



Student Handbook

Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Campus Virtual





Table of Contents

GENERAL INFORMATION 6

MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR..... 7

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS 8

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY 9

CONTACTS..... 10

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTORY 11

VISION AND MISSION..... 12

 VISION 12

 MISSION 12

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY 12

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION 12

ACADEMIC COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS 13

 Mentoring 13

 Modeling..... 14

 Assessment 14

TEACHING TYPES..... 14

ACCESS TO BLACKBOARD (Bb) PLATFORM 16

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS..... 17

STUDENT’S RIGHTS AND RESPONSABILITIES 18

STUDENT SERVICES 19

 Admissions 19

 Financial Aid 19

 Bursar 19

 Registrar 19

 Grade System Master Degree 20

 Special Grades System 20

 Incompletes..... 20

 Student Grade Complaint 21

 Grade changes and additions 22

 Partial and Final Evaluations..... 22

 Faculty Responsibilities..... 22

 Course Repetitions..... 23

Enrollment	23
Adjustments and changes to class programs	23
Relocations of Courses Due to Lack of Enrollment.....	24
Validation of prerequisites y co-requisites.....	24
Academic Load	24
Enrollments Cancellations	24
Cancellation of Non-Official Enrollment.....	24
Enrollment cancellation or annulment authorized by the committee.....	25
Enrollment Cancellation – Conditional Admissions.....	25
Cancellation of Enrollment of Students Activated in the Military Service	25
Cancellation of Enrollment for not complying with documents required by the Financial Aid Office	25
Partial or Total Withdrawals	25
Withdrawals Entitled to Reimbursement	25
Withdrawals not entitled to Adjustments	26
Official Withdrawals.....	26
Withdrawals for Non - Attendance.....	26
Reclassification (Changes) in Programs of Study.....	26
Academic Calendar	26
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act 1974 (FERPA) 34CFR, Section99.....	27
Information Directory	30
Law 186 prohibits the use of the Social Security Number as routine identification at private and public educational institutions.	30
Financing and Financial Aid Information	32
ACADEMIC POLICIES.....	32
Class Attendance.....	32
Class Attendance policy for online courses	32
Rational & procedure.....	32
Contact Hours Policy.....	33
Graduation	34
Course Validations	35
Special Permits.....	35
Satisfactory Academic Progress.....	35

Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress	36
Impact of Course Repetitions, Withdrawals, Incomplete Courses, and Transfer Courses o Satisfactory Academic Progress.....	36
Withdrawals	37
Transfer Credits.....	37
Course Repetitions.....	37
Incomplete Courses	37
Remedial and Developmental Courses.....	37
Financial Aid Warning and Failure to Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress.....	37
Scholarship and Grant Recipients	38
Financial Aid Ineligibility and Appeal Procedures.....	38
Financial Aid Reinstatement	39
QUALITY OF LIFE AND STUDENT WELLBEING	39
Psychology Services	40
Counseling.....	40
Services to Students with disabilities.....	40
Reasonable Accommodations	41
Development of Student Associations.....	44
Employment Center	44
INFORMATION RESOURCES	45
BOOKSTORE	47
INSTITUCIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.....	47
Norms of Institutional Order	47
Transgressions.....	47
Disciplinary Procedures	48
Disciplinary Sanctions	49
Academic Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy	50
Enforcement of Code of Conduct	51
Sexual Harassment Policy	51
Email.....	51
Duties and Responsibilities	51
Complaint Procedure	51
<i>NON DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT</i>	56

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Student's Manual is a document specially designed to answer as quickly as possible the most frequently asked questions of the student population.

In addition to general information about the University, the Student's Manual provides information on administrative and academic policies, student services, academic resources and everything the student needs to know in order to successfully complete an academic degree.

It should be noted that this Manual is subject to changes and may be altered at any time to satisfy student needs and requirements, according to institutional policies.

Use of masculine gender in this manual should be understood as equally applying to the feminine gender and vice versa.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR



Being responsive to the expectations of students, who wish to initiate or continue higher education studies, is a great challenge. Satisfying their interests and educational needs, while at the same time considering the elements of academic rigor which will enable them to face a competitive and globalized world, is an even greater challenge. Distance education could be the ideal modality to take care of a student population who knows what it wants. At the same time, it is a readily accessible modality that can adjust to their time limitations and to their lifestyles.

With this challenge in mind, Universidad Ana G. Méndez – Campus Virtual, has established three (3) main goals: to be an accessible and innovative educational means; to offer an education of excellence; and to offer effective and flexible student services. We are committed to the development of citizens with who possess the necessary skills and competencies needed to stand out in a complex and demanding labor market, and who are willing to help transform society through their knowledge and skills.

We have been called to live in times of great intellectual, economic and scientific challenges. Education is one of the ways we have to assertively evolve with this world. For this reason, our academic programs will always be in a process of constant development and evolution, in order to satisfy the demand for programs in diverse academic disciplines, relevant to the needs of employers and to the needs of society in general. Last, but not least, we propose to take education right into the hands of each student, through innovative technological skills which will enable us to establish our presence at a distance.

Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Campus Virtual, welcomes all of you who are willing to take on these challenges with us, and become part of this educational project.

[Migdalia Torres Rivera](#)

Migdalia Torres Rivera, Ph.D.
Chancellor

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

At Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Campus Virtual we are very pleased that you are part of our great family. Through our academic programs we will provide you with the academic preparation and the necessary tools that will enable you to achieve your academic and professional goals.

Through the use of the Blackboard platform, you will be able to access your enrolled courses from anywhere in the world. There you will find everything you need for your academic performance. You will also have available a faculty member, a specialist in the subject matter, who will direct you in your distance studies.

We offer you on-line Master's Degree programs in Business Administration, majoring in Management, Marketing, Human Resources, and Materials Control Administration. In addition to this we offer you Master's Degrees in Agribusiness, in English as a Second Language (TESOL) and in Environmental Studies, majoring in Environmental Planning.

Once again, we welcome you to this virtual adventure. For additional details, we invite you to visit our website: <http://agmvirtual.suagm.edu>. Here, our staff will offer you all the necessary assistance to succeed in your studies.

Héctor R. Flores Muñoz

Héctor Rubén Flores, MA

Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Campus Virtual (UAGM-CV) is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian university, directed to serving the local and international community.

It was founded to take care of the needs of students who need to break time and space barriers in order to obtain a quality education, which will enable them to satisfy the demands of modern society.

The educational distance modality of UAGM-CV, offers graduate programs and continued education certificates, both in English and in Spanish. It is affiliated to the Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez. All faculty members are specialists in their respective fields of study and certified to offer distance courses.

CONTACTS

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Postal Address:	PO Box 21345, San Juan, PR 00928-1345
URL:	http://agmvirtual.suagm.edu
Email:	admisiones-uv@suagm.edu graduateonline@suagm.edu
Red Interactiva:	1-800-712-4682
Chancellor:	Migdalia Torres, Ph. D.
Telephone & Fax:	787- 288-1118 Fax: 787-288-1141
Operating Hours:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administrative offices: 8:00 am a 5:00 pm (AST)• Availability of courses for all academic programs will be 24/7 (on-line)• Integrated Service Coordinators will be available from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm (AST) Monday thru Friday.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTORY

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VISION AND MISSION

VISION

The Ana G. Méndez University-Virtual Campus will be recognized, in the local e international community, as the first Puerto Rican distance education university. It will be known for the highest standards of quality and academic excellence, its advanced instructional technology, an inclusive philosophy and the most effective support services to online students.

MISSION

The Ana G. Méndez University-Virtual Campus is a distance learning institution of higher education that offers an alternative to traditional education through emerging technologies. Enacts an inclusive philosophy of appreciation for cultural diversity. It offers and awards undergraduate and graduate academic degrees and continuing education certifications, all designed to promote the holistic formation of the local and international community.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Universidad Ana G. Méndez –Campus Virtual (UAGM-CV) focuses on learning which combines theory and its application through experiences relevant to the field of studies and to the real world. Its philosophy states that the duty of the faculty is to guide and facilitate the student’s construction of learning, through the creation of learning communities and through three fundamental strategies: mentoring, modeling and assessment. It also promotes an environment of collaboration, reflection and participation within the university community.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

Universidad Ana G. Méndez –Campus Virtual (UAGM-CV) is authorized by the Council of Higher Education in Puerto Rico and is a candidate for accreditation by the Middle States Commission for Higher Education.

ACADEMIC COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

UAGM-CV promotes an interactive teaching-learning process fundamentally based on communication. For this reason, the academic community, composed by faculty, students, and administrators, is responsible for maintaining high standards of academic quality.

The commitment of the academic community is supported by an Interactive Network which offers student services through a series of options, such as Chat, telephone, electronic mail, Web pages, among others. In Puerto Rico, Universidad Ana G. Méndez – CV, affiliated to Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez, is the first institution to make available to the student a similar resource, entrepreneurial style.

