

September 2, 2010

R-1011-05
CHANCELLORS



José Ramón de la Torre

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN – NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



On February 2010, the National Science Foundation (NSF) performed a site visit to the University of Puerto Rico's Central Administration, Resource Center for Science and Engineering (RCSE) and UPR's Mayagüez Campus Research and Development Center. The Office of the Vice President for Research and Technology coordinated the site visit and provided NSF staff with documentation, as well as engaged in discussions to address their concerns and questions. On May 24, 2010, we received a letter from NSF with recommendations arising from their visit and requesting a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to be submitted within 30 days.

The UPR organized a small group of University officials that traveled to NSF to present and discuss with them a preliminary draft of the CAP. Dr. Hector Santiago, former Vice President for Research and Technology, and a task force that he designated, prepared a final CAP with specific timelines.

The National Science Foundation has made approval of future NSF awards through the UPR System contingent to the full implementation of the CAP within the stipulated timeline. They are now including a paragraph in all grant awards to the UPR System that reads as follows: *"The University of Puerto Rico submitted a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to NSF on July 9, 2010 to address the issues identified during a February 2010 Award Monitoring and Business Assistance visit. NSF is currently evaluating that CAP and will work with the awardee to finalize the negotiation of appropriate corrective actions and milestone dates. The Foundation will monitor both the progress made under the award, as well as progress in meeting milestones for corrective actions under the CAP. Failure to demonstrate sufficient progress may result in NSF taking administrative action, including reducing, suspending or terminating the award."*

From this statement, it is evident that if the UPR System does not comply with the CAP and its timeline, we risk the loss of millions of dollars in NSF funds. The UPR cannot afford to lose NSF funds under the present financial conditions of the University. Following the recommendation made by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Technology, I am officially designating the following officials to the **CAP Task Force**, representing the campuses with the largest external funding levels, to implement the CAP and assure that UPR does not lose federal funds:

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- Dr. Vivian Febo, Associate Vice President of Research and Technology
- Dr. Héctor Santiago, Professor of Agricultural Sciences of the Mayagüez Campus and former Vice President for Research and Technology
- Dr. Manuel Gómez, Professor of Physics and Director of the Resource Center for Science and Engineering, Río Piedras Campus
- Dr. Brad Weiner, Professor of Chemistry and Dean of the College of Natural Sciences, Río Piedras Campus
- Mr. Norberto Pérez, Director, Office of Sponsored Programs, Medical Sciences Campus
- Dr. Arturo Hernández, Research Professor of Chemical Engineering, Mayagüez Campus
- Ms. María Vargas, Associate Director, Resource Center for Science and Engineering

The Task Force has my full support to implement the CAP within the allotted time period. I am asking all the Chancellors to provide all the support and assistance that the Task Force requests in fulfilling their assignment.

I will provide time at the next Chancellors Meeting to be held on September 15 for the Task Force to explain the nature of their task and request your full collaboration.

I want to emphasize that the Task Force has a tight schedule that they need to comply with in order to keep the University of Puerto Rico's well gained reputation with the National Science Foundation. The Foundation is one of our major funders of science and technology, education, and innovation activities at UPR.