

# 2017-2022 Institutional Strategic Plan: Transformation And Innovation

Vice-presidency for Institutional  
Planning and Development  
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**ATENAS  
COLLEGE**  
"EDUCANDO PARA EL FUTURO"

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## **Introduction**

Atenas College was founded on October 7, 1996 in Manatí, which gave way to the creation of a new institution for training of the professionals needed by the country to advance economy and foster opportunities for the young of the region with few options for studies. With initiative and leadership Mrs. María L. Hernández Núñez, nurse by profession and visionary woman, met with a group of educators and shared her desire for sharing their knowledge and experience. After presenting such desire, the ideas were spun on creating a new institution that would provide access to education, until then limited to high school graduates.

The idea was taking shape and structure until all necessary requirements were met for authorization from the Puerto Rico Council of Education. It was a time of satisfaction, efforts, and work until achieving authorization, without reservations, on February 3, 1997 to open Atenas College's doors as a technical level, post-secondary, non-university educational institution.

The group of educators accepted the honorable mission of providing excellence education for the preparation of citizens through a human academic offer in an environment propitious for a scientific, ethical, reflective formation and a successful performance in the occupational world.

During 1997, Atenas College began its academic offering with 13 technical programs: Respiratory Care Technician, Geriatrics Assistant, Electrocardiography Technician, Operating Room Technician, Practical Nursing, Medical Office Assistant, Computer Operator, Phlebotomy Technician, Executive Secretary, Medical Record Technician, Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic, Basic Emergency Medical Technician (assistant), and Dining and Restaurant Technical Services.

Later, on February 1998, a curricular revision was carried out to modify courses and adjust them to emergent needs that claimed more and better professional services.

Two years later a new millennium begins, year 2000, and with this new era the Accrediting Commission for Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC), an institution recognized by the US Department of Education, successfully accredits the institution and the new programs proposed: Medical Insurance Billing Technician, Cardiovascular Technician, Pharmacy Assistant, and Accounting Assistant.

In 2003, Atenas College establishes a satellite unit in Morovis, Puerto Rico, to meet the need to offer health-related programs. The following programs were offered at this unit: Pharmacy Technician, Administrative Assistant, Practical Nursing, and Clinical Sonography Technician.

Atenas College continues gaining credibility and trust from the general community, which increases its commitment and need to continue growing to meet the academic and labor demand. This is why, in 2006 the environment and the need to create the Degree Division was favored. This path was arduous, energetic, and of great responsibility. It was endorsed by the Board of Directors and the Advisory Committee. After the Council on Higher Education authorized and granted, without reservations, the license to operate as a private institution of higher education, the process of student recruitment began for the Associate and Bachelor Degrees in Nursing Science.

Since then, Atenas College has continued its growth and development through the creation of courses and programs offered in various modalities, focused on learning and a competencies-based education, which contributes to the success of graduates on the various settings where they perform.

Atenas College's commitment led the Board of Directors to approve the creation of the first Simulated Hospital in Puerto Rico, where students and professionals of various health-related fields have the opportunity to refine their knowledge and skills in patient management and family, social, and environmental health conditions.

Atenas College students are privileged with a great opportunity to carry out their initial practice in a hospital setting, thus enabling them to properly prepare and provide the best services to the community; in addition to acquiring self-confidence and performing excellent work in the real practice.

Since its beginnings, the institution has been successful; maintaining accreditation status and a wide, dynamic, and diverse enrollment. In 1997, enrollment began with 75 students while currently we maintain an active enrollment of 1200 students.

All the trajectory related herein led Atenas College to be recognized as "School of Distinction" in 2006 and 2010 by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC), a national accrediting agency recognized by the US Government.

Atenas College has received many recognitions thanks to its performance, commitment, and to the fact that its services and reason to be has always been focused in the student. Some distinctions include the following:

In 2009, Atenas College became the first institution in Puerto Rico to adopt the simulation strategy in the teaching process through the Simulation and Clinical Learning Center (Simulated Hospital).

In 2010, Atenas College received a special recognition from Laerdal Medical for being pioneers in implementing the clinical simulation concept in Puerto Rico.

In May 2010, the institution received authorization from the Puerto Rico Council of Education and the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges” (ACCSC) o offer new associate and bachelor degree programs in Radiological Technology.

In August 2011, the Puerto Rico Council of Education authorized the offering of seven new programs of associate degree level: Physical Therapy, Science of Respiratory Care, Diagnostic Sonographic Technology, Technology of Health Information Management, Office Systems Administration with Coding and Medical Billing, Peripheral-vascular Sonographic Technology, and Diagnostic Echocardiographic Technology.