To maintain high quality standards, the faculty follows a competency based education model, based on three main instructional strategies: mentoring, assessment, and modeling

Mentoring

The institutional model counts with a new type of educator, a mentor, who handles himself/herself confidently and with experience within the distance modality, who utilizes the media creatively, and maintains a high level of interaction with the student.

Interaction has many forms, besides video and audio, or electronic communications. Said interaction represents a connection that the student feels he/she has with the educator and the distance institution. For this reason the educator-mentor shall create a dual communication, since the teaching-learning process, based on constructivist theories, requires communications feedback.

Students receive support and direction in order to be able to make the transition from the conventional classroom environment to the modality of distance studies. Centered on self-learning, within this modality, the student needs the adequate tools to substitute the presence of the professor in traditional education.

The educator-mentor transcends the functions of the professor, in which the teaching-learning process relies on the educator and in a one-way communication. The educator-mentor focuses on the learner and his/her learning process, striving to act as a mediator and guide in the student's discovery and creation of new knowledge.

Modeling

Modeling is a good pedagogical strategy. As a classmate with more experience in the professional field he/she teaches, the educator-mentor takes on a modeling role through his/her words and actions.

By demonstrating who he/she is, what he/she does and how he/she does it, the educator – mentor becomes a window through which the students can project themselves to the future. By modeling an ethical and scientific background and a professional behavior, the educator-mentor can make a strong impression on the students of what their attitude towards work should be.

Researches, problem solving, case study skills, among other procedures appropriate to their fields of study, are modeled by the educator-mentor. At the same time, the educator-mentor develops instructional strategies and motivates students to model them among themselves.

Assessment

Assessment consists of a continuous process of obtaining information from various sources, such as short tests, workshops, homework, presentations and direct observation of the students' performance. The analysis of the results of all of these sources provides a clear picture of how well the students are achieving the curricular expectations established for the course.

UAGM-CV has a team of instructional designers, graphic artists, programmers, and content experts, who develop, together with the educator-mentor, assessment materials and instructional resources which become an integral part of the courses.

TEACHING TYPES

On-line or virtual education is facilitated through the Web. This requires a technological infrastructure composed of equipment, connection and application. UAGM-CV is based on this type of education and offers all of its courses on-line (Web) through the Blackboard platform for distance education.

On-line courses are offered totally at distance via Internet. Synchronous and asynchronous communication is established between the professor and the student through the platform and other Web resources such as chats or discussion forums. The course content, readings, homework, as well as other related activities are conducted through the Web.

Courses also include the use of electronic instructional materials, such as:

- **Multimedia presentations:** Presentation and access to information of a multisensory nature which employs a variety of elements such as text,

graphs, static and moving images, (photo or video), animations and sound, integrated to an application or programmed.

- **Tutorials:** consist of instructions to students aimed at skills development and strengthening knowledge in a specific subject matter. They are designed to be used individually or in small groups.
- **Simulations:** Simulations provide an interactive representation of reality which allows students to try and discover how a phenomenon works or how it behaves, the things that affect it, and the impact on other phenomena. The use of this type of educational tool motivates students to manipulate a reality model and achieve an understanding of the effects of said manipulation through a process of trial and error.
- **Drill & Practice:** A computer assisted teaching modality aimed at the acquisition of knowledge or skills through exercises and visualization of the appropriate answers.
- **Web pages, among others.**

ACCESS TO BLACKBOARD (Bb) PLATFORM

Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez (SUAGM) has selected “Blackboard” (Bb) as the platform to offer and administer on-line courses. “Blackboard” is a computerized platform which uses Internet to provide access to courses from a remote location, in a flexible and simple manner for both faculty and students who have a personal account.

Blackboard use requirements

- The student must have activated the electronic mail account provided by the institution. It can be activated through servicedesk@suagm.edu or calling, toll free within the United States: 1-877-712-4682.
- The Username and Password will be the same to access Bb

Acceso al curso en “Blackboard”

- Go to <https://suagm.blackboard.com/>
- Write down Username and Password.
- Press Login.
- Under “Courses”, select the course you want to access. Once you obtain access, you will find the browsing menú.

Things the student must remember

- You must have activated the electronic mail account provided by the institution.
- Do not write www before suagm.blackboard.com
- When you identify yourself at Bb, use the Username assigned without writing @email.suagm.edu and the Password assigned to you by the system
- If you wish to read electronic mails sent by your professor, you must access <https://www.outlook.com/email.suagm.edu>

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The accelerated pace of the modern world and the need for greater academic preparation to achieve a better quality of life, are the main factors that have contributed to the development of the on-line programs described below:

Master's Degree in Business Administration with majors in:

- Management of Supply Chain and Logistics
- Agribusiness
- Management
- Marketing and Sales
- Human Resources

Master's Degree in Science in Environmental Management with majors in:

- Environmental Planning

Master's Degree in Education with majors in:

- Teaching English as a Second Language

STUDENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSABILITIES

To be considered a student at UAGM-CV, you must have been officially admitted and enrolled. The University reserves the right to admit, readmit or enroll a student in each corresponding academic term.

RIGHTS

- a) To receive a quality education that will enable the student to acquire the necessary professional competencies in the selected field of studies.
- b) To request and receive information on the mission, vision, goals, objectives and accreditations of the Institution, academic programs, services, faculty credentials and the available facilities which will facilitate the learning process.
- c) To request and receive information related to financial aid.
- d) To request services which will facilitate reasonable accommodation due to a disability.
- e) At the beginning of each session or semester, the student should receive from the faculty adequate orientation regarding the purposes and objectives of the course, themes of study, required readings, textbooks, required assignments and the necessary didactic materials. The student must also be informed about evaluation criteria to be used, as well as other aspects directly related to course development and to the approval of the course.
- f) Within a reasonable time, the student has the right to know test grades, grades for special assignments and projects, and other evaluations, as well as his/her achievements and the areas that need improvement.
- g) The student has the right to express his opinions, doubts and differences, as well as to present recommendations, petitions and claims.

RESPONSABILITIES

- a) Know the policies, norms, regulations and dispositions of the Institution.
- b) Respect the rights of fellow classmates, as well as those of the virtual university.
- c) Carry out all academic work required.
- d) Obey all established norms regarding academic integrity, student codes of conduct, institutional policies, and academic norms.
- e) Meet all economic commitments.

STUDENT SERVICES

Admissions

This office will process admissions applications from students from accredited universities and from the School of Continued Education. As part of the process, it participates in promotion activities, orientation, enrollment, and course assessment at UAGM_CV. Together with the Registrar's Office, and the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, this office coordinates the credit/course validation process.

Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Office seeks to provide online student financial aid available to finance their studies according to the criteria of financial need, in accordance with federal, state and institutional arrangements and thus to complete their academic goal. Besides this, the office seeks to join efforts and dedication of the Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez to offer quality services that meet and exceed the expectations of our students.

Bursar

The Treasurer's Office is responsible for the safekeeping of institutional incomes and revenues. It also answers to the Office of the Vice-President for Financial Affairs. This office provides support in order to strengthen and to promote the quality of services according to the needs of the university community.

The main responsibility of this office is to make official the enrollment of students. On the other hand, the office prepares statements of account and collection of enrollment and other fees, credit transcript and graduation certification fees, among others.

Services:

- Payment plans and extensions for the payment of enrollment
- Issuing checks for loan or grants balances
- Claims for checks cashed or received
- Mailing of statements of account
- Debt or clear certifications
- Flexibility of payment forms through the Web, credit card payments, money orders or personal checks
- Authorization to provide/disclose academic records

Registrar

The Registrar's Office is responsible for the safekeeping of the academic records of the students. This office coordinates the enrollment process, issues study and degree certifications and diplomas, as well as credit transcripts, on-line. It is also responsible for the implementation of rules and academic and graduation procedures.

Grade System Master Degree

Grades will be granted according to a letters system or in percentage values.

A	=	100 – 90
B	=	89 – 80
C	=	79 – 70
F	=	69 – 00

In order to determine the general grade index under the letters system, the following values are used:

A	=	4.00
B	=	3.00
C	=	2.00
F	=	0.00

Note: the letter D and therefore its value of 1 is not used in our scale of assessment for the master's degree.

Special Grades System

In special cases, the following letters system will be applied. They are not quantified for general average purposes, with the exception of WF.

W	=	Official withdrawal
WF	=	Ceased attending course without an official withdrawal
I	=	Incomplete
IP	=	In Progress
P	=	Course was approved/passed- but it does not affect academic index
NP	=	Not Passed (does not affect academic index)
NR	=	Grade not received
*	=	A course was repeated (the student record shows grade with an indication of included (I) or excluded (E))
WA	=	Administrative withdrawal
WN	=	Student enrolled but never attended course

Incompletes

The student will receive a provisional incomplete grade only due to a justified absence from the final exam and if he/she has the minimum partial grades required for the course.

