Institutional Self-Study Report
Decennial Review 2003-2013

Submitted to the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
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<td>2012 SSMS</td>
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<td>AVPAA/VPAAA</td>
<td>Associate Vice-President of Academic Affairs/ Vice-Presidente de Asuntos Académicos</td>
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<tr>
<td>EVL/BEV</td>
<td>Encarnación Valdés Library /Biblioteca Encarnación Valdés</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTOLL/BDTO</td>
<td>Bishop Torres Oliver Law Library/Biblioteca de Derecho Torres Oliver</td>
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<td>CEDYTA</td>
<td>Centro de Evaluación, Diagnóstico y Tratamiento Académico (Center for Academic Evaluation, Diagnosis, and Treatment)</td>
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<td>CEEB</td>
<td>College Entrance Examination Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEIBA</td>
<td>Centro de Enseñanza e Investigación en Biotecnología y en Agro-Biotecnología (Center for Teaching and Research in Biotechnology and Agro-Biotechnology)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EOC</td>
<td>Educational Opportunity Center</td>
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<td>HRO</td>
<td>Human Resources Office</td>
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<td>ICCS/CISC</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Clinic for Community Services /Clínica Interdisciplinaria de Servicios a la Comunidad</td>
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<td>IAO</td>
<td>Institutional Assessment Office</td>
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<td>IDL/IEV</td>
<td>Institute for Distance Learning/Instituto de Educación Virtual</td>
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<td>IRB/JRI</td>
<td>Institutional Revision Board/Junta de Revisión Institucional</td>
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<td>ISP</td>
<td>Institutional Strategic Plan</td>
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<td>LERMA</td>
<td>Laboratorio Educativo de Recursos y Materiales para el Aprendizaje (Educational Resources and Materials Laboratory)</td>
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<td>MBCL</td>
<td>Mayagüez Branch Campus Library</td>
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<td>MIML</td>
<td>Monsignor Iñaki Mallona Library (Arecibo)</td>
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<td>MSCHE</td>
<td>Middle States Commission on Higher Education</td>
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<td>NSSE</td>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement</td>
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<td>OIRI</td>
<td>Oficina Institucional de Relaciones Internacionales (Institutional Office for International Affairs)</td>
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<td>ORCI</td>
<td>Oficina de Revisión Curricular Institucional (Office for Institutional Curriculum Revision)</td>
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<td>OSPI</td>
<td>Oficina de Servicios a Personas con Impedimentos (Office for Services to Persons with Disabilities)</td>
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<td>PCMAS</td>
<td>Prueba de Certificación de Maestros (Teacher Certification Examination)</td>
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<td>PCUPR/PUCPR</td>
<td>Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico/Pontificia Universidad Católica de Puerto Rico</td>
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<td>PCUSA</td>
<td>Pontifical Catholic University Services Association</td>
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<td>PREC/CESPR</td>
<td>Puerto Rico Education Council / Consejo de Educación Superior de Puerto Rico</td>
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<td>RME</td>
<td>Road Map of Evidence</td>
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<td>TTI</td>
<td>Telecomunicaciones y Tecnología de la Información (Telecommunications and Information Technology)</td>
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<td>VPAA</td>
<td>Vice-Presidency of Academic Affairs/ Vice-Presidencia de Asuntos Académicos</td>
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<tr>
<td>VPIDRP/VPDUIIP</td>
<td>Vice-Presidency for Institutional Development, Research, and Planning/Vice-Presidencia para Desarrollo Universitario, Investigación Institucional, y Planificación</td>
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<td>Vice Presidency of Finance and Administration/Vice-Presidencia de Finanzas y Administración</td>
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<td>Vice-Presidency of Student Affairs/ Vice-Presidencia de Asuntos Estudiantiles</td>
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Executive Summary

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR), an institution of higher education, is a coeducational, nonprofit organization with close bonds to the Roman Catholic Church of Puerto Rico. It was founded in September 1948 under the guidance of the Bishops of Puerto Rico and was affiliated with Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. The university was incorporated by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York and granted an absolute charter as an institution of higher learning with programs leading to academic and professional degrees. The original accreditation by MSCHE was obtained in 1953, and the institution has been successfully accredited every decade since then. PCUPR was canonically established in 1972 and granted the title of Pontifical in 1991. This distinction officially ratified the authenticity of Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico as a genuine Catholic institution of the Church.

PCUPR continues to be a unique institution within the academic community in Puerto Rico. Its mission statement is based on *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* and the documents produced in the 2007 Catholic Bishops Conference. The mission is “to honor and promote the life and dignity of the human being as well as to educate him/her in accordance with the values of the Gospel and the disciplines of current scientific knowledge in order to build a better local and global community.” It will be accomplished “by means of a dynamic, critical, and creative educational encounter, framed around Christian amity and committed to the quest for answers and solutions to the issues of culture and to the challenges of the Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and global realities, within a peaceful and harmonious environment.” The vision is to be the primary option to achieve an integral Christian and academic formation of excellence aimed towards a life of fulfillment and adventure. The university has integrated the following values in its educational encounter: faith and reason, Catholic life, family, integrity, community service, educational quality, and dialogue.

According to Standard 1, PCUPR has a clearly established mission which articulates its commitment to student learning and to the community which it serves within a Christian framework. The values represented in PCUPR's educational philosophy are a reflection of its mission which recognizes the importance of the Gospel as well as the Puerto Rican culture in order to responsibly educate its citizens and future leaders. Consequently, the planning and decision-making processes as well as the daily routine practices are based on the institutional mission. There is congruence among the mission, the academic programs, services, and activities offered throughout the institution and the external community. The diverse academic offerings incorporate new programs that respond to societal needs and support the accomplishment of the mission as well as the services to both the internal and external communities. The mission, vision, goals and objectives are clearly inserted in the variety of activities celebrated throughout the institution. **Recommendations for institutional improvement include:** visibly disseminating the mission statement throughout the university campuses thus making it more accessible to the internal and external community; accepting the challenges of the environment by establishing a tangible presence in the communication media with perspectives derived from studies, research, and university experiences as well as an increased community presence through projects of social impact; and reorganizing the practicum required for graduation in certain majors so students may actively participate in community service projects.

Closely tied to an institution’s mission and goals is its integrity (Standard 6). PCUPR continues to formulate, distribute, and communicate to the community the policies and procedures which deal with ethical practices and issues both at the administrative and academic levels. Many of these policies, norms, and procedures are available to the external community on the institutional website or to the internal community through the university’s portal Acceso Pionero. The recruitment process for hiring administrative and academic personnel has been centralized by the Human Resources Offices making the process a more impartial one. Advertising now projects a uniform image of the university as a Catholic institution. The institution promotes dialogue and discussion of divergent ideas which contribute to the compliance of the mission by the different offices and departments. There is a climate of respect towards people of different cultural and social backgrounds within the institution. Administrators observed that the faculty enjoys academic freedom in accordance with the mission which is a perception shared by the faculty. Students also perceive that they have the liberty to question the
subjects that are being discussed in their courses. **Recommendations include:** the implementation of an effective plan to revise, update, and disseminate PCUPR policies and procedures, the **Faculty Manual**, the Administrative Personnel Manual, and the **Student Handbook** and its corresponding regulations; the review of faculty recruitment, retention, and evaluation processes to address faculty concerns; and the establishment of a systematic institutional assessment process to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of institutional policies and procedures.

**Standard 2** builds on an institution’s mission by conducting planning based on effective resource allocation which leads to institutional renewal. The **Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) 2008-2013** has an articulated vision of the institution’s priority areas and their corresponding goals and objectives and serves as a basis for the units at all campuses to establish operational plans. In order to establish a link between the budgeting process and the ISP and ensure the participation and uniformity among all units and all campuses, a new institutional operational plan model, which is aligned with the institutional mission and vision, was created. The Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses developed their campus strategic plans (2008-2013) based on the ISP and incorporated in the new model their particular goals, projected and approved budgets, and the assessment activities for effective decision-making. The university strategic planning process has improved the allocation of resources which starts with a base operating budget according to the institution’s priority areas and the enrollment projections thus creating a link between planning and budgeting. The alignment of ISP with operational planning and annual evaluations has enhanced institutional effectiveness and efficiency. At the campuses, assessment results have been linked to the planning and budgeting processes as evidenced in their campus strategic plans. **Recommendations include:** establishing a more efficient methodology or technological data base to summarize planning, budgeting, and assessment information in a more comprehensive, uniform, and accessible format for all constituencies involved in the strategic planning process; and fostering a more effective and systematic communication process among those involved with strategic planning, resource allocation, and assessment, especially with administrators at the academic and unit levels.

**Standard 3** focuses on institutional resources. As there is now a concrete link between strategic planning and its priority areas, budget allocation, and assessment activities as evidenced through the operational plans, the distribution of human, financial, technical, physical, and other resources is more effective. One of the most vital assets of PCUPR is its human resources which embody the university’s mission and Christian values. The workforce is stable with a low rate of employee turnover. Institutional training activities contribute to professional and administrative development. Although approximately 90% of institutional revenues are obtained from tuition fees, PCUPR has adequate fiscal resources to fulfill its mission, vision, goals, and objectives with an operational budget that has increased 33% in the last five years due to responsible strategic financial management. The budget process and the accounting system are now supported by an integrated information system (Banner). The Vice President of Financial Affairs and Administration has occupied the position for 10 years providing continuity in the daily financial operations and vision for future planning. PCUPR has demonstrated fiscal commitment to priority areas such as community service, student support, and research.

Technological resources and infrastructure continue to be a priority area for the institution with qualified personnel, a highly operational information management system, and a reliable infrastructure for videoconferencing, online courses, and virtual communication between faculty and students. There have been improvements to the telecommunications system and an increase in wireless access zones throughout the campuses. The use of **Acceso Pionero**, the university portal, has proven to be an effective communication resource among the university community. Improvements to the physical infrastructure at the three campuses are planned considering the needs of the university community including persons with disabilities. **Recommendations for Standard 3 include:** averaging the student to administrative/non-academic personnel ratio in all PCUPR branches to improve satisfaction with student and academic services; establishing a better structured salary scale for non-academic personnel that contemplates a monetary incentive system tied to meritorious performance and achievements; structuring an annual professional development cycle for administrative/non-academic personnel; increasing budget allocations for technological infrastructure to hire the skilled personnel, acquire updated
technological equipment, and improve the infrastructure; structuring continuous training workshops for faculty and administrators to optimize the use of Banner; and devising a concrete and consistent plan to increment external funding over a set period.

**Standard 7** speaks to institutional assessment for evaluating overall effectiveness. Since 2003, PCUPR has made great strides in implementing institutional and academic assessment in an organizational structure. The Institutional Assessment Office (IAO) guides and supports the three campuses in the implementation of assessment and supervises the corresponding units in the effective assessment of their operational plans. Planning, budget allocation, and assessment are now linked through these standardized operational plans derived from the ISP. The institutional assessment process provides the data for effective decision-making based on the specific objectives in each priority area and linked to a budget. Academic programs and services have assessment processes that evidence, organize, and sustain their evaluation and improvement. **Recommendations include:** to implement more aggressive and motivating strategies to engage all personnel in assessment to ensure both intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction; to schedule additional orientations, workshops, and seminars for administrative and service area units in assessment strategies and action planning; and to formulate a more effective means of communicating results of planning, resource allocation, and assessment.

**Standard 4** lays the groundwork for effective leadership and governance. The Board of Trustees continues to oversee the fulfillment of the mission of the university and the achievement of academic excellence and service to the general community. Trustees participate in the revision and establishment of the mission, goals, and objectives of the university, its strategic plan, and the budget. The Board has established a more visible presence by being housed on campus. The Board reviewed the **Faculty Manual** and made amendments to **Part IV: Faculty** to comply with the standards of existing labor law, establishing new contract classifications for faculty personnel. The **Bylaws** are explicit in establishing the processes of governance and administration of the Board and the institution. **Recommendations include:** to increment the number of faculty and student representatives on the Board of Trustees to improve the communication process and detect the needs of the university's different constituents, particularly the branch campuses; to consider the feasibility of implementing two-year terms for faculty and student representatives; and to complete revision of the **Bylaws**.

In accordance with **Standard 5** (Administration), PCUPR has exhibited consistency in maintaining an established administrative structure with qualified personnel as it has dealt with various changes in leadership at the institutional and campus level in the past five years. Among these are the appointment of the twelfth president, Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho, in 2009; the establishment of the Vice Presidency for Institutional Development, Research, and Planning; and the creation of a new deanship in the School of Architecture. The impact of these administrative changes is the emergence of a new administrative style and vision which aspires to reaffirm and project institutional commitment to the community it serves. All administrative personnel are competent in their respective areas of expertise. To perform their responsibilities and functions administrative personnel participate in four yearly management workshops to aid in decision-making and promote excellence in their functions. On the organizational level, PCUPR has experienced a significant change in its administrative structure since the last Self-Study. In 2011, the Executive Committee for Substantive Change of MSCHE approved the accreditation of PCUPR as a single institution with three campuses: Ponce as main campus and Arecibo and Mayagüez as branch campuses. **Recommendations include:** making a concerted effort by the administration to include the branch campuses in institutional discussions at all levels; having administrative assessment processes that are consistent and performed by all those concerned if results are to be used for institutional improvement; and conducting a systematic survey to investigate which units perceive a lack of necessary resources (human, physical, and financial) to effectively perform the tasks ascribed to their areas.

**Standard 8** focuses on student admissions and retention. PCUPR has developed a more uniform and better organized recruitment program which displays a consistent image of the institution and is tempered to the peculiarities of each campus. The university webpage gives ready access to potential students to become acquainted with the institution. PCUPR has qualified recruiters, and the Office of Admissions has an efficient well-
structured admission process due to the continued implementation of Banner. Integrated enrollment management has created a link between the processes of admissions and financial aid. Fall enrollment for the institution as a whole has risen significantly since August 2008 with an undergraduate/graduate enrollment total for 2008 that was 9,679 to 11,015 in 2012 which represents an increase of 14 percent when the projected enrollment from 2008-2012 was to be a decline of up to 3 percent for these years. The number of PCUPR graduates from 2008 to 2012 has fluctuated between 1,335 and 1,416. The continued implementation of institutional undergraduate retention plans has helped PCUPR as a whole assess its effectiveness by developing strategies that will increase student retention. The Ponce Campus has fulfilled the retention rate goal for all the cohorts from 2007 to 2011, and the branch campuses are analyzing their rates for improvement of retention strategies. ISP 2008-2013 contemplates specific strategies for student admission and retention which is linked directly to the input received from the Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP). Expanded opportunities in the curriculum and co-curriculum have been implemented in the three campuses and include 31 new programs at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels. Recommendations include: evaluating and restructuring the promotion, recruitment, and admission processes at the branch campuses; implementing and documenting efficient assessment strategies to determine the effectiveness of recruitment activities; and having a uniform format for the catalogs to present clear and precise information regarding the university’s admission policy, procedures, and/or requirements for potential applicants.

Coupled with the previous standard is Standard 9: Student Support Services. At PCUPR, guidance counselors, department chairs, faculty, and administrative staff advise first year, transfer, and other students regarding requisites and course programming for the different academic programs. Trained personnel in the financial aid offices at each campus advise students about the various financial aid programs and process. Other important information is communicated through pamphlets, bulletin boards, the official course program newspaper edited by the Office of the Registrar, and the institutional webpage. Consistent with the institutional mission, student support services provide the means for the diverse student population to acquire a Christian-centered education. There are over 30 programs and services which provide for the needs of the student body in areas such as technology, academics, enrollment, counseling and guidance, recreation, sports, and extracurricular activities and which support the institution’s mission and goals. Information of these services is disseminated through brochures, bulletins, and promotion by Católica Radio and Católica TV and can also be accessed through the university’s web page. Key support services have implemented extended hours of service at all campuses to meet the needs of the undergraduate and graduate programs. The use of a universal electronic mail system has also allowed for the integration of information and flow of communication throughout the university. The IAO continually develops tools such as surveys and questionnaires for evaluating student services. The student satisfaction level with student services, physical facilities, activities, information and communication systems, academic services, and academic support programs has been measured since 2010 at the three campuses. This data have been fundamental for the improvement of these areas as contemplated in ISP 2013-2020. Recommendations include: undertaking an aggressive campaign to emphasize the existing support programs and the importance they have for student academic and personal success; having a link on the PCUPR web page for all support services and programs providing as much information as possible in a uniform manner; having clear, concise, and uniform referral processes for all services to avoid confusion and facilitate the process; and assessing the viability of offering more services at the branch campuses.

Standard 10 emphasizes that faculty is an important asset for the success of the institution. Full and part-time faculty has increased in the last five years to 778 with 217 holding doctoral degrees, 469 with master’s degrees, 30 with bachelor’s degrees, and 63 with other terminal degrees. Institutionally, the distribution of full and part-time faculty is 447 (58%) and 331 (43%) respectively where the full to part-time ratios are 2:1 for the Ponce Campus and 1:1 for the branch campuses. The faculty is relatively stable with 67% working at the institution for more than six years. This stability is further demonstrated in the commitment to the mission of the university through the participation of faculty in diverse academic, professional, and service activities. In the past ten years, PCUPR has reinforced the policy regarding the required academic degree to teach courses at the different levels.
promoting the hiring of new faculty with doctoral degrees which is evident in the increase of doctoral degrees over the past five years. Evaluation of the faculty continues to be a key factor to maintain a competent, qualified, and committed faculty in keeping with the institutional mission and vision. Beginning in the January-May 2013 semester, a pilot online evaluation of faculty by all students in the professor’s courses will be conducted with the objective of obtaining an overall profile of the professor’s performance. PCUPR promotes professional development of the faculty both by offering institutional activities within a structured framework or supporting participation in diverse conferences and conventions in the areas of interest or expertise of the faculty. 

Recommendations include: analyzing the faculty to student ratio on a course content basis; integrating part-time faculty with full-time faculty in academic activities; and fostering between faculty and administrators more open and effective communication regarding faculty recruitment, retention, and evaluation.

Standard 11 addresses educational offerings. Established as a teacher-training college, PCUPR has grown to become a comprehensive institution with 157 academic programs including binary and combined programs that offers 13 associate, 73 bachelor’s, 37 master’s, and 8 doctoral degrees as well as 10 professional certificates and a degree in law. The university continues to strengthen and update its academic offerings based on the analysis of emerging needs of the student body and the local and global communities. The addition of 34 new academic programs and the projection of 20 new programs denote its commitment to maintaining academic excellence and competitiveness while fulfilling its vision. Since 2005, the IAO has made great strides in developing an organized assessment culture to evidence the alignment of the courses and programs with the institutional mission, vision, and strategic goals. It has reorganized the assessment process and instituted a transition to direct assessment of student learning outcomes aligned to institutional competencies and to program learning goals as well as the systematic evaluation of academic programs. The incorporation of technology has continued to enrich and transform the teaching-learning experience: financial investment in technological facilities and improvements at all campuses is a continuing priority. Research has been established as a priority area in ISP 2008-2013, and as a result a corresponding budget has been assigned for its implementation. Since the 2009 PRR, distance learning through videoconferencing and the programming of online courses has become an integral part of the educational offerings at PCUPR. Recommendations include: instituting clear and uniform procedures for the transfer of credits; providing more extensive promotion and orientation regarding online courses as well as developing online programs; enacting more rigorous measures regarding student identity validation in online courses; scheduling meetings among faculty in the different disciplines from all campuses to discuss syllabi and other pertinent issues as well as fostering communication among administrators at all levels and campuses; promoting and giving orientation to faculty and students of existing endeavors regarding academic research and publication; and promoting an assessment culture at all levels requiring documentation and action plans.