During 2012, the Board of Directors decided to cease operations in the Morovis satellite unite due to the great demand in the main campus in Manatí, Puerto Rico. The programs had great demands which enable an academic offering at the associate and bachelor degree level. The administration and the board of Directors took the initiative of aiming all efforts to the main campus.

In December 2012, the ACCSC, authorized the following associate degree programs: Physical Therapy, Science of Respiratory Care, Diagnostic Sonographic Technology, and Technology of Health Information Management. Later in August 2013, the ACCSC authorized two new associate degree programs: Peripheral-vascular Sonographic Technology, and Diagnostic Echocardiographic Technology. In March 2014, the ACCSC authorized the associate degree program in Office System Administration with Coding and Medical Billing.

In October 2013, the Operating Room, Adult ICU, Pediatrics and Neonatal ICU, and Physical Therapy units were integrated to the Simulation and Clinical Learning Center.

In 2015, once again the ACCSC recognized the education provided by Atenas College and granted re-accreditation. During this year in May, the ACCSC approved Distance Education courses for the Science in Radiological Imaging with major in Computerized Tomography, Magnetic Resonance, and Cardiovascular/Peripheral-vascular System.

This same year, the Puerto Rico Council of Education and the ACCSC approved the change of name of the associate degree program in Physical Therapy to Physical Therapist Assistant, thus meeting with the regulations of the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE).

In May 2016, Atenas College received authorization from the Puerto Rico Council of Education and the ACCSC to offer the Electrocardiography and Telemetry Technician program.

Certainly, 2016 and 2017 were years of great triumphs for the institution in obtaining candidacy status from various agencies, both institutional and programmatic. However, these have not been the only achievements since on July 24, 2018, the *Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education* (CAPTE) granted accreditation status to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

Likewise, in December 2017, the ACCSC approved Distance Education courses for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing. In addition, the institution, with its vanguard vision, submitted the application for institutional accreditation to an even greater agency, the *Middle States Commission on Higher Education* (MSCHE). In March 2019 Atenas College was accredited by that agency.

Currently, Atenas College has an academic offering of fourteen (14) academic programs, which are distributed into three (3) bachelor degree level programs; nine (9) associate degree level programs; and two (2) technical certificate programs. Atenas College continues creating new opportunities for the community, which is why it is currently designing various programs while others are in the process for approval to the offered in the near future.

## **Strategic planning process**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century has brought profound challenges to nature, values, and controls of higher education in the United States of America, and in Puerto Rico and Latin America. Higher education institutions receive external influence from the government, pressure from the market and vice versa, that causes effects in both, the decisions made for the selection of programs of studies, cost of tuition, modalities, and integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the plans of study, as well as the challenges of the recurring development of the faculty.

In an economy whose only certainty is uncertainty, the best source to obtain lasting competitive advantages is knowledge (Escotet, 2002). This fact leaves no other option than to plan strategically.

The strategic process began with the assessment of the internal environment (context) and the external environment (environment) during various sessions of intense discussion and analysis, in which the management of the institution participated.

The framework of the discussion was the general context of the US, the general environment of Puerto Rico, the global challenges of higher education, the macro-tendencies generated in light of the changes brought by the emergent society of knowledge, as well as the transformation suffered by the massive incorporation of information technologies to teaching, research, and the services in diverse educational contexts.

## **Analysis of the external and internal environment**

Assessment of the external environment considered the events of an economic, sociological, technological, and legal nature, and of external educational policies. Assessment of the internal environment was conducted simultaneously to the assessment of the external environment. This analysis was aimed at examining the tendencies and changes in Atenas College's institutional indicators, the behavior of the enrollment in the various programs, as well as the changes in the socio-demographic profile of the region which it serves and the country in general.

In the general context of the US for year 2015, economic growth reached 2.6%, driven by domestic consumption, low interest rates, and a dynamic generation of employment, despite the severe winter and large-scale strikes. The public debt is high, around 105% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and is expected to continue growing. The strength of the dollar and the weak growth of European and Japanese economies have had a negative impact in exports, generating an increasing commercial deficit. The unemployment rate has decreased to 4.9%, being under 5% for the first time since February 2008. By February 2016, 204,000 new employments were registered. Consumer expenses, which represents two thirds of the gross domestic product, has increased by 5% in the first month of 2016. The levels of economic and social inequality have increased since the 1980s, reaching it higher point since a century ago. Presidential elections of November 2016 are drawing a lot of attention with regards to the changes that may be made in the White House. The country is expected to maintain the same level of growth in 2016, driven mainly by consumption, as well as by investment in corporate modernization. At the national level, the reform of the health system has been impacted by "Obama Care" - Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) - which became law on March 23, 2010.