The final exam and/or assignment will only be offered to students who have a chance of a minimum final grade of C (see requisites for each program as specified in the catalog).

It is the responsibility of the student affected by an Incomplete, to make the necessary arrangements with the professor or Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs for the corresponding area, to determine the final work and change the incomplete.

An Incomplete (I) may be removed if the student completes the work required for the academic session, within thirty (30) days after classes start and according to the dates established by the academic calendar.

A student who does not achieve the satisfactory academic progress required to maintain financial aid because he/she received an Incomplete for one or more courses, will be able to have the financial aid reinstated once he/she has removed the Incomplete(s) according to institutional norms, provided the deadline established by the Federal Government to grant financial aid has not expired.

At the end of each academic term, it is the faculty's responsibility to submit the Official Grades Register at the Registrar's Office, including students who have received an Incomplete. In each case, the professor shall submit the partial grades obtained and a 0 grade for the specific work not completed. The faculty must hand in to the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the corresponding tests and codes and/or indicate the class assignments/class work which the student who received the incompletes has not completed.

At the end of the term prescribed for the student to complete academic work, the faculty will have five (5) days to hand in at the office of the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, all documents related to the removal of the Incomplete. The Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs will refer them to the Registrar's Office, where the official grade registry will be completed and final grades shall be awarded.

When the faculty completes the Official Registry, they shall indicate partial grades obtained by the students. In those cases where the student did not complete the academic work within the established period of time, the Registrar shall calculate the final grade, including (0) for the pending work.

Student Grade Complaint

1. The student must file a complaint at the Registrar's Office at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the end of the semester following the grade he/she is filing a claim.

2. Special claims cases or grade changes shall be resolved by the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and a faculty member at the beginning of each academic year.
3. Student grade claims will be heard in the following circumstances:
 - a. A mistake in calculations, omission of a grade or evaluation.
 - b. A violation of institutional academic norms related to evaluations.

Grade changes and additions

Any request for a grade change or addition must be submitted by the professor to the corresponding School within a period not greater than one term after the same was obtained. The request has to be made utilizing the form provided for these purposes. The Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs or his/her representative shall file the form at the Registrar's Office.

Changes made outside the established term must be justified and approved by the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Partial and Final Evaluations

During each term, professors shall evaluate students on a minimum of two (2) evaluation components. There must be at least one (1) partial evaluation and one (1) final evaluation.

The decision on the type of each evaluation will depend on the judgment and evaluation method of each professor. Said evaluations may consist of exams, projects, case studies, or other activities that the professor might deem important, depending on the nature of the course.

It will be the student's responsibility to clarify with the professor any situation related to his/her evaluation.

Students must complete the required work for evaluation during the established time. Otherwise they will receive (0) for each work not done.

Faculty Responsibilities

The professors are responsible to inform students of at least two partial evaluations prior to the last established date for partial withdrawals.

It is the professor's responsibility to observe the academic calendar and, at the beginning of each course, to inform students about the objectives and content of the course and about the exams and other assignments that will be required for their evaluation.

Course Repetitions

Students may repeat a course in order to improve their academic average. Credit will be given for the higher grade, which will be used to compute the grade point average. If the grade in the second attempt is the same as the first, only one will be used to calculate the cumulative average.

1. Students who wish to repeat a course may do so. However, they must repeat all courses required for graduation where a C or lower grade was obtained.
2. If a student has a passing grade (other than F), the student may only repeat the course once for financial aid purposes.
3. Students who repeat a course will receive the higher grade.
4. If the grade obtained in a repeated course is the same as the previous grade, it will count for the cumulative average but will count only once for the graduation GPA.
5. With respect to practicum courses, the student will have only two opportunities to repeat the course pending the recommendations and approval of the program dean and practicum supervisor.
6. A student will not be able to repeat the course until a grade has been posted

Enrollment

Enrollment is the process through which the student, after being admitted to the institution or after having completed the academic requisites for courses taken, registers the next courses to be taken, makes due payments and receives the official class program.

Adjustments and changes to class programs

The dates to make adjustments and changes to class programs are established in the academic calendar. Students make adjustments and changes for various reasons, such as: elimination of course section, course hours, sickness, etc.

The institution makes adjustments to student class programs for the following reasons: nonattendance, withdrawal, lack of a prerequisite or co-requisite, sections eliminated due to low enrollment, Norm for Satisfactory Academic Progress, and non-compliance with the documents required by the Financial Aid Office.

Relocations of Courses Due to Lack of Enrollment

Each semester or session, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs carries out a process of section eliminations. The course programming is evaluated the week prior to the beginning of classes and those courses with a low enrollment are cancelled.

Before cancelling sections, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs evaluates the relocation of the students enrolled in those sections and considers such factors as, whether the course is the only offering, if there are graduation candidates enrolled, and if it is an offering for a new major, among others.

Validation of prerequisites y co-requisites

A prerequisite is a course that the student has to take before enrolling in another course, that is, a course to be taken prior to the one he/she wishes to enroll in. A co-requisite is a course that has to be taken simultaneously during the same period. In each enrollment process, the mechanized system validates that the student meets with this requisite.

Students, who are enrolled in the course in process, may register in the following course. At the end of each semester the student is evaluated to ensure that he/she has approved satisfactorily the course in process. If the student does not meet this criterion, he/she is informed about the adjustment made to his registration.

Academic Load

A regular academic load consists of six (6) credit hours or more per semester; part-time consists of less than six (6) credit hours; three (3) credit hours or less is considered less than part time.

For an academic load of more than six (6) credit hour per module, the student will need the authorization of the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Enrollments Cancellations

An enrollment cancellation is a process through which student credits for a specific period are cancelled. Said enrollment cancellation does not have an impact in terms of costs for the student nor for Title IV funds.

Cancellation of Non-Official Enrollment

This cancellation takes place in cases of students who did not make official their registration. The cancellation takes place after the student has been notified by letter or phone call that the registration will be cancelled. The cancelation is carried out by a mechanized system according to the calendar and in coordination with the Treasurer's Office.

Enrollment cancellation or annulment authorized by the committee

Said cancellations are evaluated by a committee composed by representatives from the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, the Treasurer's Office, the Registrar's Office and the Admissions and Financial Aid Office.

The student files a written petition to the Annulments Committee, with due evidence of a critical situation. These cases must have evidence of the situation presented by the student.

Enrollment Cancellation – Conditional Admissions

The Admissions Director, inform the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs the names of students whose records have not completed their record. The Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs authorizes the Registrar to process the registration annulment.

Cancellation of Enrollment of Students Activated in the Military Service

On March 10, 2004, Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez approved a policy for students activated in the military service. This policy establishes the procedure to be followed by the student, administrative staff and faculty of SUAGM institutions, for students activated in the military service. Students, who satisfactorily complete the courses enrolled in the term of the activation, may request an evaluation before reporting to the military service. If the student does not have the possibility of satisfactorily completing the courses, the enrollment shall be cancelled, so that his academic record is not affected negatively.

Cancellation of Enrollment for not complying with documents required by the Financial Aid Office

This cancellation is processed for all students who owe necessary documents to complete the process at the Financial Aid Office. Before the enrollment is cancelled, the student is continuously followed-up so he/she may present the required documents.

Partial or Total Withdrawals

In order to request a partial or general withdrawal, the student must file said request using his/her pin number, within the deadlines established in the academic calendar, so the withdrawals may become final and official. The student may also request the withdrawal in person or by fax using the official form. The institution may drop out a student due to a recommendation from the Disciplinary Council or from the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, following the dispositions of the Code of Student Conduct.

Withdrawals Entitled to Reimbursement

Courses for which students request a partial or general withdrawal during the period of time established by the institution for withdrawals entitled to reimbursement, will affect the student's academic progress.

Withdrawals not entitled to Adjustments

Courses for which the student files a partial or general withdrawal after the period of time established by the institution for withdrawals entitled to reimbursement, will affect the student's academic progress.

Official Withdrawals

A withdrawal filed by the student within the period of time established in the academic calendar. The deadline to file said withdrawal is the last day of classes.

Withdrawals for Non - Attendance

This is informed by the professor within the dates established in the academic calendar through the Census Taking process.

Reclassification (Changes) in Programs of Study

Active students may request a reclassification or change in their program of study after complying with the following requirements:

1. Applying for reclassification
2. An evaluation by the School of the major being requested for reclassification
3. All registered credits and cumulative average of the student's former program, shall be considered for the effects of the NPAS of the program for which reclassification is requested.
4. The number of credit hours required to change programs is six (6) credits taken at the institution.