Standard 12 focuses on general education and essential skills for college-level proficiency. The general education curriculum at PCUPR has its basis in the mission, vision, and goals of the institution which are integrated in the ten core disciplines. The core courses strengthen the skills needed to develop the eight institutional competencies that will identify the PCUPR graduate. Individual programs within the core have incorporated innovative strategies and technologies to improve student learning outcomes; however the general core curriculum has not been revised in the last 20 years. Many of the general education courses are offered online which directly impacts the needs of a diverse student body, many with technological preferences. The IAO has been a key component in promoting curriculum revision based on assessment of student learning outcomes. Recommendations include: revising the general education curriculum as a priority for ISP 2013-2020 with the corresponding human, fiscal, physical, and technological support; analyzing and remedying the discrepancy in the credits required in the general education component; discussing openly the balance between general education courses and the courses in the major field of study; and implementing more institutional assessment measures upon degree completion for evidencing proficiency in key skill areas.

Standard 13 addresses related educational activities which include basic skills, certificate programs, experiential learning, non-credit offerings (continuing education), branch campuses, additional locations, and other instructional sites, distance learning, and contractual relationships. PCUPR has systematic procedures for
identifying underprepared students and for providing developmental courses and support services that can prepare them for achieving their educational goals. The Institutional Tutoring Center and projects sponsored by external funds for providing tutoring and other academic support services play an important role in fostering student achievement. PCUPR has two certificate programs at different levels that have been quite successful; the post-baccalaureate certificate in Medical Technology and a professional graduate certificate in Transportation and Maritime Logistics. Policy and procedures for validation of experiential learning in graduate programs provide for recognition of college level learning from other sources and facilitate the student’s progress without compromising the quality of the degree he/she is looking for. In addition, opportunities for validation of experiential learning at the undergraduate level are also available. PCUPR acts as a provider of continuing education activities for 22 groups of health professionals whose license certification boards are under the Department of Health. PCUPR has extended opportunities to a variety of students through its additional locations such as obtaining graduate degrees at corporate sites. The campuses have the same policies and procedures for the development, implementation, administration, and assessment of academic offerings. Promoting distance learning has become a key strategy in meeting student needs and updating the curriculum. Teacher training, course development, and the analysis of student learning outcomes have been part of this process and have had an impact on both undergraduate and graduate courses at the three campuses. For over three decades, PCUPR has maintained consortium with other institutions providing students the opportunity of obtaining second degrees.

**Recommendations for institutional improvement include:** providing orientation regarding remedial courses and corresponding support services on an institutional basis in which faculty and administrators are actively involved and knowledgeable; performing needs assessment studies to offer competitive pre-baccalaureate certificate programs and meet enrollment expectations; promoting graduate level certificates as options for obtaining success in the job market and exploring the possibility of new online graduate professional certificates in areas not offered by other institutions; developing, implementing, publishing, and communicating to the university community clear and systematic procedures for the validation of experiential learning in undergraduate programs; and strengthening more effective communication mechanisms and collaborative efforts between the three campuses especially participation in curriculum revision, design, development, and assessment through branch representation.

**Standard 14** discusses student learning assessment. PCUPR has implemented a well-structured institutional assessment plan with ongoing evaluation strategies to insure student learning consistent with the mission, strategic plan, institutional competencies, and academic program goals. Through the establishment of an institutional assessment office with the necessary human, financial, physical, and technological resources, evidence of student learning assessment information is collected and used to improve the teaching/learning process and demonstrate institutional effectiveness. The current IAP has evolved in the last five years and is linked to **ISP 2008-2013**, advancing from indirect assessment to program evaluation based on direct and indirect assessment of both the general education and professional competencies in student learning. The development of action plans based on concrete findings has led to taking affirmative actions at the course and program levels. In order to evidence that expected student learning outcomes have been reached in accordance with institutional competencies, capstone courses have been identified throughout the academic programs to track students at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of their studies. The systematic analysis of pass rates on comprehensive exams, professional certification, and licensure exams reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the programs. **Recommendations include:** changing perceptions regarding the IAP and its procedures as this plan comes to an end; improving the channels of communication regarding assessment; closing the assessment loop; and implementing effective and efficient assessment reporting practices.
Eligibility Certification Statement

Middle States Commission on Higher Education
3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680

Certification Statement:
Compliance with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and
Federal Title IV Requirements
Effective October 19, 2012

PONTIFICIAL CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO

is seeking (Check one):  ___ Initial Accreditation  
  x  Reaffirmation of Accreditation through Self Study  
  ___ Reaffirmation of Accreditation through Periodic Review

An institution seeking initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation must affirm that it meets or continues to meet established MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including the following relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008:

- Distance education and correspondence education (student identity verification)
- Transfer of credit
- Assignment of credit hours
- Title IV cohort default rate

This signed certification statement must be attached to the executive summary of the institution's self-study or periodic review report.

The undersigned hereby certify that the institution meets all established Requirements of Affiliation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation as detailed on this certification statement. If it is not possible to certify compliance with all requirements specified herein, the institution must attach specific details in a separate memorandum.

___ Exceptions are noted in the attached memorandum (Check if applicable)

Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho-Presiden  February 14, 2014  
Chief Executive Officer  (Date)

His Excellency, the Most Reverend Alvaro Corrada del Río  February 14, 2014  
Bishop of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico  (Date)  
Chair, Board of Trustees
Introduction: Overview of Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico

General Information and History

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR) is a co-educational non-profit private institution of higher education with bonds to the Catholic Bishops Conference of Puerto Rico. It was founded in Ponce, the largest city of the southern region of Puerto Rico, in September 1948 under the guidance of the Bishops of Puerto Rico and was affiliated with Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. The university was incorporated by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York and granted an absolute charter as an institution of higher learning with programs leading to academic and professional degrees. It was accredited in 1948 by the Council of Higher Education of Puerto Rico (now the Puerto Rico Education Council) and in 1953 by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1959 a center was established in Arecibo, located in the northwestern part of the island; in 1960 another center was established in Mayagüez which is located on the west coast. Both Arecibo and Mayagüez became branch campuses in 1986.

PCUPR was canonically established in 1972 and granted the title of Pontifical in 1991. This distinction officially ratified the authenticity of the university as a genuine Catholic institution of the Church. As a pontifical university, the institution must adhere to the dogmas and teachings of the Holy Roman Catholic Church as expressed by the Holy See and the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education.

Established as a teacher-training college, the university has grown to become a comprehensive institution with 157 academic programs that offers 13 associate, 73 bachelor’s, 36 master’s, 8 doctoral degrees, 10 professional certificates, and a degree in law as well as 9 binary and 6 combined programs. Full and part-time faculty has increased in the last five years to 778 with 216 holding doctoral degrees, 469 with master’s degrees, 30 with bachelor’s degrees and 63 with other terminal degrees. Institutionally, the distribution of full and part-time faculty is 447 (57%) and 331 (43%) respectively where the full to part-time ratios are 2:1 for the Ponce Campus and 1:1 for the branch campuses.

Fall enrollment for the institution as a whole has risen significantly since August 2008. The data submitted by PCUPR to the Integrated Post-Secondary Educational Data System (IPEDS) is shown in Table 1. This data is based on a cut-off date of October 15 for each year and represents an increase of 14 percent of all enrollment when the projection from 2008-2012 was to be a decline of up to 3 percent for these years. There has been a 16% increase in undergraduate students and an 8% in graduate level students. This increase in enrollment may be attributed to an effective one on one promotional campaign, new academic offerings, and the current market conditions in higher education in Puerto Rico.

Table 1: PCUPR Fall Enrollment 2008-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Ponce Campus</th>
<th>Arecibo Campus</th>
<th>Mayagüez Campus</th>
<th>PCUPR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>5,273</td>
<td>2,197</td>
<td>7,470</td>
<td>439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>5,371</td>
<td>2,360</td>
<td>7,731</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5,750</td>
<td>2,453</td>
<td>8,203</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>6,340</td>
<td>2,442</td>
<td>8,782</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>6,171</td>
<td>2,382</td>
<td>8,553</td>
<td>623</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, when comparing fall enrollment for 2011 and 2012, there is a decrease of 2% at the undergraduate level, nearly 1% at the graduate level, and 2% for all enrollment. Various external factors which have affected enrollment include competing and new emerging universities offering similar programs or short-term technical degrees in the adjacent areas to each campus. Current federal government budget constraints threaten
enrollment opportunities for over ninety percent of PCUPR students who depend heavily on financial aid (e.g. PELL grant, student loans, and work-study programs).

Table 2 illustrates the graduation total for PCUPR graduates as reported in IPEDS for the academic year of July to June. Institutional graduation totals have increased 6% in the last five years.

### Table 2: PCUPR and Campus Graduation Totals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PC</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>PCU</td>
<td>PC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Bachelor’s</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>1335</td>
<td>1002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:** PC - Ponce Campus  AC - Arecibo Branch Campus  MC - Mayagüez Branch Campus  PCU - Pontifical Catholic University

### Administrative Structure

PCUPR is a university system composed of a main campus, Ponce, and two branch campuses - Mayagüez and Arecibo. All PCUPR campuses abide by the same mission and vision. PCUPR has a two-tiered governance structure: a Corporation and a Board of Trustees. The Corporation is comprised of de jure members, who are the Apostolic delegate to Puerto Rico and the members of the Puerto Rican Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Board of Trustees is composed of members of the Corporation and appointed members. Its chair is elected from among the Puerto Rican Conference of Catholic Bishops. The President, who administers the university, is appointed by the Board of Trustees and is an ex-officio member of that body. The President presides over the organizational structure of the institution including the University Board, the Administrative Board and the University Senate. The University Senate is the representative body of the administration, the faculty, and the student body of the three campuses. The Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses are administered by a rector who answers to the President.

Since the last Self-Study, PCUPR has experienced an organizational change in its administrative structure. In November 2009, MSCHE requested that PCUPR clarify the relationship between the Arecibo and Mayagüez campuses with the Ponce Campus as these were functioning as operationally separate units. As a result, PCUPR requested that MSCHE include the Arecibo and Mayagüez campuses within the scope of the Ponce Campus governance structure. On June 28, 2011, the Executive Committee for Substantive Change of MSCHE approved the accreditation of PCUPR as a single institution with three campuses: Ponce as main campus and Arecibo and Mayagüez as branch campuses. As a result of this substantive change, PCUPR is submitting for the first time in 16 years an institutional self-study report which incorporates all three campuses.

Since the submission of the 2009 Periodic Review Report (PRR), there have been changes in leadership. In October 2009, Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho was appointed President of the institution. In July 2010, Dr. Leandro Colón was appointed Vice President of Academic Affairs. A new Vice Presidency for Institutional Development, Research, and Planning was created with Dr. Félix Cortés as its head. Upon the untimely death of Dr. Juan Quintana in September 2011, Dr. Herminio Irizarry was appointed Associate Vice-President of Academic Affairs. At the Arecibo Branch Campus, Dr. Edwin Hernández Vera was named Rector in January 2011, and he appointed a new Dean of Academic Affairs and an Associate Dean of Student Affairs. At the end of the August-December 2012 academic semester, Dr. Mei Ling Velázquez completed her term as Rector of the Mayagüez Branch Campus, and Dr. Frank Jimmy Sierra has been acting as Interim Rector.
Two new additional locations have been established since the 2009 PRR. In May 2009, the School of Architecture was inaugurated in the downtown area of Ponce. In 2011, a center for teaching and research in biotechnology and agro-biotechnology (CEIBA) was opened on the outskirts of Ponce.

**Mission and Vision**

The essence of the mission of the university is the same as the one reported in the 2003 PCUPR Self-Study. Nevertheless, there was a perception within the community that the wording was too elaborate. The Board of Trustees met at the beginning of the 2007-2008 academic year to reformulate the text of the university’s mission, vision, and values based on this perception. It is important to note that the central ideas remain true to the 2003 wording.

The reformulated version approved by the Board of Trustees in the fall 2008 semester is based on *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* and most recently on the documents produced in the Catholic Bishops Conference held in Brazil in 2007. The mission now states:

“The mission of Pontifical Catholic University is to honor and promote the life and dignity of the human being as well as to educate him/her in accordance with the values of the Gospel and the disciplines of current scientific knowledge in order to build a better local and global community.”

The method to accomplish the mission of the university is “by means of a dynamic, critical, and creative educational encounter, framed around Christian amity and committed to the quest for answers and solutions to the issues of culture and to the challenges of the Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and global realities, within a peaceful and harmonious environment.”

In accordance with the mission, the vision of PCUPR is that it will be the primary option to achieve an integral Christian and academic formation of excellence aimed towards a life of fulfillment and adventure. The university will pursue this vision by integrating the following values in our educational encounter: faith and reason, Catholic life, family, integrity, community service, educational quality, and dialogue.

**Description of the Self-Study Process**

**Preparation for the Self-Study Process**

The President of the institution, Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho, appointed Dr. Herminio Irizarry, professor of the Graduate School in the College of Business Administration and consultant to the Vice Presidency for Institutional Development, Research, and Planning (VPIDRP), chair of the Executive and Steering Committees in August 2011. In November 2011, Dr. Herminio Irizarry, Prof. María de los A. Muñiz, Director of the Institutional Assessment Office, and Dr. María de los A. Nazario, Co-chair of the Mayagüez Branch Campus Self-Study Process, attended the MSCE Self-Study Institute in Philadelphia. After discussing the various models of Self-Study design with Dr. Tito Guerrero III, MSCE liaison to the institution, university representatives selected the comprehensive model which grouped several standards. This model was approved by PCUPR’s Administrative Board and the Academic Council after discussion. At the meeting with the Academic Council, deans and rectors were asked to submit research questions for each standard and to recommend faculty and students to represent each college or branch in the different task groups. Non-academic units also submitted candidates for these groups. Upon the unexpected passing of Dr. Juan Quintana, the Associate Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Irizarry was appointed to this position. Due to Dr. Irizarry’s added responsibilities, Professor Shirley Santiago-Jiménez, who was co-chair of the Self-Study process, was named chair in January of 2012.

In January 2012, the Executive Committee was named, and the chairs and co-chairs of the task groups were appointed. At a general faculty assembly, Dr. Irizarry informed the faculty of the Self-Study process and its goals and structure. The Executive and Steering Committees then met and discussed the Self-Study Design process and timeline of tasks. An Editing Committee was formed to revise the research questions submitted and to complete the proposal of the Self-Study design. This proposal was submitted to the Executive Self-Study Committee and the President for recommendations and approval. It was then circulated to the Steering Committee so that the task
groups could begin working once approved by Dr. Guerrero from MSCH. The Self-Study Design was approved by Dr. Guerrero after his campus visit on March 7, 2012.

As mentioned previously, PCUPR is submitting an institutional self-study report which incorporates all three campuses for the first time in 16 years based on the substantive change reported in June 2011. Upon recommendation of the MSCHE liaison, Dr. Tito Guerrero, at a meeting held at the MSCHE Annual Conference in December 2012, emphasis will be placed on findings since the Periodic Review Report of 2009. A cut-off date of December 2012 was established for data gathered by the task groups. This cut-off date corresponds to the timeframe established for receiving task group reports by March 2013 and the writing and editing of the final report for submission to MSCHE by September 2013. After the preliminary visit by Dr. Antonio Gutiérrez, the Evaluation Team Chair designated by MSCHE, the cut-off date was extended to May 2013 upon his recommendation.

The Comprehensive Model with Related Standards
The model chosen for the Self-Study was the comprehensive model which allowed for a wider analytical discussion among all constituencies of related accreditation standards. This allows the university to identify achievements and challenges based on interrelated evidence leading to institutional improvement at all levels. (See Figure 1.) Consequently, the institution has constructed an integrated vision of its processes and activities. The use of this model also facilitated the gathering of related evidence and the assessment of the results in each of the 14 standards while focusing on three specific areas vital to achieving expected educational outcomes: the fulfillment of the institutional mission linked to effective strategic planning and the assessment of student learning and institutional practices.

**FIGURE 1: PCUPR SELF-STUDY MODEL**

Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study
Through the Self-Study process, the university has been able to assess its performance based on the 14 standards stipulated in **Characteristics of Excellence**. This has allowed the institution to further strengthen the institutional strategic and operational planning process in order to address the challenges of the next decade. Consequently, the primary goal of the PCUPR Self-Study process was to evidence institutional effectiveness in accordance with its mission, vision, and goals in order to promote self-understanding and renewal. This was demonstrated through an analytical and reflective self-assessment process which identified effective strategic planning consistent with
the standards of excellence coupled with the assessment of student learning outcomes. The intended outcomes of the study included:

- assessing how the institutional mission and vision are embedded in all administrative and academic university activities;
- assessing the involvement of the university community in aspects of the strategic and operational planning process on a continuous basis;
- assessing the effectiveness of academic programs and services regarding expected student learning outcomes; and
- assessing the professional and personal preparation of students from a Christian framework to be members of a dynamic society.

The secondary goal was to demonstrate compliance with relevant standards of accreditation and federal requirements.

**Organizational Structure and Methodology**

The Self-Study structure consisted of an Executive Committee composed of 15 members: a chair and co-chair, an executive secretary, and 12 other members representing the three campuses including faculty, administrators, non-academic personnel, a Board of Trustees representative, and a student representative. The Executive Committee was responsible for the managerial functions of the Self-Study process. It was in charge of designing and implementing the Self-Study process throughout the institution, directing and supervising the activities of the Steering Committee; and coordinating the distribution of data and information from surveys, statistical reports, and institutional documents among the task group chairs. A sub-committee was formed to edit and submit the final draft of the Self-Study Report after approval.

The Steering Committee was composed of the Executive Committee and the chairs and co-chairs of the task groups according to the related standards. The Steering Committee met every other month to receive and discuss the follow-up reports from the task groups. Through a collaborative effort, recommendations were discussed to enable each group to perform the activities necessary to effectively answer the research questions designed for each one. Each task group was composed of members who represented faculty, administrators, staff, and students from the three campuses. It was through the wide representation of the different constituents of the university community that the institution could formulate a comprehensive view of its activities. Nevertheless, active participation and attendance by student representatives in some committees was limited or absent. It is important to note that the Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses had a similar structure including task groups to collect data for the institutional report.

