UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO IN PONCE

Self-Study Design

**Prepared for the
Middle States Commission
on Higher Education**

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The University of Puerto Rico in Ponce (UPR-Ponce) is one of the eleven campuses of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), a large publicly supported multi-campus, coeducational university system; each campus holding a separate accreditation. The Carnegie Foundation has classified Ponce campus as a Baccalaureate College of Diverse Fields in response to its balance between the disciplines of arts, sciences, education, and business.

The highest governing body of the University of Puerto Rico was known as the Board of Trustees up to March 2013, but on April 30, 2013, under Law Number 13 (PC 927) the Government of Puerto Rico created the **Governing Board.** The Board consists of thirteen members: one undergraduate student, one graduate student, two tenured professors, the Secretary of Department of Education (Ex-Officio) and eight members of the community, at least three of whom are graduates of the UPR. The community members are appointed by the Governor of Puerto Rico while the others are elected by their peers. These eight members belong to the following fields: 1 community and social leader, 1 finance professional, 5 citizens distinguished in the arts, sciences and other professional areas, and 1 leader related to the Puerto Rican diaspora communities. This Governing Board formulates policy for the system, guides its development, allocates its budget, and appoints the President and Chancellors.

The **President** of the University of Puerto Rico, with guidance from the University Board which he presides, coordinates the academic, administrative, and financial affairs of the University. Each of the eleven units of the University of Puerto Rico is headed by a **Chancellor**, who is the chief executive officer. The Chancellor presides over the Academic Senate, the Administrative Board, faculty meetings, exercising academic and administrative authority as stipulated in the 1966 University Law, as amended, and the University of Puerto Rico By-Laws.

Established as Ponce Regional College in 1969, UPR-Ponce was originally authorized to offer associate degrees and transfer programs, but added a number of baccalaureate degree programs beginning in the 1980s. In 1981, it received authorization from the Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education (PRCHE) to offer baccalaureate degrees in Secretarial Sciences (later Office Systems) and Business Administration. Thereafter, Certification 170 (1981-82) of the PRCHE changed the name of the institution to Ponce Technological University College. In 1984, four-year degrees in Computer Information Systems and Elementary Education were also authorized by the PRCHE. Additional baccalaureate programs in Athletic Training and Social Sciences with majors in Forensic Psychology and Psychology and Mental Health were also approved by the PRCHE in 1995 and 1998, respectively. In 2002, the Council also authorized UPR-Ponce to offer a baccalaureate degree in Natural Sciences with majors in Biology and Biomedical Science.

In 1998, the Board of Trustees granted the College its autonomy from the Regional Colleges Administration and changed the institution's name to Ponce University College. In April 2000, the Board's Certifications 1999-2000-103 and 103A approved that the College be known as the University of Puerto Rico in Ponce (UPR-Ponce).   The Middle States Association/Council on Higher Education (MSCHE) accredited the UPR-Ponce in 1970, reaccredited it in 1985 and 1995, and reaffirmed accreditation in 1980, 1990, 2000, 2005 and 2011.

In 2009, the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) re-affirmed accreditation for the Associate Degree Program in Physical Therapy. The Accrediting Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) has accredited the Business Administration Program and the Office Systems Program since 2009, and 2010 respectively. The Elementary Education Program was initially accredited by the National Council Association of Teacher Education (NCATE) in October 2008 and professionally recognized by the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), and reaccreditated by NCATE in 2013. All the programs from the Engineering Department

were accredited in 2013 by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET). In addition, the Adelina Coppin Library was favorably evaluated by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in 2008, while the Counseling and Psychological Services Program was accredited by the International Association of Counseling Service (IACS) in 2010.

The campus is located in the city of Ponce on the southern coast of Puerto Rico, approximately 67 miles from the capital city of San Juan. At present, the Institution offers twelve bachelor degrees, four associate degrees, and fifty-two articulated transfer programs to other UPR campuses. As part of the University of Puerto Rico system, and the only public institution of higher education in the southern part of the island, UPR-Ponce is committed by law to serve Puerto Rico and the southern region by transmitting knowledge of sciences and arts to the community, by contributing to the development of ethical and aesthetic values with special emphasis on Puerto Rican and Western cultures, and by stimulating creative dialogue in the search for truth. The emphasis of the academic programs is on undergraduate education at baccalaureate, associate, and transfer levels to satisfy the needs of the community.

The institution's total enrollment for fall 2013 was 3,120. Ninety-two percent of the student population study full time, 84% receive some form of financial aid, and 58% are female. Seventy-eight percent of the student body is enrolled in bachelor degree programs, 11% in transfer programs, and 7% in technical programs. The remainder is classified in other categories, such as professional development programs among others. The four-year programs with the highest enrollment are Biomedical Sciences (17%), Mental Health, Accounting, and Forensic Psychology (11% each). As for the technical programs, Physical Therapy has 36% of the enrollment, Industrial Engineering Technology 25%, and Civil Engineering Technology in Drafting 20%.

Two hundred and forty four (244) non-faculty personnel and 175 faculty members serve the student body. Seventy-two percent of the faculty members are full-time employees of the Institution, 83% of whom are tenured. Full-time faculty distribution by rank is as follows: 25% are full professors, 20% associate professors, 32% assistant professors, and 23% instructors. Thirty-seven percent of full-time faculty members have a doctoral degree.

I. NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE SELF-STUDY

The Institution has undergone some changes since its last Middle States Commission on Higher Education visit as well as its 2005 Self-Study findings. In response to the recommendations of the MSCHE, the Institution appointed a committee to revise the mission. As a result of this process, the mission and goals were revised. The vision and values of the UPR-Ponce were also amply and clearly defined.

The Adelina Coppin Alvarado Library was completed remodeling in 2008, complying therefore, with the resources and space needed for the faculty and students as recommended by MSCHE. In order to facilitate institution efforts through clearly linked planning and resource allocation, the planning process was revamped. A continuous process is maintained by gathering input from institution stakeholders, beginning with the departmental chairs and office directors, the Budget and Financial Directors and finally the Administrative Board. Changes were presented in the Periodic Review Report submitted in 2010, including the professional accreditation of academic programs and evaluation of services, among others.

A sustained assessment culture has been maintained encompassing both educational and institutional components. The Institutional Assessment Plan was designed with the input obtained from the university community and approved by the Academic Senate. Meanwhile, the Academic Senate has been working the General Education Policy. The periodic evaluation of the

academic programs complies with the current needs of the professional world and related accreditation agencies.

Along with these changes, doctoral or terminal degrees are required since 2006 for faculty tenure-track positions to enhance the academic programs and services. At this time, 37 percent of the faculty holds a doctoral degree in their fields, which represents an increase of nine percent in the last ten years. Faculty participates in writing proposals to external funding sources such as Federal and State Agencies. The Continuing Education and Professional Studies Division offers professional development programs for teachers in the different content areas (mathematics, science, and English). Other academic projects have received external funding, such as the UPR-Ponce Program Research Institute for Scientific Enhancement (PRISE), Building a Bilingual Leadership in the Rehab Community (BBRLC), Excelling Engineers to 21st Century (MSEIP), and Strengthening Learning and Teaching Strategies and Practices for New Generation of Learners (Title V). Students have been able to participate in these grants and have excelled in each.

Student recruitment initiatives have been innovative, promoting participation of members from within the university community. Students serve as participants and mentors to reach possible new recruits. This is an example of the diverse types of community service that students participate in throughout the university experience. This data is used by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research, and presented to the university community.

The institution's concern for its student body is reflected by the fact that National Survey of Student Engagement is administered periodically in their first and fourth year of study. This survey provides information on students' engagement when initiating their university experience as well as in the fourth year, providing information on their perception of the programs and activities within the Institution.

In light of these diverse changes, UPR-Ponce has chosen to undertake a comprehensive self-study reordering standards to reflect the Institution as set out in *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*. This model will allow us to engage the whole campus in an integrated review of our standing in relation to the fundamental elements of the fourteen standards of excellence that guide the Middle States community. A comprehensive self-study will serve the Institution well as it provides for a deep analysis of the institutional matters.

II. SPECIFIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In undertaking a comprehensive self-study, the UPR-Ponce will measure its institutional effectiveness and set the agenda for the revision of its strategic plan. It is also expected that data collected will be used wisely to further enhance the teaching-learning processes. In order to achieve these goals, the following objectives have been established:

1. To identify strengths and weaknesses in reference to Middle States higher education accreditation standards and to use findings to engage in a proactive strategic planning process.

2. To document the scope and effectiveness of assessment efforts currently used.

3. To produce an accurate self-study report that will provide Middle States with the information and analysis needed to make a decision about our institution's reaccreditation.

4. To formulate recommendations that will set the agenda for institutional development in the next five years.

5. To strengthen the use of qualitative and quantitative data to support the analysis of the institution's educational effectiveness.

6. To make all constituents more knowledgeable about the Institution in order to encourage their ongoing commitment to its mission and goals.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SELF-STUDY COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES

The Executive Committee was appointed by the Chancellor. Its members are the chair, two co-chairs of the self-study process, and the Administrative Assistant of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. The Self-Study Steering Committee was appointed by the Chancellor in consultation with the chair and co-chairs. It includes representatives from all constituencies as well as a wide range of institutional experience, ages, and academic preparation. The Steering Committee is composed of the following members:

- Jennifer Alicea, Ed.D., Assistant Professor, English Department and Director of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research, *Chair*

- Carmen C. Morales, Ed.D., Associate Professor, English Department, *Co-Chair*

- Lizzette Roig, M.S., Professor, Chemistry and Physics Department, *Co-Chair*

- Eunice Mercado, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Chemistry and Physics Department

- Sheila Barrios, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Spanish Department

- Joycette Santos, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Chemistry and Physics Department

- Michael Campbell, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Humanities Department, *Editor*

- Pier A. Le Compte, M.A., Instructor, English Department, Editor

- Doris Torres, Ed.D., Professor, Office Systems Department Director

- Regino Megill, M.A., Assistant Professor, English Department Director

- Luis R. Sánchez, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Social Sciences Department

- Carmen A. Bracero, M.A., Professor, Office Systems Department

- Ismael San Miguel, MBA, Instructor, Business Administration Department Director