Academic Calendar

A new academic calendar is prepared for every period of classes. The same must include all deadlines for important processes which affect the university community, such as withdrawals, incompletes, reclassifications, graduation exercises, final exams, official holidays, academic breaks or recesses, among others. The academic calendar must be approved by the respective institutional bodies (Academic Board and Administrative Council.) Once calendars are approved, they are duplicated and distributed among the academic community. The academic calendar is also included in the University Catalog and available at the University's Internet page.

The academic calendar is prepared for the entire academic year and is divided into two semesters and two summer sessions. Part of term studies – shorter periods of study within a regular semester – are also programmed within these periods. Part of term studies begin and end at different dates than regular semesters. The first semester begins in August, the second semester in January and the summer sessions run from June thru August.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act 1974 (FERPA) 34CFR, Section99

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. (An “eligible student” under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution.) These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Campus Virtual receives a request for access. A student should submit to the registrar, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the registrar to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. A student who wishes to ask to amend a record should write the registrar for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the university decides not to amend the record as requested, the registrar will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student’s right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the university discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The university discloses education records without a student’s prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the Universidad Ana G. Méndez – Campus Virtual in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person serving on the board of trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the Universidad Ana G. Méndez – Campus Virtual who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent or a student volunteering to assist another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his

or her professional responsibilities for the Universidad Ana G. Méndez – Campus Virtual.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Universidad Ana G. Méndez – Campus Virtual to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

**Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202**

The Universidad Ana G. Méndez- Campus Virtual must inform the student about the information included in the directory and give them a reasonable period of time for the person to authorize, or not, the relay of this information. Institutions may disclose directory information, which may be made public and includes the student’s name, last known address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student. This information will be released only by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs or a representative after the petitioner has demonstrated a legitimate need to have such information. Students who do not wish release of “directory information” must complete a statement in the Office of the Registrar no later than the last day of each term. Otherwise, directory information may be disclosed by the University for legitimate purposes.

- FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students’ education records, without consent of the student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the student, §99.32 of FERPA regulations requires the institution to record the disclosure. Eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A postsecondary institution may disclose PII from the education records without obtaining prior written consent of the student –
- To other school officials, including teachers, within the Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Campus Virtual whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1)) To officials of another school where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if

- the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as a State postsecondary authority that is responsible for supervising the university's State-supported education programs. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
 - In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
 - To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
 - To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
 - To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
 - To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
 - Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))
 - To a victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense, subject to the requirements of §99.39. The disclosure may only include the final results of the disciplinary proceeding with respect to that alleged crime or offense, regardless of the finding. (§99.31(a)(13))

- To the general public, the final results of a disciplinary proceeding, subject to the requirements of §99.39, if the school determines the student is an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense and the student has committed a violation of the school's rules or policies with respect to the allegation made against him or her. (§99.31(a)(14))

Information Directory

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) grants the student certain rights regarding his/her academic record.

At the beginning of each semester, students admitted and enrolled for said semester receive the Information Directory document. This document is divided into three categories:

- a. *Name, student identification number, address, phone number, date and place of birth, major, credit hours enrolled, period of studies, participation in official activities, degrees and honors awarded, schools or universities attended.*
- b. *Name, student identification number, major, and credit hours enrolled, period of studies, participation in official activities, degrees and honors awarded, schools or universities attended.*
- c. *I do not authorize the institution to offer information contained in the categories included in the Information Directory.*

The student will select one of the three above mentioned categories. This document is sent to the students via electronic mail and the same must be returned to the Registrar's Office with the selected category. It is then processed by the mechanized system. Students who do not return the document are given follow-up so they may complete the same. This is done through a *hold* in the mechanized system. However, in the case of students who do not answer, if there is request for information, the same will be provided since the document indicates that if the student does not answer, the requested information can be provided.

Law 186 prohibits the use of the Social Security Number as routine identification at private and public educational institutions.

This law was created to prohibit the use of the Social Security Number as routine identification at private and public institutions from the elementary to the post-graduate levels, to establish regulations for the use of this information at educational institutions, to authorize the Higher Education Council and the General Education

Council to impose administrative fines for violations to said regulation, and to establish deadlines for compliance.

On the other hand, FERPA (*Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC 1232g*) establishes that schools or universities may, without the consent of the student or parent, divulge information contained in the directory, such as student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards and number of years attended at the institution.

However, the institution must inform the students about the information contained in the directory and grant them a reasonable period of time for the students to react and to authorize or not the disclosure of said information. On the other hand, said Federal law establishes that the students' sex and Social Security number are considered confidential information.

For all of the above, the Social Security number may not be required for tests, presentation of projects, or any other action not related to those which require legitimate need, such as enrollment process, loan or financial aid applications, credit transcripts, or requests from a government agency, the Education Council, or a court order, among others. It is required that prior to providing or using a student's Social Security number, the student be notified and that he/she, the father, mother or guardian, provide a written and signed authorization/waiver of the protection provided by law.

The Social Security number is confidential and therefore the faculty has to request in writing a student authorization before using the Social Security number. The Social Security number may not be used for routine identification at the institution. An alternate code shall be used for student routine identification.

If a document which contains a student's Social Security number must be made public, outside the academic confidentiality context, it shall be edited in such a way that the number be partial or totally illegible, without this being considered an alteration of the document's contents.

The above protections may be voluntarily waived by students of legal age or legally emancipated from parents, or by parents with legal custody or total parental rights of minors, through a written authorization. However said waiver may not be imposed as a condition for enrollment, graduation, credit or grade transcript requests, or for rendering services.

This disposition regarding the use of the Social Security number shall not apply in those cases in which it is required by law or Federal regulation or for internal procedures to verify identity, credit/course validations, employment, taxes or financial aid, subject to the institution's maintaining confidentiality.

Financing and Financial Aid Information

At the University Ana G. Mendez - Campus Virtual we recognize the importance of financial resources to enable it to continue his university studies. We guide on the procedures and requirements for completing financial aid available. To request and participate in financial aid programs and sources of funding for enrollment can access the portal UAGM -CV (<http://agmvirtual.suagm.edu>), and in the area of financial aid. You can use any of the links available for that purpose.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Class Attendance

This regulation establishes that all institutions which receive Title IV funding (Pell Grants and other financial aids) establish a system to verify student attendance during the first weeks of classes.

This process is conducted through registers that the Registrar's Office provides to the faculty and through participation records for courses available through the distance education platform. Within the period established in the academic calendar, the faculty reports students not attending. At the same time, the mechanized system carries out a series of procedures to reimburse financial aid money, in those cases entitled to reimbursement, 75% of the total course cost. The student pays for 25% of the course cost.

Class Attendance policy for online courses

The institution has established policy to monitor enrolled students and withdrawals. Weekly attendance is mandatory in all online courses. Students are expected to log in into their courses at least three times a week (10 hour minimum). Progress towards satisfactory completion of weekly assignments is expected on a weekly basis. No academic progress could jeopardize good standing and financial aid. In a distance education context, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. A school must demonstrate that a student participated in class or was otherwise engaged in an academically related activity, such as by contributing to an online discussion, text chat session, submitting an assignment, working through exercises, taking a quiz or exam or initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question.

Rational & procedure

The Federal Student Manual (Volume 4, Ch- 1, 4-29) interprets rule 34 CFR 690.80 (b) (2) (ii) as follows: "Before proceeding with the disbursement of funds from the Financial Service Authority (FSA), the student's eligibility to receive them must be determined and documented. That is to say, it must be confirmed that if the disbursement is made on or after the first day of classes, the student has started attendance." Attendance must be "academic attendance" or "attendance to a related academic activity." It must occur during the first 7 days from the beginning of classes and includes:

- Submit or complete any academic activity for the course which might include tests, completing an interactive tutorial, or participating in any computer assisted instruction.
- Participate in a discussion forum on-line regarding academic matters.
- Initiate contact with facilitator to ask questions regarding academic subjects to be studied in the course.

Attendance does NOT include:

- Log-in at a course without active participation.
- Participation in academic counseling and orientation

In those cases in which student attendance cannot be verified because he/she has not fulfilled any of the aforementioned requirements, disbursement of financial aid might be withheld, reduced, or cancelled until attendance can be verified for all courses in which the student is registered. Attendance will also be verified halfway of the academic term. Methods for verification may include evidence that the student has completed assignments, tests, or participated in discussion forums on-line, among others. If attendance is not verified, financial aid may be reduced or cancelled and reimbursed to "Free Application for Federal Student Aid" (FAFSA.) Reimbursement of financial aid may affect the balance of the student's account and require that the student make direct payments to our institution.

Contact Hours Policy

Credit hours are calculated based on the on-line assignments accumulated by the student in the platform. This includes instruction time, student work beyond the on-line platform, and the extent to which the student demonstrates achievement of on-line learning objectives.