On February 7, 2016, the Congress approved a law that cancels Obama Care, although it has no chance for implementation as it faces a presidential veto, opens the first battle between Congress and the White House.

Regarding the general environment in Puerto Rico, the country has been on a strong economic recession for 10 years. The current scenario still presents challenges for the country's economy. According to a study from the World Bank which surveyed 189 economies and their

environments to “do business”, Puerto Rico reached a ranking of 57 (World Bank Group 2016). The island’s population has decreased in 3.8 million in 2004 and 3.4 million in 2015; a decrease of 352,696 people or a 9% during that period. For 2015, Puerto Rico’s total public debt was \$73 million. If divided among all, each of us would pay a total of \$21,334; which is more than our per-capita income, of \$16,776<sup>1</sup>.

The inequality index in Puerto Rico which double those in the US, have reached levels that adversely affect economic growth and endanger social stability. The income of the lower economic stratum of society is 33 times lower than that of the upper quintile. We have weak, bureaucratized, politically undermined public corporations, dependent on the central government to cover operational deficits and organisms that are poorly supervised by their boards, lacking transparency and auditability.

The health system in Puerto Rico is in a critical state. Among the effects of the crisis are: a decrease of federal allowances, exodus of doctors, loss of coverage for patients, increase in copayments, and the quality of services. This macro panorama and its variables have an effect on the trends in higher education in the Island: enrollment, retention, offerings in accordance with job projections. During this stage of analysis, the global challenges faced by higher education in the Western Hemisphere, the global stage, and in Puerto Rico were discussed and analyzed; which are summarized in Appendix 2.

In the analysis process, we identified those situations and events that affect the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan and that could represent important challenges for Atenas College, which are summarized in Appendix 3. These arise from the rigorous match between Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities that affect the future development of higher education and post-secondary non-university institutions in the world and that follow the strategic model illustrated in Figure 1. Atenas College is positioned in the FA quadrant, challenging situation, which implies as established in the model of strategic analysis, that it is oriented to use the strong aspects of the organization such as: successful graduates exercising in positions of importance in different agencies, spiritual and humanistic foundation in management, service personnel, balanced costs and financial stability, growth philosophy and the professional development that is offered to the

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<sup>1</sup> Marxuach, S. M. (August 10, 2014). Federal Reserve Report. Center for New Economy. Retrieved from <http://grupocne.org/2014/08/10/el-informe-de-la-reserva-federal/#more-7393>

staff. Appendix 3 includes the results of the group participatory process for the identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities.

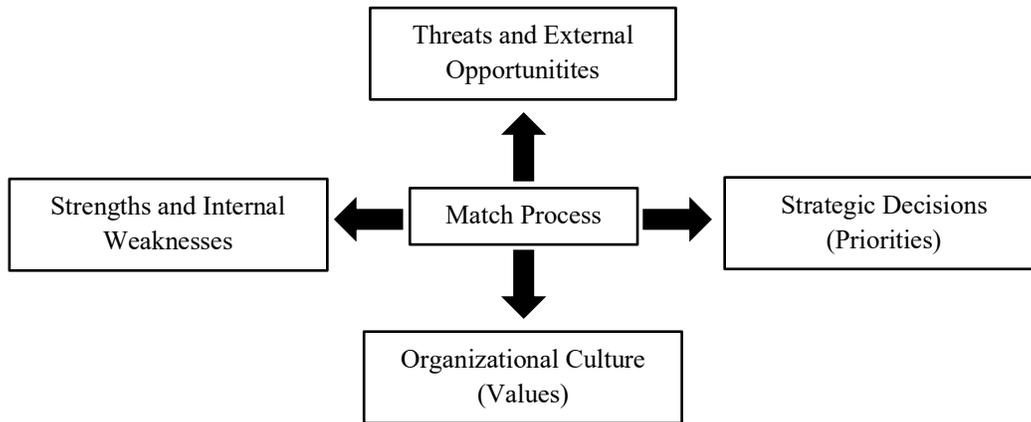


Figure 1. Strategic analysis paradigm<sup>2</sup>

### **Institutional mission, vision, and values**

In consensus, the mission and institutional vision statements were revisited, and the values were regrouped. The mission, which will guide organizational decisions of a professional, social, financial, administrative and ethical nature, is expressed as follows:

#### **Mission.**

We are a higher education institution that offers academic options in various modalities, that integrates arts, science, information technologies, and communication. We promote a culture of service focused on the student of the Puerto Rican and worldwide community, fostering a humanistic and comprehensive formation that increases the competencies of the individual.