- Anayarí Batista, M.Ed., Administrative Assistant IV, Office of Planning and Institutional Research

➢ Leonardo Morales, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Math Department and Acting Dean of Academic Affairs *(Ex Officio)*

➢ Enrico Encarnación, M.A., Instructor, Allied Health Sciences Department and Acting Dean of Administration *(Ex Officio)*

➢ Acmin Velázquez, MBA, Acting Dean of Students Affairs *(Ex Officio),* Payroll Director

➢ Charlynne De Jesús, Biology student

The Executive and Steering Committees are responsible for coordinating all stages of the self-study process and providing the necessary leadership on campus. They will develop the self-study design, prepare charges for the subcommittees, ensure that the timetable is met as closely as possible, organize public hearings on the drafts of the Self-Study report, and ensure that the final version is produced and sent on time. For this process an Internet page was created, http://www.uprp.edu/opei/acreditation/index.php, along with a newsletter, *Reacreditación 2015-2016*, to inform and promote community participation in the the self-study.

Seven subcommittees have been created, based on the fourteen standards of *Characteristics of Excellence*. In several cases, related standards were grouped under one subcommittee. Each subcommittee will be chaired by a member of the Steering Committee, chosen for his or her proven expertise or interest. This arrangement will provide for direct communication between the Steering Committee and the subcommittees. The subcommittees appropriately include faculty, staff, students, and members of the administration. Each subcommittee has an English professor or a fully-bilingual member to facilitate translation. Details of the seven subcommittees, the standards entrusted to them, and the membership of each is described in the following pages.

Subcommittee 1: Mission and Goals (Standard 1) and Integrity (Standard 6)

Joycette Santos, (Chair), Ph.D., Associate Professor, Chemistry and Physics Department
Edda Arzola, M.A., Professor, Spanish Department Director
Maribel Caraballo, M.Ed., Administrative Assistant IV, Chancellor's Office
David Forestier, M.S., Associate Professor, Biology Department
Celia González, M.P.H., Lab Technician II, Chemistry Department
Aida Rodríguez, M.A., Professor, Office Systems Department
Yannira Rodríguez, Ed.D., Assistant Professor, Office Systems Department
Frances Torres, M.Ed., Assistant Professor, English Department
Rey Pellicier, Education student

Subcommittee 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal, and Institutional Resources (Standards 2 and 3)

Ismael San Miguel, (Chair), MBA**,** Instructor**,** Business Administration Department
    Director
Marta Bahamonde, M.A., Instructor, Education Department and Director of the
    Continuing Education and Professional Studies Division
Isaac Colón, MBA, Director of the Budget Office
Alberto García, B.A., Director of the Physical Resources Office
Pedro I. Martínez, MBA, Director of the Finance Office
Ericka Rodríguez, M.Ed., Human Resources Analyst V, Human Resources Office
Arelis Torres, Psy.D., Associate Professor, Social Sciences Department
Grisobelle Virella, MS.Ed., Chancellor's Assistant in External Resources and
    Development, Chancellor's Office
Stephanie Cotto, Business Administration student

Subcommittee 3: Leadership and Governance, Administration (Standards 4 and 5)

Regino Megill, (Chair) M. A., Assistant Professor, English Department Director
Anayarí Batista, MA.Ed., Administrative Assistant IV, Office of Planning and
    Institutional Research
Dalmid Correa, MBA, Assistant Professor, Business Administration Department
Reina González, MBA, Chancellor's Assistant, Chancellor's Office
Onix Rivera, M.S., Associate Professor, Education Department
Lizzette Roig, M.S., Professor, Chemistry and Physics Department
Dennisse Rodríguez, B.A., Administrative Secretary V, Academic Senate
Ginny Vélez, JD, Accountant II, Pre-intervention Office
Katherina Aquino, Social Sciences student

Subcommittee 4: Student Admissions and Student Support Services (Standards 8 and 9)

Doris Torres, (Chair) Ed.D., Professor, Office Systems Department Director
Wilfredo Ayala, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Biology Department
Noel Callejo, B.A., Assistant Librarian III, Library
Emily Matos, M.A., Admissions Director

Michelle Méndez, Ed.D., Assistant Professor, English Department
Ivonne Rodríguez, M.S., Assistant Professor, Chemistry and Physics Department
Marya Santiago, M.Ed., Registrar
Ileana Torres, Ma.Ed., Administrative Secretary IV, English Department
Zulymer Irizarry, Business Administration student

Subcommittee 5: Faculty (Standard 10)

Carmen A. Bracero, (Chair), M.A., Professor, Office Systems Department
Ileana Latorre, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Education Department
Jaime Martínez, Ed.D., Professor, Math Department Director
Lymari Pacheco, M.A., Administrative Official II, Deanship of Academic Affairs
Pedro J. Ramirez, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Engineering Department
Fernando Rodríguez, Ph.D., Professor, Allied Health Sciences Department
Edda Rodríguez, Ed.D., Assistant Professor, English Department
Marisel Sepúlveda, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Social Sciences Department
Jaylene Torres, Office Systems student

Subcommittee 6: Educational Offerings, General Education, and Related Educational Activities (Standards 11, 12, and 13)