At UAGM-CV, the determination of credit hours is an essential component of the initial on-line course design. Contact time is closely monitored through each course activity. As part of the on-line course design, the professor, with expertise on the subject matter, produces a detailed plan which shows the specific time in which the student is expected to complete course activities.

The Curriculum Committee at UAGM-CV must safeguard that the credit hour policies are enforced, evaluate each course to certify that all course activities comply with Federal norms, policies, and regulations. Once a year, UAGM-CV will conduct an exhaustive revision of 25% of its on-line courses, as well as new design courses, to guarantee that all courses comply with the necessary credit hours.

On-line courses are offered in terms of 8 weeks and each course is equivalent to 3 credit hours, with a minimum of 45 activity contact hours, in order to achieve the

learning results detailed in the plan of studies. During this 8 week period, students interact with the content approximately 5.25 hours per week and 10.5 extra hours to complete other assignments, for a total of 15.75 hours per week of contact time.

As a preparation to achieve the learning results of a course, the on-line student must complete between 15 and 20 contact hours per week in on-line direct learning activities with the professor, as well as synchronous and asynchronous group activities facilitated by the professor.

Graduation

Graduation Requirements

Students at Universidad Ana G. Méndez- Campus Virtual are eligible to receive their degrees upon completion of the following requisites:

- Complete the graduation candidate application form within the dates established in the academic calendar.
- Courses at the School of their preference at Universidad Ana G. Méndez- Campus Virtual. Each program establishes the minimum grade required for the courses in the different majors.
- At the undergraduate level, the number of credit hours with an academic index of 2.50 or higher.
- At the graduate level, the number of credit hours with an academic index of 3.00 or higher.
- Graduation applicants must have fulfilled all of their financial obligations with the institution.
- Graduation applicants must submit to the graduation regulations and requisites established in the catalog for the year in which they expect to graduate.

Students, who completed degree requisites at the end of the first semester or the summer session, must request a certification from the Registrar's Office confirming that they have completed all of the graduation requisites.

Graduating students must pick up their diplomas at the Registrar's Office not later than one (1) year after graduation. The Institution will not be responsible for diplomas after that date.

Honors

Students who obtained a grade point index of 4.00 in their studies will receive honors recognitions. In order to obtain an honor mention, transfer students must complete 24 credit hours at Universidad Ana G. Méndez- Campus Virtual.

Course Validations

A process through which courses taken by admitted transfer students at other institutions are evaluated.

- a. Only courses approved with a “B” or higher at the transfer institution are considered for validation.
- b. If more than six (6) years have elapsed after the courses were approved, they must be evaluated by the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- c. The transfer student will be required to approve at least 24 credit hours at Universidad Ana G. Méndez- Campus Virtual.
- d. The Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs establishes the equivalents based on the catalog and the official course description from the transfer institution.

Special Permits

Students will have the opportunity to take courses at other accredited universities, if said courses are not offered at the institution and are required to continue to other courses in subsequent class terms.

- a. The course must be an immediate graduation requirement or a prerequisite for other required courses.
- b. The course is a graduation requisite and will not be offered at the Institution during the present academic term.
- c. The course to be taken must be equivalent in content and number of credits to the course offered at the Institution.
- d. Authorized courses must be approved with a minimum of “B.”
- e. At the time of the request, the student must have a minimum general grade point index of 3.00.
- f. A maximum of six (6) credits will be authorized during the student’s university life.
- g. Students on academic probation will not be eligible to take courses outside the Institution with a special permit.
- h. The student cannot have failed the same course at the Institution.
- i. Any other situation not contemplated in this norm, will be evaluated by the corresponding Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is a measure of student progress toward the completion of a degree. Federal regulations require that all students who receive Title IV funds as part of their financial aid package maintain SAP.

The Ana G. Mendez University – Virtual Campus (UAGM-CV)’s SAP policy contains qualitative and quantitative measures of progress.

The quantitative measure is based on the number of credit hours a student attempts and passes. This calculation is completed by dividing the cumulative number of credit hours a student successfully completes by the total number of credit hours the student attempts over the student's academic career in a particular program at UAGM-CV. Transfer credits are included in this calculation.

SAP also includes a qualitative measure consisting of a cumulative grade point average (GPA).

Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress

SAP is evaluated at the end of every semester.

To maintain good standing, students must achieve an overall minimum cumulative pass rate of 66.67 percent for all credit hours attempted and completed and a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (undergraduate) or 2.50 (graduate) as measured at the end of each semester.

Students are prohibited from receiving federal student financial aid after attempting 150 percent of the number of credit hours required for their academic program. This calculation includes transfer credits and all UAGM-CV enrolled credits for the student's program.

If a student wants to enroll in a different academic program, the student must request approval from the Dean of the School. Even though only attempted and earned credits from the student's current program of enrollment are included in the quantitative measure (including internally transferred credit hours) and only the grades for courses from the student's current program of enrollment are included in the qualitative measure, students are encouraged to carefully consider program changes because the federal government has placed limits on total lifetime financial aid eligibility.

Readmitted students will have the same SAP status that resulted as of the end of the last term attended.

Students requesting admission into a new degree program after having completed his or her prior program of enrollment will begin the new program with a new SAP history, unless the student transfers credits into the new academic program in which case those transfer credits will be considered when measuring SAP.

Impact of Course Repetitions, Withdrawals, Incomplete Courses, and Transfer Courses on Satisfactory Academic Progress

Withdrawals

If a student withdraws from a course, the credits for the course count toward the determination of credit hours attempted and credit hours earned but will not be considered in the cumulative GPA.

Transfer Credits

If a student transfers in credits from another institution or program, the credits for the course(s) count toward the determination of credit hours attempted and credit hours but will not be considered in the cumulative GPA.

Course Repetitions

If a student repeats a course, only the highest grade earned will be included in the student's cumulative GPA. However, each attempt at the course will count as credits attempted.

Incomplete Courses

If a student has an incomplete in a course, the credits for the course count toward the determination of credit hours attempted. The course will not be considered in the cumulative GPA until an earned grade is assigned.

Remedial and Developmental Courses

Financial aid recipients may receive aid for a maximum of 30 semester credit hours in developmental coursework. Students enrolled in remedial courses are expected to receive passing grades in those courses in order to progress into the next term. Remedial courses do not count toward the determination of credit hours attempted and credit hours earned and will not be considered in the cumulative GPA when determining SAP.

Financial Aid Warning and Failure to Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students who fail to meet the SAP requirements at the end of a semester will be placed on Financial Aid Warning for the next semester attended. The student will be notified in writing that he or she is on Financial Aid Warning and that financial aid eligibility is retained during this period. The student must meet SAP as of the next evaluation point in order to receive financial aid in future terms.

Students who become ineligible for federal financial aid funds based on their failure to maintain SAP may continue their studies at UAGM-CV at their own cost. If the student believes there are extenuating circumstances associated with the student's inability to meet SAP, he/she may appeal his/her termination status to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee. See section titled Financial Aid Ineligibility and Appeal Procedures below.

Scholarship and Grant Recipients

Other scholarship and grant programs may not allow for a Financial Aid Warning semester. In these cases, failure to meet SAP in any given term may result in the termination of scholarship or grant funds. Please refer to your scholarship or grant information materials or contact the Financial Aid department at 787-288-1118.

Financial Aid Ineligibility and Appeal Procedures

A student will be advised in writing when he or she has lost his financial aid eligibility for failure to meet SAP and will be advised of the process for re-establishing financial aid eligibility.

Students who have lost eligibility for financial aid based on a failure to meet SAP standards and who have extenuating circumstances may appeal the loss of eligibility. Students who wish to make an appeal must be current on all financial obligations. Students may not use financial aid to make retroactive tuition and fee(s) payments.

A SAP appeal must discuss the extenuating circumstances that prevented the student from meeting the requirements of the SAP policy. These extenuating circumstances must have occurred within 12 months of the student's failure to meet SAP and may include extreme medical issues, a death in the immediate family, employment related hardship and/or military mobilization. The student must also describe how his or her situation has changed in order to allow the student to meet the SAP standards at the next evaluation point. As part of the appeal, the student must submit the following:

- SAP Appeal Form
- Signed dated letter (please refer to the form for further instructions)
- Supporting documentation (third-party documentation may be required as appropriate)

In order for your appeal to be considered, you must submit the SAP appeal packet via email to registraduria-uv@suagm.edu or fax to 787-288-1141. The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will evaluate the merits of the appeal by reviewing the documentation submitted as well as the student's previous academic performance at UAGM-CV. The

committee may request additional information or documentation, as needed, and will inform the student of its final determination.

The student will have a maximum of ten days after the first day of classes to appeal. The institution will have ten days for the evaluation process after receiving the student's appeal.