The methodology employed to gather data and input for analysis included: the analysis of all pertinent documents; interviews to faculty and staff, administrators, trustees, students, and alumni; focus groups and various surveys administered to different constituencies. Subgroups were established for each standard that devised work plans to identify and analyze key findings and provide recommendations and possible solutions for institutional improvement. Key documentation and references are stipulated in the appendices and digital Roadmap of Evidence. Additional information will be available for physical perusal in the Resource Room.

In order to establish a comparative analysis with the results of the 2002 Self-Study Master Survey (2002 SSMS) which focused on perceptions, a new master survey was created composed of four questionnaires: faculty, administrators, students, and Board of Trustees. A random sample of 1,012 members of the university community participated in the 2012 Self-Study Master Survey (2012 SSMS). The distribution was as follows: 841 were students; 88 were faculty members; 68 were administrators or non-academic personnel (deans, academic chairs, and unit directors); and 15 were trustees. For purposes of analysis and assessment, the PCUPR-MSCHE Self-Study Steering Committee decided that a response to survey questions with a percentage lower than 75 indicates a less than satisfactory evaluation as compared to the 70% cut-off point used in the 2002 SSMS.
Chapter 1 - Standard 1: Mission and Goals and Standard 6: Integrity - Task Group One

STANDARD 1: MISSION AND GOALS

Standard 1 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “The institution’s mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates whom 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.”

In the context of this standard, the mission statement of PCUPR is essentially the same as the one reported in the 2003 PCUPR Self-Study. Based on the university community’s perception that the mission statement was too wordy, the Board of Trustees reformulated and consequently approved the text of the university’s mission, vision, and values during the 2007-2008 academic year. The new version is based on Ex Corde Ecclesiae and the documents produced in the Catholic Bishops Conference held in Brazil in 2007. The mission now states:

“The mission of Pontifical Catholic University is to honor and promote the life and dignity of the human being as well as to educate him/her in accordance with the values of the Gospel and the disciplines of current scientific knowledge in order to build a better local and global community.”

The method to accomplish the mission of the university is “by means of a dynamic, critical, and creative educational encounter, framed around Christian amity and committed to the quest for answers and solutions to the issues of culture and to the challenges of the Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and global realities, within a peaceful and harmonious environment.”

In accordance with the mission, the vision of PCUPR is that it will be the primary option to achieve an integral Christian and academic formation of excellence aimed towards a life of fulfillment and adventure. The university has pursued this vision by integrating the following values in our educational encounter: faith and reason, Catholic life, family, integrity, community service, educational quality, and dialogue.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGES

For this standard, the task group analyzed how the mission and its corresponding goals are integrated in the academic and administrative activities of the institution and the effectiveness with which it is achieved. It also studied and evidenced how the mission is an integral part of the strategic planning process and its particular goals and activities and to the extent in which it is also assessed as part of student learning outcomes. The methodology used by the task group was the analysis of internal secondary data such as institutional documents, the institutional web page, promotional literature, and the results of the 2012 SSMS as well as interviews with different university personnel.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS

It is not easy to determine compliance with a mission such as that of PCUPR since to comply means reaching the hearts and minds of people and transforming their inner vision of life and the human being, concepts which are not visibly measurable. What is, on the other hand, easily measured is the number of formation courses, interdisciplinary dialogues, activities, initiatives, encounters, liturgical acts, radio and television programs, publications, and the creation of the physical spaces where this change of mentality may take place.

At the Institutional level, the most significant changes in the last three years promoted directly by the presidency have been:

1. The creation of a delegate for the Institutional Mission, distinct from the university chaplain. The university community now has two priests available who have different but coordinated tasks in service of PCUPR's mission.
2. The recent creation of the Institute on Marriage and the Family, which, through workshops and seminars, seeks to emphasize the value of human life in all its stages and to study current problems confronting the Puerto Rican family.

3. The creation of a new master's degree in Canon Law in 2012.

4. The publication of 5 studies, 2 conferences, and 7 texts by both Pope Benedict XVI and the Puerto Rican Bishops, in order to increase educational references regarding the promotion of human life and dignity.

5. The re-estabishment of a certification program for teachers of religion, administrators, and pastoral personnel of Catholic schools in April 2012 (beginning with the Fajardo-Humacao Diocese).

The university has established the celebration of a congress on Catholics in public life, which was held in collaboration with the University of Madrid St. Paul CEU in February 2013. It may also be noted that during faculty assemblies and professional development activities, as well as the managerial workshops for administrative personnel, time has been dedicated to the study and reflection of pontifical documents concerning Catholic universities and their mission.

There have also been many initiatives by the Chaplaincy and Institutional Mission Office: symposiums on the family (the first celebrated in 2011 and the second in 2013), annual catechetical courses, retreats for teaching and non-teaching personnel and students, and interdisciplinary dialogues (seven in all since 2010 when the Institutional Mission Office became the coordinator of the dialogues). In addition to liturgical services and the celebration of the Sacraments, the Chaplaincy has reinvigorated the University Pastoral Plan, especially concerning university students. A sign of this revitalization has been the First Congress for Young Catholic University Students celebrated in December 1, 2012.

A significant innovation has been the celebration of on-campus Advent missions for employees and students in addition to the already established Lenten missions. The University Pastoral Office, which coordinates these missions, has prepared brochures containing themes for reflection and discussion guiding the employees, professors, and students of the different colleges as they meet around the campus.

Since August 2008, the Institute for the Social Doctrine of the Church has organized 24 conferences, 3 forums, 3 interdisciplinary dialogues, 6 study seminars, and 3 educational expositions. These activities seek "answers and solutions to the issues of culture and to the challenges of the Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and global realities" in the light of the Christian faith and values of the Gospel as proposed in PCUPR's mission. In order to make these conferences and forums available to all the university community, the Institute has published the yearbook Koinonia since 2005-2006. In addition, the Institute has produced the weekly radio program Desafiando criterios, with the intention of introducing into public debate a voice promoting the dignity of life and that of human beings when judging national and international events. Finally, beginning in 2012, work has been initiated to permeate all the college core courses with the elements and principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church. To this end, formation of the faculty in the Social Doctrine of the Church is taking place concurrently with revision of the course syllabi and creation of modules to enable the Social Doctrine of the Church to be taught throughout the curriculum. The mission statement has now been incorporated into all course syllabi.

The mission of the institution is also reflected in the services provided to the community through its clinics created by the different colleges or graduate schools. Among those already established are the Interdisciplinary Clinic for Community Service (promoted by the College of Graduate Studies) which offers individual and group therapy, orientation, and counseling services and the Legal Aid Clinic (sponsored by the School of Law). The newest addition is the Office for Management of Loss, Bereavement and Grief created in 2008 by the College of Graduate Studies at the Ponce Campus to provide support to the community in the areas of loss of life and property and the grieving process.
The mission is further integrated into the physical spaces of PCUPR as evidenced by the remodeling of the chapel Espíritu Santo in 2009 located in the student center of the Ponce Campus. In 2011, the Vice-Presidency for Student Affairs (VPSA) made available the remodeled Carlos Manuel Rodriguez Conference Room located behind the González Pató Student Center (Ponce Campus) to the University Pastoral Office and the Catholic youth groups for their exclusive use.

Students are exposed to the mission statement as early as the recruitment process. During their first year of study, the institutional mission is discussed in the orientation courses: Introduction to University Life. Course introductions, syllabi, and exams have incorporated the mission statement, and the mission, corresponding values, and institutional educational philosophy are further discussed in theology and philosophy classes.

The vision, mission, and goals are cornerstones in ISP 2008-2013 in order to meet the needs and expectations of current and future students and university processes. PCUPR recognizes that the student is the most important member of the university community (PCUPR Graduate Profile 2008-2013). As derived from its mission statement, the institution provides the skills necessary to achieve an integral Christian and academic formation of excellence as well as to develop leadership potential and adaptability to the alternative employment opportunities available. Consequently, the institutional goal is that the academic offerings of the institution respond to the expectations and interests of students and the needs of the Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and global society. The ISP 2008-2013 provided for the revision and updating of academic programs such as biotechnology, transportation and maritime logistics, and tourism according to the constructivist focus in order to develop and strengthen critical thinking, effective communication, scientific knowledge, mathematical and technological skills, the sense of ethical responsibility, and a Christian conscience. It also reflects the integration of assessment of its goals for learning, programs and institutional services.

In response to internal and external factors which have influenced institutional goals and promoted planning and operational changes as related to the mission and vision, the most significant internal one has been administrative appointments such as that of Dr. Felix Cortés as Vice-President of Planning, Institutional Development and Research, Father Javier Iñigo as Delegate for the Institutional Mission, Dr. Edgar Rodriguez Rios as Executive Director of Technology and Telecommunications, Dr. Edwin Hernandez Vera as Arecibo Campus Rector, and Dr. Carmen Betancourt as Director of the Institute for Distance Learning (IDL).

External factors such as market trends have led to significant curriculum development as evidenced by the inauguration of the School of Architecture (May 2009) and the Center for Teaching and Research in Biotechnology and Agro-Biotechnology (CEIBA 2011) and the creation of the IDL. In the last ten years, another external factor which has influenced the mission and vision is that of social changes such as increases in crime, suicides, the number of students from special education programs and with disabilities, and a population dealing with the elderly and mental disease. In 2012, statistics of the Puerto Rico Department of Health registered 257 suicides; the Puerto Rico Institute of Statistics indicated 61,720 Type I crimes; the Puerto Rico Department of Education reported 127,022 cases of students in special education; and the Puerto Rico Department of Labor reported 300,000 persons 16 years old or over with some type of disability. As a result, two new units were created to respond to the needs of students and the community at large. These are the Office for Management of Loss, Bereavement, and Grief (as previously mentioned) and the Intervention and Alzheimer's Caretakers Program (2011). The latter serves the community as an outlet for these caretakers to express feelings, share experiences, and receive orientation related to their role. Other existing services are the Integration and Quality of Life Program (1990), the Interdisciplinary Clinic for Community Services (1999), and the Office for Services for Persons with Disabilities - OSPI (2001). Solutions to these social changes have impacted resource allocation because they require physical, financial and human resources. These external factors are taken into consideration as part of responsible fiscal planning.
PCUPR actively fosters a culture of assessment within the university community. Institutional educational competencies and skills are aligned to the mission, vision and goals of the institution and are reflected in the institutional learning outcomes. The eight competencies established by the institution as expected learning outcomes upon graduation are:

- demonstrating openness and religious knowledge as fostered by the Catholic Church;
- employing critical thinking and creative techniques for solving problems;
- applying effective communication skills to express ideas, opinions, and emotions in order to maintain interpersonal and collaborative relations effectively;
- demonstrating respect for diversity of values, cultures, and points of view as well as tolerance for ambiguity and openness to change;
- applying ethical principles to cultural and human responsibilities when confronting challenges in one’s personal, family, community, and professional life;
- utilizing diverse qualitative and quantitative methods when confronting problems requiring the search for truth; and
- managing information and technology appropriately; and employing conflict management skills.

This alignment is clearly indicated in the assessment documents dealing with student learning outcomes and the alignment of institutional competencies with professional and program goals (Assessment Forms LOA-02: Matriz para el Avalúo del Aprendizaje Estudiantil en los Programas Académicos; DT-1 Relación de Competencias Institucionales, Competencias Profesionales y de Programas; and DT2:Mapas de Alineación de Competencias y Cursos). These documents are available at https://www.mipucpr.org/avaluo/ and in the Office of Institutional Assessment.

**STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The primary strength of PCUPR is that it has a clearly established mission which articulates its commitment to student learning and to the community which it serves within a Christian framework. This is reflected in the comparison of the perceptions obtained from the 2002 and 2012 Self-Study Master Surveys. In 2002, 73% of students and 87% of faculty surveyed agreed that the main beneficiary of the mission is the student. In the 2012 SSMS, 92% and 97% respectively perceived this.

The values represented in PCUPR’s educational philosophy are a reflection of its mission which recognizes the importance of the Gospel as well as the Puerto Rican culture in order to responsibly educate its citizens and future leaders. Furthermore and to this end, the planning and decision-making processes as well as the daily routine practices are based on the institutional mission.

Another strength is that there is congruence among the mission, the academic programs, services, and activities offered throughout the institution and the external community. There are diverse academic offerings which incorporate new programs that respond to societal needs and support the accomplishment of the mission. The 2012 SSMS reflects that 90% of students surveyed perceive that the mission of PCUPR is congruent with the academic programs and their related activities. In addition, the curricular sequences of the academic programs require theology and philosophy courses which reflect PCUPR’s mission to educate “in accordance with the values of the Gospel.” This philosophy has been inherently embedded in all the curricula and will be formalized in the next few years with the revision of the course syllabi and creation of modules to enable the Social Doctrine of the Church to be taught throughout the curriculum.

In keeping with its mission, PCUPR offers services to both the internal and external communities in response to their needs. For example, since 2009 the Interdisciplinary Clinic for Community Services has handled an average of 752 cases per year. These cases were mainly the evaluation of depression, anxiety, and family problems. Since 2006, the Clinic has included the RAP (Respect, Harmony, and Peace) Program for the prevention of domestic violence by targeting middle school adolescent males. It has had 676 participants. The Integration and Quality of Life Program for the prevention of the use of controlled substances has managed an average of 290 cases per year from 2007-2011. OSPI began in 2001 with the objective to offer a favorable environment for the intellectual,
physical, social, and psychological development of persons with disabilities. It recognizes the equality of and dignity of all human beings under the law. Since 2007, OSPI has provided services for an average of 136 students per year.

The mission, vision, goals and objectives are clearly embedded in the variety of activities celebrated throughout the institution. These include religious, official, and special celebrations as previously mentioned.

CHALLENGES
A major challenge for fulfilling the mission at the student level arises from the fact that many young people distance themselves culturally and religiously from the ideals promoting life and human dignity. Although students perceive that they are the primary beneficiary of the institutional goals in accordance with its mission, few can truly articulate what the institutional mission and vision are. Some students may have a scant formal education in the clarification of values, have confused and syncretistic religious convictions, or do not generally belong to religious groups or movements.

For the community as a whole, the greatest challenge comes from a society that begs for new and original responses in the face of ideological fashions and new cultural tendencies, socio-economic crises, and technological innovations. If the university does not recognize and react proactively to the challenges presented by its social environment in light of its Christian faith, it will end up repeating an interior discourse which may be "just", but sterile if it is not projected to the external community or real world. A university acquires its intrinsic identity through its encounters with the concrete problems of the society in which it lives.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT
1. PCUPR needs to more visibly disseminate its mission statement throughout the university branch campuses thus making it accessible to the internal and external community that it serves. Although some steps have been taken in this regard, signs throughout the campus in key locations as well as digital messages containing the mission statement would be effective reminders of the university's primary purpose for existence.

2. PCUPR must accept the challenges of the environment by further addressing an increased presence in two aspects:
   a. in the communication media (newspapers, internet, radio, television) with perspectives borne of studies, research and experiences lived at the University; and
   b. in the community through projects which permit impacting social problems and conditions such as poverty, marginalization, and injustice.

3. There is an urgent need to reorganize the practicum required for graduation in majors such as social work, psychology, law, and science, so students may actively participate in community service projects of social transformation in an interdisciplinary fashion.

4. Existing associations, groups, and movements dedicated to the dynamic Christian encounter among their constituents but which are somewhat marginalized, should be revitalized in order to make a greater contribution to institutionally organized initiatives. Co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g. religious and cultural activities, excursions, and concerts during the semester) and some orientation and counseling activities could be offered by these entities.

5. Pro-actively promote, especially among the external community and particularly through volunteer efforts by the faculty and student community, the services offered by the various clinics so that all citizens may benefit from these services and through them discover a dignified treatment which reflects the values characterizing PCUPR. In addition, offer more fiscal support to these services with additional funding if necessary.
STANDARD 6: INTEGRITY
Standard 6 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “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.”

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE
For this standard, the task group studied how and to what extent the institution demonstrates the practice of ethical principles and the observance of stated institutional policies in its programs and activities in both the internal and external communities while supporting academic and intellectual freedom and respecting diversity. The methodology used was the same as that for Standard 1.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS
The PCUPR mission clearly states that it “promotes the life and dignity of the human being.” Dignity cannot be achieved without the foundation of integrity in all of the activities and publications that the institution performs whether they relate to the management of financial or administrative tasks, the teaching/learning process, or student and community services. In order for this to be accomplished, the university provides an environment of integrity, tranquility, and security for its community. The attainment of this environment is evidenced in the dissemination of policies throughout the university community. The policies guiding the ethical behavior of the university community have as their goal to create awareness and establish behavioral parameters in areas such as intellectual property, the environment, and the abuse of controlled substances, among others. Policies are communicated to academic and non-academic administrators at periodic administrative management workshops and through electronic mail. These ethical institutional policies are promoted within the institution through pamphlets and PCUPR’s web page at http://website.pucpr.edu/ under the link Conoce tu Universidad. These include: the Student Handbook which contains institutional norms and policies as well as student regulations (Normas Y Políticas Institucionales y Reglamento De Estudiantes); Institutional Policies and Norms regarding Web Use (Políticas y normas institucionales de la Red Universitaria); Health and Occupational Safety Policy (Política de salud y seguridad ocupacional); Alcohol, Tobacco, and Controlled Substance Abuse Policy (Política para una comunidad universitaria libre de alcohol, tabaco y sustancias controladas); Intellectual Property Policy (Política de propiedad intelectual); Trademark Policy (Política de marcas y nombres); and Environmental Policy (Política ambiental). Other policies such as those in the Faculty Manual are available under restricted access through the link Acceso Pionero. In addition, the VPAA and the Accreditation Office have compiled these and other policies for reference in binders titled “Políticas, normas y procedimientos institucionales” (Institutional Policies, Norms, and Procedures). Where pertinent, the policies stipulate the necessary processes for conflict resolution as warranted.

The assessment of integrity in the policies, procedures, and practices of the institution is performed by the corresponding unit at the academic and administrative levels. This assessment can be performed by the department or administrative office, the college or school, and/or the corresponding vice-presidency. For example, before 2012, the Public Relations Office was responsible for verifying that all promotional materials complied with the Trademark Policy before purchases. Now, academic deans and academic and unit directors have this responsibility.

Student complaints and disciplinary measures regarding academic matters are channeled through the hierarchy of the student’s major culminating with the Vice Presidency of Academic Affairs. Other complaints and disciplinary measures are handled by the Vice Presidency of Student Affairs. The Student Handbook (rev. 2008), which is accessible to all students via the university website, stipulates the institutional norms and policies as well as student regulations regarding violations, sanctions, and conflict resolution in order to safeguard the integrity, mission, and vision of the institution. Since 2008, 111 complaints have been submitted to the VPSA.

