

INTEGRATOR HELPS STUDENT ACCESS

ID cards help university officials determine who should be on campus

By Monique Merhige

As a school administrator, it is important to choose the right ID card solutions to keep your university safe and secure. In today's world, you can never be too safe or have too many security measures in place. Widely used for identification, access control, and time and attendance purposes, ID cards help identify at a glance who should be on campus, and more importantly who should not be there.

Access control and ID card technologies have evolved over time and are a huge focus for most universities around the country. Currently, the one issue that many universities face that can impede security best practices are budget constraints. When faced with a low budget for security, universities need to

look at the big picture and explore all the options available to them and work with a vendor that can help them select the right ID card solution that won't break the budget.

"In a perfect world, security measures should be available to everyone and no school should be turned away due to a limited budget," said Gabriel Schonzeit, president of IDSecurityOnline.com. "The reality is that most schools do not have the resources necessary to put the right security measures into place and struggle with what to do on a limited budget. In these types of situations, the university needs to explore the various ID card solutions available to them and consider purchasing their own ID printer and printing their own badges in-house to help improve security



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DECADES OF SERVICE

The University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez Campus encompasses approxi-

mately 315 acres. The campus has a sports complex that includes a gym, a weight room, rooms for dance/aerobic classes, courts for basketball, a tennis and volleyball complex, a natatorium,

an outdoor sports field and the Rafael A. Mangual Coliseum. The campus also offers two cafeterias, a bookstore, a bank, a lounge and a computer center. At present, the campus population

is composed of 12,136 students (graduate and under-graduates), 1,336 regular staff members and 1,026 members of the educational staff. With a mixed and multi-cultural student base, the university offers a solid academic program for graduates and under-graduates that prepares students to face the challenges of professional life.

The college offers four Academic Deans that includes business administration, arts and sciences, agricultural sciences, and engineering.

The university was established in 1903 by the Asamblea Legislativa Act. In 1908, the United States spread to Puerto Rico and provided help with the Nelson Morrill Act, making the university a land grant institution. This prompted the growth of higher education, and on Sept. 23, 1911 the College of Agriculture was established in Mayagüez as part of the University of Puerto Rico.

It was in this college that the Mayaguez Campus originated and a year later was renamed the College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts (CAAM), the name by which it was known for 50 years. In 1942, a reform was started at the University of Puerto Rico, which brought the CAAM accelerated growth. The faculties of agriculture, engineering and sciences were created. The growth continued into the 1950s when the faculty of sciences became the faculty of arts and sciences, and the nuclear center and several new academic programs were established for undergraduates.

Later in 1966, the university was organized into autonomous campuses, passing the College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts became the Mayaguez Campus, second in size within the University System of Puerto Rico and the only one with a School of Agriculture with Marine Science graduate programs in Puerto Rico. The college now offers renowned graduate programs offering master's degrees and doctorates.

SECURITY CHALLENGES FACED

The University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez Campus was looking for a way to help detect anyone who was on school grounds pretending to be a student. Similar to most universities, the budget was limited and the administrators needed to find a way to prevent non-

students from using the facilities and services around the campus.

Access control was a huge focus for the school and required all security personnel to be on board with new security measures. Since implementing an ID System, every student is required to wear an ID card with a bar code that helps decipher who is allowed in the computer center, who is entitled to special lunches in the college cafeteria and who is allowed to borrow books in the general library or use audiovisual equipment.

Another example would be student athletes who are entitled to special lunches in the cafeteria. Once the ID badge is swiped, cafeteria personnel can verify the type of lunch that needs to be served for each student.

“We were searching for a vendor to help us eliminate fraudulent students on campus. It was time for us to take control of our security issues by improving our access control system with ID Badging,” said Wilson Lugo Quintana, photographer and specialist of computing equipment at University of Puerto Rico. “The university has saved a significant amount of money on an annual basis by reducing student fraud costs.”

The university purchases 10,000 ID Cards from IDSecurityOnline.com on average every two years to keep up with student enrollment. In addition, they purchased three HID Fargo DTC-400s printers and recently a new DTC1250e printer. All student ID Badges are generated in-house from the University of Puerto Rico's at Mayaguez Office of the Dean of Students with their own ID badge printer.

In order for a student to receive a badge, they need to provide the original legal identification document—driver license or a passport—show evidence of enrollment in the present or upcoming semester and show a payment receipt. Without these documents, a student would not receive a photo ID badge and could not access campus services throughout the university. The ID badge is required to take exams, borrow audiovisual equipment or books, access computer labs, and for any service requested on campus.

FOR THE REAL STUDENTS

It was important to the university to

protect the students who were entitled to all the benefits the school had to offer. By investing in the right ID card solutions, The University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez Campus has seen

significant cost savings by reducing fraud and can rest easy knowing that the “real” students are on campus enjoying the amenities.

Monique Merhige is a freelance writer based in New York City.



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