Parting from the revised mission, Atenas College academic community revised the values of the institution. The organizational values provide a sense of common direction for all members of the institutional community and establish guidelines for their daily compliance as they are promoters to achieve the outcomes. Following are the values established by Atenas College.

Table 1. Atenas College Values

<sup>2</sup> Model created by Ortiz Reyes (2000) derived from the theoretical works of Porter (1985) and H. Mintzberg (1990)

<b>Culture of Peace</b>	Promotes good relations, tolerance, solidarity, and attention towards others.
<b>Culture of Individual, Social, and Environmental Responsibility</b>	Responds to its commitment with integrity; places care and attention in what is done or decided.
<b>Culture of Cooperation and Collaboration</b>	Works as a team, integrating efforts to achieve the desired outcome.
<b>Culture of Quality and Innovation</b>	Procures to be better each day in its own academic, administrative, and service work.

After the revision, the vision statement is expressed as follows:

**Vision.**

To be a vanguard, pertinent, enterprising, and proactive institution of higher education, nationally and internationally recognized; establishing collaboration alliances that will make it socially and fiscally sustainable.

**Atenas College institutional goals.**

Framed in our mission, vision and values, we propose the following institutional goals:

- Provide as safe environment for learning, teaching, and intellectual production, sustained by innovative models that reflect the best practices in the administration of higher education.
- Provide an innovative, vanguard, pertinent, and flexible academic offering that integrates diverse modalities and options to address the different profiles of the student body and assessment of their learning.
- Foster appreciation and respect for human dignity and cultural diversity.
- Foster recurrent development of the faculty in teaching, intellectual production, and community service, framed in the educational model of the institution.
- Build a culture of service and institutional assessment focused in the student and the development of their talents.
- Promote the development of student competencies by means of the coherent articulation of the academic offering and the support services to the student community.

- Promote comprehensive development of students in the arts and sciences, and their entrepreneurial capacity to value, understand, and transform their environment and insert themselves in the global community.
- Offer a general education component based in the competencies on technological literacy and informatics, scientific and quantitative reasoning for decision-making and problem-solving, oral and written communication, ethical and aesthetic values, and the capacity to integrate these competencies into the professions.
- Promote institutional renewal in a proactive manner through the instauration of inclusive processes for strategic planning and assessment of their financial capacity, its human and physical resources.
- Address the need for lifelong education by means of a proactive program and community education adjusted to the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **Axes of institutional development**

As part of the analysis of the internal strengths and challenges of the institution, the participants of the process identified eight (8) axes of institutional development. For the purposes of the institutional planning process, the term axis was described within the mechanical concept of "movement manager" or institutional change. The following are the institutional development axes:

Axis 1. Quality in teaching and student learning

Axis 2. Diversification and expansion of the academic offering with emphasis in the graduate level and distance education

Axis 3: Development of a culture of institutional assessment

Axis 4: Physical infrastructure and technological infrastructure of information and communication

Axis 5: Enrollment management

Axis 6: Fiscal sustainability, government, and administration

Axis 7: Positioning and strengthening of internal and external image

Axis 8. Social responsibility

The scope of each of these axes is included in the section of strategic priorities.

Table 2. Strategic Priorities

Institutional goals	Corresponding axes of institutional development
Provide as safe environment for learning, teaching, and intellectual production, sustained by innovative models that reflect the best practices in the administration of higher education.	Axes 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 y 7.
Provide an innovative, vanguard, pertinent, and flexible academic offering that integrates diverse modalities and options to address the different profiles of the student body and assessment of their learning.	Axes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 y 7.
Foster appreciation and respect for human dignity and cultural diversity.	Axes 1, 6, 7 y 8.
Foster recurrent development of the faculty in teaching, intellectual production, and community service, framed in the educational model of the institution.	Axes 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 y 8.
Build a culture of service and institutional assessment focused in the student and the development of their talents.	Axes 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 y 8.
Promote the development of student competencies by means of the coherent articulation of the academic offering and the support services to the student community.	Axes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 y 7.
Promote comprehensive development of students in the arts and sciences, and their entrepreneurial capacity to value, understand, and transform their environment and insert themselves in the global community.	Axes 1, 2, 4 y 8.
Offer a general education component based in the competencies on technological literacy and informatics, scientific and quantitative reasoning for decision-making and problem-	Axes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 y 7.

Institutional goals	Corresponding axes of institutional development
solving, oral and written communication, ethical and aesthetic values, and the capacity to integrate these competencies into the professions.	
Promote institutional renewal in a proactive manner through the instauration of inclusive processes for strategic planning and assessment of their financial capacity, its human and physical resources.	Axes 3, 5, 6 y 7.
Address the need for lifelong education by means of a proactive program and community education adjusted to the requirements of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century.	Axes 1, 5, 6, 7 y 8.

