



BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO

[Seal: University of Puerto Rico • 1903]

CERTIFICATION NUMBER 55  
2016-2017

I, Gloria Butrón Castelli, Secretary of the Board of Governors of the University of Puerto Rico, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT:

The Board of Governors, in its regular meeting on December 19, 2016, considered the recommendation presented by the Acting President of the University of Puerto Rico and, with the endorsement of the Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee, has approved the following:

***AMENDMENTS TO THE POLICY AND RULES OF ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS, adopted by Certification Number 111 (2013-2014).***

**The amendments are incorporated herein as part of this Certification.**

**Upon the effective date of this Policy, any other regulation, certification, rule, procedure, circular, or provision in force at the System or unit level or in conflict with or contrary to this Policy shall be thereby repealed.**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I issue the present Certification, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, today, December 23, 2016.



[Signature Gloria Butrón Castelli]  
Gloria Butrón Castelli  
Secretary

[Seal: University of Puerto Rico • 1903]



POLICY AND RULES OF ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN  
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

Table of Contents

<b>I.</b>	Title .....	2
<b>II.</b>	Statement of Purpose .....	2
<b>III.</b>	Application and Scope .....	2
<b>IV.</b>	Definitions .....	3
<b>V.</b>	Rules of Eligibility for Participating in Financial Aid Programs .....	7
<b>VI.</b>	Rules for Reviewing Eligibility to Participate in Financial Aid Programs and for Appealing Decisions Rendered by the Institutional Reviewing Committee .....	11
<b>VII.</b>	Veteran Students.....	13
<b>VIII.</b>	Rules and Procedures; Amendments; Interpretation; Separability.....	13
<b>IX.</b>	Non-Discrimination.....	13
<b>X.</b>	Repeal.....	13
<b>IX.</b>	Effectiveness.....	14



## **POLICY AND RULES OF ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS**

### **I. Title**

These policy and rules shall be known as the Policy and Rules of Academic Eligibility for Participation in University of Puerto Rico Financial Aid Programs.

### **II. Statement of Purpose**

The provisions contained herein constitute the institutional policy of the University of Puerto Rico, which defines the academic eligibility of its **undergraduate and graduate** students to participate in Financial Aid Programs at the University. The academic progress requirements described in this policy are independent from the minimum requirements each college or program may define for the purposes of continuing with subsequent courses or experiences within the curriculum. The purpose of these provisions is to ensure the best possible use of financial aid programs and encourage students who participate in said programs to achieve a suitable academic progress directed toward the completion of a degree, in accordance with the provisions for which the student may qualify under his or her academic program. The revision of this policy responds to the need to incorporate changes in line with the new rules and regulations for Title IV Programs and other programs, as well as the academic progress indices established by the units.

In the case of **graduate students**, these provisions only apply to federal student loans and other federally funded financial aid programs. These provisions do not apply to the Formative Academic Experience Programs (*Programa de Experiencia Académica Formativa*) nor to competitive grant programs, such as the Merit-Based Scholarship (*Becas por Mérito*), Thesis, Dissertation of Equivalent Project Scholarships (*Becas de Disertación, Tesis o Proyecto Equivalente*), Grants to Support Research and Professional Development of Graduate Students (*Becas para el Apoyo a la Investigación y Desarrollo Profesional de los Estudiantes Graduados*), Doctoral Grants (*Becas Doctorales*), among others.

### **III. Application and Scope**

- A.** These rules are applicable to University of Puerto Rico **undergraduate and graduate** students for the aforementioned purposes. These do not supersede any other rule or institutional policy related to the academic achievement of students or with the maximum timeframe in which to complete a degree. This policy does not affect the academic requirements established by academic programs or accrediting agencies.
- B.** In the specific case of **undergraduate students**, these rules shall be applicable for determining student participation in Title IV federal financial aid programs and in any other type of financial aid offered at the University of Puerto Rico in any of its institutional units. Furthermore, the determination of eligibility is subject to the financial needs of the student, the availability of funds, and the rules established by the United States Department of Education regarding the use of funds to cover the educational costs and the Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU).



- C. In the specific case of **graduate students**, these rules shall be applicable to all students enrolled in a Master's or doctoral degree program or a graduate-level certification, regardless of whether they previously received financial aid or not. These rules are applicable to new students, full-time or part-time active students, and those who paused their studies. Medical students enrolled in internships or medical residency programs are not eligible for federal financial aid programs. However, this restriction does not apply to Dental Medicine internship students, who must comply with academic progress rules to maintain financial aid eligibility.