Integrity is exemplified by processes which demonstrate fairness and impartiality. With regards to PCUPR employees, hiring practices are performed by the Human Resources Office and the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. Department chairs inform the Associate Vice-President of Academic Affairs (AVPAA) of available
positions; administrative directors inform the Human Resources Office of administrative vacancies. Since January 2012, the AVPAA submits these petitions to HRO which then proceeds to publish announcements for these positions via email to the internal community first, thus centralizing the recruitment process. As of April 2013, these vacancies appear on the university webpage under Empleos. If necessary, the available positions are then published in the newspapers for the external community. Applications are now only accepted by HRO for published vacancies which are referred to the Delegate of the Institutional Mission for verification of canonical status. PCUPR is an equal opportunity employer; however, under 42 U.S. Code, Section 2000e-2, as a Catholic educational institution managed by the Corporation composed of the Puerto Rican Conference of Bishops, “... it shall not be an unlawful employment practice for a school, college, university, or other educational institution or institution of learning to hire and employ employees of a particular religion...”. Faculty candidates are then duly interviewed by departmental, college, and institutional committees while non-academic personnel are interviewed by unit directors and HRO utilizing institutional rubrics.

Upon being hired, non-academic employees receive a personnel manual (published in 1999 and under revision) with respective addenda of new and revised policies which clearly indicate the norms and procedures regarding evaluation, acquiring a permanent position, compensation, retention, and dismissal. Newly hired faculty is given a half-day orientation regarding institutional norms and procedures and is advised to access the Faculty Manual online (also under revision) at Acceso Pionero or view a hard copy available in each dean’s office. Processes and practices involving faculty evaluation, promotion, tenure, compensation, retention, and dismissal are stated within Section IV which was revised in 2010. A summary of the fundamental norms regarding appointment, dismissal, and the rights and responsibilities of the faculty is found in Chapter XIV of the Bylaws of PCUPR (Also known as “Statutes”).

Integrity also refers to how accurately and timely information regarding the institution is disclosed both to the internal and external communities. Changes that affect the institution are disclosed through various channels. At present, the principal methods of timely disclosure are online. The university webpage (www.pucpr.edu) is accessible to both the internal and external communities. The university homepage displays links to institutional information such as the principal administrative offices, the different colleges and schools, academic offerings and calendars, student life, university pastoral plan, employment opportunities, and others. Most importantly, Spanish and English versions of both the undergraduate and graduate catalogs are available online to the internal and external communities. Each catalog records changes in the academic programs, costs, and institutional policies and is revised every four years. Also published in the last two years on the homepage is the online newsletter Huellas del Futuro, which is updated daily with the latest events that occur at PCUPR.

Internal communications are available through the university intranet Acceso Pionero and the internal email system supported by Google Apps for Education (gmail@pucpr.edu) which was adopted in 2011. Acceso Pionero gives the internal community secure access to academic and administrative information about institutional policies, norms, services, activities, and academic programming among others. The internal email system is the vehicle for announcements that affect the administration, faculty, and other personnel. These announcements originate at all administrative levels, from the Presidency down to the chairs of department committees, and include information such as the appointments of academic and non-academic personnel to administrative positions; changes or restatements of institutional policies; professional development and institutional activities; and changes and problems in the technical and physical facilities.

The university is in the process of reducing the consumption of paper, but hard-copy versions of important information such as the undergraduate and graduate catalogs in Spanish and English, the Faculty Manual, and the newspaper format of the semester academic offerings as published by the registrar are provided. Fifty printed copies of each catalog are presently produced and placed in the offices of the president, the vice-presidents, the rectors, the deans, and the registrar, and in the Encarnación Valdés Library (BEV). The remaining copies are reserved for academic programs that are undergoing accreditation. Corrections to the aforementioned documents are distributed as necessary to maintain accuracy. The latest complete version of the Faculty
that appears online is that of August 2006 as amended in August 2010 (Section IV, Faculty); however, it is presently in the process of being revised.

In addition to the electronic media, the meetings of administrative units also serve as a means of disseminating information which affects the institution. These meetings include those of the University Senate (at least 6 times during the academic year), the General Faculty Assembly (twice a year), the colleges (at least twice a year), and academic departments (monthly).

The majority of published university documents and promotional materials clearly state the mission, and the institutional vision and goals are stated in pertinent documents as well. The English and Spanish undergraduate catalogs mention the mission, vision, and values of the university as well as the objectives of the institution. The Faculty Manual refers to the mission, vision, and values of the university; however, these need to be updated to reflect the most recent versions.

Advertising published by the institution reflects the mission either because it is stated in print or implied in the visuals that are utilized. In fact, the new logo of the institution introduced in 2011 is based on the architectural structure (the arch and cross) that is at the entranceway of the main campus in Ponce. The arch symbolizes the cultural path to which the university contributes its evangelical, academic, and social work in Puerto Rico. In addition, the cross is a symbol of the institution’s pontifical status and also accentuates the Catholic mission of the university. Furthermore, institutional advertising showing students participating in community programs has demonstrated a commitment to the promotion of human life and dignity. It also emphasizes church doctrine applied in the work experience of students. In the last three years, the vision of the institution has been reflected not only in the advertising of the variety of academic offerings but also in the messages they contain with the campaign slogan “Live Your Future Today.” Various examples of institutional advertising within the context of the mission and vision can be found in the links in the Roadmap of Evidence.

PCUPR facilitates and promotes a climate of respect for cultural and social diversity. Its mission statement recognizes that as an institution it is responsible for creating a better local and global community; and within its vision, it is committed to searching for solutions related to the cultural realities not only of Puerto Rico but that of the Caribbean and the world. This climate of respect is an effort evidenced by the academic and institutional organizations and offices that have been established.

The Association of International Students (formerly the Association of Foreign Students) under the VPSA was officially established in 1982 and had been inactive for the last ten years. It was reactivated in April 2012 with a total membership of 20 students from the Caribbean and Central and South America. The Institutional Office for International Affairs (OIRI) was established in 2010 to provide students and faculty members with the opportunity to experience other cultures in an educational internship setting. The university continues to give support to a growing population of students with disabilities through OSPI. The discussion of divergent ideas and perspectives is evident administratively in meetings held at the departmental, college, and institutional level. Academically it is discussed through the promotion of respect in classroom discussion as well as in interdisciplinary conferences and activities held throughout the institution and open to the community at large.

The university’s vision statement fosters the basic principle of the search for truth through dialogue and discussion as the foundation of “a dynamic, critical, and creative educational encounter.” Building on the values of the Gospel and the current scientific knowledge available through research, it upholds the ideal and pursuit of academic freedom as clearly stated in the Faculty Manual, Part V: Section 2.0 on page 21. Due to the university’s religious origin, nature, and history, restrictions imposed by the dogma, the morality, and the law of the Catholic Church are not considered unwarranted.

In March 2010 PCUPR established a policy for academic research (Política de Investigación Académica) which is accessible to the internal university community through its portal Acceso Pionero under the Faculty link. The objective is to promote among faculty and students the development of research projects which will expand
existing knowledge, improve and better understand the discipline, and ultimately offer solutions to existing societal and global challenges. The policy clearly states procedures regarding aspects such as the submission, evaluation, and approval of proposals as well as applying for institutional funding. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) was established in 2011 to guarantee that research with human subjects is in accordance with federal regulations and that the dignity, confidentiality, well-being, and respect for these are safeguarded. In addition, a policy regarding academic and professional publications was established in May 2011 and revised in April 2012. The policy seeks to encourage publication by the faculty through different incentives within a structured framework in order to promote the dissemination of knowledge produced by the academic environment. The policy is accessible on the university portal Acceso Pionero under Mi PUCPR. An institutional committee oversees the promotion of research among faculty and subsequent publication in academic and professional journals.

PCUPR has a clearly established institutional policy (PUCPR: Política Institucional de Propiedad Intelectual) regarding institutional property rights approved by the Board of Trustees in September 2012 and which is readily accessible on the university website under Conoce tu Universidad: Políticas institucionales. This policy covers aspects which are related to already existing institutional policies such as trademarks, conflicts of interests, and ethical and legal aspects of accessing and using information. This policy governs the ownership and dissemination of intellectual property. Other policies and norms published on the website include policies for the use of digital materials and their placement in digital reserve and the use of the institutional website.

STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS
The institution continues to formulate, distribute, and communicate to the community the policies and procedures which deal with ethical practices and issues both at the administrative and academic levels. Many of these policies, norms, and procedures are readily available to the external community on the institutional website or to the internal community through the university’s portal Acceso Pionero.

The recruitment process for hiring administrative and academic personnel has been centralized by HRO thus making the process a more impartial one.

The advertising campaign initiated in 2011 now projects a uniform image of the university as a Catholic institution and emphasizes the mission, vision, and goals of the university academically and within the local and global context. In the 2012 SSMS, approximately 94% of administrators observed that information reported within and outside the institution is truthful and honest and research and publications are done according to institutional ethical policies.

The 2012 SSMS also reflects that 90% of the administrators surveyed perceive that the institution promotes dialogue and discussion of divergent ideas which contribute to the compliance of the mission by the different offices and departments. Eighty-nine percent of students surveyed recognize that there is a climate of respect towards people of different cultural and social backgrounds within the institution as compared to 82% of students surveyed in 2003.

In both the 2003 SSMS and 2012 SSMS, 90% of administrators (deans and chairs) observed that the faculty enjoys academic freedom in accordance with the mission. Eighty six percent of the faculty now, as compared to 74% in 2003, has the same perception regarding academic freedom. In the 2012 SSMS, 89% of students surveyed feel that they have the liberty to question the subjects that are being discussed in their courses. Finally, 91% of the faculty perceives it has the freedom to propose changes which help authorities to better comply with or achieve the institutional mission.

CHALLENGES
Various policy manuals have not been revised in the last ten years or have been in revision without a final version for various years. These have become a compilation of the original with addenda attached making the policies and procedures contained difficult to verify and follow. These manuals include the Faculty Manual (2006) which has
three versions (the original and two supplemental); the **Student Handbook** (2008) which has a confusing title because of the various documents it encompasses; and the **Manual for Administrative Personnel** (1999 and amended in 2003) and its 24 attached policies. In addition, some of these documents appear online and pose an additional challenge because they are outdated.

The **Student Handbook** which contains institutional norms and policies as well as student regulations lacks clear or established disciplinary measures for violations in areas such as drug, alcohol, or substance abuse and sexual offenses. Conversely, general disciplinary measures for conduct violations appear, but there is no clear description for the process for presenting student complaints, who will process said complaints, and who will facilitate the corresponding recommendations and sanctions. Other policies such as the university protocol regarding restraining orders have not been revised in accordance with the present laws of Puerto Rico; in addition, there are no university procedures in keeping with amendments to the law in areas such as stalking.

The 2012 SSMS reflects that 71% of the students surveyed perceive that there are effective procedures to manage student concerns justly as compared to 73% in 2002.

According to the 2012 SSMS, 69% of the faculty reports that it is aware of the policies, procedures, and decisions which affect them. Faculty perception regarding evaluation and promotion processes being in accordance with the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of PCUPR (69% in 2012 SSMS vs. 68% in 2003 SSMS) as well as the adequate communication of the results of procedures regarding faculty recruitment, retention, and evaluation (62% in 2012 SSMS vs. 66% in 2003 SSMS) continue to be a red flag for the institution. However, 77% of the administrators surveyed in the 2012 SSMS felt that norms regarding faculty recruitment, retention, compensation, evaluation, and promotion in rank are clearly written, accessible, and periodically revised.

Another challenge is the lack of uniformity and dissemination of the latest approved version of the university's mission, vision, and goals in all its published documents, policies, and procedures.

Finally, the effectiveness of institutional policies with regards to integrity is not an easy matter to assess. The lack of an established uniform institutional assessment process for these policies is evident in that it is performed by the corresponding unit at the academic and administrative levels.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT**

1. The latest approved version of the mission, vision, and goals of the university must appear in all of the university documents to ensure uniformity.

2. The university must implement an effective plan to revise, update, and disseminate its institutional policies and procedures, **Faculty Manual**, **Administrative Personnel Manual**, and the **Student Handbook** and its corresponding regulations. This plan must include some type of overseer to ensure that whatever is published, whether on paper or online, is uniform, exact, and in keeping with the current laws. Furthermore, the communication of these procedures must be more direct and participatory at all levels, especially to the faculty and students.

3. Procedures regarding student concerns need to be emphasized in orientation courses as part of the discussion of the **Student Handbook**.

4. The faculty recruitment, retention, and evaluation processes must be reviewed to address faculty concerns. Primary among these is the perception that these are not adequately communicated to them; there is a need for more open and direct forums such as faculty assemblies, workshops, seminars and others to address this challenge versus merely being informed via the university intranet.

5. A systematic institutional assessment process must be established to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of institutional policies and procedures.
Chapter 2 - Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal; Standard 3: Institutional Resources; and Standard 7: Institutional Assessment - Task Group Two

STANDARD 2: PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL
Standard 2 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “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.”

The context of this standard is that adequate planning processes, coupled with a clear mission statement and subsequent assessment, allow PCUPR to meet its goals while supporting the opportunity for change and renewal. These planning processes help PCUPR manage the institution efficiently by establishing fiscal controls which will improve services and processes through effective resource allocation.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGES
For this standard the task group analyzed the implementation of the strategic planning process which integrates the institutional mission, vision, and goals and its alignment with resource allocation to determine its effectiveness. Consequently, it also analyzed how this process utilizes the results of its assessment activities to direct and promote institutional renewal. Furthermore, the group studied how the strategic planning process incorporates the outcomes of student learning assessment in other operational plans (financial, enrollment, facilities, and technology) and unit-level plans to improve educational programs and offerings. Finally, it analyzed and assessed the effect of institutional changes and the aperture of the university’s constituencies to analyzing, discussing, and reviewing administrative processes and academic offerings. The methodology used was that subgroups were established for each standard in this task group. These devised a work plan to identify and analyze the key issues found as a result of research and analysis of documents in order to provide recommendations and possible solutions for institutional improvement. Documentation used is stipulated in the Roadmap of Evidence.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS
PCUPR has established a framework for planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal in its strategic plan. In accordance with the recommendations presented by the MSCHE Evaluation Team in 2003, as well as the requests in subsequent Monitoring Reports (2005, 2007, and 2011), PCUPR has pursued the alignment of its strategic plan with budgeting and operational planning from 2003 to 2013 producing ISP 2003-2008 and ISP 2008-2013.

ISP 2003-2008 was the institution’s first attempt to develop a culture that links planning and assessment with budgeting. The evaluation of this plan was based on whether the objectives derived from the mission and goals were achieved through assessment activities and how these results were used for institutional renewal. Attention was given to how resource allocation supports the development and changes necessary to improve and maintain institutional quality.

ISP 2008-2013 was approved in October 2008 based on the evaluation of ISP 2003-2008. It is a more comprehensive strategic plan which effectively integrates the areas of budgeting and assessment to guide and evaluate institutional development, change, and quality. This plan provides information on how priority areas are consonant with the institutional mission, vision, and goals and how they are to be financed as well as time frames for budgeting projections, operational priorities, and capital acquisition in a five-year cycle. It also states how evaluation and assessment are accomplished. The strategic plans for 2008-2012 of the Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses are derived from ISP 2008-2013 and have the same mission, vision, and institutional priority
areas. Even though the priorities are the same for the whole institution, the goals and/or objectives are particular for each one.

ISP 2008-2013 includes the same seven institutional priority areas which were contemplated in the former strategic plan. These priority areas are as follows: Integration of Faith and Life, Attention to Student Needs, Updating the Curricula, Human Resources, Technological Infrastructure, Physical Infrastructure, and Administration and Finances (including External Resources and Public Relations). Each priority area entails several goals, objectives, and strategies/activities in order to obtain expected results during this five-year period. ISP 2008-2013 was developed to address the following key strategic points based on assessment evidence regarding the internal and external environment.

- institution-wide enrollment, revenues, expenditures, and capital acquisitions projections for each of the years and areas covered;
- a detailed annual operating budget, including the fund allocation to accomplish the priorities in each unit, as part of this planning process;
- institutional goals and objectives used as a guide by the functional units (both academic and administrative) to establish specific strategies and activities;
- operational plans of the units which include goals, objectives, and strategies/activities, time frames, and the human and fiscal resources necessary; and
- an annual evaluation of the operational plans by academic and administrative units to determine the progress and need for adjustments.

In 2011, a new priority area - Research - was added to the current ISP to stimulate academic research and publication at the graduate level for both faculty and students.

PCUPR is currently in the planning process of its new institutional strategic plan (ISP 2013-2020) which will cover the span of seven years and maintain the eight priority areas. ISP 2013-2020 will be the first completely institutional plan as it will direct the three campuses under the same mission, vision, priority areas, goals, and objectives. Each branch campus will now have operational plans derived from ISP 2013-2020 which will indicate unit level strategies/activities and assessment that contribute to the institutional objectives and goals while considering the peculiarities and realities of each one.

The university pursues effectiveness and efficiency of strategic planning and the performance of the university’s units through specific and defined indicators which measure the execution of the ISP and operational plans. Indicators allow comparison of the results of the implementation of the strategic plan in order to ascertain if the desired objectives were reached (See Roadmap of Evidence for a sample of operational plans with established quantitative or qualitative indicators). After careful analysis, the strategic plan and the operational plans, based on the strategic priorities, are tied to the resources needed, providing an adequate basis for the approval of resource allocation dependent on the availability of funds. The results are evaluated by units and action plans are developed which serve as the basis in the preparation of the following year’s budget and operational plan. The process is facilitated by the Vice-Presidency for Institutional Development, Research, and Planning (VPIDRP). This process has improved the effectiveness and efficiency of strategic planning by aligning the institutional strategic priorities and goals with the budgeting development processes and making it more participatory. It seeks to further develop and maintain the linking of the budget process with strategic, operational, and action plans, thus complying with the Characteristics of Excellence established by MSCHE.

Due to the current economic recession and its effect on diverse state and federal laws regarding tuition and grants, most universities have foreseen a potential for economic concern. For this reason, in April 2010 the President initiated a series of academic management workshops (known as “Gerencia Académica”) with all university administrators to educate, inform, share, and discuss information on topics related to planning and other institutional priorities. These workshops explained the conceptual and procedural relationship of the institutional strategic plan with operational plans and its link with budget development and assessment.
The university strategic planning process has improved the allocation of resources which starts with a base operating budget according to the institution’s priority areas and enrollment projections. Planned levels of enrollment, projected tuition increases, and intended activities are factors used to develop projected yearly budgets based on strategic priorities. In addition, beginning in January 2011, the VPIDRP and Budget Office conducted a series of workshops to establish a relationship between the budgeting development process with the ISP and ensure wider involvement. Over ninety percent of department heads and office directors, deans, rectors, and vice-presidents participated in these orientations. As a result of this process, the deans and department heads synchronized their specific needs and institutional priorities and prepared a draft of the operational plans for fiscal year 2011-2012. Consequently, the VPIDRP, the VPAA, and Budget Office realized that the operational plans of the units were not uniform nor were they fully integrated to the ISP. In May 2011, a new institutional template for unit operational plans was introduced and implemented beginning with the July 2011 fiscal year. The model is aligned with the institutional strategic priorities and divided by goals, objectives, and strategies as well as includes areas to indicate activities, human and fiscal resources, time frames, qualitative and quantitative measures, and assessment outcome results. The outcome results are to be used as assessment tools for ISP 2013-2020 which will lead to institutional renewal and its corresponding goals. At present, 100% of the academic and administrative units have operational plans based on this model, thus providing evidence that there is alignment of strategic planning and resource allocation based on the priority areas and corresponding goals.