### **Atenas College Strategic Plan**

#### **Expected position for 2022**

By the end of the period covered by this Strategic Plan, the institution:

- utilizes planning in a systematic, permanent, and comprehensive manner to provide guidance and perspective to the academic and administrative activities.
- has transformed the educational and evaluation model of its curricula into one based in competencies of its graduates through relevant, flexible, efficient academic programs focused on learning, accredited by the corresponding organizations, and supported by interaction and openness to the national and international environment.
- has widened its academic offerings: offers in-classroom and virtual programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels and has strengthened its offering of professional certificates.
- has increase the development of the virtual academic offering and has 50% of student participation in distance education.
- has developed a model of comprehensive and inclusive training through a robust general education component that ensures that students are critical, enterprising, competitive and

committed to society and their duties in the health field. Their training will promote their national and international mobility.

- has selected and developed its faculty, which is competent in their field of study in their areas of teaching and intellectual production. Performs an academic work that is recognized by academic ranks for their creative contributions to the health field, their participation in national and international cooperation networks, and in the formulation of public policies.
- carries out innovative activities for creation, generation, and application of knowledge for development in the fields of study, attention to social needs of their environment, and services in the health area.
- has an institutional government and administration whose management is transparent, flexible, effective, and with clear policies for institutional assessment and assessment of effective student learning.
- proactively attends the updating challenges in its physical and technological infrastructure, its workforce, the development of its teaching and non-teaching staff and successfully moves towards a model of generating external resources for its strengthening and fiscal sustainability.
- has requested and achieved Candidacy for Accreditation with the *Middle States Commission on Higher Education* and has obtained total accreditation from this organization by 2020.

### **Strategic priorities**

#### **Axis 1. Quality of teaching and student learning**

Atenas College develops its academic management through the implementation of

develops its academic management through the implementation of training plans for students to achieve certain goals, considering the institutional philosophy, external challenges, and applicable regulations with the corresponding search, procurement and management of the necessary resources. The competencies-based curricular model will be used as a strategy, based on Sergio Tobón's stages from his book *Methodology of Curricular Management: a SocioFormative perspective* (2013): profile contextualization, training plan and implementation.

**Strategic goal 1.1** Maintain academic offerings updated with the integration of general education and professional competencies, according to the Academic Model.

***Strategic objectives.***

**1.1.1** Integrate general education competencies in all academic programs for compliance with the institutional mission.

**1.1.2** Design learning strategies aligned to the general education and professional competencies of the programs to achieve the institutional mission.

**Strategic goal 1.2** Strengthen the professional growth of the faculty to achieve development of teaching, evaluation, research, and teaching-learning competencies with the integration of technologies.

***Strategic objectives.***

**1.2.1** Facilitate training aimed at the development of teaching, evaluation, research, and teaching-learning competencies focused on experiential learning and simulation, in a competencies-based curriculum.

**1.2.2** Determine the faculty profile according to the evaluation, research and teaching-learning competencies in a competencies-based curriculum.

**1.2.3** Incorporate a system of academic ranks for full-time faculty based on experience and academic preparation.

**1.2.4** Foster professional growth of the faculty by increasing its academic level.

**1.2.5**

**Strategic goal 1.3** Strengthen the quality of teaching and learning by integrating standards of programmatic accreditation in the academic programs.

***Strategic objectives.***

**1.3.1** Integrate standards from accrediting agencies in the Nursing program and Physical Therapist Assistant program.

**Axis 2. Diversification and expansion of the academic offering with emphasis in the graduate level and distance education**

Atenas College is committed to develop and implement academic programs necessary to meet the needs of the market it serves. This direction will be updated constantly by checking the

pulse of economy, the population demand, development of new professional and technological practices, and the public policies that affect the institutional mission and vision.

**Strategic goal 2.1** Diversification of the existing academic offering to adjust it to the current needs of the students considering the distance modality.

***Strategic objectives.***

**2.1.1** Investigate which are the careers of greater demand in Puerto Rico at a graduate level.

**2.1.2** Develop a plan to offer academic programs according to the need of the job market.

**Axis 3: Development of a culture of institutional assessment**

Atenas College will foster a culture of institutional assessment which will involve all institutional units, since the units with understanding of the different processes are the ones that can best account for these.

Their day-to-day contact with the processes under their responsibility constitute the most fundamental resource in the delineation of relevant and reachable objectives, to identify the best means to achieve them, to effectively probe how the process is going, and to identify the necessary changes and propose new policies.