Luis R. Sánchez, (Chair), Ph.D., Associate Professor, Social Sciences Department
Brett Diaz, M.A., Librarian I, Library Director
José López, Ed.D., Lab Technician II, Mathematics Department
Mayra Montero, Psy.D., Assistant Professor, Social Sciences Department Director
Carmen C. Morales, D.Ed., Professor, English Department
Mariel Nazario, B.A., Program's Official, Technological Assistance
Wilfredo Ortiz, M.S., Associate Professor, Mathematics Department
Cynthia Rivera, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Biology Department
Milton Rivera, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Chemistry-Physics Department
Heidy Reyes, M.S., Assistant Professor, Biology Department Director
Maritza Rodríguez, MBA, Instructor, Business Administration Department
Carmen Soto, M.A., Associate Professor, Allied Health Sciences Department
     Director
Rosa Torres, M.A., Research Assistant III, Office for Planning and Institutional
     Research
Antonio Zaragoza, M.A., Associate Professor, Engineering Department Director
Juliette Hernández, Biology student

Subcommittee 7: Institutional Assessment and Assessment of Student Learning (Standards 7 and 14)

Sheila Barrios, (Chair), Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Spanish Department
Jennifer Alicea, Ed.D., Assistant Professor, English Department and Director of the Office
     of Planning and Institutional Research
Eunice Mercado, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Chemistry and Physics Department
María Zayas, Ed.D., Instructor, Education Department

Alma Ortiz, DPT, Instructor, Allied Health Sciences Department
Lourdes Ortiz, M.A., Lab Technician of Language and Instructor, English Department
Rosabel Colón, B.A., Human Resources Analyst II, Human Resources Office
Merari Turell, BA, Administrative Secretary IV, Registrar Office
Orlysmarie Colón, Education student

IV. CHARGES TO SUBCOMMITTEES

This section identifies the members, purposes, and specific charges for each subcommittee. The charge questions prepared by the Steering Committee for each subcommittee reflect the Commission's accreditation standards and our institutional mission, culture, and idiosyncrasies. This constitute the most important part of the "blueprint for the self-study process" (*Self Study: Creating a Useful Process, p. 18*). Together with the section on editorial style and format, they should provide a clear, and precise guide of what must be studied and how information should be reported. Each subcommittee will carry out their charges by researching and analyzing the questions posed by the Steering Committee. In order to do so, they will use a variety of strategies and methodologies. Pertinent documents will be studied and analyzed. Survey questions will also be drafted for the master surveys that will be used to poll the different constituencies. These surveys will be designed, administered, and tabulated by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research in collaboration with members of the Steering Committee. Other possible strategies include the use of interviews and focus groups.

The subcommittees may be organized into smaller task forces for specific purposes if deemed necessary. In some cases, subcommittees may coordinate their efforts with other subcommittees for the analysis of data and the formulation of recommendations.

Data collected will be analyzed and draft reports will be written and reviewed by the subcommittees. These drafts will be presented to the Steering Committee, which may request revisions when necessary. The final draft of the complete Self-Study Report will be produced by the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee. It will then be made available to all

constituents for revision and feedback, providing a basis for the preparation of the final document.

A. SUBCOMMITTEE ON MISSION AND GOALS, AND INTEGRITY

Purpose

The purpose of the Subcommittee on Mission and Goals, and Integrity is to examine the institution's mission and goals in terms of the following: clarity, distinctiveness, congruence, relevance, adequacy, and utilization. It will also study the consistency of the mission statement with the aspirations and expectations of higher education. The degree to which the Institution adheres to ethical standards and its own stated policies in conducting its programs and activities will also be studied. The Subcommittee will present a documented analysis of this area and submit recommendations for improvement or development.

Charge Questions

Mission and goals

1. What evidence shows that the UPR-Ponce's mission and goals guide all levels of the Institution, including faculty, administration, staff, and governing bodies in decision-making processes?

2. How was the mission statement revised? How do the mission and goals respond to the external and internal context and constituencies?

3. How can it be shown that the institutional goals are consistent with the mission? What evidence supports the statement that the institution's goals focus on student learning, institutional improvement, and other outcomes?

4. What evidence shows that the institution's mission and goals are developed through collaborative participation by those who facilitate or are otherwise responsible for institutional improvement?

5. How are the UPR-Ponce's mission and goals formally approved, publicized, and widely known by the institution's members?

Integrity

1. What policies exist on campus related to academic integrity of faculty, students, and staff? To what extent are these policies adhered to?

2. What fair and impartial mechanisms exist to deal with the academic assessment of students, their conduct, and any alleged disciplinary violations in a prompt, appropriate, and equitable manner?

3. How is the institutional climate perceived as one of respect and justice among constituents?

4. To what extent has the Institution practiced honesty and truthfulness in: public relations, announcements, advertisements, institutional information, and admissions materials and practices?

5. How does the institution demonstrate that it has fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of employees? How often are these practices revised?

6. What evidence supports that the required and elective courses are sufficiently available to allow students to comply within the published program length?