For the fiscal year 2011-2012, the Budget and Planning Offices emphasized the importance of documenting the assessment of each activity in order to facilitate the linking of these expenditures and their contribution to the ISP. Based on the total available funds and the link of the budget request to the institutional priorities, the University Finance Committee, the president, and his executive staff determine the budget assigned to each unit.

To ensure that ISP objectives are linked directly with financial, technological, and human resources, as well as physical facilities, the university currently uses benchmarking and published indexes related to specific strategic objectives as part of the strategic planning process and compares them to results obtained from diverse institutional units. These benchmarks are constructed based on formative and summative evaluations for a five-year period according to the proposed objectives of each vice-presidency and its corresponding offices. The VPIDRP is responsible for collecting indexes and/or benchmarks, communicating information, and generating reports to regulatory agencies which are then used for decision making and strategic planning. The analysis for the new ISP will be completed by May 2013 and presented to the Planning Committee of the Board of Trustees.

In the report to the Planning Committee of the Board of Trustees in March 2012, President Vélez Arocho outlined the assessment results that have led to a number of initiatives that add to and support the institutional mission. These initiatives, aligned to the original seven priority areas of the ISP (as well as the new area regarding research) and their corresponding goals from 2011 to 2012, are indicative of institutional renewal. Table 3 highlights some of these accomplishments leading to institutional renewal.

### Table 3: Alignment of Priority Areas with Institutional Renewal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY AREA</th>
<th>ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I. Integration of Faith and Life | • The re-establishment of a certification program for teachers of religion, administrators, and pastoral personnel of Catholic schools in April 2012 (beginning with the Fajardo-Humacao Diocese).  
  • Internally, programs and activities which emphasize the evangelical mission of the Church targeting the university community and especially students, have been established (e.g. Pastoral Juvenil, the congress Católicos y vida pública, and radio programs). |
| II. Attention to Student Needs | • The Ponce, Mayagüez, and Arecibo campuses reached their retention goals for the academic year 2009-2010. PCUPR maintains one of the highest retention rates among universities in Puerto Rico as well as one of the highest graduation rates among private universities.  
  • A new portal link was added to offer students, graduates, and alumni employment information (www.trabajando.com). |
Consistent with strategic planning, the university has developed a comprehensive assessment plan linked to the ISP. During 2005, the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) was established to work in the development and implementation of the Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP) 2005-2010. This plan took into account the institutional vision, mission, and priority areas developed in ISP 2003-2008 and focused on student learning outcomes through indirect assessment. The IAC oversaw the development process of institutional assessment plans for the academic and administrative units.

During 2009-2010, the institution began a transitional year known as the Student Learning Assessment Cycle in which academic units transitioned to direct assessment of learning outcomes for the years 2010-2013. The process was aligned to institutional competencies and to program learning goals. Once the 2010-2013 learning outcomes direct assessment cycle is completed, a new assessment cycle will begin. In this new five-year assessment cycle, program learning goals will be aligned to PCUPR graduate competencies as defined in ISP 2013 - 2020 and to standards of professional accrediting agencies.

As established by the institution and reported to MSCHE in previous monitoring reports, PCUPR has been working vigorously to align assessment, strategic planning, operational planning, and resource allocation. The results of these efforts have been changes in the methodology of unit level budget preparation including how institutional facilities are used and the awareness of technological needs. These efforts have provided the opportunity to improve educational programs and offerings. Both the Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses were required to present evidence in the last monitoring report that student learning outcomes are used to inform the planning and budgeting process. The branch campuses have developed strategies and assessment instruments for which human and instructional resources were identified as part of each campus’s strategic plan. These strategies have been implemented into action plans for which budgets are allocated. Arecibo assigned $16,925.00 while Mayagüez assigned $34,529.00 respectively to each one’s assessment action plan for the academic year 2011-2012.

In order to achieve institutional change and renewal, it is imperative that the university’s constituencies be open to the analysis, discussion, and review of their administrative processes and academic offerings. Through the evaluation of the minutes of the Board of Trustees from July 2009 to December 2012, it is evident that upon receiving input from the university community through its President and appointed faculty and student representatives, administrative processes are analyzed, discussed, and reviewed by the board.

**STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Since the 2009 Periodic Review Report, PCUPR as an institution has worked to address the issues which were indicated in the MSCHE response to the report. With an articulated vision of the institution’s priority areas and their corresponding goals and objectives, ISP 2008-2013 has served as a basis for the units at all campuses to establish operational plans. In order to establish a link between the budgeting process and the ISP and ensure the participation and uniformity among all units and all campuses, a new institutional model, which is aligned with the
institutional mission and vision, was created and became effective July 1, 2011. The results of this model will be
used as assessment tools for the next institutional strategic and assessment plans.

The Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses developed their campus strategic plans (2008-2013) based on the
ISP. They incorporated the new institutional model for operational plans and presented their particular goals,
projected and approved budgets, and the assessment activities necessary for effective decision-making.

The university budgeting process has improved the allocation of resources which starts with a base operating
budget according to the institution’s priority areas and the enrollment projections thus creating a link between
strategic and operational planning and budgeting. The alignment of ISP with operational planning has expanded
since the university evaluates the operational plans every year to ascertain if goals and objectives have been
achieved. This annual evaluation has enhanced institutional effectiveness and efficiency since adjustments can be
made in a timely fashion. The 2012 SSMS reflects that 89% of the administrators and 94% of the Board of Trustees
perceive that the ISP takes into consideration the available finances and budgetary resources as compared to 65% of
deans and academic chairs in the 2002 SSMS.

The institution made a transition from using indirect assessment measures to implementing direct measures of
student learning assessment in 2009. Action plans to improve student performance were established to address
the assessment results of comprehensive exams, internships, and other academic activities. At the Arecibo and
Mayagüez Branch Campuses, assessment results have been linked to the planning and budgeting processes as
evidenced in their campus strategic plans.

CHALLENGES
A challenge to the effectiveness of the strategic planning process and the involvement of all constituencies is that
relevant information and documentation at different levels is not available in a readily accessible format. The
abundance of information now stemming from the linkage of the ISP and IAP as well as operational plans at the
unit levels is not channeled adequately for its disclosure and analysis.

A second challenge is the perception of administrators in relation to the strategic planning and resource allocation
process as reflected by the percentages obtained in the 2012 SSMS. In the 2002 SSMS, 81% of deans and
academic chairs perceived that there is a mechanism for formal participation in the design and evaluation process
of the institutional budget; whereas in the 2012 SSMS, 71% of administrators perceive this. Other areas in which
administrators were less than 75% in agreement include:

- budget assignments are consistent with the existing institutional policies and procedures (71%);
- budget assignments in the institutional planning process are effective in providing resources, services, and
  adequate facilities in order to comply with the institutional objectives related to the teaching-learning
  process and new academic offerings (67%);
- the organizational and administrative structure permits the development of plans for improving the
  services that are offered (67%); and
- the learning assessment and institutional assessment processes are aligned (67%).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT
1. The institution needs to establish a more efficient methodology or technological data base to summarize
planning, budgeting, and assessment information in a more comprehensive, uniform, and accessible format for
all constituencies involved in the strategic planning process. This will help in analyzing learning outcomes more
effectively to achieve the institutional mission.

2. There is a need to foster a more effective and systematic communication process among those involved with
strategic planning, resource allocation, and assessment, especially with administrators at the academic and
unit levels. Coupled with the prior recommendation, favorable perceptions can be achieved with the flow of
information and effective communication.
3. As the end of the 2010-2013 assessment cycle approaches, it is imperative that learning outcomes be assessed and the planning matrices revised according to student competencies and professional skills required for the next institutional assessment plan. In addition, the assessment of academic programs as part of the assessment and evaluation cycle must integrate student learning assessment and academic and administrative services in the decision-making and planning processes as aligned to institutional and program goals.

STANDARD 3: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES
Standard 3 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “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 uses of the institution’s resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.”

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE
For this standard, the task group analyzed if the necessary institutional resources (human, financial, technical, facilities and others) are used effectively and efficiently to achieve the institutional mission and goals as well as the objectives of the institutional strategic plan and improve student learning outcomes. In addition, it analyzed the diversification of the financial resources as they comply with the objectives of the mission and the strategic planning process in order to assess the financial stability of the institution.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS
PCUPR has organized its human, financial, technical, physical, and other resources to support its mission and goals. The decision-making process for the distribution of these resources is based on a thorough analysis of available funds. This distribution which is monitored through operational plans is effective because there is a link between strategic planning and its priority areas (PA), budget allocation, and assessment activities. The allotment of resources is based on the annual projections. Trends of generated credits, revenue and expenses, new projects, investments, analysis of unit needs, and other factors are considered when making decisions for resource allocation. Institutional strategic planning also takes into consideration information contained within other documents which deal with capital improvements and research funding. Figure 2 explains the decision-making process involved in the distribution of resources as part of strategic planning.

Figure 2: Institutional Strategic Plan Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Time Allotment</th>
<th>Result Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Fiscal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beca
use improving student learning outcomes is a priority at PCUPR in order to achieve its mission and goals, the following resources were analyzed to evidence their effective and efficient use.

**Human Resources**
The institution recognizes that human resources are its most important asset. Academically, the institution as a whole has seen an increase of 156 full-time and part-time faculty members from 2008 (622) to 2012 (778). The Ponce Campus (including the Coamo extension and Schools of Law and Architecture) increased from 470 in 2008 to 589 in 2012; the Arecibo Branch Campus increased from 56 faculty members to 84; and the Mayagüez Branch Campus increased from 96 to 105. These increases are a reflection of enrollment tendencies and new academic offerings. From 2008 to 2012, there was an increase of 65% in doctoral faculty. Institutionally, administrative and non-academic personnel has seen an increase of 38 employees from 2008 (454) to 2012 (492). Personnel at the Ponce Campus increased from 388 in 2008 to 421 in 2012; the Arecibo Branch Campus increased from 32 to 35; and the Mayagüez Branch Campus increased from 34 to 36.

The distribution of institutional human resources over the past five fiscal years including the branch campuses is indicated in Table 4. There has been an overall increase of 18% in human resources.

**Table 4: Distribution of Institutional Human Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty (FT/PT)</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>747</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Non-Academic Personnel</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1076</td>
<td>1177</td>
<td>1209</td>
<td>1285</td>
<td>1270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial Resources**
PCUPR has adequate fiscal resources to fulfill its mission, vision, goals, and objectives in the educational encounter. During the past five years, the total operating expenditures of the Institution have increased from $49,462,317 to $65,773,182. This represents an increase of $16,310,865 or 33%.

Fifty-nine percent of operating expenditures are allocated to salary and benefits to employees. The summary of current expenditures shows that personnel compensation in the amount of $35,809,575 and $38,712,161 for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 respectively. This represents 61% for 2011 and 59% for personnel compensation expenses.

According to the financial statements, approximately 90% of the revenues of the institution are obtained from tuition fees. From 2008 to 2012, revenue from tuition and fees has increased from $49,892,795 to $70,358,431 which indicates an increase of 41%.

As part of the institutional mission and vision, PCUPR emphasizes the importance of inserting itself in the search for answers to local and global issues. As part of this vision, PCUPR has prioritized areas such as community service and student support, to which it has demonstrated fiscal commitment during the budgeting process. Audited statements indicate the following:

- For community service, in 2010, $549,236 was allocated; in 2011, $532,943; and in 2012, $1,235,371 for an overall increase of 125%.
- For student services, in 2010, $6,857,082 was allocated; in 2011, $8,085,202; and in 2012, $7,641,982 for an overall increase of 11%.
- Research was established as a new priority area in 2011; in 2011 $39,827 was allocated and in 2012, $52,827, for an overall increase of 32%.

Funds for community service are used to support programs such as the Interdisciplinary Clinic for Community Service, the Legal Aid Clinic, the PCUPR Pre-School Development Center, and others. The institution subsidizes student support services through programs such as Title V and TRIO (Upward Bound and Student Support
Services). Funds for research have been distributed to IORI, CEIBA, and research committees under certain vice-presidencies.

In the development of the 2013-2020 ISP, the university will continue to demonstrate its fiscal commitment to further develop community services, student support services and research as these are an integral part of the priority areas of Integration of Faith and Life, Attention to Student Needs, and Research.

**Library Services**

PCUPR has five libraries: Encarnación Valdés Library (EVL) and Bishop Fremiot Torres Oliver Law Library (BTOLL) on the Ponce Campus; the Technological and Architectural Resource Center (CARIBET) located at the School of Architecture off-campus in downtown Ponce and established in 2009; Monsignor Iñaki Mallona Library (MIML) in Arecibo; and the Mayagüez Branch Campus Library (MBCL).

Each library has a director and is adequately supported and staffed to achieve the institutional mission, goals, and objectives for student learning, both on campus and at a distance. Table 5 indicates the number of staff and the service hours for each library.

**Table 5: Library Staff and Service Hours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Number of Librarians</th>
<th>Number of Support Staff</th>
<th>Service Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EVL</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mon-Thurs: 7:30 AM-10 PM; Fri: 7:30 AM-4 PM; Sat: 8 AM-8 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Holidays: 8 AM– 4 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTOLL</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sun-Sat: 7:30 AM-12 Midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARIBET</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mon-Fri: 8:00 AM-10 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIML</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mon-Thurs: 8:00 AM-10 PM; Fri: 8:00 AM-9 PM; Sat: 8 AM- 4 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Holidays: 5 PM–9 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBCL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mon-Thurs: 8:00 AM-10 PM; Fri: 8:00 AM-6 PM; Sat: 9 AM- 12 Noon and 1 PM-4 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Holidays: Either closed or from 3:30 – 10 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The institutional virtual libraries allow the university community to use the online public access catalog, multidisciplinary databases that provide full text to academic journals, electronic research engines, and electronic books. CARIBET is a specialized library for the School of Architecture which also has access to external digital databases such HW Wilson, EBSCO Host Web, ProQuest and ProQuest Digital Dissertations among others.

Annually, professional development activities are organized to help employees keep abreast with the professional demands of their field and education as a whole. The activities are organized by professional librarian associations. In the past five years, 11 staff members have attended 18 activities for which $11,225 have been allotted.

The libraries provide clear access to and throughout the facility, automatic doors at the main entrances (except for CARIBET), and accessible tables, restrooms, and drinking fountains for the disabled. The EVL has an Assisted Technology Room with specialized equipment and programs for people with disabilities. MIML has designated an area in the Multimedia Laboratory with specialized equipment and programs for this population. According to the 2012 SSMS, 79% of administrators and faculty perceived that the available learning resources in the different areas of the libraries are adequate as compared to 78% of faculty, deans, and academic chairs in the 2002 SSMS. **Table 6: PCUPR Student Satisfaction regarding Libraries** reveals the percentages of satisfaction (very satisfied and satisfied) about the different campus libraries as indicated in questionnaires administered by the Institutional Assessment Office in 2010 and 2011.
Table 6: PCUPR Student Satisfaction regarding Libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ponce (BEV)</th>
<th>Ponce (BTOLL)</th>
<th>Arecibo</th>
<th>Mayagüez</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attention given by library personnel</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of library personnel</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of library materials and resources</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating schedule</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy of photocopying services</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Average</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Allocation of funds to satisfy the needs of the different libraries is determined in each library’s operational plan based on annual evaluations and satisfaction questionnaires. Budgetary distributions for each library over the past 5 years are indicated in Table 7. The substantial budgetary increase in 2009-2010 was due to the creation of the Technological and Architectural Resource Center (CARIBET) located at the School of Architecture.

Table 7: Budget Allocations for Libraries from 2008-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EVL</td>
<td>$947,761</td>
<td>$1,034,751</td>
<td>$1,115,028</td>
<td>$1,168,927</td>
<td>$1,191,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTOLL</td>
<td>970,249</td>
<td>970,122</td>
<td>1,333,665</td>
<td>1,350,183</td>
<td>1,480,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARIBET</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>129,949</td>
<td>96,445</td>
<td>113,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIML</td>
<td>247,008</td>
<td>361,070</td>
<td>356,825</td>
<td>434,780</td>
<td>429,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBCL</td>
<td>380,960</td>
<td>396,290</td>
<td>426,353</td>
<td>498,302</td>
<td>547,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$2,545,978</td>
<td>$2,762,233</td>
<td>$3,361,820</td>
<td>$3,477,192</td>
<td>$3,762,155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of Budgetary Increase: 8% 22% 6% 6%

Technology
The Office of Telecommunications and Information Technology (TTI) has the responsibility to keep abreast of technology changes, determine institutional technological and information needs, and provide the necessary services and resources. Technological resources impact the teaching/learning and administrative processes at all levels and how students, faculty, and administration interact. In the last five years, the organizational structure has been redefined. The office has an executive director who responds to the president, a programming and operations director, and a technological infrastructure (TI) director. The executive director oversees the institutional information technology systems (Banner and Legacy) which include data base and systems administration. The programming and operations director oversees development and operations. The TI director oversees the telecommunications system which includes the help desk/call center, and network computer, telephone, and audiovisual services. TI has three computer network technicians, with additional technicians in each college, school, and branch campus who respond to the respective dean or rector. The operating budget has increased from $1,501,011 to $2,248,799 (an increase of 50%) over the past five years.

TTI provides training to faculty and staff to assure the maximum use of technology in an efficient and effective manner. There have been over 60 trainings during the past five years at the three campuses which include workshops on the use of Google Apps, blogs, and aspects of the Banner system.

Among the primary concerns of PCUPR has been the updating of security measures and classroom technology as well as the replacement of equipment and software. Budget allocation in the unit’s operational plan supports the hardware and software maintenance/replacement plan for technological equipment and resources. The university provides for the acquisition and replacement of technological equipment annually, giving priority to the areas of educational offerings and academic support to meet the needs of the institution. Table 8: Budget Allocations for Technological Equipment indicates the budget allocations for acquisition and replacement of technological equipment (e.g. computers, security cameras, data projectors, and printers.) Fluctuations in annual budget allocations are dependent on the operational plans.
Table 8: Budget Allocations for Technological Equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>2008-2009</th>
<th>2009-2010</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>$304,162</td>
<td>$548,817</td>
<td>$760,992</td>
<td>$867,232</td>
<td>$313,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arecibo</td>
<td>70,589</td>
<td>69,906</td>
<td>88,070</td>
<td>103,665</td>
<td>55,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
<td>99,029</td>
<td>19,988</td>
<td>234,490</td>
<td>113,989</td>
<td>34,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Institutional</td>
<td>$473,780</td>
<td>$638,711</td>
<td>$1,083,552</td>
<td>$1,084,886</td>
<td>$403,710</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the Arecibo Branch Campus, funds from the Title V Grant (Exploiting Technology for Academic Improvement) were used to: provide video conference access in five classrooms and centers including the library; equip the existing 21 classrooms with a computer, data projector and smart board; provide technology to the Faculty Development Center; and equip the different areas in the library with computers, laptops, and other technological devices, as well as access points for wireless connections. Also with internal funds, a cyber café was created.