Financial Aid Reinstatement

If the Institution approves a SAP appeal, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation for one academic term; the student also may be placed on an Academic Plan. The Institution will advise the student of the progress the student must achieve to ensure he or she meets the SAP policy or the requirements of the Academic Plan by the end of the probationary semester. Students will be eligible for financial aid while on Financial Aid Probation. After the end of the Financial Aid Probation semester, the Institution will measure the student's academic progress. The student will retain financial aid eligibility only if the student meets published minimum SAP standards or meets the requirements of the Academic Plan at the end of the semester of Financial Aid Probation.

Any student who loses financial aid eligibility due to SAP and attends school at his or her own cost will regain financial aid eligibility in the academic semester following the semester in which the student once again meets the minimum SAP standards.

QUALITY OF LIFE AND STUDENT WELLBEING

The office of this Associate Vice-Chancellor establishes a model of multidisciplinary services to ensure prevention, education and investigation, in a primary intervention process. It promotes the development of the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of the human being, as well as a state of harmony with the environment. It aims at the transformation of the University into a healthy virtual community. Its commitment is to give hope its space in a virtual manner, while becoming a source of opportunities at a distance. The office of this Associate Vice-Chancellor offers the following services:

- Psychological support
- Orientation and counseling
- Coordination of services for students with disabilities
- Talks, forums, workshops, and lectures

Psychology Services

Short term services to persons who require or request psychological intervention. In order to achieve an improvement, the student is referred to behavior professionals so that they can provide follow-up services if necessary. Our professionals are licensed in the field of psychology. These services might be requested by sending an email or by faculty referral.

Counseling

Orientation and counseling professionals at Universidad Ana G. Méndez Campus Virtual, work with the students, clarifying doubts, facilitating the decision-making process, and assisting them with their goals and achievements. Confidentiality of all counseling services is guaranteed.

- **Occupational/vocational counseling** - The students receive assistance in the process of defining their professional, vocational or occupational goals.
- **Personal counseling** – The students have the opportunity to share their personal concerns. The counselor evaluates needs and offers alternatives to work with them.
- **Academic counseling** – The students’ interests, database and limitations are evaluated. Then the counselors design a plan of studies which will allow them to achieve their academic goals.
- **Group counseling** – Students are organized in groups of four to six persons who meet on-line with the professional counselor to discuss a problem or any particular subject.
- **Norms for Satisfactory Academic Progress** – In accordance with Universidad Ana G. Méndez – CV academic norms and regulations and with Federal regulations from the Department of Education, Norms for Satisfactory Academic Progress are established which apply to all students whether they have financial aid or not.

In order to receive quality and instantaneous services, the student may communicate with the counselor through the “chat” application from 8:00am – 5:00pm Atlantic Time zone (AST) or send an email.

Services to Students with disabilities

Who is considered handicap or with a disabilities, under the law?

According to ADA Act, a disability is a chronic or long term physical or mental challenge which substantially limits one or more essential daily life activities (i. e., walking, sitting, breathing, learning, working, sleeping, etc.). Said law also requires an individualized evaluation of each case in order to determine the existence or absence thereof of a disability or special need. The law does not require the University to evaluate students or cover expenses for said evaluation. It is the student’s responsibility to present appropriate documentation and to request pertinent services and

adjustments/accommodations. The University has the right to establish professional criteria to review the documentation.

Reasonable Accommodations

“Reasonable accommodations” is a term used by ADA and the Rehabilitation Act to describe the modifications made to the environment in order to remove or reduce structural and/or educational barriers, within a reasonable degree, which might be faced by a student due to disability or special need. The law does not require that students with a disability or special need be given a “special” advantage which places them in a better position for success than his or her peers. The reasonable adjustments/accommodations are made to place the disabled student or student with special needs in the same initial position of his or her peers. However, an academic unit is not required to fundamentally alter the nature of its programs for the accommodation of its students.

Requisites:

- Complete the application for reasonable accommodation
- Provide medical evidence from a certified/licensed health professional
- Interview with a counselor

University Commitment and Support

UAGM-CV is committed to provide equal opportunities to students with disabilities or special needs by providing an environment of social and academic support. Faculty and students work as a team to determine the needs of students with the purpose of making efforts to satisfy those needs.

Support

UAGM-CV complies with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (section 504) which requires that no qualified student shall be excluded from enrollment in any course due to a disability or special need. Students who choose to accept special adjustments or accommodations under ADA, must state their disability at the time of enrollment. Likewise, all possible efforts will be made to provide, within reason, said special adjustments/accommodations. Some programs may require manual skills.

Any student, who feels that he or she has not been treated fairly under the Federal policies stated by UAGM-CV, has the right to file a written complaint. The complaint shall be sent to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs. This procedure applies only to complaints filed in writing.

Communication

UAGM-CV expects that students with disabilities or special learning needs, take an active part in communicating their needs, since they are the best qualified to describe their strengths and weaknesses. It is important that students inform the University of their Situation at the time of enrollment, or as soon as possible thereafter, in order to allow for sufficient time to make necessary arrangements.

Forms and Sources of Documentation

Documentation is critical in order to determine the appropriate adjustments /accommodations. It is the student's individual responsibility to identify himself/herself as a disabled person or as a person with special needs and to provide the University with the necessary diagnosis documentation, prepared by a certified professional. The documentation must show the ways in which said disability limits the student's ability to participate in an academic environment; it should clearly establish the accommodations or academic adjustments required, it must be included as part of the application and must be handed to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs for verification.

Acceptable sources of documentation to verify a student's disability or special need in order to request special adjustments or accommodations could be:

Student Reports

The student is a vital source of information regarding the ways in which he or she might suffer from a "limiting disability." The student's report, in his or her own words, of his/her experience with said disability, barriers and effective or non-effective accommodations, is an important tool, which might even be sufficient to establish disability and need for special accommodations.

Information from external sources or third parties

The documentation in which a disability is diagnosed must demonstrate the ways in which said disability limits the student's ability to participate in an academic environment. It should clearly establish the accommodations or academic adjustments requested, and must be handed to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs for verification.

**UAGM-CV is a higher education institution whose offerings are completely on-line, so that procedures and criteria to determine reasonable accommodations might not be the same as those for other institutions or entities.*

Confidentially and release information

UAGM-CV is committed to ensure that all information regarding disabilities or special needs of its students is confidential, as required and allowed by law. In the majority of cases, the University will not inform the faculty of the nature of the disability or special need of a student, unless it is necessary in order to provide the appropriate adjustments/accommodations and in order to protect the health and safety of the student and/or others. The faculty is informed about the adjustments/accommodations necessary to satisfy the needs inherent to the disability or special need of a student. The student may present a written authorization to release his/her diagnostic documentation if he/she wishes to share it with others.

In addition to the adjustments/accommodations usually provided by the faculty, the University reserves the right to release supplementary information in such cases as it might be necessary to make it known. Some of the most common scenarios, include, but are not limited to:

- A request for a course substitution
- The student's safety and/or that of others
- Complaint cases
- Special considerations for financial aid

Appeals

The student may discuss all problems related to his/her adjustment/reasonable accommodations with the counselors. To request or file an appeal, the student must send an electronic mail to his/her counselor, informing the plaintiff's name, the description of the alleged violation and the name of the person who allegedly violated his/her rights.

Once the complaint is received, UAGM-CV will initiate an investigation. Once the investigation is completed, both parties will be informed of the results of the same.

***Blackboard**, the platform used by UAGM-CV, does not contain barriers for persons with disabilities and is easily accessible to users. For additional information, and to know more about the services offered, the student may access the following link: <http://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Learn/Resources/Accessibility.aspx>

Links of Interest

- [American with Disabilities Act \(ADA ACT\)](#)

Emergency Contacts

- 9-1-1 emergency calls
- Suicide prevention 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- Controlled Substance Abuse: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Other links

- Alcoholics anonymous: <http://www.aa.org/lang/sp/subpage.cfm?page=1>
- Narcotics anonymous: <http://www.na.org/>
- Domestic Violence: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/violence-against-women/government-in-action/>

Student Responsibilities

1. It is the student's responsibility to request reasonable accommodations.
2. Must inform the professor of the reasonable accommodations required.
3. Reasonable accommodations must be requested for each term in which the student enrolls.

Faculty Responsibilities

1. The faculty is notified by means of a memorandum sent to his/her electronic mail. Once this communication is received, , the professor must comply with the specifications contained in the electronic mail and ensure that all necessary accommodations are made.
2. It is the faculty's responsibility to request the necessary additional tools that might be required to satisfy the necessary reasonable accommodations as might be the case.
3. The professors must comply with the specifications stated in the communication.

Development of Student Associations

Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Campus Virtual will promote that students who have the necessary interests, skills and abilities, engage in the organization of student associations for the wellbeing of the university community.

1. Application and accreditation of student associations
2. Procedures guidelines for the accreditation and development of student associations.

