

REPORT TO THE
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, and Students
Of The
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AT CAROLINA
(UPR – CA)
P.O. Box 4800
Carolina, PR 00984

By

An Evaluation Team representing the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Prepared after study of the Institution’s Self-Study Report
And a visit to the Campus on September 18-21, 2011

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This Final Report, submitted on September 10, 2011, represents the views of the evaluation team as interpreted by the Chair. The report goes directly to the institution before being considered by the Commission. It is a confidential document prepared as an educational service for the benefit of the institution. All comments in the report are made in good faith, in an effort to assist the University of Puerto Rico - Carolina. This report is based solely on an educational evaluation of the institution and the manner in which it appears to be carrying out its educational objectives.

**AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT
TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AT CAROLINA
(UPR – CA)**

Chancellor:

Prof. Trinidad Fernández-Miranda

Dean for Academic Affairs:

Dr. Ana E. Falcón Emmanuelli

Chair of the Board of Trustees (UPR System):

Luis Berríos

(elected 9/17/2011, upon completion of Ms. Ygri Rivera de Martínez's term)

TEAM REPORT FOR
UNIVERSITY of PUERTO RICO AT CAROLINA
(SELF-STUDY: COMPREHENSIVE)

I. Context and Nature of the Visit

Institutional Overview

The University of Puerto Rico at Carolina (UPR – CA) is one of 11 campuses that constitute the state-supported University of Puerto Rico (UPR) System. UPR – CA was founded in 1974 by legislative action of the Council of Higher Education [No. 71 (1973-74)]. In July of 1999 it became an autonomous campus of the University of Puerto Rico.

Originally meant to serve the northeastern part of the island of Puerto Rico by offering technical programs of study, at present UPR – CA receives students from all over the island and a small group of students from the Caribbean. The institution now offers 10 baccalaureate degree programs and six associate degree programs, several of which are unique within the UPR system. UPR – CA is the only unit to offer baccalaureate degrees in Hotel and Restaurant Administration, Graphic Arts, Advertising, Multidisciplinary Studies with a Major in Tourist Culture, and Criminal Justice with Majors in Forensic Psychology, Law and Society. It also has articulated transfer programs with other UPR campuses in Education, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Allied Programs in Health Science, and Engineering.

UPR – CA is the only campus in the UPR system that works under a quarter-term calendar schedule of 10 weeks each. The academic year consists of three quarter-term sessions. Typically, students obtain their baccalaureate or associate degree in a shorter period of time as compared to a semester system.

Governance in the UPR System is entrusted to the Board of Trustees, the University President, and the University Board. At UPR – CA, the highest academic and administrative authority is the Chancellor, supported by four deans: Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administrative Affairs, and the School of Hotel and Restaurant Management. There are two advisory bodies to the Chancellor: the Administrative Board and the Academic Senate. The Chancellor reports directly to the UPR System President.

Initial accreditation of UPR – CA (known at that time as Carolina Regional College) by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education was granted in 1978. The name of the institution was changed twice: to UPR Carolina University College (1999) and to its current name, The University of Puerto Rico at Carolina (2000). Accreditation was last reaffirmed on November 16, 2006 after the last Periodic Review. At that time, a monitoring report was requested by April 1, 2008, documenting (1) progress in the implementation of effective

institutional planning and assessment process and (2) status of institutional finances and enrollment. On June 26, 2008, the monitoring report was accepted and an additional monitoring report was requested, further documenting (1) progress in the implementation of effective institutional planning and assessment processes (Standard 7) and (2) the status of institutional finances and enrollment (Standard 3). That second monitoring report was accepted on June 25, 2009.

After submission of a voluntary information report, UPR – CA was put on probation on June 24, 2010, due to lack of evidence that it was in compliance with Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance) and Standard 11 (Educational Offerings). The institution remained accredited while on probation. A required monitoring report was submitted on September 1, 2010, to further document that UPR – CA could sustain, on an ongoing basis, compliance with (1) Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance), (2) Standard 11 (Educational Offerings), and (3) Standard 3 (Institutional Resources). After a Commission Liaison guidance visit, MSCHE acted on November 18, 2010 to continue UPR – CA’s probation because of lack of evidence of compliance with Standards 3 and 4. An additional Monitoring Report was requested by March 1, 2011, once again documenting evidence that the institution had achieved and could sustain ongoing compliance with Standards 3 & 4. The institution remained accredited while on probation, and the 2010-2011 evaluation visit was postponed to the Fall of 2011.

On April 6-7, 2011, following submission of the Monitoring Report, an MSCHE-appointed team visited UPR – CA to consider the university’s progress with regard to these two standards. Based on its review of UPR – CA’s Monitoring Report and appendices, interviews, and other institutional documents, the visiting team affirmed that the institution appeared to meet the Requirements of Affiliation under review. On June 23, 2011, MSCHE removed probation and reaffirmed accreditation.

Scope of institution

According to the most recent accreditation status, UPR – CA is a public institution with a state affiliation. It offers Associate’s and Bachelor’s degrees in diverse fields. It has no branch campus, no additional locations or other instructional sites, and offers no Distance Education programs. Total undergraduate student headcount enrollment for the first quarter term 2010-2011 on the single campus consisted of 4002 students, 77.1% of whom studied full-time, approximately 62% received financial aid, and 55.2% were female. Also, 65.2% of the student body enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs, 18.4% in associate degree programs, and 13.6% in transfer programs to other UPR units. The student body is served by 213 faculty and 252 non-teaching staff. The 2010-2011 faculty profile shows that 51.6% are full-time and 48.4% are part-time.

Three academic programs have obtained professional accreditation. UPR – CA holds specialized accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (for the School for Hotel and Restaurant Administration, 2008) and from the Association of Collegiate Schools and Programs (for Business Administration and for Office Systems, 2011). The Hotel and Restaurant Administration Program was recently elevated to the status of School

of Hotel and Restaurant Administration. Additional academic programs and student support services are currently seeking accreditations.

Self-study process

UPR – CA’s Self-Study Report describes institutional strengths and weaknesses and provides insight into the University’s progress towards meeting goals and developing strategies to address present and future challenges. It is developed around four broad outcomes and institutional priorities and a series of specific objectives that include evidence of compliance with the Characteristics of Excellence; an examination of institutional transformation since the last Self-Study in 2001; assessment at all levels of the Institution through discussions that involve a fair representation of the academic community; and specific recommendations that ensure that the University fulfills its Mission Statement. In the process of preparing the Self-Study Report and analyzing UPR – CA’s accomplishments over the past decade and the challenges it continues to face, the University community seems to have developed a clearer understanding of itself and a stronger commitment to maintaining UPR – CA as a successful, stable institution.

The model selected by UPR – CA for its Self-Study is the Comprehensive model. It provides a description of the University’s performance as measured against the fourteen MSCHE Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education. The 14 Standards of Excellence are regrouped into six areas:

- Area 1: Mission, Goals, and Integrity (Standards 1 & 6)
- Area 2: Planning, Resources, and Governance (Standards 2, 3 & 4)
- Area 3: Assessment (Standards 7 & 14)
- Area 4: Student Life (Standards 8 & 9)
- Area 5: Faculty and Staff (Standards 5 & 10)
- Area 6: Curriculum and Academic Offerings (Standards 11, 12 & 13)

Visit

On September 18-21, 2011 the evaluation team selected by MSCHE visited UPR – CA to carry out the scheduled decennial evaluation visit. The team consisted of the chair and seven members.

The chair had made a preliminary visit to UPR – CA on May 23, 2011, as called for by MSCHE. The visit was very positive, and took place without incident. Since that time, frequent communication has existed between the Chancellor, Prof. Trinidad Fernández-Miranda, the Accreditation Liaison Officer, Dr. Awilda Núñez, and the chair of the Visiting Team, Dr. Reginetta Haboucha.

The team would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to the leadership, faculty, staff, and students of UPR – CA, and to the staff of the President of the UPR System in San Juan, for the courtesy and warm welcome and hospitality they were shown prior to and during the accreditation visit. The enthusiastic and complete cooperation of everyone involved in the

process is to be commended, as is the demonstrated level of commitment to the institution shown throughout the process.

II. Affirmation of Continued Compliance with Requirements of Affiliation

Based on a review of the self-study report as well as of the monitoring reports and appendices, campus interviews, and a number of institutional documents, the evaluation team affirms that the institution continues to meet the Requirements of Affiliation under review.

III. Compliance with Federal Requirements; Issues Relative to State Regulatory or Other Accrediting Agency Requirements

The Team has relied on institutional certification and/or written documentation to make the following determinations:

Based on review of the Self-Study, certification by the institution, other institutional documents, and interviews, the evaluation team affirms that UPR-Carolina Title IV cohort default rate falls within federal limits.

The evaluation team has verified that the institution meets relevant requirement under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, including transfer of credit.

The institution appears to have no pending issue with state regulatory requirements or with programmatic accrediting agencies.

IV. Evaluation Overview

UPR – CA seems committed to continuing effective governance efforts to sustain an Open University culture that ensures the continuity and rigor of its educational offerings as well as its Mission, Vision and Objectives. Aware of the many challenges ahead, the Institution has implemented measures to secure financial stability and ongoing academic excellence.

UPR – CA employs dedicated staff and faculty and meets the MSCHE human capital requirement standard. The new administrative team is capable of leading the institution. The physical and technical facilities seem adequate to meet the mission of the institution. However, if the financial pressures continue to increase, the leadership team will have to make very difficult decisions in setting targeted priorities.

The institution should be proactive in anticipating that financial problems may continue to impact its operations. It is suggested that a task force comprised of various university stakeholders be formed to evaluate the direction of the institution during the next three to five years and provide recommendations to the leadership team on various actions that could be undertaken given likely financial scenarios. In this manner, the communication process can be enhanced and the campus community involved in charting the institution's future direction.