At the Mayagüez Branch Campus, Title V Grant funds (Invigorating the Learning-Teaching Environment in the Classroom and the Laboratory through Curriculum Enrichment) were used to: improve technology infrastructure; provide video conference access; provide wireless internet access for the faculty, students, and administrative personnel; offer technology training for faculty and students; build a technology center and a research center in the library; and create the tutoring center which offers tutoring services for students.

Physical Facilities

The institutional plan for physical infrastructure includes improvement projects for physical facilities as well as security at the three campuses. Table 9 indicates budget allocations for these improvements at the three campuses over the past five years. The substantial increase in 2009-2010 corresponds to the establishment of the School of Architecture and CEIBA and the expansion of BTOLL.

Table 9: Budget Allocations for Physical Infrastructure Improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>2008-2009</th>
<th>2009-2010</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>$2,025,496</td>
<td>$8,602,087</td>
<td>$2,133,463</td>
<td>$1,559,367</td>
<td>$1,792,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arecibo</td>
<td>175,755</td>
<td>66,446</td>
<td>24,466</td>
<td>441,048</td>
<td>$2,053,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
<td>362,363</td>
<td>344,145</td>
<td>163,694</td>
<td>742,704</td>
<td>$147,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Institutional</td>
<td>$2,563,614</td>
<td>$9,012,678</td>
<td>$2,321,623</td>
<td>$2,743,119</td>
<td>$3,994,806</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Board of Trustees in 2012 authorized disbursements in the amount of $10,014,400 for renovations, maintenance, service, and equipment. The authorized amounts by campus were $700,000 for Arecibo, $775,000 for Mayagüez, and $9,462,500 for Ponce. An additional disbursement for equipment was granted in the amount of $519,000 to allocate among branch campuses after careful considerations of their needs.

Improvements completed in the last five years to physical facilities at the Ponce Campus include remodeling of the González Pató Student Center (including the medical facilities and the cafeteria); the Maintenance Building, the Fine Arts Building, a new soft ball field, a new multimedia foreign language lab, and nursing simulation labs. At the Arecibo Branch Campus, the Faculty Room and Student Center are being remodeled. Two buildings near the Mayagüez Branch Campus have been acquired for future expansions. Major projects planned to begin in the summer of 2013 at the Ponce Campus include the remodeling of the Vicente Murga Amphitheater with an estimated cost of $4.2 million and the improvement of the drinking water system at a cost of $1.2 million. For the 2013 fiscal year other major improvements include the budget of $1.4 million for the facilities which will house the hotel and restaurant management program in Mayagüez and $425,000 for the Arecibo Branch Campus multi-complex building.

The assessment of the financial stability of the institution hinges on the diversification of its financial resources as they comply with the objectives of the mission and the strategic planning process. As previously discussed under
Standard 2, financial planning and budgeting allocation processes are now linked to institutional and unit priorities and goals in the operational plans that stem from the institutional strategic plan.

To provide assurance that institutional and administrative budgeting efforts, finances, and asset management are linked, the institution has developed financial ratios as indicators. The ratios provide information about liquidity, solvency and profitability of the institution. The financial ratios maintained or improved the benchmark established by the institution thus providing financial stability and assuring the implementation of future plans. The principal financial indicators based on audited financial statements are presented in Table 10.

**Table 10: Financial Ratios 2008-2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liquidity Ratios</td>
<td>1.5:1</td>
<td>1.7:1</td>
<td>2.10:1</td>
<td>2.5:1</td>
<td>3.14:1</td>
<td>1:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Debt/ Net Assets</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Revenue / Net Assets</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Revenues/ Total Assets</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the net accounts receivable in 2008 were $4,118,477 and in 2012 were $3,443,972. The loans receivable in 2008 were $13,559,908 and in 2012 were $10,912,078. There has been an annual decrease of 24% and 13% respectively, which further substantiates the financial stability of the institution.

As previously mentioned, approximately 90% of the revenues of the institution are obtained from tuition fees. Other income activities include grants, contracts, professional services, housing fees, recovery of indirect costs, and fund raising. Funds raised by academic units for their particular needs established are directly assigned to them.

The institution is exposed to both internal and external auditing. The scope of operations of the Internal Audit Office, under the mandate of the Board of Trustees, encompasses the examination and evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the business controls and practices of the university, its branches, and extensions. Its main function is to conduct independent reviews of both the financial and operational activities of designated areas to determine compliance with university policies and procedures, good business practices, rules and regulations. It also submits reports of its findings to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees which reports to the Board with recommendations as appropriate. Externally, PCUPR is audited annually by Deloitte and Touche LLP. Audited financial statements have maintained unqualified opinions during the past five years demonstrating fiscal responsibility. Financial audits reflect that the university complies with all policies and regulations and is financially stable. Financial expediency and fiscal responsibility can be observed through diverse indicators from the audited financial statements. Table 11 illustrates some of the key indicators of financial stability.

**Table 11: Financial Stability Indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash Balances</td>
<td>$14,184,483</td>
<td>$14,731,726</td>
<td>$23,294,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Net Assets</td>
<td>$67,450,668</td>
<td>$82,989,259</td>
<td>$83,924,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments (including endowments)</td>
<td>$974,937</td>
<td>$949,513</td>
<td>$974,974</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the last three years, the institutional expenditures in areas such as instruction and academic support have remained constant for a total of 63% to 65 % with respect to total revenues. During these same three years community service, institutional support, student services, and research disbursements have remained between 35% to 37% when compared to total revenues.

The institution receives a management letter indicating areas of concern and their recommendations from external auditors. Recommendations are evaluated by the institution and if deemed necessary are accepted and implemented by the Vice Presidency for Financial and Administrative Affairs.
Institutional resources are assessed annually through the evaluation of the operational plans. The results of this assessment determine how costs are controlled and resources redirected to improve efficiency and accomplish institutional improvement. PCUPR is currently in the process of comparing benchmarks established for the priority areas with results obtained from diverse institutional units. As mentioned previously under Standard 2, benchmarks were constructed based on formative and summative evaluations for the five-year period where each vice-presidency and office has stated its proposed objectives. The VPIDRP is now in the process of establishing the 2013-2020 ISP, and benchmarks for further implementation will be established in the process.

The Office of External Resources under the VPIDRP is the unit responsible for the development of new revenue sources by offering technical support in the writing of proposals to obtain external funds. This office is also in charge of the development and implementation of policies and procedures regarding federally funded projects and ensuring compliance with established guidelines. Administrative and accounting support as well as training is provided to faculty members, graduate students, and professional staff seeking outside funding for research projects, training grants, and other related activities. The office also serves as liaison between the university and external sources such as: federal and state agencies, municipalities, foundations, local and U.S. universities and colleges, non-profit organizations, public and private schools, and the private work sector. From 2008-2013, PCUPR has established initiatives and obtained external funds from the following agencies among others: U.S. Department of Education (USDE) for Title V Programs in the Ponce, Mayagüez and Arecibo campuses; AmeriCorps VISTA; U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds for the BS in Biotechnology; and the U.S. Department of Commerce-EDA funds to establish the Biotechnology Learning and Research Center (CEIBA). Table 12 indicates the funds granted institutionally and by campus in the last six years.

**Table 12: External Funds Received***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ponce Campus</th>
<th>Arecibo Campus</th>
<th>Mayagüez Campus</th>
<th>PCUPR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>$3,956,469</td>
<td>$703,489</td>
<td>$1</td>
<td>$4,659,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>$2,316,559</td>
<td>$633,733</td>
<td>$935,023</td>
<td>$3,885,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>$2,683,281</td>
<td>$887,994</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$3,571,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>$2,752,801</td>
<td>$919,469</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$3,672,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>$1,978,621</td>
<td>$412,800</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$2,391,421</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Funds as approved per year according to grant award notification

Table 13 further illustrates PCUPR faculty participation in proposal development from 2008-2013. Overall, faculty participation has been limited due to lack of an inherent research culture, incentives, and available time due to full academic loads.

**Table 13: PCUPR Faculty Participation in Proposal Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Administrative Personnel</th>
<th>Proposals Submitted</th>
<th>Proposals Awarded</th>
<th>Allocated Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$4,659,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$3,885,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$3,571,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>$3,672,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$2,391,421</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

As there is now a concrete link between strategic planning and its priority areas, budget allocation, and assessment activities as evidenced through the operational plans, the distribution of human, financial, technical, physical, and other resources is more effective.

One of the most vital assets of the institution is its human resources which embody the university’s mission to honor and promote life through an education imbued with Christian values. According to the 2012 SSMS, 84% of
students surveyed perceive that the treatment they receive from the personnel in the different units reflects Christian values as compared to 75% in the 2002 SSMS. In addition, the work force is stable, and there is a low rate of employee turnover. Administrators continue to perceive that their academic preparation is appropriate for the position that they hold (92% in 2002 SSMS vs. 93% in 2012 SSMS). Ninety percent of administrators now also view the academic preparation and experience of the employees that they supervise as appropriate for the performance of their duties and responsibilities as compared to 72% in the 2002 SSMS. Eighty three percent of administrators in the 2012 SSMS felt that the training activities offered by the institution contribute to their professional and administrative development while 78% of the faculty perceives that the institution provides the opportunity to participate in professional activities in the area of their expertise. These perceptions indicate that the institution’s administrators and faculty are not only adequately prepared to perform their duties but are professionally current.

Even though approximately 90% of the institutional revenues are obtained from tuition fees, PCUPR has adequate fiscal resources to fulfill its mission, vision, goals, and objectives with an operational budget that has increased 33% in the last five years due to responsible strategic financial management. In the 2012 SSMS, 76% of trustees and administrators surveyed perceived that budget assignments are consistent with the existing institutional policies and procedures.

The budget process and the accounting system are now supported by an integrated information system (Banner) that serves as a tool to project income, allocate resources, make disbursements (payroll and purchases) electronically, and prepare monthly interim financial reports in a more reliable and effective manner. In addition, PCUPR has a comprehensive manual of procedures, which is also available on the university portal Acceso Pionero, to facilitate acquisitions and accounting related practices.

Since 2003, Prof. Irma Rodríguez has occupied the position of Vice President of Financial Affairs and Administration thus providing continuity in the daily financial operations and vision for future planning. This is in sharp contrast to the last self-study where this position had been occupied by four different people.

PCUPR has demonstrated fiscal commitment to priority areas such as community service, student support, and research thus supporting the institutional mission and vision. In the 2012 SSMS, an average of 82% of administrators, faculty, and trustees surveyed perceive that PCUPR facilitates the human, physical, and financial resources for implementing community service projects.

The technological resources and infrastructure continue to be a priority area for the institution as a whole. First of all, it has qualified personnel to manage the infrastructure and technological resources necessary to handle the global network. PCUPR has a highly operational information management system (Banner and Luminis) as well as contractual agreements with Microsoft for software use. To support the teaching-learning environment, it has a reliable infrastructure for video-conferencing, online courses, and virtual communication between faculty and students. In 2010 PCUPR acquired the Moodle platform for online teaching, and in 2012, the platform for university communication was established through the use of My Courses in the Acceso Pionero portal and Google G-mail. There have been improvements to the telecommunications system and an increase in wireless access zones throughout the campuses. The use of Acceso Pionero has proven to be an effective communication resource among the university community as reflected by an average of 80% of law and undergraduate students from the Ponce and Mayagüez campuses who participated in various satisfaction surveys administered in 2010-2011.

Improvements to the physical infrastructure at the three campuses are another priority area to which PCUPR has committed over $20,635,840 in the past five years. According to the 2012 SSMS, an average of 82% of administrators, faculty, and trustees perceive that improvements to the physical facilities are planned considering the needs of the university community including persons with disabilities.
CHALLENGES

Although the student to administrative/non-academic personnel ratio at the Ponce and Arecibo campuses averages 20 students per person, the Mayagüez campus has a ratio of 46 students per person which can affect student and academic services. This was evidenced by a 58% and 51% level of satisfaction with student and academic services respectively in the 2011 Institutional Satisfaction Survey at the undergraduate level at the Mayagüez Campus.

For administrative and non-academic personnel, there is no monetary incentive system for meritorious performance and achievements as tied to total compensation. In addition, there is no organized professional development or continuing education (traditional or distance learning) for these employees. Salaries for personnel in critical positions, which are recognized as difficult for hiring and retention, are also lower than those in comparable markets.

In the 2002 SSMS, 57% of the faculty felt that improvements to facilities are planned to meet the needs of students as opposed to 68% of the faculty in the 2012 SSMS. Although the percentage has increased institutionally, the faculty’s perception continues to be less than satisfactory. However, 100% of the Board of Trustees perceives that improvements are planned considering the needs of the community. In addition, 61% of the faculty expressed in the 2012 SSMS that the different labs available to students are satisfactory as opposed to 67% in the 2002 SSMS. This does not take into account whether the perception is about computer labs or science labs.

The emerging technologies and the rapidity with which technological changes occur pose one of the major challenges to all educational institutions. At PCUPR, limitations in the area of technology stem from the need to increase personnel and budget accordingly to meet the changes that affect the technological infrastructure. The implementation by the university of updated versions of the information management systems of Banner and Luminis is not synchronized causing lapses in effective use of these systems. In addition, the information management resources offered by Banner are underutilized. The Disaster Recovery system is not up to date. There is still need for technological equipment in many classrooms, laboratories, and offices. There is a lack of sufficient online student services available despite the efforts made in this area. Services such as tuition payment for online registration are still needed.

Tuition fees continue to be the most important financial revenue of the institution; this presents an on-going dilemma for the institution due to various external factors which will be affecting this revenue in the coming years. Diminished population growth reflects a decrease in demand for university studies as competing universities offer similar programs or short-term technical degrees in the southern area of Puerto Rico. From 2008 to 2012, approximately 92% of PCUPR students depended on financial aid (e.g. PELL grant, student loans, and work-study programs) while current federal government budget constraints threaten this opportunity for students.

Institutional strategies and mechanisms for increasing and generating external funding are still a challenge for PCUPR. Sixty-seven percent of the administrators surveyed in the 2012 SSMS feel that institutional strategies to obtain and increase external funds are effective as opposed to an average of 48% of deans and academic chairs who perceive that there is a formal process to diversify the institution’s income. The reality is that external funding is limited to the proposals that are approved, and the acceptance of these has also been impacted by federal government cutbacks. For the past five years, 101 proposals were submitted by the External Resources Office, and only 35 were approved.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1. The student to administrative/non-academic personnel ratio should be equivalent in all PCUPR branches to improve satisfaction with student and academic services.
2. PCUPR should consider establishing a better structured salary scale for non-academic personnel that contemplates a monetary incentive system tied to meritorious performance and achievements and not solely based on years of employment. In addition, an annual professional development cycle should be structured for administrative/non-academic personnel in key areas of interest and identified needs as is done for the faculty and upper management.

3. There have been substantial improvements in the physical infrastructure based on key projects in the last five years. Nonetheless, perception may be limited to the experiences in each individual’s work area. It is important that administrators communicate effectively the achievements in the different areas and emphasize through discussion the need for community members to present recommendations for improvement and continued maintenance so that these can be incorporated into operational plans.

4. Although technological infrastructure continues to be a priority area for the institution, it is imperative that adequate and progressively increasing budget allocations be made to hire the necessary skilled personnel, to acquire updated technological equipment, and to improve the infrastructure in order to optimize TTI services.

5. As part of the technological professional development of the faculty and administrators, a systematic plan for continuous training workshops should be structured to optimize the use of Banner as an information management system. These can be scheduled at the beginning or end of the academic semesters and offered to the different colleges and schools.

6. It is imperative that the university devise a concrete and consistent strategic plan to increment external funding over a set period. This can entail activities such as reinforcement of the Office for External Resources, more effective training and incentives for faculty to be involved in proposal writing, and/or a resurgence of alumni involvement in fund raising.

**STANDARD 7: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT**

Standard 7 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “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.”

In the context of this standard, the assessment process at PCUPR is designed to evidence the achievement of its mission and goals as it evaluates its effectiveness as an institution. Institutional assessment is applied at all academic and institutional levels, encompassing a comprehensive process that guides planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal (Standard 2). Institutional assessment must be integrated with the goals and strategies of the ISP and unit plans and their respective assessment strategies.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE**

For this standard the task group analyzed the process of implementing institutional assessment to verify that the university supports assessment and communicates and uses assessment results to foster institutional improvement and improve student learning outcomes.

**ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS**

Since the 2003 Self-Study, the subsequent Periodic Review Reports (Ponce, Arecibo, and Mayagüez) in 2009, and the Monitoring Report of 2011, PCUPR has documented how it has worked arduously to create an assessment culture which will help evidence how the institution achieves its mission and goals. Through the standardized operational plans now used by all units, planning, budget allocation, and assessment are now linked and derived from the ISP. The VPIDRP is in charge of evaluating and summarizing the operational results to incorporate them into the annual analysis of the ISP. The VPIDRP identifies those results that support the planning process as well as those areas that need improvement. As a result, recommendations are submitted to the president regarding corrective measures, improvements, and changes to the plan regarding the ISP’s goals or objectives indicating a level of confidence in the assessment process. The institutional assessment process promotes appropriate
decision-making clearly based on the specific needs in each priority area and where appropriate is linked to budget allocations.

The Institutional Assessment Office (IAO), under the VPIDRP, works in collaboration with this vice-presidency and its personnel to facilitate, through institutional research and assessment, the qualitative and quantitative analysis of academic and non-academic activities stemming from the now eight priority areas of ISP 2008-2013. The institutional assessment process provides the necessary data for effective decision-making based on the specific objectives in each priority area and where necessary, linked to a budget in order to achieve the institutional mission and goals through the efficient use of its resources. It provides leadership and support to all three campuses in the implementation of their assessment plans. The branch campuses have coordinators who work with the director to organize activities that address their specific needs. The IAO also supervises all units in performing effective assessment of their operational plans. Assessment information is collected, analyzed, and ultimately shared with the constituencies for institutional improvement.

The 2011 Monitoring Report documented how the three campuses implemented the ISP and linked long-range planning, decision-making, and the budgeting process, as well as the integration of all functional units (Standard 2). It also provided evidence that the Arecibo and Mayagüez Campuses used assessment results in the planning and budgeting processes (Standards 2 & 3) thus demonstrating congruence between the ISP and the IAP.

The institution is informed in various ways of assessment results obtained from diverse assessment instruments such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), institutional student satisfaction surveys, the National Alcohol, Drug, and Violence Survey (CORE-PR), and the Institutional Freshman Student Profile. The achievements attained and the challenges that the campus faces are reported in the semi-annual general faculty assembly by the VPIDRP. The IAO director also presents annual findings to the deans and faculty of the different schools and colleges. In addition, the IAO publishes assessment results and action plans by campus on its webpage for use by the internal community (e.g. the Interdisciplinary Clinic for Community Service and the Integration and Quality of life Program). Furthermore, the IAO publishes a semi-annual bulletin titled Avalúo Informa which is sent via email to the community and is also posted on the webpage. Finally, academic chairs share a summary of direct assessment results for programs among their faculty members.