**Strategic goal 3.1** Foster a culture of institutional assessment that enables making informed decisions for improvement and achievement of the institutional mission and goals.

***Strategic objectives.***

**3.1.1** Develop a plan for implementing a culture of assessment considering the trends a higher level.

**3.1.2** Update the Institutional Assessment Plan.

**3.1.3** Develop technological tools to collect data obtained from making informed and proactive decisions for institutional improvement.

#### **Axis 4: Physical infrastructure and technological infrastructure of information and communications**

Atenas College aims at promoting and using advanced technologies in the learning process in all the spheres and all levels. The institution will have an efficient technological and physical structure, in such way that it meets the conditions necessary and the needs of our students. The physical infrastructure, technological update, and maintenance of the facilities will be a constant priority for institutional strengthening.

**Strategic goal 4.1** Maintain an efficient operation through the integration of information and communication technologies as part of the Institutional Technological Infrastructure Plan.

*Strategic objectives.*

**4.1.1** Develop the technological infrastructure to support institutional development in an efficient and sustainable manner.

**Strategic goal 4.2** Develop and maintain the physical facilities in optimal conditions.

*Strategic objectives.*

**4.2.1** Adjust the physical infrastructure to maintain institutional operations in optimal conditions.

**Strategic goal 4.3** Strengthen the use of information and communication technologies in the teaching-learning process of the academic programs in various modalities.

*Strategic objectives.*

**4.3.1** Integrate information and communication technologies in the teaching-learning process of the academic processes in various modalities.

#### **Axis 5: Enrollment management**

Atenas College has a diverse enrollment; therefore, one of our priorities must student recruitment, service, and retention to achieve the preparation of leaders with the competencies required in the current work field.

Recruitment at the institution must be ethical, focused on identifying students who desire to benefit from the academic offering of the institution. The service provided to students is founded on the institutional values and philosophy.

**Strategic goal 5.1** Utilize proactive and novel strategies aimed at recruiting prospects qualified to complete a higher-level career.

***Strategic objectives.***

**5.1.1** Investigate which proactive and novel strategies help increase recruitment of prospects interested in completing a higher-level career.

**Strategic goal 5.2** Increase student retention through direct-service and student-support activities coordinated with the academic units.

***Strategic objectives.***

**5.2.1** Strengthen the Retention Plan to increase retention and graduation rates.

**5.2.2** Promote the creation of student organizations.

**5.2.3** Promote student participation in student organizations.

**5.2.4** Foster relations with alumni and communities of interest, by promoting their participation as collaborators in the academic work and as an inspiration for students.

**Strategic goal 5.3** Strengthen services aimed at students to contribute in the comprehensive development and achievement of their academic and professional goals.

***Strategic objectives.***

**5.3.1** Implement a preventive and corrective program aimed at providing academic and service staff with the tools to help the students to improve their learning process and quality of life.

**5.3.2** Increase student participation in co-curricular activities that strengthen the competencies required by their program of study.

**5.3.3** Ensure distance education students receive the same services as traditional education students.

**5.3.4** Implement strategies to accelerate the process of enrollment.

**Strategic goal 5.4** Promote that the student develops the general and professional competencies that enable the graduate to perform competently in the working world.

**5.4.1** Identify student leaders who may serve as mentors to help other students to develop general and professional competencies.

**5.4.2** Foster professional development of graduates to improve their competencies and performance in the working world.

- 5.4.3** Establish competency-evaluation activities to determine the students' competencies before completing their program of study.

**Axis 6: Fiscal sustainability, government, and administration**

Atenas College is in an ongoing evaluation of the organizational structure to ensure an efficient management and in turn, ensure compliance with the service it offers, and the federal, state and institutional policies. In addition, it will ensure financial soundness for which it has been characterized since its foundation; thus, achieving high performance that will sustain and maintain the financial reserves.

Financial sustainability of the institution depends mainly on federal Title IV funds, which makes it necessary to expand the collection of income through other sources that may generate new revenues for the creation of projects that serve the student community and development of our human talent.

**Strategic Goal 6.1** Diversify the sources of institutional income through the creation of a Plan for Diversification of Income that includes the collection of external funds and the creation of service companies that generate economic benefits.

***Strategic objectives.***

- 6.1.1 Increase the fiscal resources of the institution to maintain financial stability.
- 6.1.2 Train academic and administrative human resources in the elaboration of competitive proposals to obtain external resources of diverse nature and in the creation and development of service companies.
- 6.1.3 Increase of the offerings and revenues related to Continuing Education.
- 6.1.4 Strengthen the reserve fund to sustain the operations without depending from external resources for a reasonable period of time.