V. Compliance with Accreditation Standards

Self-Study Chapter 1 – Mission, Goals, and Integrity

This section of the report covers the following standards:

Standard	1:	Mission and Goals
Standard	6:	Integrity

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

UPR-CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 1 – Mission and Goals

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- In September, 2008, the Academic Senate ratified modifications to the UPR – CA Mission, ensuring that goals and objectives appropriately reflect current institutional standards.
- UPR – CA presents evidence that its mission and goals were developed through collaboration and involvement of the university community, and are periodically evaluated and formally approved. The evaluation team discussed the evolution of the new Mission Statement with the self-study steering committee during its visit, as well as with the faculty during a Q & A session, and finds that the process was handled with thoughtful care and the same committed spirit in which members of the University appear to approach planning.
- The University desires to be among the most recognized institutions of Higher Education in Puerto Rico. To that end, its Mission Statement represents its heart and soul. From an institution’s mission comes the development of objectives and goals and stakeholder acceptance of such objectives and goals. UPR – CA has a Mission Statement that is fully integrated into the campus community.
- The mission and vision are aligned with the UPR System plan (*Diez para la Década, or Ten for the Decade*). The Mission Statement embodies appropriate values and is accurately descriptive of the broadly defined goals of the University. In the discussions held with members of the university community, it appears that university stakeholders are mostly aware of UPR – CA’s mission.
- Aiming to form graduates intellectually and morally motivated, UPR – CA is committed to providing a student-centered education that fosters high values such as integrity, ethics, and academic excellence with a curriculum that integrates general and specialized education. Its Mission Statement confirms its desire to develop the student body into reflective and ethical professionals open to the path of continuous learning, professional and personal growth, and with a strong sense of social responsibility and respect for diversity.
- The Mission Statement is posted throughout various areas of the campus to demonstrate its importance and value to all stakeholders. All newcomers are exposed to and given a copy of the Mission Statement as a way to measure what the college is doing.

- Each year, the division directors review the operational part of the Strategic Plan to monitor the accomplishment of goals and objectives set the year before and to amend or refocus the goals, where appropriate. The overall direction of the University and its educational programs are the central focus of that plan.
- The evaluation team also had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the student body. 26 students attended that particular one-hour session and impressed the team with the manner in which they represented themselves. They are charismatic and bright young adults.
- Responses to the evaluation team's question of why they enrolled at UPR – CA included the following strong points from the students:
 - It offers a diverse and exciting program selection.
 - It provides a warm and collegial student life environment.
 - The faculty and administration are very well organized and student-centered. They are supportive and engaged with the students.
 - The faculty and administration provide for a very professional environment.
 - The ten-week three quarter-long academic year is very attractive to students, many of whom work in addition to attending college.
 - While UPR – CA has basic technology in the classrooms, delivery of education content is well balanced.
 - UPR – CA provides a sense of unity with and connectivity not only to the college but also to the community at large.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- The Mission Statement provides effective guidance to all programs and units. The evaluation team commends it.
- The evaluation team commends the faculty, staff, administration, and students for fully embracing the mission of UPR – CA.
- The institution as a whole seems to be quite aware of the importance of devoting serious attention to the development of its next strategic plan while keeping in mind the standards of accreditation.

Suggestions:

- We suggest that UPR – CA better align the strategic planning efforts with the academic plan, annual budget planning process and facilities planning process. A fully integrated campus master plan would serve it well.
- UPR – CA will certainly want to continually seek greater clarity with which the mission statement, goals, and objectives delineate the overall educational objectives and goals.
- Clearly, the importance of specialized and general education are front and center of the educational degree programs and should be affirmed through the Mission Statement at all times and very deliberately made an integral part of the curricula.
- We suggest that UPR – CA continue to revisit its statements to clearly distinguish between goals, objectives, and tasks and enunciate them so they flow seamlessly from the Mission Statement.

- The recent challenges experienced by the UPR System have provided an opportunity for reflection and action that the university community at UPR—CA should continue to take advantage of.

Standard 6: Integrity

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 6 – Integrity
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Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard:

- The concept of integrity is central to the operations of UPR – CA. It is in fact the first principle mentioned in its Mission Statement. Universally, faculty and students comment that integrity is a prominent value in the culture of the institution and is accorded highest importance. Faculty report that they strive to model ethical principles in their own behavior and to integrate ethics and socially responsible behavior into their courses.
- Pertinent academic information, policies and practices are available online and easily located. This includes student and faculty handbooks, and data about the institution, including the Student Right to Know crime and graduation rates. Overall, evidence suggests that the institution grants free access to its programs and activities to its community.
- Processes for addressing student complaints are made available on the website, in brochures, and on CDs given to new students at orientation. The team reviewed examples of student grievances and verified that they had been handled by the Ombudsperson according to institutional procedures. Interviews with students confirmed that they are aware of the processes available to address their complaints. Plans are underway to evaluate the effectiveness of the Ombud’s services.
- The catalogue for 2005-2010 is available online and in print. The updated 2011-2016 catalogue is currently under development and is expected to be completed by December, 2011.
- The Faculty Handbook contains policies on faculty hiring, promotion, tenure and evaluation; protection of academic freedom and intellectual property. New faculty are informed of these policies during orientation. Interviews confirmed that faculty perceive these policies to be administered fairly and impartially.
- A questionnaire administered in 2010 found that the majority of faculty was acquainted with UPR – CA policies and procedures, faculty manual and strategic planning goals. However, complete survey results were not presented, and it is not known whether there were follow-up efforts to further disseminate information that was not familiar to faculty and staff.
- Students acknowledge that, in the past, trust in the administration was an issue. They perceive that the current administration has made efforts to improve communication. They express some concern about the undue influence of politics on administrative decision-making; this contention is refuted by the faculty, however, whose experience is that hiring and dismissal policies have been applied fairly and without regard to political considerations.

- When asked about their perception of the institutional climate, faculty were in strong agreement that the atmosphere at UPR – CA is characterized by openness and respect among students, faculty, staff and administration.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- The evaluation team notes that the prominent placement of “integrity” in UPR – CA’s Mission Statement is unusual among public universities. It is even more pleased to learn through conversations with faculty, staff and students that for the UPR – CA community, “integrity” is more than a word in the mission statement; it is a lived concept that is highly valued and widely manifested through attitudes and behavior.
- UPR—CA is commended for ensuring that students completed the courses affected by the recent student strike. Interviews with students confirmed that they were able to complete the coursework interrupted by the strike.
- UPR – CA is commended for its active involvement with the local community.

Suggestions

- Take steps to ensure that faculty, staff, and administrators have appropriate access to current policies and future revisions. Provide appropriate communication of policy revisions as needed.
- Continue a meaningful dialogue with elected student leaders and the student body in general, to ensure that students, administrators, and faculty understand and consistently follow the newly approved institutional by-laws.

Self-Study Chapter 2 – Planning, Resources, and Governance

This section of the report covers the following standards:

Standard	2:	Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal
Standard	3:	Institutional Resources
Standard	4:	Leadership and Governance

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 2 – Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- In 1994, strategic planning became part of a UPR system-wide effort.
- UPR – CA is guided by a Strategic Plan with goals and objectives that are clearly stated and linked to the UPR System Strategic Plan. This alignment is clearly demonstrated in the Self-Study, the institution’s statement of values, vision, and mission, and in the strategic responsibilities of the deanships.

- The 2006-2011 UPR – CA plan includes 10 key areas and 48 objectives, together with strategic directions, indicators of success, timeframes and persons responsible for implementation. A separate operational plan includes resources and sources of funding for carrying out each of the strategies. The Plan was revised in 2008.
- Information for planning was presented in multiple documents, making the processes difficult to grasp.
- The “indicators of success” are better described as measures, and generally lack targets that should demonstrate successful accomplishment of goals.
- In a separate document labeled “Table of Achievement,” results of the measurements are summarized for 2007 through 2010, although objectives did not report results for every year.
- Broad-based participation into the strategic planning process is assured through the Institutional Accreditation, Assessment, Planning and Budget Committee (CIAAPP). Evidence provided by UPR – CA officials substantiated that the Committee has met periodically since 2008.
- Planning is clearly prevalent, but the connection to budget and assessment is tenuous. There is no clear evidence of the systematic links between planning, budget, and assessment required by the standard, although there is evidence of the attempt to link planning to resource allocation at the institutional level.
- There was no written evidence that the Strategic Plan results are used systematically to drive further planning and resource allocation. Informally, academic officials noted that resource requests were based on conclusions drawn from assessment results. However, results from the current plan are being gathered through the Office of Planning and Institutional Studies and will be turned over to an Institutional Planning and Development Committee to form the basis for the next five year revision of the Strategic Plan.
- Evidence indicates that, at least in the areas with external accreditations, there is a process for linking departmental goals to campus goals, that there is an annual reporting process, and that some decisions are based on these reports.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- UPR – CA’s planning processes are comprehensive and include objectives that are well thought out, appropriate to its mission and lead to the accomplishment of its goals.
- The planning process has received broad-based participation from faculty, staff and students throughout the years of the plan.
- The Institutional Accreditation, Assessment, Planning, and Budget Committee (CIAAPP) is instrumental in ensuring alignment of critical institutional processes.

Suggestions

- The strategic planning process should be continuous.
- The current strategic plan contains numerous goals and objectives. It is suggested that upon revision, the plan focus on its areas of greatest priority, making it more manageable and likely to result in successful accomplishments.

- It would serve the institution well if the new Strategic Plan would incorporate goals, objectives, strategies, timeframes, measures, resources, indicators of success, and timelines, as well as responsible persons in a single location.
- For coordination purposes, the planning process should incorporate the 30 performance indicators reported to the UPR system.
- It would be helpful for UPR – CA to define numeric “indicators of success” (targets) against which results can be measured.
- Existing technology should be used for planning and reporting results.

Recommendations

- As the Middle States Commission expects a thorough review of assessment information to lead to either confirmation of current goals, plans, programs and services, or the appropriate modification of them, we recommend that UPR – CA’s planning processes include periodic assessment of goal attainment, such as quantitative and qualitative information that explicitly leads to conclusions about goal attainment and use of resources to achieve its purposes.
- The evaluation team recommends that the institution give prompt attention to providing adequate resources and expertise to support institutional planning.
- The institution should collect ongoing evidence that its goals and objectives reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results and are used for planning and resource allocation at the institutional and unit levels.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 3 – Institutional Resources
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Summary of Evidence and Findings

In MSCHE’s *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, two benchmarks are stipulated for institutional resources. The first one deals with the availability and accessibility of human, financial, technical, physical facilities and other resources necessary to achieve the institution’s mission and goal. The second benchmark focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency in the utilization of the institutional resources.

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- UPR – CA, one of eleven campuses of the UPR system, is dependent upon the UPR System for funding allocations. The allocations are based on a budget process beginning with the Chancellor’s request to the President. Funds are allocated based upon the prior year’s continuing budget, workload increases, and any approved special budget additions.
- Additional funding comes from external sources, including federal (mostly Pell grants to students) and other state funds.
- The UPR – CA’s financial situation mirrors the larger financial issues faced by the UPR system. The state government supports over 85% of the UPR system budget through a funding formula based upon 9.6% of the average state net income collected by state appropriations in the two prior fiscal years. Last academic year, the system faced a serious budget deficit. It is assumed that the System deficits are temporarily managed

through a one-time \$100 million line of credit from The Government Development Bank for Puerto Rico. During the time of this visit, the budget staff indicated that the net balance of the credit line was now closer to \$73 million. This credit line must be repaid over a three-year period.