#### IV. Definitions

##### A. Financial Aid Programs

All programs, regardless of the source of funding, intended to aid financially **undergraduate and graduate students** at the University in covering educational costs. These include, but are not limited to, federal scholarships, federal work-study program, loans, and other financial aid provided at the Institution.

##### B. Academic Year

Annual academic period, for which the beginning and ending dates of which are established by each institutional unit in coordination with central university authorities. The academic period does not include the summer term, unless the official curriculum approved by the university authorities establishes otherwise.

##### C. Internal Reclassification

Process by which an **undergraduate student** changes academic program within the same institutional unit in which he or she is enrolled. For an **undergraduate student**, only validated credits shall be considered, as long as they do not exceed 150 percent (150%) of the total amount of credits required for financial aid eligibility. In the case of **graduate students**, the rules in force at the student's unit shall apply.

##### D. Transfer between Units

Process by which an **undergraduate student** who is not enrolled in an articulated transfer program permanently moves from one institutional unit to another within the UPR system to continue his or her studies. **Not applicable to graduate students.**

##### E. Articulated Transfer

Process by which an **undergraduate student** who is classified under an articulated transfer program at an institutional unit within the University of Puerto Rico permanently moves to another unit within the UPR system, according to the terms stipulated in the articulated transfer agreement between both units. **Not applicable to graduate students.**

##### F. Transfer



Process by which an **undergraduate student** from another licensed or accredited institution of higher learning, duly recognized by the appropriate regulatory authority, is admitted to a unit within the University of Puerto Rico System to continue his or her studies. In the case of **graduate students**, the rules in force at the student's unit shall apply.

#### **G. Degree-Granting Academic Program**

**Undergraduate or graduate** curriculum approved by the appropriate University or regulatory authorities under which a student is registered for the purposes of classification in a unit within the UPR system, in order to obtain a university degree or certification. Minor Programs, Concurrent or Sequential Major Programs, or a Professional Certification duly approved by current University regulations shall be considered part of a degree-granting program when the student has been formally admitted therein.

#### **H. Review of Eligibility to Participate in Financial Aid Programs**

Process through which **undergraduate and graduate students** who have lost eligibility to participate in financial aid programs as a result of noncompliance with satisfactory academic progress criteria may petition the Dean of Students of his or her unit to refer the matter before the Institutional Financial Aid Eligibility Reviewing Committee for review.

A maximum of three (3) petitions for review are permitted per student, and only a fourth petition shall be accepted if extenuating or special circumstances are present (providing evidence), including, but not limited to, serious illness or injury, sudden functional disability, serious illness or death of an immediate family member up to the fourth degree of consanguinity, or other similar circumstances.

The Dean of Students shall be responsible for keeping record of the amount of times a student presents a petition for review. The student shall have ten calendar days after the first day of class to submit his or her petition for review. (The date must be indicated in the Academic Calendar for each unit).

#### **I. Institutional Financial Aid Eligibility Reviewing Committee**

Committee appointed by the Dean of Students (or the Dean of Graduate Studies, in the case of graduate students) of the unit to examine petitions for review from students who have lost academic eligibility to participate in financial aid programs and who believe that extenuating or special circumstances were present. No member of the Financial Aid Office or the Registrar's Office shall be a member of the Committee. The recommended composition of the Committee is as follows: a representative from the Office of the Dean of Academic Affairs, a Medical Services representative, a licensed Clinical Psychologist or Professional Counselor (for the main purpose of consultation), and any other member the Dean of Students considers appropriate. The Department Chair, or his or her representative, and Program Area Coordinators (in the case of graduate students), in coordination with the Institutional Reviewing



Committee, shall be responsible for preparing the academic plan together with the student and monitoring compliance.

#### **J. Appeal**

Process through which undergraduate and graduate students whose eligibility to participate in financial aid programs has been denied by the Institutional Reviewing Committee may appeal the decision to the appropriate appellate authorities in the unit or in the System, pursuant to this Policy and to CES Certification No. 138 (1981-1982), as amended.

#### **K. Remedial Courses**

Courses to improve an undergraduate or graduate student's academic performance in a particular subject and which may form part of the academic plan for a student on financial aid probation. Remedial courses shall be defined by the college or program, considering the field of study, and approved by the Department Chair. These courses shall be covered by financial aid, provided they correspond to the same level of studies, are calculated in credits or contact hours, and are evaluated by quantitative assessment (by letter grade).