7. How accessible are the institutional documents, such as catalogs, statistical data, policies, and others?

B. **SUBCOMMITTEE ON PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL, AND INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES**

Purpose

The Subcommittee on Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal, and Institutional Resources will study the nature and quality of the UPR-Ponce's planning process. It will also determine its effectiveness in establishing the priorities and direction necessary to improve and sustain institutional quality. The adequacy of human, financial, technical, physical facilities, and other resources for achieving the mission and goals will be assessed. In light of its findings, the Subcommittee will make recommendations on how the Institution can improve the effectiveness of its strategic planning process using the fundamental elements of the second standard of *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*. These recommendations will be considered in the revision of the UPR-Ponce's strategic plan.

Charge Questions

Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

1. What planning processes have been carried out in the last ten years?

2. What evidence exists to link institution's goals with the planning process and resource allocation?

3. What evidence demonstrates that the institution and individual units have clearly stated goals and objectives?

4. What strategies are used to give constituents effective participation in the planning process, implementation, and evaluation? How are planning process and improvement communicated to the university community?

5. What institutional and student-learning assessment information is used for planning and resource allocation purposes?

6. What changes result from the periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resources allocation, and institutional renewal processes?

Institutional Resources

1. What strategies are used to measure the degree of efficiency of institutional resources to support UPR-Ponce's mission and goals?

2. How are budget allocations consistent with existing policies and procedures? What evidence demonstrates that they provide for adequate student services, faculty, staff, technology, and physical facilities?

3. What strategies do the institution use to increase institutional resources?

4. How are comprehensive infrastructure or facilities master plan and a facilities/infrastructure life-cycle management plan appropriate to the mission?

5. How adequately supported and staffed are facilities to all academic programs, such as the library, and other learning resources, according to the comprehensive infrastructure plan?

6. What is the procedure for acquiring and replacing equipment according to academic programs and support service needs?

7. What protocols exist to ensure adequate institutional controls to deal with financial administrative and auxiliary operations?

8. How is use of institutional resources periodically assessed? How are the results used to enhance continuous improvement?

C. SUBCOMMITTEE ON LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION

Purpose

The purpose of the Subcommittee on Leadership, Governance, and Administration is to carry out a careful analysis of the effectiveness of the institution's system of governance in policy development and decision-making. It will also determine how well the administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research, foster quality improvement, and support the University's organization and governance. The Subcommittee will present a documented analysis of these areas and submit recommendations for improvement.

Charge Questions

Leadership and Governance

1. How does the governance structure of UPR-Ponce comply with its mission and vision?

2. How do governing documents, such as by-laws and regulations define the composition, selection, duties, and responsibilities of the governance structure?

3. What evidence demonstrates that authority and accountability for policy development and decision-making is clearly assigned?

4. Do the members of the governing bodies have the expertise to fulfill their responsibilities?

5. How does the institution provide for the participation of appropriate constituents, including students, in the decision-making process?

6. How do the UPR Governing Board, the University Board, and UPR-Ponce governing bodies share responsibilities and coordinate efforts?

7. What assessment processes are established to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional leadership and governance?

Administration

1. What are the lines of organizational hierarchy and authority? Are they sufficiently clear to ensure institutional efficiency and effectiveness? What evidence demonstrates that these lines are followed?

2. How does the administration lead the institution towards achieving its mission and goals?

3. Are the administrative leaders' academic backgrounds, professional training, and skills appropriate for the institution's mission, goals, type, size, and complexity?

4. How effective is the communication among administration, faculty, staff, and students?

5. How is the effectiveness of administrative structure and services periodically assessed and used for improvement?

D. SUBCOMMITTEE ON ADMISSIONS, AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Purpose

The purpose of the Subcommittee on Admissions, Retention, and Student Support Services is to determine the extent to which the UPR-Ponce's admissions policies, procedures, and practices are clearly stated, fully understood, widely communicated, consistently implemented, and periodically reviewed. It will also establish how consistent they are with, and contribute to, the fulfillment of the institution's mission, goals, and objectives. An analysis will be made of the quality of student support services available to help students achieve the institutional goals set for them. The Subcommittee will present a documented analysis of these areas and submit recommendations for improvement or development.

Charge Questions

Student Admissions

1. How are the admissions policies that support and reflect the mission of the institution developed and implemented? How are the academic offerings and admission criteria communicated to assist prospective students in making decisions? How does the institution evidence effectiveness regarding the admission process?

2. What are the admission criteria and support services for students with special talents or special abilities? How is the admission criteria published?

3. How are potential students informed about the financial aid available? How accurate and comprehensive is that information? How are these services assessed?

4. What criteria are used to give credit to courses taken at other institutions?

5. What changes have been made in the admissions process and criteria as a result of assessment activities? In what ways are students made aware of these changes?

6. How has the UPR-Ponce determined if there is a relationship in admission criteria, academic success, and student retention? How does the UPR-Ponce publish information about academic success and retention to potential and enrolled students?

Student Support Services

1. What support services, appropriate to students' strengths and needs, are available to help them achieve the learning expectations? How are they disseminated among the student body? In what ways are these services integrated and congruent with academic programs?

2. By what means does the UPR-Ponce ensure that student support services are provided and supervised by qualified personnel?

3. How does the UPR-Ponce help students with varied spectrum of students' academic and other needs to deal successfully with the rigor and demands of academic programs? How does the UPR-Ponce demonstrate that the services provided are equitable, supportive, and sensitive?