- UPR – CA, like so many institutions across the United States, has experienced a reduction in operating funding since 2009-2010. The most precipitous reduction of 16.36% was between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. Minor increases were experienced in 2011-2012 and will continue through 2015, though they will hardly cover workload needs.
- The UPR System financial projections for 2012-2015 are based on a 4% yearly increase (Board of Trustees Certification No. 60); continuing state support through the 9.6% formula; an increase of nearly 25% in enrollment; no additional ARRA funds; and \$4,000,000 from the implementation of the \$800 Stabilization Fee, effective 2010-2011.
- One must note that the demographics do not support an increase in enrollment given the continued population decline in Puerto Rico.
- In the long term, ongoing budget difficulties in the UPR system, which is closely tied to the state's economy through the 9.6% formula funding, low tuition, and highly fluctuating external sources of income, may impact the ability of UPR – CA to fully deliver its mission and meet its goals.
- UPR – CA has a well-developed budget allocation process, which starts with the departmental requests that go to the Dean and Budget and Finance areas. The Dean then brings priorities to the Administrative Board, consisting of the Deans, selected department heads, two members of the Academic Senate and student representatives, who make recommendations to the Chancellor.
- UPR – CA has a number of capital and rehabilitation needs, most of which have been placed on hold until funding is forthcoming. Some of the campus buildings are showing wear and need renovation to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment. Athletic facilities are woefully inadequate for a campus of around 4,000 students and 500 employees -- not just from the standpoint of the athletic program, but also in consideration of the health and welfare of the campus community (*mens sana in corpore sano*).
- To meet the planned fiscal stringency, UPR – CA has relied on retirements, the closure of two Associate Degree programs, and on restrictions on equipment purchase. In addition, UPR – CA projects to reduce by attrition the size of the faculty by 27 and the support staff by 29 over the coming five years, which will put a strain on the institution's ability to provide a quality education.
- The UPR System has shown evidence that steps have been taken to ensure that audits for 2011 forward will be produced on time. It has developed a detailed timeline which, if followed, will produce an audit by December 31 of each year. In addition, the System has established a comprehensive Internal Control Program within the past year, with each campus having a designated contact.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- UPR – CA established the Institutional Accreditation, Assessment, Planning, and Budget Committee (CIAAPP) in 2008 to assure the alignment of assessment, planning and budget, which advises the Chancellor on the coordination of these critical processes.
- UPR – CA has robust, participatory budget processes for the allocation of General Funds and for the student technical fee that supports technology during these times of fiscal restraint.
- UPR – CA has begun budgeting funds for research, which will help strengthen the faculty and the institution.
- UPR – CA has made physical improvements in a number of areas, including Financial Aid and Admissions, the Counseling Department, and the Hotel Administration facility.
- UPR – CA created an External Resources Office in 2010 to increase external funding.
- UPR – CA has been highly successful in obtaining and using Federal grant funding.
- The School of Restaurant and Hotel Management and the Automotive Technology program as well as the Continuing Education Department have devised plans to provide services both on campus and elsewhere, which will increase outside revenue for the programs and the institution.
- In compliance with the mandate to secure financial stability outside of government funding, UPR – CA has identified external funding alternatives. Some of these are already in operation, and others are in their initial phases. Funding alternatives include Upward Bound, Student Support Services, Title V Grants, Title V – Coop II, Community Empowerment Project for Economic Development (CEPED), California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA), National Institution for Health (NIH), Continuing Education Division (DECEP), School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration, and Quick Lube Oil Change (TEAU Lube).

Suggestions

- While there is a well-developed budget process, it is not clearly linked to the University’s Strategic Plan. Every effort should be made to link budget allocations clearly to elements of the Plan.
- The institution should expand its efforts to seek external funding beyond Federal and other governmental grants and begin fundraising efforts from alumni and businesses. It might consider whether it would be more efficacious to run some of the auxiliary operations, like food service, as an institutional operation.
- One area of external funding that has not been exploited is that of externally funded faculty and student research. A robust externally funded research program will not only provide additional much needed funds, but will ultimately strengthen academic excellence.
- UPR – CA has identified over \$8 million of major capital needs and \$840,000 in rehabilitation and renovations. It needs to be creative and strongly lobby for support of the System and the government to receive these badly needed capital funds.
- While the System has recently begun to implement a system-wide internal control process, UPR – CA needs to have a campus-based Internal Control Program that becomes part of the institution’s culture. An Internal Control Program helps to ensure that daily operating practices and procedures are sufficient to minimize the possibility of operational failure, overspending, or other actions inconsistent with policy or in violation

of law. Simply stated, an Internal Control Program is designed to review, critique, and strengthen the institution's existing systems and procedures.

Recommendations

- While the UPR System has a Facilities Master Plan, it is recommended that the campus develop its own Facilities Master Plan through a widely participatory process including administration, faculty and students. Such a plan would tie facilities planning to UPR – CA’s Strategic Plan, academic program plans and other pressing needs, including athletic facilities. It would identify deferred maintenance and ultimately prioritize capital projects. Such comprehensive planning is especially important during times of restricted resources to insure that available funding is applied to the institution’s highest priorities. It would provide a ten to fifteen year blueprint for the construction and renovation of campus facilities, taking deferred maintenance into consideration. It would serve also as a useful tool for convincing both System and governmental funding agencies that capital priorities are strategically tied to the University’s mission and goals.
- It is recommended that the institution develop a planning budget and priority-setting document to connect its strategic plan with its available resources so as to produce realistic outcomes and clarify stakeholder expectations. Again, broad participation in this priority-setting project is encouraged and could include representatives of various campus community members including faculty and students. The task would be to develop a medium-term plan (three to five years) that outlines possible strategies in view of the precarious financial situation, including cost-cutting measures and program changes necessary to meet a continued budget reduction over a three to five-year period. The plan should also include a demographic analysis of the pool of college-qualified students who could be potential applicants to the institution.

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 4 – Leadership and Governance
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Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- UPR – CA provided the evaluation team with evidence that documents the leadership and governance policies and responsibilities of the UPR System and those of the institution.
- The institution’s system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.
- As evidenced by its Self-Study, March 2011 Monitoring Report, and the Assessment Report: UPR – CA Action Plan, the institution has focused great attention to foster and cultivate an open institutional culture, with the implementation of clear institutional policies specifying the respective authority of the different governance bodies and their respective roles and responsibilities in shared governance.
- The UPR – CA governance structure, including the roles of the Chancellor, Dean of Academic Affairs, Administrative Board, and the Academic Senate are clearly

delineated, as stated in a number of public laws, and is communicated to the campus on the UPR – CA Website and available in the Library.

- Communication between the Chancellor, President, and University Board to support a shared vision of one university system has been enhanced with regularly scheduled meetings.
- Discussions with constituents made it clear that the Chancellor and Deans are well respected by the college community for their integrity and creativity, and that they are well qualified for the positions they hold. Meetings held with students confirm the Chancellor has created an environment that encourages student leadership to take an active role in shared governance.
- As a means to support faculty and student research and to increase the number of external grants, the Chancellor is creating a Research Center that will house the Center for Faculty Research, the Center for Student Research and the External Funding Office. The External Funding Office will provide grant writing workshops and administrative support for faculty and student grant researchers.
- The institution has overcome a period of transition with leadership changes in the UPR system. The BOT is now committed to developing a formal succession policy. Following the established consultation process, on June 22, 2011, the BOT appointed Miguel Muñoz as President of the UPR System, effective immediately. This assures continuity and stability given that he had previously served as Acting UPR President and as Chancellor of the Mayaguez campus. The previous BOT President, Ygri Rivera, completed her term of service on the BOT. As of 9/17/2011 Luis Berríos became the newly elected BOT President. Until then he had held the position of 2nd Vice President.
- The UPR BOT has embarked on a process of self-assessment, as required by MSCHE. At its meeting of February 25, 2011, it hired a consultant to help with compliance with Standard 4. Although the BOT had conducted three prior self-assessment exercises, those had not included all current members. The BOT's self-assessment process has continued with meetings with the consultant, who led the BOT into an assessment of its performance. A rubric was administered and analyzed, and an action plan developed, which is beginning to be implemented.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- The institution is commended for improving communication within UPR – CA and for its commitment to creating and maintaining an Open University culture. UPR – CA appears to be committed to informing the college community of the institution's policies and responsibilities by discussing core issues and exploring possible solutions through departmental meetings with directors, meetings with the Administrative Board and Academic Senate, Faculty and Student meetings.

Suggestions

- While the UPR – CA administrators have made great effort to improve shared governance with the elected student leadership, it is recommended that the UPR administration reaffirm its commitment to actively promote an open and transparent dialogue with the student leadership by hosting a scheduled forum with the President and UPR administrators at least once a year.

- UPR – CA should continue to strengthen its orientation program for new and existing members of the campus community, including students. A program of this sort could be very valuable for the institution to discuss and disseminate information about the mission, strategic plan, goals, and the structure and operation of the governance model for the campus as an integral entity of the UPR system.

Recommendation

- Continue efforts to develop an assessment rubric within the Academic Year 2011-12 to assist UPR – CA in evaluating progress in implementation of the UPR Campus Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness Plan.

Self-Study Chapter 3 –Assessment

This section of the report covers the following standards:

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment
 Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 7 – Institutional Assessment.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- Administrators and campus leaders/decision makers sufficiently implemented their institutional assessment plan with results displayed in the UPR – CA Self-Study. An ample number of measurement tools were applied, campus interviews were conducted and the results are adequate to conclude that assessment is acceptable. Reflections on related issues and selected measurement tools are noted hereafter.
- An important element for guaranteeing the excellence of academic offerings is the continual evaluation of the university programs. The campus has been working to obtain professional accreditation from the appropriate agencies. In 2007, the Library was professionally evaluated by the ACRL. The School of Hotel and Restaurant Management was accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration in 2008, and Business Administration and Office Systems were accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs in 2011. Currently, the Social Sciences, Interior Design, Graphic Arts and Industrial Maintenance departments and the Counseling and Guidance Office are revising their programs to comply with their respective accreditation agencies.
- UPR – CA is making strong progress in developing its assessment process. Overall, the institution is developing and implementing an assessment process that evaluates its general effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards. This is evidenced by the production of the following documents and accomplishments: Five-Year University Assessment Plan 2006-2007 to 2010-2011, assessment trainings, and the incorporation of NSSE, FSSE and the accreditation of

several professional programs. In addition, UPR – CA is also designing intentional objectives and strategies to achieve its goals by utilizing technology and other performance indicators to assess academic progress, i.e., the Class Frequency Report, journals, rubrics, and portfolios in academic departments.