**Strategic Goal 6.2** Maintain an organizational structure aimed at compliance of the institutional mission and goals.

***Strategic objectives.***

- 6.2.1** Develop a shared organizational structure aimed at institutional effectiveness to achieve the mission.

- 6.2.2 Adjust policies and procedures aimed at compliance of the institutional mission and goals.
- 6.2.3 Foster professional development of the administrative staff to develop the best practices, integrating technology.
- 6.2.4 Foster professional growth of the administrative staff by increasing their academic level.
- 6.2.5 Support the Board of Directors in the elaboration of their Annual Work Plan.

### **Axis 7: Positioning and strengthening of the internal and external image**

Atenas College should be recognized as a leader institution in the areas of health-allied science at a state, national and international level. This positioning will be achieved through the integration of multidimensional messages to be disseminated through all the technologies and communication strategies available, and training of our personnel to disseminate such message.

**Strategic goal 7.1** Strengthen the institutional image at a local and international level as a leader institution.

#### ***Strategic objectives.***

- 7.1.1 Maintain an integrated-communications plan with emphasis in the digital market to disseminate the information of the academic offering and the services offered at the institution.
- 7.1.2 Widen the geographic zone to impact at a local and international level to strengthen the internal and external image.

### **Axis 8. Social responsibility**

Atenas College will be responsible of carrying out initiatives of social responsibilities with its environment. In this way it is intended to add value to the communities we serve. Under this institutional priority we will identify the needs of the communities of region to provide what is within our reach.

**Strategic goal 8.1** Foster the creation of innovative projects through which the institution meets its social responsibility.

#### ***Strategic objectives.***

- 8.1.1** Implement innovative projects through which the institution meets its social responsibility and adds value to the population segments that need solidary support.
- 8.1.2** Promote alliances with public and private organization for collaboration and organization of activities that promote health and social wellbeing.

### **Non-discriminatory language**

When the masculine gender is used in this Strategic Plan, it must be understood that it represents the female gender in the same way or vice versa.

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Model created by Ortiz Reyes (2000) based on the theoretical work of Porter (1985) and H. Mintzberg (1990).

## Appendix A

### Terminology

To understand the language employed in this document and familiarize participants of the process with the specific terminology, we have developed a list of terms solely for these purposes.

**Analysis of the environment-** Involves identifying those factors and conditions that, from the outside, influence on the intuition and establishes on it important consequences; from the perspective of the SWOT analysis, it refers to the analysis of the threats and opportunities presented in the context in which the institution operates. Activities or events that occur outside of the institution. These factors involve technological, sociological, economical, and political changes, and changes in the respective industry.

**Internal analysis** – Enables the organization to discover its own characteristics that constitute essential and priority attributes which enable it to face the environment in the most helpful way for itself and for society. Among these attributes stand out the experiences, resources and potentialities, its competitiveness, its operational capacity, its shortcomings and most important problems, and its functioning. Activities or events that occur on the inside of the organization which have a direct effect on its viability and growth. These factors involve the mission of the institution, its goals, the quality of the service it offers, the effectiveness of support functions, the budgetary reality, and the use of resources.

**Assessment of outcomes-** A process through which the evidence of the congruence between the institutional mission, goals and objectives established and the outcomes of its programs and activities are collected and analyzed to improve teaching and learning.

**Strategies** – A mean to achieve objectives (the “how”), guidelines to help select the appropriate actions to reach the goals of the institution. It is the willingness and application of the resources and abilities of the organization in function of the objectives and goals in the most efficient manner.

**Evaluation** – Etymologically, the word “evaluate” is related to the Latin word “valere”, which means to value, give value, assign a value. It is preceded by the prefix “e,” apocope of the Latin preposition “es” which means valuation from inside out. As per the Dictionary of the Spanish Language, to evaluate means to assign the value of something.

**Comprehensive formation** – To develop man in all its potentialities and values and in all its dimensions: formative (educate for life), socio-interactive (leaders who transform the community), cognitive (development of skills for analysis, reflection, with scientific spirit through research), academic-professional (acquisition and generating of scientific knowledge to preserve and reestablish health conditions).

**Strategic management** – Methodology that integrates prognosis, purposes, and medium-term and long-term objectives with the daily work. It is widely used in the business world.

**Technological management**- Is a system of knowledge and practices related to the process of creation, development, transfer, and use of technology.

**Globalization** – Economical, technological, social and cultural process of great scale that consists in the increasing communication and interdependency between the countries of the world unifying its markets, societies, and cultures through a series of social, economic, and political transformations that gives it a global character.