#### **L. Preparatory Courses or Transitional Studies**

Set of courses that cover the minimum entry or previous academic requirements recognized by the field of study that enable a **graduate student** to continue studies toward the Master's degree or Doctorate to which he or she has been admitted on a conditional basis. The student must pass the preparatory courses indicated by the college or program in order to continue with other courses in the graduate curriculum to which he or she was admitted on a conditional basis.

#### **M. Financial Aid Probation Status**

Classification granted to a student by the Reviewing Committee as a result of a successful review process. This should not be confused with academic probation, which may result in academic suspension.

#### **N. Academic Plan to Maintain Financial Aid Eligibility**

The academic plan indicates the courses a student must approve and the required minimum GPA improvement that must be met in order for financial aid probation to be lifted. The purpose of the academic plan is to enable the student on probation to achieve the academic progress required to recover regular eligibility to financial aid programs.

An academic plan shall be prepared for all students who have been placed on financial aid probation for not meeting the minimum GPA required for retention. To calculate the minimum GPA improvement required within the academic plan, said minimum



GPA (as established per year of study) is subtracted from the student's cumulative GPA. The result is divided by two.

(Average required – Cumulative GPA)  $\div$  2 = Required minimum GPA improvement for each term within the academic plan.

(For programs that run quarterly or by trimester, the sum shall be divided by 3).

The academic plan is prepared during the summer, before the student confirms enrollment, in order for him or her to enroll in courses that match the academic plan that has been designed.

The Department Chair or his or her representative, together with the Program Area Coordinators (in the case of graduate students) and the Institutional Reviewing Committee, shall be responsible for preparing the academic plan in coordination with the student. The academic plan shall be signed both by the student and the Department Chair. The Department Chair or the Academic Advisor shall be responsible for monitoring compliance.

All students on probation shall have a year to achieve satisfactory academic progress. However, the Reviewing Committee shall evaluate academic progress at the end of each academic term to verify compliance with the academic plan. Failure to comply with the academic plan in said time shall result in the student's loss of eligibility and must reapply. An agreement form is included for students who do not show academic progress or failing to approve the required percent of attempted credits, but have met or exceeded the minimum required GPA. See appendix, Academic Plan and Agreement Form.

## **O. Satisfactory Academic Progress for the Purposes of Financial Aid**

### **a. Criteria for undergraduate students**

An undergraduate student has satisfactory academic progress when he or she meets the minimum GPA required by the unit for retention and the minimum percent of credits attempted and approved, together with the mathematical requirement of being able to complete the degree within the 150 percent (150%) limit. After the sixth year, the student shall no longer be eligible to receive the Pell Grant. However, the student may apply for other programs, such as the **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant** (FSEOG) and federal student loans.

First-year **undergraduate students** must approve 57 percent (57%) of attempted credits during the first academic year. Undergraduate students from second-year onward must approve 67 percent (67%) of attempted credits during the academic year prior to evaluation. The resulting calculation shall be rounded down to the next integer.

### **b. Criteria for graduate students**



A graduate student has satisfactory academic progress when he or she maintains the minimum GPA required by the unit; maintains his or her status as a full-time or part-time regular student; is currently studying within the given timeframe established for completing the degree; and has completed the courses, academic activities or assignments required within the stages established by the program or school for completing the degree. The criteria for projecting whether the student could complete his or her studies within the last year allowed shall not apply. In extraordinary cases, when the student exceeds the maximum timeframe for completing the degree, he or she may request an extension, pursuant to the rules established by the program or unit, up to two (2) years. During those two years, the student may receive financial aid benefits as stipulated herein.

**c. Criteria for Exchange Students**

Students participating in an Exchange Program shall be eligible for financial aid provided that the student is within the timeframe established for completing the degree and has approved the required courses and essential or significant academic work specified for that stage of the student's program of study. Students participating in an Exchange Program shall be granted conditional academic progress status (or automatic provisional probation) pending the receipt of the student's grades from the foreign institution offering the program of study previously approved by the UPR Department Chair. Once grades are received, the conditional academic progress status shall be removed if the student meets the required academic progress. Otherwise, the student must return the money received to the institution.

**P. Non-Satisfactory Academic Progress for the Purposes of Financial Aid**

An **undergraduate or graduate student** is considered to have non-satisfactory academic progress for the purposes of financial aid when the student has failed to meet any of the requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress established herein for his or her level.