- The development of objectives and goals in harmony with mission is certainly a high priority, but a most pertinent question is: at what level are the objectives and goals being attained? No measurement instruments are displayed in the Self-Study to reflect a specific level of attainment. Accomplishment indicators are not always articulated or appended.
- The recent challenges experienced by the UPR System have provided an opportunity for reflection and action. The visiting team was given evidence of a credible planning process tied to resource allocation, which includes periodic assessment of outcomes and updates by institutional stakeholders. The System keeps a chart of Commission Requirements regarding progress: actions planned; activities in support of each action; assessment of whether activities have been initiated, are in progress or in sustained compliance. The outcomes of activities are updated in a timely fashion.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- Professional accreditation of key academic programs that add rigor and prestige to the institution.
- Accreditation of student services.
- Design and formation of certification programs by DECEP, the Continuing Education division, to respond to the needs of the commonwealth.
- The establishment of the external assessment measures NSSE and FSSE in 2010.
- The formation of the preschool for employees' children based upon the assessment of employee needs.
- The development of the Assessment and Accreditation Office and the hiring of the Director of Assessment.
- The development of objectives and goals by each academic department.
- Documentation of meetings notes, attendance at meetings, and training sessions.
- The fostering of a culture of transparency through growing assessment practices evidenced by solid documentation of meetings, trainings and workshops with key staff and university leadership.

Suggestions

- Focus on strengthening the assessment system to ensure that it is consistent throughout the entire university.
- Establish consistent assessment measures. For example, UPR – CA has a Strategic Plan, but how is it determined if the components of the Plan are being achieved? Stating an acceptable minimum level and then charting progress over time would tell Strategic Plan stakeholders if their efforts are effective and resulting in acceptable returns.
- Develop a baseline objective and goal accomplishment level. It is highly commendable that the Strategic Plan and assessment plans are living documents. However, considerable clarity of achievement levels would be attained if baseline measurement points were established.

- Adopt an assessment process that incorporates the use of technology i.e., Weaveonline, OPScan/Insight 4, Class Frequency Distribution Report, TrackDat, Survey Monkey etc. to more efficiently evaluate its success measures.
- Continue to seek accreditation of academic and student service programs.
- Incorporate into other academic programs the same assessment practices that proved successful for accredited programs.
- Incentivize assessment process with faculty through recognition of faculty who participate in assessment process.
- Establish a culture of assessment with staff through their quarterly and annual reports.
- At the conclusion of each quarter assess units and divisions to determine if adequate progress is being made. This practice should be done at unit levels and brought up to senior leadership under the University governance structure.
- Recalibrate plans and resource allocation to ensure adequate progress towards goals and the Strategic Plan during quarterly assessments.
- Share NSSE and FSSE data with the UPR – CA community in a timely fashion to support planning and resource allocation.
- Seek additional support from Central Administration to continue to provide the budgetary resources for the utilization of NSSE and FSSE to allow the university to further develop its assessment practices on an ongoing basis.
- Complete each assessment tool annually or at least on a 5-year schedule.
- Clearly, institutional assessment has led to institutional change as evidenced by the accreditation of bachelor degrees and Student Support areas. The ultimate goal is to develop a documented, organized and sustainable assessment process for the campus and its respective programs. This activity should include administration, faculty, non-teaching professionals, students and the external community. Quantitative and qualitative results would provide evidence upon which the multiple plans can be adjusted for future goal enhancements.
- Show evidence of how a recommended institutional change is reached based on inputs from the entire UPR – CA community.
- Better connect assessment results to physical and fiscal resource requests.

Recommendations

- Utilize the newly created position of Director of Assessment to further develop the culture of assessment at UPR – CA.
- Require that all academic departments and administrative units across the University incorporate assessment in their reporting. The assessment process needs to flow continuously throughout the University and be better connected to key institutional and unit level goals.
- Further develop a campus-wide system to disseminate and analyze assessment information to support planning and resource allocation.
- Adopt and fully implement the Institutional Assessment Plan 2011-2016, which is currently in draft form.
- Assess campus utilization and align it with the Strategic Plan to develop an independent comprehensive facilities master plan.
- Select common measurement tools and then establish baseline data for each assessment index.

- Continue efforts to develop an assessment rubric to assist UPR – CA in evaluating progress in implementation of the UPR Campus Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness Plan.

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 14 – Assessment of Student Learning.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- Generally, the institution is developing and implementing an assessment process to evaluate teaching and learning outcomes. As a result, the assessment of student learning is being demonstrated through intentional practices that incorporate teaching, learning, and achievement to assess UPR – CA’s progress towards both its mission and strategic plan. Moreover, the University has designed courses, programs and experiences that are rigorous, coherent and relevant to the mission of the University. In addition, student achievement is assessed through pre- and post-tests, rubrics, journals and other methods that demonstrate that the students have knowledge, skills and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education needs.
- The campus has been working on obtaining professional accreditation for additional programs from the appropriate agencies.
- As per Certification No. 43 of the Board of Trustees), UPR – CA maintains a 5-year cycle of program review to reaffirm relevance and quality and to determine effectiveness.
- The evaluation team could not find strong evidence of genuine applied student outcomes assessment. While the campus presented evidence of various charts and graphs for student assessment and program review, the team was unable to determine how these templates relate to a complete comprehensive assessment. While the faculty indicate that many courses include pre- and-post tests and employ rubrics for student assessment, there is no current comprehensive framework for capturing assessment data at the course and program level, analyzing that data and using the results to inform changes in teaching and learning.
- Assessment tools have been identified and some assessment has been accomplished. Assessment tools include pre- and post-tests, midterm and exit exams, and scoring rubrics. A concern is that there are many goals and objectives, and assessment of these student learning outcomes is set to begin in Fall 2011 and finish in 3 years. In addition, while rubrics as well as testing and course alignment have been created, there is not enough linkage to individual student learning outcomes. Furthermore, since the assessment plan has not been implemented in its entirety as yet, there is not a large body of evidence to analyze whether or not the general education program is meeting its goals. The testing center, however, has provided statistical support for departmental assessment tools.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- Accreditation of professional and student affairs programs.

- Learning Outcomes Assessment Tools developed in 2006-2007 to better evaluate academic programs.
- The establishment of external assessment measures NSSE and FSSE in 2010.
- Utilization of results from assessments to make recommendations for program enhancements to support learning.
- Engagement of Advisory Boards to support curricular and workforce development needs of the University.
- Change in course sequencing to support learning and student success.
- Employment of web interface for lectures to support the educational needs of digital natives.
- Development of the Assessment and Accreditation Office and the hiring of the Director of Assessment.
- Documentation of attendance at workshops and training sessions.

Suggestions

- A documented, organized, and sustainable assessment process should be the end-goal. Are UPR – CA students learning what administration and faculty want them to learn? It is critical that selected student learning assessment tools be reasonably accurate and truthful to provide valid data upon which student learning adjustments can be made. Curricular changes and resource allocation amendments are easier to justify if the requests are based on living data rather than an opinion survey or conjecture.
- Integrate the use of technology in assessment of student learning outcomes to efficiently evaluate programs and services.
- Institute a quarterly assessment process for all units and divisions and share results globally.
- Systematize the same assessment practices used for accredited programs.
- Adjust plans and budgets after quarterly assessments.
- Emphasize the importance of assessment at all levels to ensure continuous quality improvements.
- Systematize assessment to provide consistency, and confirm that student learning outcomes assessments are evenly applied throughout the University.
- Ensure that assessment of student learning is an ongoing process.
- Develop a comprehensive technology and facilities master plan that focuses on supporting student learning.
- Continue to develop advisory boards to congregate, collaborate and create more mechanisms to fundraise at UPR – CA.
- Encourage program directors to incorporate student learning outcomes results into the budgetary development process.
- Encourage faculty to compare assessment plans searching for common points. There might well be a single plan usable for the entire student body, thus allowing common interpretation and future planning.
- UPR – CA should consider developing a systematic student learning outcomes assessment plan linking program mission and goals to student learning outcomes, perhaps based on a 5-year cycle. Program teams are encouraged to select an appropriate instrument, develop a plan that focuses on program stakeholders and implement it on an

annual basis. It doesn't have to be extensive, just consistent. They could utilize such assessment methods as portfolios, student entry and exit interviews, the monitoring of graduation rates and the implementation of student satisfaction questionnaires. Plan underpinning could help improve course content, adjust program admissions and enhance the teaching-learning strategies. The plan would likely lead to the establishment of a baseline data set needed for periodic comparison of previous change/results and the need for future student learning outcome adjustment. Ultimately, student learning outcomes are all about the students.

- Identify possible initiatives to be undertaken to enhance the General Education program, including the use of appropriate learning outcome assessment measures and approaches. Such effort should also include closing-the-loop actions based on direct measures of learning outcomes.

Recommendations

- Provide the necessary resources for the Director of Assessment to fully develop the office of assessment
- Incorporate effective assessment practices, i.e., technology, rubrics, capstone projects and feedback from advisory boards.
- Develop a facilities master plan and a technology master plan to support teaching, learning and allocation of resources.
- Continue to evaluate the outcomes of the restructured general education requirements and share findings with the University community.
- Make clear consistent standards and methods to evaluate the level, quality, and quantity of learning consistent with the institution's mission. An assessment of placement and successful completion on student persistence and academic achievement would enhance the reputation of the institution.

Self-Study Chapter 4 – Student Life

This section of the report covers the following standards:

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention
Standard 9: Student Support Services

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 8 – Student Admissions and Retention

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- Because the admissions process requires prospective students to apply to the UPR system, rather than directly to the Carolina campus, UPR – CA appears to have little input into the recruitment process and, therefore, to have little use for an enrollment

management plan. Nonetheless, it does as much as possible to help recruit potential students through outreach to high schools.