**Innovation** – Is the transformation of an idea in a marketable new or improved product or an operative process in the industry and in commerce or a new method of social service. It implies the successful introduction to the market in the processes of production or in the organizations themselves or new products, technologies or knowledge intensive services, as well as the subsequent dissemination in society.

**Mission** – The mission is a brief description of the “reason to be” of the organization; reminds you of the “reason to be” of the institution; identifies current and future target market; defines the field of action of the institution; explains the institutional response to the needs that gave origin to the organization; identifies sustainable comparative advantages in the long term.

**Strategic goals** - They are the specific results that an organization aims to achieve through the fulfillment of its mission.

**Relevance** - Respond to the needs of the nation by evaluating health policies with a critical stance and with the proposal of new alternatives. Relevance also implies taking into account the current and potential risks of becoming ill, as well as the conditions necessary to maintain health. This requires establishing relationships and interrelations to be able to renew a curriculum that meets these needs. At this point it is important to study globalization against local, regional and national identity as another point of tension.

**Policies** – Guidelines that provide general guidelines for channeling administrative management in specific directions and that ideologically guide towards autonomous decision-making for the achievement of institutional objectives. They are a basic guide for the action of their internal clients in compliance with some institutional objectives proposed by senior management. They establish what the management wants or prefers to be done and reflect a directive decision for all similar situations.

**Social responsibility** - Commitment that companies and individuals that comprise them have with society. It incorporates the concept of positive or negative assessment of the social impact that business decisions represent. This assessment is registered in both the ethical and legal context. In our university environment it is understood that this does not refer only to the articulation of the Medical Sciences Campus or the University with its social environment, but that the same teaching and research functions are part of its social responsibility.

**Technology** - The set of scientific and empirical knowledge, skills, experiences and organization required to produce, distribute, market and use goods and services.

**Strategic Planning** - Constitutes the core of the model as it identifies the needs of the organization, its “reason to be” and its objectives to subsequently guide resources and activities towards the achievement of vision through strategies and tactics of long, medium and short term. Strategic planning is the systematic, intentional and integrative process by means of which the needs of the organization are identified, their reason for being, the objectives and goals are defined to achieve in the long term, the resources and the actions, all framed within the institutional mission, vision and values defined collectively. Based on the situational analysis, the organization will find those weaknesses, strengths, threats and opportunities of its own and its environment, in order to propose strategies according to the problems it must resolve to ensure achievement of its objectives; It is an organized way of managing the future, whose purpose is to make the future of the organization happen according to your vision.

**Implementation of the Institutional Strategic Plan** - The Implementation of the Institutional Strategic Plan constitutes a work plan based on the objectives that the operational units will try to achieve. This document is the link between the Strategic Plan and the Operational Budget.

**Values** - A value is the permanent belief that a specific form of conduct or final condition of existence is personally or socially preferred to an opposite or inverted mode of behavior or final condition of existence.

**Vision** - Vision is a living mental image, it represents a desirable future state that we seek to create, it serves as a guide for decision making and commitments for action; declares the aspirations of the institution. It is constituted in the strategic direction and communicates the most important values of the institution.

**Strategic objectives** - It is a formulation of activities that the institution wishes to carry out in order to achieve the expected long-term position.

## Appendix B

### Global challenges of higher education

- Greater demands for quality and belonging.
- Integration of the new ICT; virtual university and virtual didactics.
- Little versatility to compete with new offers or flexible and personalized curricula with varied routes and different outputs.
- New demographic structure and aging of the population in face of few academic programs aimed at older adults.
- Inability to respond to the expectations of the new generations and difficulty in getting rid of traditional pedagogical models.
- Demand for a more leading roles of the university in society.
- Little scientific-technological awareness of the media and low investment companies in research, development and innovation.
- Poor competitiveness as an institution in the international context; students and teachers without sufficient international level.
- Worldwide validity of university degrees; little development in homologation of degrees and in double degree.
- Relative reduction of the state budget for the university in a context of demands for greater coverage and quality.
- Guidance on financing under the private logic, losing part of its central functions with research missions, extension and critical nature of society.
- Lack of consistency and continuity of policies and programs that are established in response to political decisions and government programs.
- Little recognition of the university management as a task based on scientific knowledge; the managerial positions can be occupied by people without training or knowledge in the field, which leads to inefficiency in management.
- Rigid organizational structure, with little capacity for change and agility to face and adapt to the changing dynamics of the environment and social demands (model of bureaucratic organizational structure).
- Lack of creativity and agility in decision-making due to the high level of red tape due to internal and external regulations and management problems