4. In which way is the athletic program regulated, as compared to other institutional programs, in terms of academic, fiscal, administrative principles, and procedures?

5. How do extracurricular activities relate to students' interests and needs? How are these activities disclosed to all students?

6. What regulations does the UPR-Ponce enforce to protect students' right to confidentiality and how are they disclosed? How does the Institution ensure the safety and secure maintenance of students' records?

7. What procedures are available for addressing students' complaints and grievances and how are they disseminated?

8. How effective are students support services in helping students satisfy their needs and reach their goals?

9. How have the results of the assessment data been used to improve student support services?

E. SUBCOMMITTEE ON FACULTY

Purpose

The purpose of the Subcommittee on Faculty is to study the extent and effectiveness with which the faculty discharges their primary responsibilities of teaching, research, and service, as well as their related roles in student advising, curriculum development, academic policy making, and governance.   It will also scrutinize faculty recruitment and retention, performance assessment, and promotion processes. The Subcommittee will present a documented analysis of this area and submit recommendations for improvement.

Charge Questions

<u>Faculty</u>

1. How does the Institution ensure that there is an adequate number of qualified full-time teaching faculty and other professionals developing, supporting, and carrying out UPR-Ponce's academic programs? To what extent does the University promote diversity among faculty members?

2. How does UPR-Ponce publish and implement procedures for faculty recruitment, retention, tenure, promotion, grievance, discipline, and dismissal norms?

3. To what extent does faculty participate in developing, evaluating, and revising academic programs?

4. To what extent do faculty members provide adequate student academic advising?

5. How is the faculty involved in decision making at the institutional and departmental levels?

6. How does the Institution promote and support the professional development of faculty in teaching, research, scholarship, and service? How satisfied is the faculty with activities for professional development?

7. To what extent does faculty integrate and promote the use of technology in the teaching-learning processes?

8. What evidence demonstrates faculty excellence in teaching and other related activities? How is excellence in teaching related to the students' learning outcomes and advancement? To what extent are the students satisfied with the teaching-learning processes?

9.   How does the UPR-Ponce assure academic freedom? What is the faculty perception of academic freedom in the Institution?

F. SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS, GENERAL EDUCATION, AND RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Purpose

The Subcommittee will study the content, rigor, and coherence of the UPR-Ponce academic programs and related educational activities as well as the extent to which they serve institutional goals. It will also investigate expected learning outcomes for each program to gauge institutional effectiveness in achieving them.   The sufficiency and effectiveness of program resources will also be evaluated. The Subcommittee will look at how the curricula is designed to ensure that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including oral and written communication in Spanish and English, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy. A documented analysis of these areas will be presented together with recommendations for improvement.

Charge Questions

Educational Offerings

1.   How do the institution's educational offerings reflect and promote its' mission and goals? What evidence demonstrates that the educational offerings are of sufficient rigor, content, breadth, and length for college-level programs?

2.   How does the curricula provide for the knowledge, skills, and attitudes in rigorous manner in pursuing degree?

3.   To what extent academic programs' structure foster coherent learning experiences and promote a synthesis of learning?

4.   What are the expected student learning outcomes for each program? How does the Institution ensure students' awareness of program learning objectives? How are courses designed to achieve these outcomes? To what extent are these learning outcomes achieved?

5. How often and how effectively are academic programs evaluated in terms of their congruence with institution's mission, planning, and resources (human, physical, fiscal, technological)? How do educational offerings of the UPR-Ponce prepare students for gainful employment, and/or admission to graduate studies?

6. To what extent are criteria for the acceptance of transfer credit fair, consistently applied and readily available? How can it be demonstrated that these criteria take into consideration expected learning outcomes?

7. How do learning resources, facilities, instructional equipment, library services, and professional library staff support the institution's educational program?

8. How do professional library staff and faculty collaborate in teaching and fostering information literacy and technological competencies across the curriculum? How are these skills assessed and how are the results used for improvement?

9. What evidence demonstrates that program curricula foster the development of research and critical thinking?

10. How is the Honor Studies Program incorporated into the overall curriculum? What evidence can be found of the achievement of this program's goals?

11. What actions are taken to improve the teaching-learning processes and program effectiveness as a result of the assessment of student learning?

General Education

1. How does the UPR-Ponce structure and deliver general education? How are the general education requirements undertaken throughout the student's program of study?

2. How are the skills and abilities, developed in general education, applied in the academic majors?

3. To what extent do the general education requirements contribute to the achievement of the institution's mission and goals?

4. To what degree do the general education requirements enable students to acquire and develop core knowledge and skills such as communication skills, quantitative and scientific analysis, values and ethics, among others? What evidence shows that students acquire the general education requirements by graduation?

5. How are general education requirements presented in official publications?

6. How are the assessment results of general education outcomes used to improve curricula?

Related Educational Activities

1. How does the Institution identify students who are not fully prepared for college level study? What services does the Institution provide in order to prepare them for success in achieving their educational goals?

2. What is the nature of offerings available from the Continuing Education and Professional Studies Division? What is the policy for students enrolling in these courses?