- Admissions policies and regulations are well defined and available on the UPR – CA webpage. There is evidence that criteria include the General Application Index (IGS) based on the student's high school GPA + his/her College Board score and an admission index set by each academic program.
- Each department establishes its own minimum IGS, thus providing the institution with a greater opportunity to meet its mission with correct student placement. That index is submitted to the UPR System.
- A limited number of students (2.2%) are admitted who do not meet the admissions criteria. However, a student's IGS cannot be more than 20 points below specific program requirements. Information and an IGS calculator are available on the college webpage.
- By offering comprehensive information about academic programs and various sources of financial aid, the institution assists prospective students in making informed decisions about attending the institution.
- Those students who choose to apply to UPR – CA do so because it offers programs of interest and because of its geographic location.
- Total undergraduate student headcount enrollment for the first quarter term 2010-11 consisted of 4002 students, 77.1% of whom studied full-time, approximately 62% received financial aid, and 55.2% were female. Also, 65.2% of the student body enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs, 18.4% in associate degree programs, and 13.6% in transfer programs.
- Data on file as of 7/18/2011 show a full-time headcount of 3085 students and a part-time headcount of 917.
- Services for low achieving students are provided through DECEP summer camps, college preparatory courses, and workshops.
- Efforts to improve communication to students regarding college policies, academic requirements, financial assistance and services have been made. Information to prospective students is provided through guides, brochures, high school visits and counseling information sessions. Currently enrolled students receive a CD Rom outlining UPR – CA policies and attend a one-week orientation. The UPR – CA website is updated frequently. Great personal attention and campus-wide support is given throughout the admission and matriculation process, and during first year.
- Comprehensive information and advice regarding financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans and refunds is provided. The Financial Aid Offices publishes eligibility requirements in the college bulletin and on the web, information sessions are held on campus and financial aid staff attends workshops and training sessions. Internal and external evaluator reports indicate that the Financial Aid Office is in compliance with all regulations.
- UPR – CA has a student handbook, a student complaint system, and a grievance process with access to an ombudsperson. Recent updates to the student by-laws and code of conduct have been published and provided to the students and announced through email. These documents were developed by the parent institution, the UPR System.
- The institution offers a variety of activities and services to orient and support its new students. Such available activities contribute to student retention.

- Academic advising is conducted by each department for its majors, but course registration is handled by department directors, faculty, secretaries, and the Registrar. Online pre-registration is available. Those with special needs receive assistance.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- There are many things to be proud of at UPR – CA. Among them is that students are enthusiastic about the campus. They love their teachers and are very pleased with the quality of their academic programs. They are satisfied with the effectiveness of student services and with the interaction with the new administration. UPR – CA is to be commended for the student centered environment that has been created to support student achievement and success.
- Efforts to enhance student retention, including the reorganization of student support services and the improvement of academic support services with enhanced advisement, counseling, tutoring and mentoring services, is commendable. Monitoring of academic performance and study plans yields improvements in student success.

Suggestions

- It may benefit the institution to make transparent to faculty and students expected learning outcomes and assessment results and to conduct ongoing data analysis of student success, remediation results, etc.
- It may benefit the institution to measure the success of its students during and after their enrollment, whether they transfer, graduate, study part-time, continue their education, or study as non-degree student. This, of course, may require a dedicated Institutional Research specialist.

Recommendations

- The institution should seriously consider analyzing student persistence and attrition college-wide, as well as by academic program. A periodic review of retention data might help ascertain why some admitted students do not persist.
- The institution should make every effort to show how ongoing institutional activities inform institutional decisions regarding programs, services, and resource allocation.

Standard 9: Student Support Services

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 9 – Student Support Services

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- In partnership with the UPR System, UPR – CA provides a range of student support services appropriate to student needs. These services and programs are consistently supported by the UPR System.
- The context of Standard 9 requires a well-organized and appropriate program of student service delivery, including online and in person interactions. Within this context, topics such as the delivery of quality student services, accessibility of services, and consistency

of delivery services were evident in discussions and the evidence presented. Additionally, the areas of student engagement, student concern resolution, child-care, and levels of student participation in campus activities and athletic programs were also adequately addressed. Finally, it was also determined that the utilization of online services and technology in both delivery and communication with UPR – CA students plays an important role in student support services.

- The main focus of support services at UPR – CA is preventing students from dropping out of school, motivating them to continue with their chosen academic program, and enabling them to graduate within the expected period. The success is evident. Students and alumni praise the support and guidance provided to them in their efforts to move ahead in their career aspirations and educational goals.
- Student support is perceived as a priority on campus in terms of institutional objectives. Overall, many programs and opportunities are provided to help students achieve both their academic and personal goals. Such services create a comprehensive environment in which a student using these services can succeed. They comprise a rich variety of offerings, i.e., health, social and cultural activities, quality of life, special academic support programs, career services and others, with annual written reports prepared for the Dean of Students.
- Strengthening support services and quality of life are perceived as a specific goal in developing activities that promote and lead to greater student academic and personal achievement. This goal is also perceived as giving students the opportunity to exercise their rights and responsibilities, especially for students with disabilities.
- The Counseling Department was restructured to meet IACS (International Association of Counseling Services) criteria and reorganized as an Academic Service Department in 2006, providing individual counseling, group counseling and crisis intervention. Statistics were presented and verified for the period 2006-2008 offering a summary of the extent of services provided by this department in reaching more students with personal, family, and vocational situations. It was also indicated that assessment instruments were developed to evaluate the services offered and used by students. The data presented indicate that counseling greatly helps students stay in school and attain better grades. This was substantiated by feedback from students who also asserted that they were satisfied with the process.
- Support Services are undergoing further evaluation to ensure that the services provided are effective and impact student life. This effort also includes offering services during extended campus hours to meet the needs of that specific student population. UPR – CA has also demonstrated a commitment to serving students with childcare needs. Both male and female students who are parents are offered assistance in The Childcare Program. In addition, a Student Ombudsperson provides special attention to situations that may lead to formal complaints.
- Various activities were identified in the Self-Study Report that help support the objective of providing up-to-date information regarding student services to all students, such as orientation and counseling for new and current students, satisfaction surveys, free e-mail accounts for student to receive official information (e-mail notices).
- Information is made available to help students complete their studies successfully: a CD-ROM containing UPR – CA's catalog is provided to incoming students and further supplemented with additional orientation by the Registrar. In keeping with the objectives

of Student Support Services, such information is readily available at UPR – CA’s website.

- Student Support Services rely heavily on survey feedback from student and staff to continually improve services. Results of student surveys conducted for the Self-Study indicate a high level of satisfaction with the availability and quality of the services provided. The team’s interaction with the program directors confirmed the impression of a professionally knowledgeable, motivated, and caring staff. Students receive appropriate guidance and direction regarding obtaining services for which they are eligible including access to assistance with financial aid, advisement, counseling, and health service. Student grievance processes are documented, including access to the services of an ombudsperson.
- Procedures are in place to provide accommodations to students with special needs. The major objective is seen as helping a wide spectrum of disabled students adapt faster and better to university life by providing advisement, counseling, and quality medical services. Facilities have been designed and equipment purchased to satisfy their needs (AY 2008-2009). The Self-Study and site visit confirm that campus infrastructure improvements provide for handicap access.
- Within Student Services, the Office of Student Affairs supports student organizations on campus. Students are represented in institutional and faculty meetings, department committees, etc. Institutional commitment is for participation of all constituencies. The role of student organizations and their objective of guaranteeing the constitutional right of complete freedom of association within the student community and the entire student spectrum are very evident at UPR – CA: there are twelve (12) student organizations, ranging from Student Council through Students of Office Systems. In addition, an Honor’s Studies Program plays an important role in guiding students to pursue post-graduate studies. Other activities provided during the academic year include crime prevention, sexual harassment, stress management, self-esteem and prevention of violence against women.
- The Registrar’s Office and Student Support work closely to safeguard student academic information. Required annual notices on Family Educational Rights and Privacy are promulgated electronically. Students and new faculty members receive appropriate orientation with documentation that explains the institutional policy.
- There has been progress in the quality of the university cultural and social activities. Extracurricular activities for students are abundant and many students participate.
- Financial aid alternatives that guarantee student access to an affordable education have increased.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- Students express appreciation for the faculty and satisfaction with campus support services. The evaluators recognize and commend the commitment of the faculty and staff to their students.

Suggestions

- The Self-Study Report asserts that assessment of Student Support Services has been carried out in a number of offices to ascertain the level of services provided, but it

requires a little more effort, which UPR – CA is willing to make. This is commendable and recommended as assessment continues to become a vital criterion in the evaluation process.

- Initiate a needs assessment within the student support services area to identify areas for additional cross-training.
- UPR – CA would greatly benefit from actualizing the plan by which the student assessment methodology is outlined, applied and recorded.

Self-Study Chapter 5 – Faculty and Staff

This section of the report covers the following standards:

Standard 5: Administration

Standard 10: Faculty

Standard 5: Administration

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 5 – Administration

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- The institution has overcome a period of transition with leadership changes in the UPR System and in UPR – CA. Because of administrative turnover, the administration of the University is relatively new, having been hired in the past several years, but all are well qualified for their respective positions and work well together as a team. The administration has the support of the faculty and staff. Students say they are responsive to their needs and suggestions.
- Given its current enrollment and the number of faculty and supporting staff, UPR – CA is a small institution. There is a clear organizational chart with clearly defined roles. The review team believes that the current administrative structure is adequate for the size of the institution.
- Over the past decade the University has established rules and regulations.
- Job descriptions and responsibilities of staff are clearly established in the UPR Bylaws and are also held in the Office of Human Resources.
- There is a good system of evaluation for faculty and staff, but it is not uniformly applied across the institution. The Deans are evaluated on an on-going basis by the Chancellor, but with no formal process. The Chancellor is evaluated by a committee of the Academic Senate with the report sent to the President of the System.
- The University has made a valiant effort to improve communication throughout the institution. It has purchased Gmail. It has also purchased and installed Oracle e-Business suite to standardize financial operations as well as student information, H/R, and external resources management. While coming late, the University is making efforts to put necessary information systems in place to properly support the work of administrative leaders.
- In the evaluation team meetings with various constituents, it was clear that the leadership at UPR – CA understood the serious challenges facing them with tight financial

resources, high dependency on government support, declining revenues and increasing expenditures.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- UPR – CA’s new leadership team is commended for the stability provided to the institution at a time when it is facing serious budgetary problems. The willingness of the new administration to engage students and faculty in an open manner is very important in enhancing communications among all parties involved.
- UPR – CA’s now provides institutional e-mail, Gmail, at no cost to faculty, staff and students to improve communications throughout the institution.
- UPR – CA’s implemented Oracle e-Business suite to standardize operations and reporting across the University and to provide administrators the data necessary to run their areas.
- There has been a concerted effort to insure quality through the use of external auditors to assess administrative, operational, academic and fiscal effectiveness of financial aid.