It is difficult to measure the cost effectiveness of the institutional assessment process as it depends on the integration of the IAP with the ISP and the institutional budgeting process. The budgeting process assigns and identifies sources of institutional finances and performs periodic financial evaluations and analysis. The comparison of budgeted activities versus actual activities measures the effectiveness of the use of financial resources. This process allows the institution to make adjustments, changes, and assignments according to institutional needs by capitalizing resources in order to obtain the expected results which lead to institutional renewal. Thusly, PCUPR directs its efforts and resources to control variables that can affect the achievement of established goals. The assessment process offers specific data which permit PCUPR to make decisions regarding the planning and distribution of fiscal, human, technological, and physical resources to provide an effective educational encounter and improve student learning.

Institutional effectiveness of PCUPR is measured through multiple methods of assessment to ensure the achievement of its mission and goals. Institutional assessment is a comprehensive process at the academic and administrative level which facilitates planning, resource allocation, and consequently, institutional renewal accomplished by outcomes analysis leading to action. Table 14: Institutional Assessment/Outcomes indicates examples of institutional assessment activities performed and the subsequent actions taken for institutional improvement.
### Table 14: Institutional Assessment/Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Action(s) Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Student Satisfaction Survey 2010- Ponce Campus</td>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td>• Dissatisfaction with physical facilities.</td>
<td>• Results informed to the Board of Trustees, the University, and Faculty Assembly among others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Dissatisfaction with campus security in evening sessions, the cafeteria, technology, and communications.</td>
<td>• Improvements to campus illumination were performed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Buildings were painted and campus landscaping was performed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Improvements to campus parking areas were evaluated and subsequently performed (ongoing).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Transition to <a href="mailto:gmail@pucpr.edu">gmail@pucpr.edu</a> for campus communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• More wi-fi hotspots were added.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The cafeteria concession was changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference enrollment study for summer sessions:</td>
<td>October 2009</td>
<td>• 54% of students surveyed preferred the two summer sessions as opposed to 35% who preferred the six-week summer session</td>
<td>Continue offering the two summer sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Viability study to convert two summer sessions (4 weeks each) into one six-week session.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Alcohol, Drug and Violence Survey (CORE-PR) given at Ponce, Arecibo, and Mayagüez campuses</td>
<td>2004, 2007, 2010, and 2012</td>
<td>• 2010 CORE instrument at Ponce Campus reflects 71.2% of the students consume alcohol.</td>
<td>• Ponce Campus: Integration and Quality of Life Program developed TV media campaign and radio spots with students and offered mental health services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Distribution of alcoholic beverages is only authorized in writing by the President’s Office for official institutional activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Deans submit in biennial review reports evidence of courses which include alcohol and other drug issues, as established in their course syllabi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic programs and services have assessment processes that evidence, organize, and sustain their evaluation and improvement. PCUPR has established a manual for the evaluation of academic programs (*Manual para la Evaluación de Programas Académicos en la PUCPR* - see [RM62](#)) revised in 2011 which contains a guide to evidence the quality and effectiveness of academic programs based on the assessment of outcomes in areas such as curriculum; student learning; physical, fiscal, human and learning resources; and the integration of technology using qualitative and quantitative criteria. The process is sustained as the findings of these evaluations (weaknesses and strengths) are shared at all academic levels and action plans are developed and put into practice. Institutional assessment is performed through the analysis of data obtained from institutional satisfaction questionnaires and NSSE. The evaluations and analyses of the retention, attrition, and graduation rates are used for course programming, academic scheduling, and assigning teaching facilities; the development of new academic programs and the possible closure of low-demand programs; the projection of student enrollment, income, and expenditures as part of the strategic planning process; and the allocation of human and fiscal resources.
Student learning outcomes assessment began in 2009 and was officially implemented by stages in the 2010-2013 cycle. Faculty and academic chairs have been part of this process since its inception. Each department has an assessment committee which has a representative on the respective college assessment committee. In turn, each college and school has a representative on the institutional assessment committee. Given the strides done in assessment over the past five years at PCUPR, an assessment culture is emerging. This assessment process has become the basis for changes in teaching methods, techniques, and strategies to improve student learning outcomes and student retention. It also has provided the necessary data to guide decision-making and effective planning.

**STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**
Since 2003, PCUPR has made great strides in implementing institutional and academic assessment in an organizational structure. The IAO guides and supports the three campuses in the implementation of assessment and supervises the corresponding units in the effective assessment of their operational plans. Through these standardized operational plans derived from the ISP, planning, budget allocation, and assessment are now linked. The institutional assessment process provides the necessary data for effective decision-making based on the specific objectives in each priority area and where necessary, linked to a budget in order to achieve the institutional mission and goals through the efficient use of its resources.

Academic programs and services have assessment processes that evidence, organize, and sustain their evaluation and improvement. From 2009 to 2013, 76 academic programs were evaluated which resulted in the placement of 5 in moratorium from 2011 to 2013. The program evaluation process was changed in 2010-2011. The projection is that by the end of the 2011-2016 assessment cycle, a total of 193 programs will have been evaluated (some of which will have been evaluated individually by campus although they are offered institutionally).

As part of institutional assessment, 409 PCUPR alumni were surveyed via telephone between September and December 2010 to discover their perceptions about the services they received at their Alma Mater as indicated in Table 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>% of Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the academic programs offered at PCUPR</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of courses offered</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General education received</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual atmosphere at the institution</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major courses adequately prepared me for the work force</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic program contributed to the development of moral and ethical value system in order to confront the challenges in the professional career.</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The experiences acquired on campus contributed to personal and spiritual growth.</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These percentages are a clear indication that the mission of the institution is achieved with regard to educating “in accordance with the values of the Gospel and the disciplines of current scientific knowledge.”

**CHALLENGES**
Engaging the faculty and personnel from the different units in the assessment process has been a laborious one at PCUPR. It is an emerging culture. Despite the orientations, professional development activities, workshops, IAO leadership and support, the 2012 SSMS reflects that only 65% of administrators and 70% of faculty feel that assessment results are used to make decisions regarding curriculum revision, teaching strategies, course planning, student admission, and student retention and support. Similarly, 70% of faculty and 67% of administrators perceive that the learning assessment and institutional processes are aligned.

Major efforts have been made in academic assessment, yet it has been difficult to implement structured assessment processes in the service areas due to the lack of organized and consistent strategies. This in turn affects the effective implementation of an assessment plan that leads to improvement in these areas.
There are problems communicating results once they have been analyzed by IAO and returned to administrators (deans and directors). In the 2012 SSMS, 52% of the faculty expressed satisfaction with the assessment process and the communication and implementation of assessment results in the improvement of student learning. Fifty-two percent of administrators perceived that their faculty is satisfied with the assessment process and the improvement of student learning while 64% felt that the means used to communicate and share information and assessment results is effective. If the information is not shared effectively, action plans cannot be written based on evidence and successfully implemented. There have been isolated efforts throughout the institution but there is a lack of consistency and coordination.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT
1. More aggressive and motivating strategies have to be implemented to engage all personnel in assessment to ensure both intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction.

2. Additional orientations, workshops, and seminars should be scheduled for administrative and service area units in assessment strategies and action planning.

3. The university needs to formulate a more effective means of communicating results of planning, resource allocation, and assessment. Although information is available, accessibility should be easier and less time-consuming. One possible solution is additional technology and software to improve this area. The VPIDRP should identify a methodology that integrates information regarding assessment, planning, resource allocation, and learning outcomes.
Chapter 3 - Standard 4: Leadership and Governance and Standard 5: Administration - Task Group Three

STANDARD 4: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE
Standard 4 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “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.”

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE
For this standard, the task group studied the structure, operations, and activities of the Board of Trustees in the governance of the institution and the realization of its mission and goals. It also determined what administrative and organizational changes may have occurred in the past decade and their impact within the Board of Trustees in institutional decision and policy-making processes. In addition, the effectiveness of the Board of Trustees in developing and generating resources needed to sustain and improve the institution was examined. Finally, the task group determined what the assessment process used to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional leadership and governance was. The methodology used for this standard and Standard 5 was the extensive analysis of reports, minutes, and other pertinent documents.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS
There have been no significant changes in the governing structure of PCUPR since the 2003 Self-Study Report. The university is governed by a two-tier structure comprised of the Corporation and the Board of Trustees. The Corporation is composed of de jure members who are the members of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Puerto Rico and the Apostolic Delegate for Puerto Rico. The Chairman of the Corporation is elected from among these members. An Executive Committee, whose members are elected for a term of six years, heads the Corporation. It has the authority to approve the mission and vision of the university and may present revisions of these to the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. (See Figure 3.)

Figure 3: PCUPR Governing Structure: Tier 1

The Board of Trustees is the organization that supervises all the operations of the university to ensure that the principles of Catholic Doctrine are observed in accordance with Canon 810.2 of the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church and that there is compliance with the mission and vision of the institution. The Board of Trustees is composed of the members of the Corporation and those other members appointed by them for a period of three years and who may be re-appointed. A faculty representative (nominated by the VPAA) and a student representative (nominated by the VPSA) are appointed for a one-year term by the Corporation who may appoint
at their discretion any candidate of their choice. The selection process of the other appointed members of the Board of Trustees is not documented in the **Bylaws**.

The Chairman of the Corporation is also the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is comprised of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the Grand Chancellor, the Vice-Grand Chancellor, the President of the University, and the chairpersons of each of the standing committees of the board. (See **Figure 4: PCUPR Governing Structure: Tier 2**.) The Bishop of Ponce is the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees and serves as the Grand Chancellor of the university who supervises the operations of the institution according to the **Bylaws** and the Code of Canon Law. The President of PCUPR serves as the Secretary of the Executive Committee and of the Board of Trustees. This committee receives reports from the presidents of the standing committees which are finance, development, planning, student affairs, academic affairs, and internal auditing. Further details of the composition, duties, and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are clearly established by the **Bylaws**.

**Figure 4: PCUPR Governing Structure: Tier 2**

Although the structure of the Board of Trustees has not changed in the last five years, what has changed is the profile of the composition of its board. As of 2012, the Board of Trustees consists of twenty-three members: 8 *de jure* members; 13 lay members (including the faculty and student representatives) who are people active in community affairs, business, and professional fields; and 2 religious members who are monsignors. The number of lay members has increased since the 2003 Self-Study from 43% to 57%, and there are board members from the geographical areas of Arecibo and Mayagüez. Female representation on the board has dropped from 17% in 2003 to 4% in 2012.

The Board of Trustees meets at least three times a year. To ensure efficient operation and the participation of the members, the Board of Trustees **Bylaws** establishes standing committees which were previously mentioned. Each committee meets at least once a year to work with the assignments delegated by the Board of Trustees and must report their recommendations at the next board meeting.

The Board of Trustees establishes institutional policies with the input received from university organizations such as the Administrative Board, the University Board, and the Faculty Assembly. The PCUPR President and vice presidents compose the Administrative Board. The University Board is composed of the Administrative Board members, the deans, the rectors of the branch campuses, and several university administrators. The Faculty Assembly is composed of the President of the university who presides over the assembly which includes the vice presidents, the rectors, the deans, and all faculty members with academic rank. Nevertheless, all faculty is invited
to attend, and this is the forum where open discussion regarding the institutional mission and goals, program offerings, and resources occurs.

The Board of Trustees also receives input from the University Senate which is the representative body of the university administration, the faculty, and the student body. It is comprised of elected and ex-officio members who participate in the university legislative process by submitting legislative proposals to the Board of Trustees. This is yet another forum to discuss institutional issues openly.

The decisions of the Board of Trustees regarding policies and procedures in the areas of governance, institutional improvement, educational programs and degrees, budgetary concerns and fiscal operations, and the overall orderly management of the university among others are communicated to the community through the secretary of the Board of Trustees who is the President of the university. The university assures the availability of documents dealing with the governance and policies of the university (e.g. Bylaws, Faculty Manual, Student Guide and Regulations among others) by housing them in the EVL, the Calasanz Building (Board of Trustees facility at the Ponce Campus), the offices of the President, vice-presidents, rectors and deans, and in some cases the university portal, Acceso Pionero. These documents delineate the university structure, duties, and lines of authority. Minutes of the Board of Trustees are available at the Calasanz Building upon request. In addition, the Public Relations Office disseminates official information to the university community via email and through the PCUPR website and press releases (external community).

The interaction among the Board of Trustees, the administration, and the faculty is limited to the representation on the Board which is essentially the President of the university and the faculty representative.

Since the submission of the 2009 PRR, there have been several leadership changes, but there have been two significant administrative changes on the Board of Trustees. The first was the appointment of Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho as President of the institution in October 2009. Secondly, Monsignor Alvaro Corrada del Río, S.J., Bishop of Mayagüez, was appointed Chairman of the Board in 2011 upon the retirement of the previous Chairman of the Board, Monsignor Ulises Casiano. These leadership changes have not affected the institutional decision and policy-making processes as these are established in the Bylaws. With regards to organizational changes, the only noticeable change in the last five years has been the incorporation of the Standing Committee for Fundraising to the Development Committee with a link to the office of the VPIDRP as a consulting body.

During the past five years the Board of Trustees has undertaken specific efforts to improve its fund raising capabilities. As a result, the Board has determined that raising external funds is directly related to the specific objective for which the funds are needed, the commitment of the committee members to specific projects, and the standing of committee members in their communities. As such, the Board’s Standing Committee for Development has assumed the task of establishing different fundraising sub-committees or task forces which are specifically designed to raise funds for the project that is being undertaken.

In the recent past, different fundraising teams have been formed for activities such as the celebration of the 60th anniversary of PCUPR and the yearly Golf tournament. More recently the Board has been involved in establishing a committee for the remodeling of the Vicente Murga Amphitheater which will begin in the summer of 2013. These fund-raising teams have been composed of members of the internal and external communities interested in and familiar with the type of project at hand. One example of involvement by the external community is the organization known as the Madrinas (Godmothers) who represent female alumni. All fund-raising teams have at their disposal institutional public relations personnel and consultants. Each team reports directly to the President and the Development Committee. Table 16: Fund-Raising Efforts indicates the different sub-committees that have been formed and funds raised.
Table 16: Fund-Raising Efforts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Committee</th>
<th>Project Chair</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Funds Raised (2008-2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60th Anniversary Celebration</td>
<td>Jesus Gil, Esq.</td>
<td>2008–2009</td>
<td>Development of Infrastructure</td>
<td>$266,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Golf Tournament</td>
<td>Carolyn Costas, Esq.</td>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>Scholarships and Remodeling of Vicente Murga Amphitheater</td>
<td>$106,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicente Murga Amphitheater: “Dona tu Butaca”</td>
<td>Ms. Eva Cabán</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Refurbishing and remodeling</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Madrinas</td>
<td>Mrs. Maribel Sánchez</td>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>$17,159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there is an established assessment process for the evaluation of administrators: vice-presidents, rectors, deans, academic chairs, and unit directors (See Standard 5, page xx), there is no defined assessment process for the evaluation of the President and the Board of Trustees. According to the 2012 SSMS, only 63% of the members of the Board recognized that it has procedures for self-evaluation.

STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS
The Board of Trustees continues to effectively oversee the fulfillment of the mission of the university and the achievement of academic excellence and service to the general community. Trustees actively participate in the revision and establishment of the mission, goals, and objectives of the university, its strategic plan, and the budget.

Since the last self-study, the Board of Trustees has established a more visible presence by being housed on campus in a remodeled facility known as the Calasanz Building. It also has a full-time secretary to tend to matters pertaining to the Board.

The Board reviewed the Faculty Manual and made amendments to Part IV: Faculty in the academic year 2009-2010 to comply with the standards of existing labor law, establishing new contract classifications for faculty personnel.

The Bylaws are explicit in establishing the processes of governance and administration of the Board and the institution. They clearly establish the powers and corresponding duties of the Board of Trustees, the President, and other officers as well as other constituents of the university (University Senate, faculty, and student body).

CHALLENGES
The Board of Trustees continues to have one faculty representative and one student representative for the complete PCUPR system. These representatives have always been from the Ponce main campus thus limiting the branch campuses from discussing their particularities.

Because faculty and student representatives are appointed for a one-year period, it is difficult for them to have a thorough grasp of issues considered by the Board and participate fully as an informed member. This contrasts significantly with the other board members who are appointed for three years.

The PCUPR link designated to the Board of Trustees lacks concrete information regarding the Board and its members and duties.

According to 2012 SSMS, 52% of the faculty perceives that the Board of Trustees evaluates new ideas for institutional improvement presented by them. Nevertheless, 94% of the Board of Trustees surveyed perceives that they do evaluate ideas proposed by the faculty. The last revision of the Bylaws was in 1996. A new revision has been under discussion for the past two years and has not been completed to date.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1. To improve the communication process and detect the needs of the university’s different constituents, particularly the branch campuses, the number of faculty and student representatives on the Board of Trustees should be incremented.

2. In 2003, PCUPR stated to MSCHE after the Evaluation Team Visit that the Board of Trustees would consider the feasibility of implementing two-year terms for faculty representatives. This suggestion for improvement of participation on the Board should be revisited once again and include student representation.

3. The PCUPR link designated to the Board of Trustees should incorporate more information such as an opening statement by the Chair, profiles of board members, a summary description of the standing committees, contact information, and other pertinent information.

4. To further enhance the communication process regarding institutional improvement, it would be more beneficial if the President, as Secretary of the Board, communicated to the faculty decisions or projects emphasizing ideas presented by faculty. One such area could be regarding academic issues.

5. Revision of the Bylaws merits action by the Board of Trustees to resolve changes that should be addressed due to a growing university community.

STANDARD 5: ADMINISTRATION

Standard 5 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “The institution’s administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution’s organization and governance.”

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE

For this standard, the task group assessed the impact and effectiveness of administrative changes within the last decade. It also evaluated the current administrative structure, processes, and leadership roles and responsibilities to determine their efficiency in achieving the mission and goals of the institution and promoting research and scholarship. As a final charge, the task group documented and analyzed the processes used for communication among all the university’s constituents.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS

The administrative structure of PCUPR is established in the By Laws which clearly define administrative roles and responsibilities and are in accordance with the university’s mission. The university is administered by a President appointed by the Board of Trustees for a term of six years. There are four vice-presidents who are appointed for a five-year term, a rector for each branch campus, college and school deans, and departmental directors. As discussed in Standard 4, the Administrative Board, University Board, and University Senate fall under the purview of the Presidency in addition to other key offices. Figure 5: PCUPR Organizational Chart I depicts this aspect of the administrative structure while Figure 6: PCUPR Organizational Chart II further illustrates the organizational structure of each vice-presidency.
A similar hierarchal structure is followed by the branch campuses of Arecibo and Mayagüez taking into consideration the peculiarities of each one. These organizational structures are depicted in Figures 7 and 8.