3. How are these offerings designed, advertised, administered, and periodically evaluated? How are non-credit offerings consistent with the institution's mission and goals?

4. What student support services are available to students enrolled in programs and courses offered by the Continuing Education and Professional Studies Division? How satisfied are students with these services?

5. What other learning experiences such as internships, practicums, cultural trips, community services, and service learning activities, among others, are available for students in different academic programs?

G. SUBCOMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Purpose

The purpose of the Subcommittee on Institutional Assessment and Assessment of Student Learning is to provide evidence of the existence of a pertinent assessment plan and process at UPR-Ponce for periodic assessment of institutional effectiveness. In addition, it will investigate the extent to which the information obtained from this process is considered for institutional planning, resource allocation and institutional renewal. Also, the Subcommittee will examine the process by which UPR-Ponce assesses student learning outcomes to determine the effectiveness of its courses and programs. The Subcommittee will present a documented analysis of this area and submit recommendations for improvement.

Charge Questions

Institutional Assessment

1. What evidence does the UPR-Ponce provide of the institutional assessment process? How consistent is the institutional assessment plan in achieving the mission and goals of the UPR-Ponce? What evidence exists of the implementation and participation of the faculty, administration, and staff in the effectiveness of the assessment plan?

2. How are assessment results shared and discussed with appropriate constituents? How are institutional assessment findings used to improve and to maintain the quality of planning processes, resources allocation, and institutional renewal?

3. How does the Institution evidence periodic evaluation of the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the institutional assessment process?

4. How are the assessment results used to improve the programs and services?

Assessment of Student Learning

1. How clearly stated are expectations for student learning outcomes at institutional, program, and course levels? How consistent are these expectations with the institution's mission and with standards of higher education across the disciplines?

2. What evidence has been documented by the Institution of the student learning outcomes assessment plan? How does the Institution evidence its implementation and effectiveness?

3. How is student learning assessed?

4. How does the Institution evidence support and collaboration of faculty and administration in the assessment of student learning?

5. How are assessment results communicated to constituents? How are these results used to enhance teaching and learning and to improve curricula, educational programs, and instructional activities?

6. How the assessment results evidence that students are achieving key institutional and program learning outcomes?

7. How is student learning assessment information used as part of the institutional assessment process?

V. INVENTORY OF SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

All subcommittees will be challenged with the task of consulting and analyzing documents relevant to their charges. In order to facilitate the task of identifying available sources, the following list of resources has been compiled. It should be emphasized that **all** subcommittees will have to initiate their tasks with a careful reading of the institutional mission statement, key Middle States publications, and previous accreditation documents.

1. UPR By-laws
2. UPR Governing Board Certifications
3. Board of Trustees Certifications
4. University Board Certifications
5. Academic Senate Certifications
6. Administrative Board Certifications
7. UPR-Ponce Catalog
8. UPR-Ponce Strategic Plan
9. UPR-Ponce Operational Plan
10. Ten for the Decade
11. Mission statement and goals
12. UPR-Ponce Organizational Chart
13. UPR-Ponce's Web page
14. Faculty Handbook
15. Course Syllabi
16. Institutional Profile
17. Characteristics of Excellence (MSCHE)
18. Self-Study: Creating a useful process and report (MSCHE)
19. Team Visits: Conducting and hosting an evaluation visit (MSCHE)
20. MSCHE Web page
21. Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources (MSCHE)
22. Periodic Review Report (2010)
23. Self-Study (2005)
24. Monitoring Reports
25. Annual Reports
26. IPEDS
27. Annual Institutional Data Profile
28. Annual Budget
29. Proposals and Projects
30. UPR Audit Financial Statements
31. Financial Reports
32. Auditors' Reports
33. Institutional Assessment Plan
34. Institutional Assessment Reports

35. Students By-laws
36. Freshman Profile
37. Alumni Profile
38. Students Satisfaction Survey
39. Exit Interviews (Graduation Candidates)
40. Graduation Candidates Study
41. Graduation Candidates Profile
42. NSSE Results
43. General Education Policy
44. General Education Assessment Plan
45. Professional accreditation documents
    - Allied Health Studies
    - Education
    - Office Systems
    - Business Administration
    - Engineering
    - Library
    - Counseling and Psychological Services

VI. TIMETABLE

Date	Activities
I- Organizational Phase	
August- December, 2012 and January-May, 2013	Training workshops for leaders, faculty, and non-faculty members provided by the Director of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research.
	Chair and Co-chairs are appointed.
June 2013	Steering Committee members are identified.
	Sources of information for documenting the Self-Study are identified and listed.
August 2013	Steering Committee members are appointed.
	Orientation meeting for Steering Committee is given.
September-October 2013	Self-Study model selected, grouping of standards determined and organization of chapters decided.
	Draft of Self-Study Design begins to be prepared.
November 13 and 14, 2013	Steering Committee Chair and Co-Chair participate in the MSCHE Self-Study Institute
November- December, 2013	Subcommittees (task force) are appointed and established.
	Subcommittees and other university groups are oriented.
	Dr. Tito Guerrero Self-Study preparation visit is scheduled (April, 2014).
January 2014	Official notice to campus community about the Self-Study Process and membership of the Steering Committee.
II- Self- Study Design	
January- February, 2014	Work teams develop charge questions.
	Chair and Co-Chairs review and revise the charge questions with task force leaders.
	UPR Central Administration and campus community review draft.
March- April, 2014	Steering Committee revises draft.
	Steering Committee completes Self- Study Design and submits it to MSCHE liaison, Dr. Tito Guerrero.