Suggestions

- We support the Self-Study’s suggestion that outcomes assessments be fully incorporated into administrative processes on campus.
- Assessment is effective when all units are assessed. The University needs to establish a systematic assessment process to evaluate support services.

Recommendation

- The institution meets the standard for excellence in administration, although the review team expects that the new leadership of the university should engage in a continuous strategic planning and priority setting exercise in anticipation of possible continued financial difficulties.

Standard 10: Faculty

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 10 – Faculty

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- The institution uses the faculty, staff, and administration hiring, evaluation and dismissal policies of the UPR system. Articles 42, 43, and 44 of the UPR General By-laws govern faculty recruitment, retention, tenure, and promotion. There are stated guidelines for faculty ranking and responsibilities. The Academic Senate, through Certification 022, 03-04, governs the evaluation process of the faculty. The criteria and process from Department to the Administrative Board are appropriate. This information is found in the Faculty Manual, drawn from the UPR By-laws. Most of the faculty is aware of these policies.
- The student body is served by 213 faculty and 252 non-teaching staff. The 2010-2011 faculty profile shows that 51.6% are full-time and 48.4% are part-time.

- Data show that the institution employs qualified professionals (full-time and part-time) with appropriate credentials and experience. All faculty now hold at least a Master's degree. A large percentage already holds the doctorate, with a growing number working on attaining a doctoral degree (Ed. D. or Ph.D.).
- As part of its strategic plan objectives UPR – CA has increased the percentage of faculty with doctoral degrees over the past several years. All tenure-track teaching or research faculty recently hired hold a terminal degree. In the same time period, however, the percentage of full-time faculty has decreased from 60% to 52%. Additional retirements are anticipated, but prospects for replacement are not promising at this time due to budgetary constraints. Fewer faculty on board, however, means that remaining faculty may be asked to teach more classes or that class size will grow.
- Faculty appear to be effective and committed teachers. They comply with their contractual obligations, such as teaching load and office hours. Faculty-student interaction, as reported by students, faculty and staff, is found to be admirable. Currently, faculty are clearly involved in curriculum development and a documented process exists for creation and revision of the curriculum. The process begins at the department level and is brought through the appropriate channels for development. The goals and objectives are found in the department annual reports. However, it is not clear how the results are tied to budgeting and planning.
- Faculty communicate the planning of their courses through a course syllabus frequently revised.
- The faculty and other academic personnel demonstrate their willingness to participate in institutional planning and assessment as well as in college governance. They characterize the academic atmosphere as one of creation and collaboration and feel well integrated into the life of the institution.
- There is excellent support from faculty and other qualified professionals (librarians, counselors, researchers, and a psychologist) to accomplish the academic mission of the institution. Faculty benefits include an array of leaves, a pension plan, financial assistance for those who seek to achieve terminal degree, free tuition for faculty and immediate family at any UPR campus, and there is evidence that, until the current fiscal crisis, the institution sought to fulfill its responsibility towards the faculty with released time opportunities and support for professional development.
- In addition, the UPR – CA provides support for teaching faculty to remain up-to-date in their fields. The Academic Research and Creative Works Committee has supported faculty well over the last 10 years by funding a total of 57 projects. UPR – CA has also supported training in the use of technology. New full-time as well as part-time faculty participate in an orientation in the summer, which introduces them to all facets of college life and employee information.
- Fiscal constraints halted promotions in 2008-09 and 2009-10, although faculty members were still recommended by their department by virtue of their merits.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- The team commends UPR– CA for the quality and stability of its faculty.
- UPR– CA has increased the percentage of faculty with a terminal degree through hiring goals and support for pursuing degrees.

- UPR– CA offers a two-day orientation for full and part-time faculty.
- The adjuncts are well integrated into the UPR – CA community and academic mission.
- The visiting team recognizes the redirection of the institution regarding research and its support for a culture of change. As a means to encourage faculty and student research and to increase the number of external grants, the Chancellor is creating a Research Center to house the Center for Faculty Research, the Center for Student Research and the External Funding Office.
- The faculty are very committed to the students they educate. They find it very rewarding to get them to succeed. The evaluation team finds it heartening to see the close ties between students and faculty and how faculty appear to make every effort to serve as a link between the students and the community in a variety of ways.
- Various successful accreditation efforts have recently taken place: This is a credit to the hard work of the faculty.

Suggestions

- Continue to provide support for and encourage faculty to pursue terminal degrees.
- Continue to receive input on the types of professional development needed.
- The External Funding Office will provide grant writing workshops and administrative support for faculty and student grant researchers. Both the administration and the faculty are encouraged to find ways to continue in that direction as much as possible.
- Continue to support faculty promotions.
- Monitor decreasing percentage of full-time tenure-track faculty and analyze the relationship over time between faculty performance with an increased teaching load and student learning outcomes as it may affect academic excellence.

Self-Study Chapter 6 – Curriculum and Academic Offerings

This section of the report covers the following standards:

Standard	11:	Educational Offerings
Standard	12:	General Education
Standard	13:	Related Educational Activities

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 11 – Educational Offerings.

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- Excellence of academic offerings is guaranteed through ongoing evaluation of programs. All UPR – CA’s educational offerings are evaluated on a cyclical basis (five-year cycles) to ensure academic offerings are current and reaffirm quality and significance. Furthermore, the majority of these programs are in the process of being professionally certified or accredited based on criteria specific to the discipline, the standards, and the

assessment process specified by the accrediting agency. Systemic assessment of course offerings and accreditations provide the appropriate content, rigor and coherence.

- All current syllabi are reviewed by faculty and communicated accordingly to the academic community in terms of programs, course content, and student guidance. The syllabi are evaluated to ascertain that they contain all of the elements of an effective syllabus, course objectives and course outcomes, and further, include all appropriate education outcomes relevant to a specific course.
- UPR – CA’s educational resources are readily available to all students, including traditional classroom students and special needs students. Educational resources are also found to be useful to students in attaining the knowledge and skills they need to meet their learning goals and career objectives.
- The process of academic program review and assessment, including ensuring that expected learning outcomes are represented in each course and effectively communicated to students, was confirmed. In supporting academic offerings the availability of necessary learning resources for students are also evaluated. Furthermore, the effectiveness of UPR – CA’s process to facilitate transfer credit for academic offerings is also taken into consideration.
- UPR – CA’s Self-Study Report outlines the university’s five baccalaureate degrees available uniquely on their campus that respond to the needs of the students, the community and academic disciplines. These programs appear to be consistent with the mission of the institution and of sufficient content, scope and duration. They are conducted at levels of rigor appropriate to the programs offered.
- A “Culture of Institutional Evaluation and Assessment” characterizes the evaluation of academic programs, and an Annual Achievements Report is submitted to the Dean for Academic Affairs. These reports are based on the assessment of student learning and program outcomes with respect to the goals and objectives of the academic programs. It was evident that recommendations are implemented where necessary to improve student learning and program effectiveness. The Self-Study Report does indicate that some of the academic programs are in a more advanced stage of assessment than others, with changes incorporated as may be indicated in the teaching-learning process, curricular revisions, and continuous academic program improvement.
- Two specific activities ensure that quality education is provided that is focused on persistently improving the teaching-learning process. First, practicums are offered that evaluate the competencies of graduating students aligned with input on these competencies from related industries. Second, based on input from the assessment process, learning objectives outlined in the course syllabi are periodically revised as may be needed in terms of instructional and evaluation strategies, methods, textbooks, bibliography, and supplemental activities that contribute to developing information skills or literacy. The latter was identified as an essential component for all educational programs and it is evident that steps are taken to integrate this element to all disciplines in UPR – CA’s curricula. The development of technological competency at all levels is identified as a priority. This effort is integrated through the Faculty Center for Resource and Technology Support unit with the objective of providing facilities, resources and support. The objective is to stimulate professional development in emerging technologies and other elements that impact the teaching-learning process and promotes academic excellence.

- Finally, UPR – CA has established norms and procedures for articulation and transfer programs with active transfer programs in five specific areas – Education, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Allied Programs in Health Science, and Engineering.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- Excellence of academic offerings is guaranteed through ongoing evaluation.

Suggestion

- Evaluate feasibility of short-term offerings such as certificates of achievement and academic certificates in emerging fields of study to meet immediate workforce needs and to serve as a springboard to degree programs in those fields.

Recommendations

- Imbed critical thinking outcome in course syllabi.
- Continue to promote an aggressive culture of program review, course review, and outcomes assessment.

Standard 12: General Education

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 12 – General Education

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- UPR -- CA has developed a General Education Program designed to promote the mission of the College. The program provides students the skills necessary to be competent in their chosen field or have the foundation from their associate degree to transfer to a bachelor degree. They are of sufficient scope to enhance the intellectual growth of students and are linked to the UPR Central Administration’s Strategic Plan *Diez para la Década* 2006-2016 goals. The Committee of Accreditation, Assessment, Planning, and Budget identified a set of attributes necessary for all graduates with broad input from faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and employers. These attributes became the basis for which the mission, broad outcomes, and 12 general education goals were formulated. Faculty, Department heads, the Academic Dean, Associate Academic Dean, and the Director of Assessment and General Education confirmed the information in the Self-Study report.
- The incoming class of 2009-2010 operates under the new general education program of 12 goals, with all bachelor programs of study having 44 credits of general education. The associate degree programs have between 25-30 credits in general education. Each general education goal is aligned with baccalaureate co-curricular and concentration courses found in the alignment chart of the General Education Plan. This program prepares students to become proficient in oral and written communication in English and Spanish and scientific and quantitative reasoning, develop technological competency, and be knowledgeable in a body of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives. Faculty are provided adequate training through workshops, seminars, and PowerPoint presentations.

- UPR – CA has supported the General Education Program with time and resources, including a general education committee and director. However, the program is not well communicated to students. The Student Manual is lacking in information. While it describes the 12 goals, it does not tell the students which courses they will need to take.
- Interdisciplinary seminars have been created and students take capstone courses - primarily internships or practicums to meet the general education goals. A strength of the general education program is the relationship with industry partners, which offers real-life experiences to the students.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- Partnerships with industry that offer real-life experience to students.
- Support to the academically underprepared students.

Suggestions

- Continue to review general education requirements so that they appropriately prepare students in both transfer and career degree programs.
- Review the number of credits in the general education program as compared to the number of credits in the major, taking into consideration that some information in the general education courses is taught in the major courses.

Recommendations

- Implement the appropriate assessment plans for all programs for bachelor and associate degree programs, including appropriate number of objectives to assess.
- Improve student manual to include the general education courses they will need to take.
- Publish General Education program in the catalogue and website in a timely fashion.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 13 – Related Educational Activities

Summary of Evidence and Findings

Based on a review of the Self-Study, other institutional documents, and interviews with faculty, staff, students, and others, the team developed the following conclusions relative to this standard.