Employment Center

This Center complements the academic formation of students and the university community in general, facilitating their transition into the labor market for which they are preparing. UAGM-CV provides a virtual catalog at the university website which

includes references at the local and international levels. The following are some of the services offered by the Center:

- Preparation of résumé
- Employment search
- Writing letters of presentation
- Coordination of appointments
- Orientation for employment search
- Talks and workshops (seminar and webinar)
- Computer training (webinar)

INFORMATION RESOURCES

Virtual Library Ana G. Méndez

Vision

SUAGM Library is a leader in services of excellence in the areas information and research resources as required by the distance education modality. Leadership is demonstrated through the availability of pertinent and updated electronic collections and cutting-edge technologies.

Mission

The Virtual Library of Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez is committed to support the student and academic community of Universidad Ana G. Méndez – Campus Virtual, affiliated to Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez. The main goal is to provide the required resources and services in order to contribute to a successful teaching-learning process. Our library aims at the development of life-long learners by providing information of excellence, promoting research and critical thinking.

Objectives:

1. To offer remote and electronic access to databases, books and magazines
2. To promote the development of information and research skills through links, tutorials and guidelines
3. To provide communications access for bibliographical and reference assistance
4. To be a learning vehicle through pedagogical resources available 24/7
5. To serve as a collaboration model and as a model of innovative uses of instructional technology
6. To provide access and links to other digital collections of general interest
7. To provide options for students with disabilities which include programs and assisted equipment?

User's Community

These services will be offered to students enrolled in distance programs at SUAGM institutions. This population is characterized by asynchronous, collaborative, and

cooperative learning. The Virtual Library at SUAGM also provides assistance to the faculty, teaching support staff, student support staff, and all of its constituents.

Philosophy

The Virtual Library, according to ACRL directives, has the following responsibilities:

1. Providing access to adequate and equivalent library services to students and faculty of the academic institutions of the Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez.
2. The distance university will be responsible for the administration of the library, as well as for the planning, development and evaluation of services.
3. The library will identify, elaborate, coordinate, offer, and evaluate the value and relevance of resources and services.
4. The library will instill permanent learning attitudes through the development of information and alphabetization skills in the virtual community.
5. The distance university recognizes the need for the service, actions and techniques used by the virtual library and others, such as instructional methods and telecommunications.
6. The distance university has the responsibility to ensure that the information skills service complies with national and regional accreditation norms, as well as with the ACRL professional association and its guidelines.
7. The Virtual Library shall assign a budget to ensure adequate services for the information needs of students, faculty, and the academic offerings.

The libraries at the affiliated institution of Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez will support the information needs of the distance learning community. The library at Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Campus Virtual is responsible for the development and periodical review of the agreements between the institutions.

Information Resources

The Universidad Ana G. Méndez - Campus Virtual has the responsibility of providing and guaranteeing electronic access to quality and in-depth materials, with the range and relevance required by the academic offerings. These materials must:

1. Meet the student needs and enrich academic programs.
2. Satisfy research and teaching needs.
3. Meet all other information needs of the distance community.

Library Catalog

Distance students and faculty may access ANA catalog via Internet from the website of the Virtual Library at SUAGM and the libraries at the other institutions (UT, UNE, and UMET) of Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez.

Access to Database and Electronic Books

Remote access to database and electronic books through Proxy Server. The library provides access to database on a particular subject or subjects related to academic areas, such as Business, Education, Humanities, Technology, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Health Sciences.

Virtual Reference

Virtual Reference services are offered through the following: Telephone, electronic mail, by appointment, on-line tutorials, PDF Guides, and Web page

Document Delivery and interlibrary loans

Format: paper, fax or electronic format, depending on the item

Delivery: Interlibrary services at Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez, regular mail or electronic mail.

BOOKSTORE

At the UAGM-CV Website, the students will be able to access the on-line bookstore services with the available resources, as requested by the academic programs.

INSTITUCIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Norms of Institutional Order

The purpose of this code is to inform students, present or virtual, about behavior norms.

It will be the student's responsibility to know and obey these dispositions and norms of Institutional order in order to maintain a proper learning environment.

Transgressions

Cases related to students disobeying norms, policies, regulations, statutes and rules of conduct will be classified as follows:

- a. **Misdemeanor** - a fault committed by a student which a faculty member, university official or employee considers partially affects institutional order
- b. **Serious offense** – a fault committed by a student which seriously affects institutional order. Serious offenses are, among others:
 - Conduct which damages institutional property
 - Use of offensive language, lack of respect, insult, threats of aggression, attempted or actual aggression to functionaries, professors and/or students
 - Disobedience or refusing to follow instructions given by associates of the Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Campus Virtual
 - Distributing or publishing informative material via electronic mail without the authorization of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs.
 - Distribution of political propaganda

- Any type of conduct which interferes with university activities and teaching activities, namely classes, tutoring, research, among others
- Falsification of official documents such as: grade registers, letters in which permissions are granted, withdrawal or enrollment forms, academic records or other official documents.
- Falsification of authorized signatures
- Violation of institutional regulations, the laws of Puerto Rico, the laws of the United States, or international laws, when accessing Internet pages, electronic mails, among others, for activities not related to academic work.
- Providing international access to the institution's computer system to unauthorized persons, including sharing the student's account number with another person, sharing the account number or password of another student with a faculty member or with a third person; altering or inquiring about the account number or password of other users without authorization, and interrupting access to the computer system.
- Disobedience or violation of probation conditions and/or sanctions imposed according to the procedures established by this Code.
- Any other action contemplated by law regarding cybernetic crimes.

Disciplinary Procedures

The university representative will inform the student about the misdemeanor in violation of the Code and discipline him/her with a reprimand or with corrective measures. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the university representative will notify the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Cases in which there is one or more serious offense, will be handled by the Disciplinary Council, composed by two representatives from the administrative area and two representatives from the academic area. The Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs may initiate a preliminary investigation and a disciplinary process on his own right, upon receipt of a report from a faculty member, officer, employee or student of the institution about any act committed considered a serious offense.

- a. The disciplinary process is initiated when the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs files the case.
- b. The Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs may provisionally suspend any student against whom a formal complaint is filed. Said provisional suspension shall not exceed fifteen (15) working days. A provisional suspension means the immediate prohibition from attending classes and participating in institutional activities.
- c. The Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs will call a meeting of the Disciplinary Council no later than the fifth (5th) working day after the formal complaint was

- filed, to inform members of the content of the same and present the case of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs.
- d. The disciplinary Council will hold an administrative hearing to interview the plaintiff, student, witnesses and present the evidence gathered. The student will have the opportunity to make a personal or cybernetic appearance at the hearing with the purpose of being able to make comments on the evidence presented, offer oral or written proofs, refer witnesses, as well as explain his/her position about the complaint. If the student does not answer the summons and does not present an excuse to justify it, it will be understood that he/she accepts the facts. The investigative process will then continue and the necessary disciplinary decisions will be made.
 - e. The hearing cannot be extended more than fifteen (15) working days. The Disciplinary Committee shall make a determination according to the evidence submitted. In the event that the decision is that there was no offense, the record will be filed and any provisional suspension imposed will be without effect. The Council will inform the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, who will in turn inform the student.
 - f. If the Council determines that there was a serious offense, it shall make a resolution and notify the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs about the corresponding sanction. The Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs will notify the student, in writing and with acknowledgement of receipt, about the determination of the Council and the sanction imposed. The student will be advised about the right to appeal before the Administrative Council within the term established by the Code.
 - g. The Council's written resolution shall contain a brief summary of the facts, the article or clause of the Code in violation, the offense committed, the disciplinary sanction applied, and the signature of the person designated to notify the resolution.

Disciplinary Sanctions

Disciplinary sanctions for a serious offense may be:

1. Written reprimand in which the offense incurred is described in detail
2. Establishment of probation for a definite period of time. This probation period may be revoked, with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs or the Chancellor, if the student did not fulfill the specific conditions established.
3. Restitution-compensation for losses and/or damages incurred by the university
4. Suspension of all or some of the student rights for a fixed term, during the semester in progress
5. Suspension for the entire semester in progress
6. Suspension for the whole academic year in progress or for a longer term
7. More than one of the above mentioned disciplinary sanctions
8. Expulsion from the institution.

If the sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Council is a suspension for the semester in progress, the academic year in progress or permanent, the Council must inform this determination to the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs to which the student belongs, and to the faculty in all of the courses in which the student is enrolled.

A student suspended for the semester in progress or for the academic year in progress, must apply for readmission and must be interviewed by the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs or his/her representative. If during the period in which the student was suspended, he/she has taken courses at another university institution, said courses will not be validated by Universidad Ana G. Méndez-Campus Virtual.

If the offense of the proven facts which led to a suspension for the semester or academic year in progress is repeated, it will be the basis for permanent expulsion.