**Q. Financial Aid Probation**

Period of one year granted as a result of a successful review process. The Dean of Students shall notify the Registrar when a decision favorable to the student who has been placed on financial aid probation has been emitted. The unit Registrar shall update the student's status in the student information system.

**V. Rules of Eligibility for Participating in Financial Aid Programs**

Academic eligibility for participation in financial aid programs at the University of Puerto Rico shall be determined according to the following rules:

**A. Classification in a Degree-Granting Program (undergraduate and graduate students)**





In order to participate in financial aid programs, students must be officially classified in a degree-granting academic program. In the case of graduate students, classification includes admissions that are conditioned to the approval of a set of courses (preparatory or transitional) in order to continue studies in the program to which he or she was admitted. Financial aid shall cover a maximum of 30 preparatory course credits. It is necessary that the student be admitted to a graduate program (even if only on a conditional basis).

**B. Grade-Point Average (GPA) for the Purposes of Financial Aid (undergraduate and graduate students)**

To achieve academic eligibility, students must attain a minimum cumulative GPA required for retention at the program or unit.

**C. Academic Progress for the Purposes of Financial Aid (undergraduate and graduate students)**

Students must meet the criteria established under the definition of **[Satisfactory Academic Progress for the Purposes of Financial Aid (Section IV. O. a, b and c)]**.

**D. Evaluating Academic Progress for the Purposes of Financial Aid (undergraduate and graduate students)**

All students on probation shall have a year to achieve satisfactory academic progress. However, the Reviewing Committee shall evaluate academic progress at the end of each academic term to verify compliance with the academic plan. Failure to comply with the academic plan in said time shall result in the student's loss of eligibility for financial aid and must reapply. An agreement form is included for students who do not show academic progress for failing to approve the required percent of attempted credits, but have met or exceeded the minimum required GPA. See appendix, Academic Plan and Agreement Form.

When evaluating academic progress for the purposes of financial aid for University of Puerto Rico undergraduate and graduate students, the following criteria shall be considered (as applicable):

**1. Maximum Amount of Credits that May Be Attempted with Financial Aid Eligibility (undergraduate students)**

An undergraduate student may attempt up to 150 percent (150%) of the credits required by his or her academic program. The institution shall ensure that the student completes his or her degree without exceeding this limit. The institution shall notify the student through a warning when the 150 percent (150%) limit is approaching, but may allow the student to receive financial aid during the last possible year within the 150 percent (150%) limit under certain conditions established hereinbelow. The first warning shall be sent when the student reaches 100% of the credits required by the academic program. The second warning shall be sent when the student reaches 125% of the credits required by the academic program.



**2. Transfers, Transfers between Units, and Internal Reclassifications (undergraduate students)**

In the case of students who are reclassified from another institutional unit, from within the same unit, through a transfer from another licensed or accredited institution of higher education, only validated credits shall be considered toward the 150 percent (150%) credit maximum allowed herein or toward the maximum timeframe permitted for a graduate student to complete a degree.

The University of Puerto Rico is responsible for conducting all processes of validation or equivalency prior to enrolling transfer students so that the margin of credits pertaining to financial aid for each student is known beforehand.

For the purposes of financial aid, courses approved at the institution or unit of origin shall be analyzed when evaluating a student's file to accredit the most amount of courses possible as part of the academic program curriculum to which the student was admitted.

**3. Articulated Transfers (undergraduate students)**

Satisfactory academic progress for undergraduate students participating in articulated transfer programs shall follow the same GPA progression and percentages previously indicated herein. The student must meet the minimum general GPA for retention to the program of study, as established for each unit. However, the evaluation of the 150 percent (150%) requirement shall be calculated based on the assigned program curriculum at the unit the student was first enrolled.

**4. Readmission (undergraduate and graduate students)**

A student who is readmitted to a college or program in which he or she had previously been evaluated for the purposes of financial aid shall be evaluated pursuant to the rules in force at the moment of readmission. The same criteria for reclassification established hereinabove shall apply to all students who are readmitted to a new college or program.

**5. Academic Amnesty (undergraduate students)**

Consideration of any petition or action based on GPA and equivalent years of study for a student who has been granted academic amnesty (financial aid, reclassification, transfer, graduation, admission to graduate studies) shall be based on the GPA calculated after academic amnesty, pursuant to Board of Governors Certification No. 27 (2008-2009).

**6. Curriculum Revision (undergraduate and graduate students)**

Curriculum revisions are not applied retroactively. Requisites established in a revised curriculum shall only apply to students admitted after the effective date of the revision. However, students who willingly choose to fall under the revised



curriculum instead of the curriculum in force at the time of his or her admission shall be considered reclassified.