- UPR – CA has no branch campus, no additional instructional sites, and no contracted providers. It offers no Distance Education programs.
- Continuing Education operations on most college campuses tend to be more agile than academic departments. As such, they are usually able to be on the cutting edge of instructional program design and technology and can be an important contributor to the degree programs in providing new directions and techniques based on learning from the global industry. The institution makes every effort to live up to the mission of the UPR to serve the people of its region and of the island by presenting opportunities to improve cultural as well as socio-economic conditions.
- DECEP, the UPR – CA Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies, provides services to the external community and makes every efforts to respond to its needs. It has been effective in maintaining excellent community relations, fulfilling the

evolving needs of its traditional and non-traditional student neighbors for continuing education and for professional and personal self-improvement. Credit and non-credit courses offered by qualified professionals responsible for the design, delivery and academic oversight are intended to offer lifelong development to those who seek it on a flexible schedule. Current programmatic offerings cover a wide range of topics in various disciplines, as outlined in DECEP's September 2010-June 2011 catalogue. A series of additional catalogues from previous years were also provided as further evidence of progress made in the division.

- In collaboration with faculty, DECEP offerings range from traditional courses (such as developmental skills in math, English and Spanish) to courses for personal growth and others structured to the needs of current school teachers to maintain and enhance their skills or achieve certification. Offerings fulfill both the UPR – CA mission and vision and those of DECEP, as outlined in the evidence documents provided.
- The institution recognizes that some students need help in improving their quantitative and analytical skills, their English oral/written skills, as well as their technology and mathematical skills. Non-credit pre-college level courses, taken prior to or concurrent with enrollment in degree credit courses, are a building block to enhance the success of these underprepared students. Systematic procedures (tests or measures) are used to identify them, and they are given appropriate referral and support services.
- DECEP contributes significantly to the UPR – CA culturally, intellectually and fiscally. Current operations are estimated at \$300K annually, with a 50% margin, and deserved attention during the team visit.
- During the visit the evaluation team met with several members of the Continuing Education staff. The newly appointed Director recognizes the enormous opportunity of growing the division in a focused and strategic manner with a variety of different programming options as well as providing an additional revenue stream to support the institution financially.
- The Director and the Continuing Education team display valuable experience in entrepreneurship, marketing and business development and instructional program design. Members speak with enthusiasm about their work and seem ready to take on the challenges presented. Everyone seems well poised and prepared to meet the expectations of the Continuing Education operations. The evaluation team's impression is that the DECEP team works well and is able to take advantage of the skill sets each team member brings to the operation.
- The DECEP team recognizes that it enjoys the opportunity to sell an educational product. The reputation of UPR – CA, its faculty and facilities minimize the challenge of selling short courses and other education programs. As a center of entrepreneurial activity, the staff recognizes that the expectations for the financial support they can provide to UPR – CA will continue to grow. They also recognize that their role is critical in image and brand enhancement of UPR – CA throughout the community at large.

Significant accomplishments, significant progress, exemplary/innovation practices, or commendations

- The Institution should be commended for its community involvement and for its efforts to be responsive to the needs of its neighbors. For example, since 2009 Honors students have worked with the Dr. Clemente Fernández Elementary School in San

Anton, Carolina to tutor, tell stories, offer workshops in drawing, maintenance, landscaping, and recycling, donate school materials, create murals, and assist on Field Days.

Suggestions

- UPR – CA should consider evaluating and synchronizing curriculum and program development across all the academic departments and the manner in which intellectual property is shared among all stakeholders.
- A periodic evaluation of the effect of DECEP offerings on the institution’s resources should take place.
- Continuing Education might want to seek opportunities for cultural exchange programs.
- UPR – CA should make every effort to show evidence of effectiveness in the developmental programs for underprepared and low-achieving students by analyzing the impact of the skills development programs on student achievement and retention and by demonstrating how programs and support services help these students achieve expected learning goals.
- At the same time, UPR – CA should spare no efforts in finding a way to support a robust tutoring program for all its students.

Va. Documents Consulted and Individuals Interviewed.

Below is a sample of documents reviewed. Other documents, including those listed in the self-study for every chapter, and others provided on site were also reviewed as appropriate for the various standards. The team commends the institution for the documentation provided in the exhibit room.

Ley de la Universidad de Puerto Rico (Ley número 1 de 20 de enero de 1966, según enmendada)
Comité Asesor del Rector. Experiencia y Retos (4 de marzo de 2011)
UPR Código de Conducta Estudiantil
UPR Reglamento General de Estudiantes de la Universidad de Puerto Rico
Academic Senate Certifications
UPR General By-laws
UPR – CA Course Catalogue
UPR – CA Self-study Report August 2011
UPR – CA Monitoring Report March 2011
UPR – CA Websites
UPR – CA Visión y Misión (Plan Estratégico) de la UPR – CA a partir de la aprobación por el Senado Académico
Academic Program Support Documents
Academic Senate Meeting Minutes
Administrative Board Meeting Minutes
Alumni Documents
Budget documents (UPR Audited Financial Statements; General and External Funds Allocations; External Resources Received and Projected; Budget Distribution and Projection by Program; Budget Distribution and Projection by Category Expenses;

Statement of Projected Revenue and Expenses for Consolidated Budget; Academic Resources and Student Enrollment Projections; Personnel Counts and Compensation Planning; Report on Compliance from Ernst & Young; Strategic Plan Alignment with Budget Distribution; Title V spreadsheet; Integrated Budget Project Flow Chart; General Fund Income – UPR; Technology Fee Distribution; Revision to the Base Budget of the General Fund, FY 2011-2012; Notes to Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards, with Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs and Summary Schedule of Prior Audits Findings)

Certification Statement: Compliance with MSCHE Requirement of Affiliation and Federal Title IV Requirements, Effective October 1, 2009

Chancellor's Annual Reports

Deanship Documents

Decanal annual Reports

DECEP Documents

Department Meeting Minutes

Departmental Self-Study Reports for accreditation

Documents in support of Standards of Excellence

Faculty Manual (drawn from the UPR By-laws)

Junta de Síndico, UPR, Certificación Número 7 (2011-2012)

Junta de Síndico, UPR, Política Institucional sobre las extenciones de los derechos de matrícula en la Universidad de Puerto Rico (Propuesta Aprobada por la Junta el 8 de Agosto 2011)

Library Documents

Meeting Minutes (Junta Universitaria, Chancellor and President, Faculty Meetings)

Regulations for the Periodic Evaluation of Academic Programs at the University of Puerto Rico

Title V Grant Workshops

Below is a sampling of individuals interviewed by members of the evaluation team. Other individuals were also interviewed as appropriate for the various standards.

Self-Study Steering Committee

Dr. Awilda Nuñez, Chair, Self-Study Steering Committee & Accreditation Liaison Officer

Dr. Raúl Otero, Co-Leader of Area I – Mission & Integrity

Prof. José Colón, Co-Leader of Area I – Mission & Integrity

Prof. Miguel Pérez, Co-Leader of Area II – Governance & Strategic Planning

Prof. Wanda Pantojas, Co-Leader of Area II – Governance & Strategic Planning

Prof. Lydia Rodríguez, Co-Leader of Area III – Assessment

Prof. Roberto Vizcarrondo, Co-Leader of Area III – Assessment

Prof. Stanley Portela, Co-Leader of Area IV – Student Life

Dr. Noraida Domínguez, Co-Leader of Area IV – Student Life

Prof. Marisol Rodríguez, Co-Leader of Area V – Faculty & Staff

Prof. Ángel Maldonado, Co-Leader of Area V – Faculty & Staff

Dr. Kattia Walters, Co-Leader of Area VI – Curriculum

Prof. Kathryn Robinson, Co-Leader of Area VI – Curriculum

Prof. Carmen Luz Cruz, Director, Planning Office, Instructor

Mr. Orlando Santiago Meléndez, President of Student Council

Mr. Javish Rodríguez, Vice-President of Student Council

Ms. Luz M. Cortijo, MSCHE Administrative Assistant of UPR – CA
Ms. Elisse León Álvarez, Student of School of Hotels & Restaurants Administration
Ms. Juliana Ramírez, Student of Business Administration
Mr. Wilfredo Inle Alemán, Alumni

Team Meetings

- Academic Dean, Academic Department Heads, Program Directors, Library Director
- Student body representatives and Student Government (26 attendees)
- Open Meeting with UPR – CA community (69 attendees)
- Academic Senate (17 attendees)
- Academic Dean and General Education Coordinator
- Non-academic Directors and staff (56 attendees)
- Assessment, Strategic Planning and Accreditation Liaisons for Academic Departments
- Alumni (10 attendees)
- Advisory Board (4 attendees)
- Faculty representatives (41 attendees)
- Strategic Planning Committee
- Physical Planning Office representative
- Dr. Ana Falcón, Dean of Academic Affairs
- Mr. Rafael Gierbolini, Dean of Administrative Affairs
- Dr. Geraldo Perfecto, Dean of Student Affairs
- Staff of the Student Affairs Deanship

Meeting with Restaurant and Hotel Administration - Dr. Patricia Sinatra

- Prof. Miguel Pérez, Dean of Hotel and Restaurant Administration
- Prof. Jonathan Ramos, Assistant Professor
- Ms. Marilyn Rivera, Instructor
- Ms. Keren Torres, Administrative Assistant

Meeting with Area I - Dr. Victor Gielisse

- Dr. Raul Otero, Assistant Professor
- Prof. José Colón, Instructor

Meeting with Administrative Dean and Physical Resources Director - Dr. Kenneth H. Levison and Mr. Eric Almonte

- Prof. Rafael Gierbolini, Dean for Administrative Affairs
- Mr. Herman Muñoz, Physical Resources Director

Meeting with Administrative Dean, Budget Director and Staff - Dr. Reginetta Haboucha and Dr. Kenneth H. Levison

- Prof. Rafael Gierbolini, Dean for Administrative Affairs
- Ms. Sarahí Guadalupe, Budget Director
- Dr. Mónica LLadó, Assistant to Vice-president for Academic Affairs, UPR System
- Mr. Willie Rosario, Budget Director, UPR System
- Dr. María del Pilar Toral, External Resource Director

- Milagros José, Budget Specialist
- Christán Toledo, Director, Information System

Meeting with Academic Dean and Institutional Assessment Coordinator - Dr. Eric Almonte, Dr. Sharon Ronco, and Dr. Victor Gielisse