Date	Activities
	Web page is set up.
	Preparation for visit of Dr. Tito Guerrero
May 2014	Self- Study design is submitted to MSCHE.
June 2014	MSCHE approves design.
III- Data Gathering and Analysis Phase	
August- November, 2014	Work teams research, interviews, and data analysis are conducted. Draft reports will be initiated.
November- December, 2014	Preliminary reports are sent to the Steering Committee for review.
IV. Preparation of Self-Study Report	
January- March, 2015	Selection of Self-Study Team Chair.
	Chair and Co- Chairs prepare preliminary draft of chapters.
April 2015	Self-Study first draft is edited, revised, and disclosed to the campus community for feedback.
May-June 2015	Review and integration of the recommendations made by campus community.
September 2015	UPR Central Administration reviews the report.
V. Self- Study Submission to the MSCHE Evaluation Committee	
October 2015	Self-Study draft is sent to the evaluation team chair, prior to chair's preliminary visit.
	Team chair's preliminary visit is conducted.
November-January, 2016	Final version of the Self-Study Report is completed.
VI. Commission Visit to UPR-Ponce and Response to the Final Report	
February 2016	Final version of the Self-Study is sent to UPR Central Administration and campus community.
March 2016	Final report is sent to the evaluation team and to the MSCHE.
April- May, 2016	Site visit is organized and conducted.
June 2016	Evaluation team report is received and responded.
	Commission acts with respect to accreditation.

VII. EDITORIAL STYLE AND FORMAT

Each subcommittee will prepare and submit electronically the chapter reporting on the work conducted, and presenting the findings obtained in regards to the charges assigned to them. Recommendations will also be made. Each chapter will be organized as follows:

I. **Introduction**

This will provide an overview specifying the purpose and charges of the subcommittee and reference to the standard(s) examined.

II. **Methodology**

This section will present procedures used to gather and analyze data in a qualitative and quantitative manner.

III. **Findings**

A description of specific area(s), including major changes which have taken place over the past ten years and an analytical discussion of the inquiry undertaken, containing important findings will be presented.

IV. **Conclusions**

This section will include a documented analysis of strengths and weaknesses in achieving institutional excellence in relation to accreditation standards.

V. **Anticipated Courses of Action**

The Subcommittees will provide suggestions for building on the strengths and addressing weaknesses. All recommendations should be based on specific data and findings. They are not expected to find solutions to problems, but rather suggest possible courses of action.

VI. **Appendices**

Chapters should generally contain twelve single-spaced pages. Relevant tables and figures pertaining to each charge should be incorporated into the narrative accordingly. Additional supporting evidence and material such as catalogs, brochures, newsletters, manuals, and others should be included in the appendices. Wherever possible, one original copy of these materials should be provided.

In order to maintain uniformity, chapters will be written using Microsoft Word. The final version will be submitted to the Steering Committee through the institutional e-mail together with one unbound hard copy by scheduled due date. The following technical details should be carefully observed:

- Font: Calibri, 11-point

- Spacing: Single spaced, double space between paragraphs, blocked paragraphs

- Margins: Microsoft Office Word default

- Fully justify text in paragraphs

- Use Excel for tables and charts

- Center primary headings with all letters in bold, caps in 14-point

- Left justify secondary headings with all letters in 12-point, bold, and caps

- Left justify tertiary headings in bold and capitalize the first letter of all important words

- Use single-line borders on tables

VII. ORGANIZATION OF THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

Executive Summary
Annual Institutional Data Profile
Chapter 1   Introduction
Chapter 2   Mission, Goals, and Integrity

Chapter 3	Planning, Resource Allocation, Institutional Renewal, and Institutional Resources
Chapter 4	Leadership, Governance, and Administration
Chapter 5	Student Admissions, Retention, and Student Support Services
Chapter 6	Faculty
Chapter 7	Educational Offerings, General Education, and Related Activities
Chapter 8	Institutional Assessment and Assessment of Student Learning
Chapter 9	Major Findings and Recommendations

IX. PROFILE OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The University of Puerto Rico in Ponce requests that Dr. Tito Guerrero III accompany the team that will visit the Institution. Also, UPR-Ponce recommends that in choosing the visiting team, the following considerations be used as a guide:

➢ Experienced team chair, preferably with a working knowledge of Spanish,

➢ At least one senior faculty or administrator from a public, multi-campus university system

➢ As many members as possible with fluency in Spanish

➢ Members with expertise in the following areas:
   o Student services
   o Planning, budgeting, and assessment
   o Information literacy
   o Physical facilities planning
   o Information technology
   o Labor unions

➢ Faculty from the following areas:

   o Baccalaureate Programs: Biology, Business Administration, Psychology, and Education
   o Associate Degree Programs: Civil and Industrial Engineering Technology
   o Transfer (articulation) Programs: Humanities or Social Sciences, Natural Sciences