#### **7. Drops and Incompletes (undergraduate and graduate students)**

For the purposes of determining academic eligibility, all courses with a provisional grade of incomplete (I) or with an A, B, C, or D shall be considered approved. Courses graded an IF or dropped courses (W) shall be considered attempted and not approved. Similarly, courses graded with an F shall be considered attempted and not approved. Dropped courses shall not be used to calculate the GPA.

#### **8. Summer-Term Credits at Institutional Units Where the Summer Term Is Not Part of the Regular Academic Year (undergraduate and graduate students)**

A student may address deficiencies in his or her cumulative GPA by approving credits approved during the current academic year, which may qualify the student for financial aid for the following academic year.

Students also may improve the percent of approved credits during summer terms. All students enrolled in summer courses, once finished, may request the Registrar to reevaluate his or her academic progress. If the student demonstrates compliance with eligibility criteria for participating in financial aid programs, he or she shall not be required to petition for review.

#### **9. Repeated Courses (undergraduate and graduate students)**

For the purposes of receiving financial aid benefits, an **undergraduate student** may repeat courses pursuant to the current regulations, provided the student does not exceed 150 percent (150%) of the total amount of credits required to complete the desired degree. There is no limit to the amount of times a student may repeat a course, as long as the student has not passed the course previously. However, after a third attempt, the student must demonstrate that he or she has requested and is receiving assistance from a professional, that he or she has taken remedial courses as approved by the Department Chair or his or her representative, or has received some other documented form of assistance to improve performance.

Approved courses may be repeated only once. According to the Federal Aid Student Handbook (34 CFR 668.2(b)), an approved course is a course in which the student has obtained a grade higher than an F. Any additional course repetition, if approved by the Department Chair or his or her representative, shall be paid for directly by the student.

In the case of **graduate students**, repeated courses, workshops, seminars, and laboratories in which the student obtained a grade of C or less or an NP shall be considered when calculating the GPA. Graduate students may repeat said courses pursuant to the graduate studies policy for the unit.

#### **10. Class Attendance**



Class attendance at the University of Puerto Rico is mandatory. Absences without due substantiated grounds may affect a student's participation in financial aid programs, pursuant to the rules applicable to the course delivery method and the policies applicable to each institutional unit.

## **VI. Procedure for Reviewing Eligibility to Participate in Financial Aid Programs and Appealing Decisions Rendered by the Institutional Reviewing Committee**

### **A. Procedure for Reviewing Eligibility to Participate in Financial Aid Programs**

Undergraduate and graduate students who do not meet the eligibility criteria established herein shall receive a written notice of non-satisfactory academic progress for the purposes of financial aid eligibility from the institutional unit Registrar's Office. Students who have been placed on probation or have lost eligibility to receive financial aid under these rules may file a petition for review before the Dean of Students of the corresponding unit. **Graduate students** shall petition for review before the Dean or Chair of Graduate Studies. Petitions shall be referred to the Reviewing Committee.

If the Reviewing Committee determines that the undergraduate student cannot complete the amount of credits required by his or her academic program within 150% of the established credits, but he or she meets the minimum required GPA and has consistently approved 67% of the credits attempted each year, the student shall be placed on probation and may continue receiving financial aid during the time remaining within the 150%, provided that he or she meets the conditions indicated herein. If the student has already utilized 150% of the credits, he or she in no way shall be eligible to participate in financial aid programs, not even through the review process. If the Reviewing Committee determines that the student can achieve satisfactory academic progress at the end of the academic term (semester, quarter, trimester, or other), the Committee shall recommend the Dean of Students to authorize placing the student on probation. Notwithstanding, if the Committee determines in its evaluation that the student will require more than one term to achieve academic progress, the recommendation for probation shall be accompanied by an academic plan, as provided herein, to enable progress within the period established by the Committee based on its analysis.

**Graduate students** who do not meet the academic progress and retention requirements established by the program shall be placed on probation for a maximum of two consecutive academic semesters and must petition the Dean or Chair of Graduate Studies of the unit to review eligibility to participate in financial aid programs. However, during the two semesters of probation, the graduate student shall continue to be eligible for financial aid at the University of Puerto Rico, as established herein, provided the student maintains a minimum GPA of 2.0. In so doing, graduate students are permitted to take the necessary measures to raise his or her GPA to reach the minimum for retention (including, but not limited to, remedial courses, repeating courses, etc.). Concerning enrollment in remedial courses, eligibility is maintained only if courses are equivalent in regards to academic level, amount of credit or contact hours and are evaluated with a letter grade. At the end of the probation period, if the student does not meet the criteria for retention, the student shall be dropped from the



graduate school or program and shall no longer be eligible for applicable financial aid programs established herein.