- Dr. Ana E. Falcón, Dean for Academic Affairs
- Ms. Cristina Martínez, Assessment and General Education Director

Meeting with Area IV - Dr. Héctor López

- Prof. Stanley Portela, Library Director
- Dr. Gloria Oliver, Counseling Director
- Dr. Noraida Domínguez, Instructor of Information Literacy
- Prof. Milagros Ramos, Student Ombudsperson
- Ms. Celia Méndez, Admissions Office Director
- Dr. Gerardo Perfecto, Dean of Student Affairs

Meeting with Administrative Dean, Finance Director and Staff - Dr. Reginetta Haboucha and Kenneth H. Levison

- Prof. Rafael Gierbolini, Dean for Administrative Affairs
- Mr. Juan Torres, Finance Director, UPR – CA
- Mr. José Márquez, Assistant Director, Finance Office, UPR System
- Dr. Mónica LLadó, Assistant to Vice-president for Academic Affairs, UPR System
- Ms. Sarahí Guadalupe, Budget Director
- Milagros José, Budget Specialist
- Mr. Willie Rosario, Budget Director, UPR System

Meeting with Academic Dean, Institutional Research Coordinator and Area III - Dr. Eric Almonte

- Dr. Ana E. Falcón, Dean for Academic Affairs & Coordinator of Outcomes Assessment
- Dr. María del Pilar Toral, Director of External Resources
- Dr. Maricela Porbén, Associate Professor
- Ms. Cristina Martínez, Assessment and General Education Director
- Prof. Lydia Rodríguez, Associate Professor
- Prof. Roberto Vizcarrondo, Assistant Professor
- Prof. Carmen L. Cruz, Planning and Institutional Research Director

Meeting with Area VI - Dr. Héctor López

- Dr. Kattia Walters, Faculty Research Center
- Prof. Kathryn Robinson, English Department Director
- Prof. Wanda Pantojas, Assistant Professor
- Dr. Lizaida López, Assistant Professor
- Dr. Evelyn Ortiz, Head Professor
- Prof. Awilda Vélez, Student Support Services Director

Meeting with Administrative Dean and Assistant Dean - Dr. Patricia Sinatra

- Prof. Rafael Gierbolini, Dean for Administrative Affairs

- Mr. Gregory Bermúdez, Assistant Dean for Administrative Affairs

Meeting with DECEP and CEPED - Dr. Victor Gielisse

- Mr. Luis Rivera Oyola, Continuing Education Division Director
- Ms. Ivelisse Casado, Continuing Education Division, Executive Assistant
- Prof. Teresita Ibarra, Instructor

Meeting with Ombudsperson Official - Dr. Sharon Ronco

- Prof. Milagros Ramos, Student Ombudsperson

Meeting with Academic Dean and General Education Coordinator - Dr. Victor Gielisse

- Dr. Ana E. Falcón, Dean for Academic Affairs
- Ms. Cristina Martínez, Assessment and General Education Director
- Prof. Wanda Rodríguez, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Facilities Tour - Dr. Kenneth H. Levison

- Prof. Rafael Gierbolini, Dean for Administrative Affairs
- Mr. Herman Muñiz, Physical Resources Director

Dr. Patricia Sinatra

- Prof. Carmen L. Cruz, Planning and Institutional Research Director
- Prof. Stanley Portela, Library Director

Meeting with Academic of Student Affairs, Registrar Admissions, DECEP Directors, and Area IV Coordinator - Dr. Patricia Sinatra

- Dr. Gerardo Perfecto, Dean for Student Affairs
- Mr. Abelardo Martínez, Registrar
- Ms. Celia Méndez, Admissions Office Director
- Prof. Carmen L. Cruz, Planning and Institutional Research Director
- Prof. Stanley Portela, Library Director
- Dr. Noraida Domínguez, Instruct of Information Literacy
- Ms. Ivelisse Casado, Continuing Education Division, Executive Assistant
- Mr. Luis Rivera Oyola, Director, Continuing Education Division

Dr. Sharon Ronco

- Prof. Mario J. Maura, Business Administration Director
- Prof. Carmen L. Cruz, Planning and Institutional Research Director

Dr. Reginetta Haboucha

- Chancellor Trinidad Fernández-Miranda, UPR – CA
- Dr. Ibis L. Aponte-Avellanet, Vice President for Academic Affairs, UPR System
- Dr. Mónica LLadó, Executive Assistant to Vice President of Academic Affairs, UPR System

Dr. Kenneth H. Levison

- Mrs. Elizabeth Negrón, Human Resources Director
- Prof. Rafael Gierbolini, Dean for Administrative Affairs

Dr. Cheryl Reagan

- Department Chairs
- Dr. Ana Falcón, Academic Dean, Ms. Cristina Martínez, General Education Director, and Prof. Wanda Rodríguez, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Meeting with Assessment, Strategic Planning and Accreditation Liaison for Academic Departments - Dr. Sharon Ronco

- Dr. Awilda Núñez, MSCHE-Liaison
- Prof. Carmen L. Cruz, Planning and Institutional Research Director
- Ms. Cristina Martínez, Assessment and General Education Director

VI. Summary of Recommendations for Continuing Compliance and Requirements

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

The institution’s mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates who the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education, clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are used to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 1 – Mission and Goals

There are neither recommendations nor requirements for Standard 1.

Standard 2: Planning, Resource allocation, and Institutional Renewal

An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 2 – Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

Recommendations

- As the Middle States Commission expects a thorough review of assessment information to lead to either confirmation of current goals, plans, programs and services, or the appropriate modification of them, we recommend that UPR – CA’s planning processes include periodic assessment of goal attainment, including quantitative and qualitative

information that explicitly leads to conclusions about goal attainment and use of resources to achieve its purposes.

- The evaluation team recommends that the institution give prompt attention to providing adequate resources and expertise to support institutional planning.
- The institution should collect ongoing evidence that its goals and objectives reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results and are used for planning and resource allocation at the institutional and unit levels.

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

The human, financial, technical, facilities, and other resources necessary to achieve an institution's mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution's mission, the effective and efficient use of the institution's resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 3 – Institutional Resources
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Recommendations

- While the UPR System has a Facilities Master Plan, it is recommended that the campus develop its own Facilities Master Plan through a widely participatory process including administration, faculty and students. Such a plan would tie facilities planning to UPR – CA's Strategic Plan, academic program plans and other pressing needs, including athletic facilities. It would identify deferred maintenance and ultimately prioritize capital projects. Such comprehensive planning is especially important during times of restricted resources to insure that available funding is applied to the institution's highest priorities. It will provide a ten to fifteen year blueprint for the construction and renovation of campus facilities, taking deferred maintenance into consideration. It will serve also as a useful tool for convincing both System and governmental funding agencies that capital priorities are strategically tied to the University's mission and goals
- It is recommended that the institution develop a planning budget and priority-setting document to connect its strategic plan with its available resources so as to produce realistic outcomes and clarify stakeholder expectations. Again, broad participation in this priority-setting project is encouraged and could include representatives of various campus community members including faculty and students. The task would be to develop a medium-term plan (three to five years) that outlines possible strategies in view of the precarious financial situation, including cost-cutting measures and program changes necessary to meet a continued budget reduction over a three to five-year period. The plan should also include a demographic analysis of the pool of college-qualified students who could be potential applicants to the institution.

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active government body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 4 – Leadership and Governance

Recommendation

- Continue efforts to develop an assessment rubric within the Academic Year 2011-12 to assist UPR – CA in evaluating progress in implementation of the UPR Campus Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness Plan.

Standard 5: Administration

The institution's administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution's organization and governance.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 5 – Administration

Recommendations

- The institution meets the standard for excellence in administration, although the review team expects that the new leadership of the university should engage in a strategic planning and priority setting exercise in anticipation of possible continued financial difficulties.

Standard 6: Integrity

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 6 – Integrity

There are neither recommendations nor requirements for Standard 6.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 7 – Institutional Assessment.

Recommendations

- Utilize the newly created position of Director of Assessment to further develop the culture of assessment at UPR – CA.
- Require that all academic departments and administrative units across the University incorporate assessment in their reporting. Assessment process needs to flow continuously throughout the University and be better connected to key institutional and unit level goals.

- Further develop a campus-wide system to disseminate and analyze assessment information to support planning and resource allocation.
- Adopt and fully implement the Institutional Assessment Plan 2011-2016, which is currently in draft form.
- Assess campus utilization and align it with the strategic plan to develop an independent comprehensive facilities master plan.
- Select common measurement tools and then establish baseline data for each assessment index.
- Continue efforts to develop an assessment rubric to assist UPR – CA in evaluating progress in implementation of the UPR Campus Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness Plan.

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

The institution seeks to admit students whose interest, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students' educational goals.

UPR -- CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 8 – Student Admissions and Retention

Recommendations

- The institution should seriously consider analyzing student persistence and attrition college-wide, as well as by academic program. A periodic review of retention data might help ascertain why some admitted students do not persist.
- The institution should make every effort to show how ongoing institutional activities inform institutional decisions regarding programs, services, and resource allocation.

Standard 9: Student Support Services

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution's goals for students. In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 9 – Student Support Services

There are neither recommendations nor requirements for Standard 9.

Standard 10: Faculty

The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 10 – Faculty

There are neither recommendations nor requirements for Standard 10.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence that are appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 11 – Educational Offerings.

Recommendations

- Imbed critical thinking outcome in course syllabi.
- Continue to promote an aggressive culture of program review, course review, and outcomes assessment.

Standard 12: General Education

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency

UPR – CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 12 – General Education

Recommendations

- Implement the appropriate assessment plans for all programs for bachelor and associate degree programs, including appropriate number of objectives to assess.
- Improve student manual to include the general education courses they will need to take.
- Publish General Education program in the catalogue and website in a timely fashion.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

The institution's programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

UPR -- CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 13 – Related Educational Activities

There are neither recommendations nor requirements for Standard 13.

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

UPR –CA is in compliance with MSCHE Standard 14 – Assessment of Student Learning.

Recommendations

- Provide the necessary resources for the Director of Assessment to fully develop the office of assessment.
- Incorporate effective assessment practices, i.e., technology, rubrics, capstone projects and feedback from advisory boards.
- Develop a facilities master plan and a technology master plan to support teaching, learning and allocation of resources.
- Continue to evaluate the outcomes of the restructured general education requirements and share findings with the University community.
- Make clear consistent standards and methods to evaluate the level, quality, and quantity of learning consistent with the institution's mission. An assessment of placement and successful completion on student persistence and academic achievement would enhance the reputation of the institution.