The decision of the Disciplinary Council will be final and could be appealed by the student before the Administrative Council, by regular mail or electronic mail, within fifteen (15) working days. The student must send a copy of the appeal, during the same period of time, to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, as well as to the Disciplinary Council. The decision of the Administrative Council shall be final, firm and without appeal.

Academic Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy

Academic violations to the Academic Integrity Policy are defined as follows:

- a. Lack of honesty, including fraud and plagiarism, regarding academic work. For example:
 - Allowing that another person does research and writes the student's work or take the student's tests and/or do the student's assigned projects
 - Present another's knowledge or knowledge developed by a third party, as the student's own, even if it is from electronic sources
 - Be in possession of notes, study sheets and other materials during a test or other academic exercise when these are not authorized.
- b. Presenting ideas, research or written work of others, as one's own is considered plagiarism.

Faults related to the Academic Integrity Policy shall be sanctioned according to existing academic regulations.

Enforcement of Code of Conduct

All students must obey this Code. Lack of knowledge of the same cannot be used as an excuse to avoid application of corresponding norms.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The SUAGM policy is to provide students, faculty and personnel, with a responsible learning and working environment. SUAGM does not promote, tolerate, nor allow sexual harassment, since, as with all other types of discrimination, sexual harassment at the work place or in the studies environment, violates this policy as well as other local and Federal dispositions.

Any staff member or student who incurs in sexual harassment conduct in violation of SUAGM norms and policies, as well as Federal and local laws in force, will be liable to disciplinary measures which could result in separation, expulsion or dismissal from the institutions.

To learn more about Sexual Harassment Policy press the following link: [http://humanresources.suagm.edu/PolForm/Politicas/9 Politica de Hostigamiento Sexual/Politica de Hostigamiento Sexual.pdf](http://humanresources.suagm.edu/PolForm/Politicas/9%20Politica%20de%20Hostigamiento%20Sexual/Politica%20de%20Hostigamiento%20Sexual.pdf)

Email

SUAGM provides all of its students, associates and faculty with an electronic mail address to transmit information. It is the user's responsibility to make proper use of the same and avoid incorrect use, in compliance with this policy.

Duties and Responsibilities

SUAGM users with access to computer resources must abide at all times by the laws of the United States of America and Puerto Rico, including but not limited to copyright, laws which regulate communications, and the privacy rights of others. All illegal activity or any other activity which intercepts or interrupts the use of computers or the web is prohibited.

Complaint Procedure

I. INTRODUCTION

The Office of Student Affairs holds an open door policy for the students to express their concerns and situations. This allows the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or his representative for the immediate handling of the situations or complaints related to the offices and services of the Office of Student Affairs. If the situation cannot be addressed at the time, there is an established procedure that allows us to handle the complaints. This procedure applies to all students officially enrolled. The same is established in order to meet the claim or lawsuit when a student believes a crime or a violation of their rights has been committed related to the services, processes or by any member of the institution.

The procedure starts with the filing of a claim or complaint and ends with the determination made in the case.

Cases in which a student presents an improper conduct towards another student, faculty or associate, the process to follow is established in the Students Regulations. The complaints impelled by sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with the policy of Sexual Harassment of the University System Ana G. Méndez.

II. DEFINITIONS

Associate: Any person employed or contracted by the SUAGM, full or part time, which includes; Faculty, Administrative Staff, Managerial, Lecturer, Researchers and any other post that will emerge from the regular or transitory Manuals, Regulations, Statutes and Policies of the SUAGM.

Investigative Committee: people who will lead the investigation and will issue a report to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or some other related personnel with the facts. The committee shall consist of three (3) people of which two (2) shall be representatives of the Office of Student Affairs , one of them being a Counselor, and one (1) a representative of the Assistant Vice President of Human Resources.

Student: any person officially enrolled in the courses within the academic offerings.

Virtual Space: This includes the "Blackboard" platform and all the tools available for the communication with students provided by the institution.

Facilities: areas within the perimeter where the campus is located and the locations in which official activities sponsored by the institution are carried out.

Investigation: procedure initiated to obtain information that clarifies a criminal complaint, and for which an Investigative Committee has been assigned in accordance with the rules and regulations of the institution.

Student Complaint: oral expression and/or written presented by a student before the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or his representative, which presents a situation that affects the plaintiff's rights.

Plaintiff: person who presents the complaint.

Defendant: a person or persons against whom the complaint is presented.

Policy: written expression of the University System Ana G. Méndez and University Ana G. Méndez - Virtual Campus, on a specific topic that informs the standards and guidelines for their guidance, management and solution.

Students Regulations: document which contains the rules of institutional order that apply to the students officially enrolled.

Witness: A person who witnessed the facts contained in the complaint.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Complaints related to partners of the Office of Student Affairs

1. The complaint is submitted to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or his representative within a term of ten (10) business days from the time the situation occurred. The student can file the complaint in a verbal or written form. The complaint should contain a brief drafting of the facts and allegations, the date, place physical or virtual space where they occurred, names of witnesses and the signature of the complainant.
2. If the complaint is presented in a verbal form, the representative of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or his representative shall prepare a record, which includes the name of the complainant, the facts that support the allegations, persons involved, witnesses, date of submission of the complaint and any other relevant data. If the plaintiff refuses to sign, it will be documented in the report by the person who serves the complaint.
3. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or his/her representative may resolve the complaint informally by bringing the parties to dialog with them on the situation presented and find a conciliatory solution.
4. If the complaint is not resolved through the conciliatory solution, the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs will coordinate with the Assistant Vice President for Human Resources of the institution the appointment of the Investigative Committee. The committee is responsible for conducting the interviews with the complainant, defendant and other people involved by offering them equal opportunity to present their facts. It also holds the authority to request documents and information relating to the complaint. You should also review and analyze the evidence to support or refute the facts. If out of the same investigation a possible violation of the institutional rules is revealed, the case will be discussed under the existing regulations.

5. The minutes taken by the Investigative Committee must be signed by the respondents. If the person refuses to sign the statement resulting from the interview, the committee should include a note indicating that the respondent refused to sign the same. The notes pertaining to all the communications between the Committee and the witnesses must be part of the file.
6. The committee shall finalize the investigation and submit to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs a report within a period of not more than fifteen (15) business days after it has been presented.
7. The Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs will evaluate with the Assistant Vice President for Human Resources of the institution the report submitted by the committee and shall deliver its determination which will be notified to the complainant and the respondent. The notification shall be made through written notice and sent by certified mail, return receipt requested no later than ten (10) working days.
8. The situations that continue, will be subject to disciplinary and corrective measures, which will depend on the outcome of the investigation and the provisions contained in the applicable regulations.
9. If the student does not agree with the determination, a written appeal to the Rector can be requested within a term of ten (10) working days after the date the determination has been issued. The letter of appeal must present the reasons for which the student does not agree with the resolution.
10. The Rector shall issue its resolution no later than fifteen (15) working days. The determination shall be notified to the complainant in a written notice through certified mail, return receipt requested. The Rector's decision will be final and unappealable.

B. Complaints related to Faculty

If a student considers his rights have been affected by a member of the faculty, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or his representative, he shall refer the situation either

verbally or in writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs or his representative to which the professor belongs.

C. Complaints related to Associates in other administrative areas

If the student presents a complaint against an associate of another administrative area, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or his representative shall report the same in writing to the Assistant Vice President for Human Resources of the Institution in order for them to proceed with the corresponding investigation.

IV. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The form for the Filing of the Complaints is available in the student portal MiUAGM under the section of student life. The associate that receives the form immediately shall refer the complaint to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or its representative.
2. The committee must keep the information confidential and must act in an objective and impartial manner. It is important to ensure that the witnesses and the complainant do not become victims of reprisals because of the complaint that has been filed and be part of the investigation process.
3. If the complainant decides not to participate in the investigation or decides to withdraw from the same, the investigative process will continue until it finalizes. The lack of interest of the plaintiff will be considered, as well as the available evidence.
4. The investigative process is informal and administrative. Therefore, the parties will not be allowed to be represented by lawyers or legal representatives.
5. The Committee shall take minutes of its meetings and shall keep a record of all the information obtained during the investigation and the decisions taken. This shall be a separate one from the personnel file.
6. When the collected evidence does not allow a disciplinary action to be imposed, preventive measures will be taken.
7. If the evidence collected determines any disciplinary action to be taken, a copy of the final determination shall be included in the associate's file.
8. The procedure for filing complaints and appeals is subject to the working days set in the same.

V. FORMS

- A. [Complainant's Report](#)
- B. [Defendant's Report](#)

NON DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Ana G. Méndez University System does not exclude participation, or deny benefits or discriminate against any person because of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, social status, political affiliation, political ideas or religious or being a victim or be perceived as a victim of domestic violence, sexual or stalking aggression or being military, ex-military, serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the United States or hold veteran status or any other category protected by law.