Students on probation may benefit from financial aid programs. At the end of the probation period, students who comply with the rules for academic eligibility may continue to participate in financial aid programs. If upon conclusion of the established probation period the student has achieved satisfactory academic progress, he or she shall lose eligibility to participate in financial aid programs.

#### **B. Procedure for Appealing the Decision Rendered by the Institutional Reviewing Committee**

Students who do not succeed in maintaining financial aid eligibility through the regular review process or probation (with or without an academic plan) and are excluded from financial aid programs may appeal the decision before the Institutional Reviewing Committee pursuant to the following procedures:

If the Committee decides the student is not eligible to participate in financial aid programs at the end of the review process, the student may request an interview with the Dean of Students (or, in the case of graduate students, the Dean of Chair of Graduate Studies) of the corresponding unit, who shall render a decision regarding the petition for review within a period of 30 days. The student shall be notified in writing of the decision rendered by the Dean or Chair of Students (or, in the case of graduate students, the Dean of Graduate Studies) at the address and email on file at the Financial Aid Office. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the Financial Aid Office and the Registrar's Office for the corresponding action, where it shall be included to the student's file. The file shall be kept under the charge of the Office of the Dean of Students during the review process. Once the review process has finished, the Office of the Dean of Students shall remit the file to the Financial Aid Office. However, all medical evidence submitted during the review process shall be sent to and filed at the Medical Services Office. All medical documentation shall be handled pursuant to the provisions on confidentiality established in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

If the Committee decides the student is not eligible to participate in financial aid programs at the end of the review process, the student may appeal the decision before the Chancellor of the institutional unit within ten working days of the postmark date on the notice of the Committee's decision. If the student is not satisfied with the Chancellor's decision, the student may file an appeal before the President and the Board of Governors, respectively, within the time period established by Certification No. 138 (1981-1982), approved by the former Council on Higher Education, as amended, governing administrative appellate procedures.

During the appeal process, the student must pay tuition or request an extension pursuant to the procedures established by the corresponding institutional unit for such matters. If the student receives a favorable decision on appeal, he or she shall be reimbursed the appropriate amount.

### **VII. Veteran Students**



- A. The requirements therein established shall apply to students at the University of Puerto Rico who are veterans of the United States Armed Forces, as defined by the United States Veterans Administration, and receive financial aid benefits by way of the Montgomery G.I. Veteran students shall receive benefits up to a maximum of 36 months, regardless of whether he or she is enrolled in an associate degree, undergraduate degree or Master's degree program.
- [B.] Notwithstanding, these students shall have the right to choose to apply concurrently for financial aid under Title IV programs. Once their corresponding benefits under the Montgomery G.I. Bill are exhausted, they may continue to receive benefits under Title IV financial aid programs until exhausting the 150 percent (150%) maximum time limit permitted pursuant to the rules established by the United States Department of Education.

### **VIII. Guidelines and Procedures; Amendments; Interpretation; Separability**

- A. The President of the University, or his or her authorized representative, may issue or promulgate the necessary guidelines or procedures or amend the current ones in order to implement the provisions of the policy and rules herein established, facilitate compliance with its provisions and ensure its uniform implementation and application.
- B. The Board of Governors, *motu proprio*, or by request of the President of the University, may amend this policy and its rules.
- C. The President of the University of Puerto Rico shall interpret any controversy relating to the content of this policy and its rules or any unforeseen situation not provided for herein.
- D. The provisions of this institutional policy are separable from each other. The invalidity of one or more sections or subdivisions shall not affect the remaining provisions that may be applied independently of those declared null and void.

### **IX. Non-Discrimination**

The University of Puerto Rico Policy against Discrimination, approved by Board of Trustees Certification No. 58 (2004-2005), is made extensive to the administration, implementation, and application of these rules, as well as to all duties and activities of the institution, such as financial aid.

### **X. Repeal**

Upon the effective date of this policy, Board of Governors Certification No. 111 (2013-2014) shall be repealed, as well as any other regulation, certification, rule, procedure, circular, or provision in conflict or contrary to this policy.

### **XI. Effectiveness**

This Policy shall take effect immediately upon approval by the Board of Governors.