**Figure 7: Organizational Chart - Arecibo Branch Campus**

**Figure 8: Organizational Chart - Mayagüez Branch Campus**

One of the most important attributes in the success of an organization is its ability to manage change positively in order to grow and face the challenges of a dynamic society. PCUPR has an established process through the University Senate for providing input by the university community in the nomination of candidates to administrative positions such as president, vice-presidents, deans, and rectors as outlined in the Bylaws, Article VII and Article VIII, Section 8, Part D.
During the last five years, PCUPR has experienced various changes in leadership at the institutional and campus level. From 2003-2009, Prof. Marcelina Vélez-Santiago was president. In 2009, Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho was appointed the twelfth president of the institution; in July 2010, Dr. Leandro Colón was appointed Vice President of Academic Affairs. The Vice Presidency for Institutional Development, Research, and Planning was created with Dr. Félix Cortés as its head. In September 2011, Dr. Herminio Irizarry was appointed Associate Vice-President of Academic Affairs. Other institutional offices that have seen leadership changes have been IAO, TTI, and IOIR.

At the Ponce Campus, there have been changes in the deanships of the College of Science, the College of Education, and the School of Law as well as a newly created deanship in the School of Architecture. At the Arecibo Campus, Dr. Edwin Hernández Vera was named Rector in January 2011, and he appointed a new Dean of Academic Affairs and an Associate Dean of Student Affairs. From 2003 to 2012, Dr. Mei Ling Velázquez was Rector of the Mayagüez Campus, and Dr. Frank Jimmy Sierra, the Dean of Academic Affairs, will be acting as both dean and interim rector as of January 2013.

The impact of these administrative changes is the emergence of a new administrative style and vision which aspires to reaffirm and project institutional commitment to the community it serves. This is accomplished by offering a contemporary academic and work-oriented environment which will prepare the student body to face the competitive challenges of daily life and still enjoy an enriching university experience.

Within the organizational structure, PCUPR has an informed and structured University Senate which is a forum to discuss institutional issues openly. The President of PCUPR presides over the University Senate, and there is a vice-president who is chosen by the elected senators. The University Senate is comprised of four types of members: ex-officio members who are administrators and directors of specific student service programs; senators elected by eligible faculty of the colleges, schools, and branch campuses (two elected faculty representatives from each college or school in addition to one elected for every 30 full-time faculty members); senators at-large elected as needed at a general faculty assembly by eligible faculty (to maintain an uneven number and a proportion of two elected faculty senators to one ex-officio senate member); and student senators (who must have no less than a 2.0 GPA and have been studying for at least one year) elected by full-time students. In addition and in accordance with the document Student Guide and Regulations if a student council is elected for the academic year, the president of said council becomes an ex-officio senator. (See Figure 9: University Senate – Organizational Chart.) Permanent standing committees within the senate include student affairs, curriculum and educational policy, finance, nominations, rank and tenure, and faculty affairs.

**Figure 9: University Senate – Organizational Chart**
The University Senate has ordinary meetings the last Thursday of each month except in January, June, July, August, and September. In extraordinary circumstances, it may meet in May and/or December. Senate members participate in the university legislative process by submitting legislative proposals to the Board of Trustees and performing other duties as outlined in the Bylaws under Article VIII, Section 6. Input received from faculty assemblies and student organizations is channeled through their respective representatives in the University Senate thus providing a means for institutional improvement. Further details regarding the University Senate are found in the document *Senado Universitario – Reglamento* (University Senate – Rules and Regulations) as corrected and approved in 2001.

On the organizational level, PCUPR has experienced a significant change in its administrative structure since the last Self-Study. From 1996 to 2009, the Mayagüez and Arecibo Branch Campuses were accredited by MSCHE to function as operationally separate units. However, in the Statement of Accreditation Status of November 2009, MSCHE requested that the next Self-Study of PCUPR clarify the relationship between the Arecibo and Mayagüez campuses with the Ponce Campus. After a pondered analysis, PCUPR requested that MSCHE revise its 1996 decision to include the Arecibo and Mayagüez campuses within the scope of the Ponce Campus governance structure. This would mean a main campus located in Ponce with branch campuses in Arecibo and Mayagüez. On June 28, 2011, the Executive Committee for Substantive Change of MSCHE approved the accreditation of PCUPR as a single institution with three campuses: Ponce as main campus and Arecibo and Mayagüez as branch campuses. The impact of this organizational change has not been substantial as the branch campuses were not wholly independent bodies with regard to governance, planning, and budgeting and were subject to the policies and procedures stipulated in the Bylaws and Faculty Manual.

PCUPR has an established procedure for announcing and filling vacant academic and non-academic positions. During 2011-2012, PCUPR changed its hiring practices. These practices now are performed by the Human Resources Office and the Vice-Presidency for Academic Affairs (Refer to *Standard 6: Integrity*.) Published announcements for available positions always include the requirements and qualifications for each position.

All administrative personnel are highly qualified and competent in their respective areas of expertise. To perform their responsibilities and functions in accordance with the mission, vision, and objectives of the institution, since 2010 administrative personnel are given four yearly management workshops (*talleres de gerencia administrativa*) on topics such as strategic planning, legal aspects regarding management, and sexual harassment in the workplace among others. These workshops also serve to offer administrative leaders the decision-making information they need to assume their roles and promote excellence in their functions. In addition, academic administrators also participate in the professional development activities offered by the institution at the beginning of each academic year.

An assessment process to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional leadership and governance is important in order for an institution to maintain its excellence. Academic chairs, unit directors, deans, branch campus rectors, and vice-presidents are evaluated annually by their respective superiors using an institutional assessment rubric. Performance in areas such as decision-making, objectivity, management skills, and professional development is assessed. Once completed, the evaluation is discussed with the immediate supervisor where the strengths and weaknesses are outlined and an action plan is prepared for professional improvement. In the 2012 SSMS, 78% of administrators perceived that they are evaluated periodically and receive recommendations for self-improvement. Seventy-six percent agree that there is periodic assessment of the administrative structure to determine effectiveness and efficiency.

The number of staff of the academic units is contingent on the office: colleges have a dean and an administrative assistant; departments have an academic chair and an administrative assistant. Other units have a director and the necessary staff to perform the functions and duties of said unit.
The strategies used to promote open discussion in relation to the institution’s mission, goals, program offerings, and resources occur through forums which include the meetings of administrative units. These meetings include those of the University Senate (at least 6 times during the academic year), the General Faculty Assembly (twice a year), the colleges (at least twice a year), and academic departments (monthly). Minutes record the issues discussed, and reactions are channeled accordingly as input for decision-making. The internal email system (gmail@pucpr.edu) is another forum for communication among the different constituencies and includes live chat. Again, reactions are channeled and considered where appropriate. According to the 2012 SSMS, 81% of the administrators surveyed feel that they meet periodically with the faculty and/or employees to discuss their needs. In addition, 84% of the administrators feel that communication between the administrator and the faculty and/or employees is adequate and that as administrators they have access to their superiors to discuss work-related matters and to offer suggestions.

**STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The principal strength that the university exhibits is the consistency it has had in maintaining an established administrative structure with highly qualified personnel. In the 2012 SSMS, an average of 93% of administrators surveyed agrees that their academic preparation is adequate for the position they hold and that their professional or administrative experience is appropriate. To maintain personnel abreast of current administrative practices, professional development and administrative training are being offered on a more frequent basis. Eighty-four percent of the administrators surveyed (2012 SSMS) agree that the training activities offered by the institution contribute to their professional and administrative development.

In the 2012 SSMS, 78% of administrators perceived that they are evaluated periodically and receive recommendations for self-improvement. Seventy-six percent agree that there is periodic assessment to determine effectiveness and efficiency.

**CHALLENGES**

The organizational change which integrated the three campuses as one sole institution has exposed various factors that need to be addressed before there is a truly institutional mentality. The first tendency has been to identify PCUPR with the Ponce Campus, disregarding that the term “institution” refers to all campuses. The second tendency is that the university community mostly emphasizes the particular situations of the Ponce Campus without taking into account that the institution has three geographical sites, each with individual cultures and needs. Examples of this are discussions at general faculty assemblies, curriculum revision at the departmental level, and committee work. This is further reinforced by the perception of the Board of Trustees in the 2012 SSMS where only 56% feel that communication among administrators among the campuses is effective.

In relation to the aforementioned, student representation in the University Senate does not include representatives from the branch campuses. There is at least one faculty representative from each branch campus, and students are not afforded the same privilege. In addition, there are inconsistencies regarding student representation in the University Senate among the **Bylaws, University Senate Rules and Regulations**, and the **Student Guide and Regulations**.

While there are various channels of communication within the administrative structure, the effectiveness of this communication is perceived as being less than satisfactory. An average of 69% of trustees and administrators feel that the communication among administrators of the different units, offices, and campuses is effective. This perception is further reinforced as only 57% of administrators of colleges and units surveyed said that they meet with other college or unit administrators to discuss course programming.

If an institution aspires to improve and be recognized as one of excellence, there must be periodic assessment for self-improvement. Although an average of 77% of administrators surveyed in 2012 perceive that there is periodic
assessment for self-improvement in order to determine effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative structure, this percentage should be much higher to reflect that on-going periodic assessment is performed.

According to the 2012 SSMS, 56% of the administrators surveyed feel that the unit they supervise has the necessary resources (human, physical, and financial) for the effective performance of the academic programs or the tasks pertaining to their positions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT**

1. The administration must make a concerted effort to overtly include the branch campuses in all institutional discussions at all levels, especially those that deal with course programming, curricula, and committee work. This also applies to colleges and units within the same campus. The use of video-conferencing technology can improve communication among the campuses and maximize the participation of the different constituencies in order to better accomplish the institutional mission. Departmental meetings as well as general faculty assemblies could be rotated among the three campuses to foster a feeling of institutional unity and belonging. Representatives from the different units can be invited to departmental meetings when key issues are discussed.

2. Regulations regarding student participation in the University Senate should be revised to include participation by full-time students at the branch campuses as well as clarify existing discrepancies. This merits an in-depth analysis and revision of the Bylaws, the University Senate Rules and Regulations, and the Student Guide and Regulations regarding student representation in the University Senate.

3. In the area of administrative assessment, it is imperative that the assessment process be consistent and performed by all those concerned if results are to be used for institutional improvement. Although 77% reflects an acceptable average as established for this self-study, the periodic assessment of the administrative structure merits further development.

4. A systematic survey should be conducted to further investigate which units perceive a lack of necessary resources (human, physical, and financial) to effectively perform the tasks ascribed to their areas.
Chapter 4 - Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention and Standard 9: Student Support Services – Task Group Four

STANDARD 8: STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND RETENTION

Standard 8 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students’ educational goals.”

In the context of this standard and in accordance with the mission of PCUPR, students who are admitted partake of an integrated education focused on their intellectual, spiritual, personal, and social growth. The achievement of this growth is best measured by the ability of the institution to facilitate an admissions process which culminates in the retention of these students and a successful completion of their academic goals.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGES

For this standard, the task group analyzed the institution’s recruitment, admission, and retention policies to ensure that they are congruent with the institutional mission, vision, goals, and objectives. It also focused on determining that if the diverse student population is provided equal opportunities for success in meeting educational goals through the institution’s recruitment, admission, and retention policies and procedures. Finally, the task group assessed current enrollment management practices and their impact on student retention and institutional efforts for improvement. The methodology used was that of previous task groups with the establishment of subgroups to analyze institutional compliance for each standard. Documentation used is stipulated in the Roadmap of Evidence.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS

The goal of PCUPR is to be the primary option to achieve an integral Christian academic formation of excellence aimed towards a life of fulfillment and adventure. To effectively promote this goal, the university has well-organized recruitment and promotion programs with ample institutional financial resources as well as per campus. This is summarized in Table 17: Financial Resources for Promotion and Recruitment 2008-2013. All promotion and recruitment activities reflect the institutional mission, vision, goals, and objectives. Since 2009, the Promotion and Recruitment Division, formerly under the Office of Admissions, responds to the VPIDRP. There are four recruitment officials and two coordinators at the Ponce campus; in addition, the School of Law has its own office for recruitment and admission, and the School of Architecture manages the majority of its own promotion and recruitment activities. At the branch campuses, both the promotion and recruitment efforts are coordinated by two admission officers per campus (one of these works only part-time at Arecibo) who respond to the director of Office of Admissions in Ponce but are supervised directly by the Dean of Student Affairs at the branch campuses.

Table 17: Financial Resources for Promotion and Recruitment 2008-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Ponce Campus</th>
<th>Mayagüez Branch Campus</th>
<th>Arecibo Branch</th>
<th>PCUPR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>$187,228</td>
<td>$60,364</td>
<td>$44,274</td>
<td>$283,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>$218,083</td>
<td>$49,755</td>
<td>$32,223</td>
<td>$203,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>$236,915</td>
<td>$46,767</td>
<td>$77,634</td>
<td>$397,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>$264,773</td>
<td>$49,976</td>
<td>$79,895</td>
<td>$796,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>$296,582</td>
<td>$55,368</td>
<td>$133,858</td>
<td>$762,452</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PCUPR has a uniform institutional protocol (Guías de identidad y marca) for its promotional activities at all campuses. This protocol includes a new university logo introduced in 2011, a restructured webpage, and standardized promotional materials. Centralized marketing activities through radio, television, and press promotions have permitted the university to present a clear and attractive image. Notwithstanding, the university allows some degree of variance among the campuses to reflect the particular needs of the community each serves.
and the unique academic offerings of each one. To target potential students, the campuses have other specific promoting and recruitment activities such as: visits to both public and private high schools, open houses, individual and group campus tours, individual student orientations, booths or rented spaces at commercial malls, parish visits, and participation in community activities. Academic degree brochures and electronic presentations are commonly used in these activities. On the admission form, potential students indicate the recruitment practices by which they learned about the institution. This data is analyzed to determine which recruitment practices are more effective. Until 2009 the analysis of this data was performed by the Office of Admissions and then it was transferred to the VPIDRP.

Once students demonstrate interest in the institution through information cards distributed at recruitment activities, their information is forwarded to the telemarketing official who contacts them to offer further orientation and begin enrollment tracking. Since 2009, student information is entered into the Banner system as part of the enrollment management process. Student trajectory is monitored since the student submits the application form, is admitted, registers, and ultimately graduates. An in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of this process since its inception is scheduled for the 2013-2014 academic year.

Although PCUPR has developed and implemented a well-organized recruitment program with ample human and financial resources, some of the recruitment officials interviewed indicated that the resources needed for a more aggressive marketing campaign to promote the institution’s ample academic offerings and services must be increased.

The institutional admission policy is clearly stated in the PCUPR Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2014 (English version) on page 52 and it is in accord with the institution’s mission, vision, and goals as it admits those students who demonstrate the required aptitudes and potential to benefit from a college education. The students should also have the motivation and a general positive attitude needed to achieve excellence in their educational encounter. The policy also states its non-discriminatory nature regarding race, color, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, or disabilities a diversified student population that includes Catholic, non-Catholic, and public and private school graduates as well as high school equivalencies from different geographical areas of the island, the United States, and foreign countries. The university admits students as either regular or special admissions to graduate or undergraduate programs according to the applicants’ educational areas of interest. General admission requirements and procedures as well as academic offerings and requisites for potential students, undergraduates and graduates, transfer students, special students, students with permission, and others are clearly stated in the catalog, on the printed admission application, and on the PCUPR’s website. In addition to the general admission requirements, some colleges and programs have special requisites. Examples of these are the College of Science, the School of Law, and the School of Architecture.

The Office of Admissions has a manual of procedures with a flowchart of the admission management process for potential students based on the Banner information system. This is a well-structured document that was created to ensure that the criteria and admission requirements are met. Trained personnel from the Offices of Admissions, the Registrar, and Financial Aid, among other administrative offices, are linked by a series of information modules within the Banner system. The Admissions Module contains tables and rules regarding the criteria and norms for admission for each academic program. Data entered goes through a quality check to ensure all of the information is correct and the requisites are complete. The more complete the application is, the faster the office can emit a decision regarding admission for the potential candidate. Once the Office of Admissions creates a student file, it is transferred and belongs to the Registrar’s Office. The overall process is effective and efficient.

For graduate admission program, the Office of Admissions receives, processes, and then refers the applications to the corresponding graduate program which controls the final decision regarding acceptance. If necessary, graduate programs inform the Office of Admissions of any other requirements and documents needed by the potential candidate for possible acceptance.
The overall institutional administration process is efficiently integrated between the Registrar and the Financial Aid Offices. Both institutional offices are located at the Ponce Campus. The Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses have officers who coordinate their services and respond to the directors of the offices at Ponce Campus. The Office of the Registrar, assigned to the VPAA, is responsible for keeping the official student records as well as monitoring that all institutionally approved academic policies and federal regulations are met. Among the services of this office are the management of the registration process, the preparation and publication of the institutional catalogs, editing and publishing the official course program newspaper, and processing official transcripts certifications, and readmissions. The primary goal of the Financial Aid Office (Oficina de Asistencia Económico) is to inform, guide, and give orientation about the various financial aid programs (federal, state, and institutional) available to applicants and admitted students. Trained personnel at all the campuses assist students and parents in the financial aid process. Important information for undergraduate and graduate students such as application requisites, submission dates, and financial aid services offered are communicated through pamphlets, bulletin boards, the official course program newspaper edited by the Office of the Registrar, and the institutional webpage.

As discussed under Standard 6: Integrity, PCUPR ensures that students receive accurate comprehensive information regarding academic offerings and financial aid in order to make informed decisions about academic and financial expectations and opportunities. In the 2012 SSMS answered by students, the Office of the Registrar at the Ponce Campus obtained 82% of positive satisfaction with the services rendered while the Arecibo Branch Campus obtained 85% and the Mayagüez Branch Campus 82%, respectively. In the Undergraduate Student Satisfaction Survey (2010 - Ponce), 65% of students surveyed in Ponce expressed satisfaction with financial aid services; and 24% emitted a neutral response. This same survey was administered to the Arecibo and Mayagüez branch campuses in 2011. In Arecibo, 68% expressed satisfaction while 14% were neutral, and In Mayagüez 70% expressed satisfaction while 15% were neutral.

Another priority area for all higher education institutions is the retention of their enrolled students. The Ponce Campus established the Institutional Retention Plan 2007-2012: Undergraduate Level that is accessible via the university’s portal Acceso Pionero: Mi PUCPR. It is a comprehensive plan that includes goals, objectives, and strategies to increase student retention that reflects the institutional mission, vision, goals, and objectives. The Mayagüez and Arecibo Branch Campuses have established their own retention plans (2008-2013) aligned to the goals and objectives of the Ponce Campus. Specific undergraduate retention goals for these plans are to retain 70% of the enrollment in the freshman year, 60% in the second year, 50% during the third year, 40% in the fourth year, and 30% in the fifth year. To assess the fulfillment of this goal, the Statistics Office has been analyzing the percent of retention by cohorts in the three campuses beginning in August 2006. Table 18: Retention Rates by Cohorts for PCUPR Campuses 2006-2011 summarizes this data.

Table 18: Retention Rates by Cohorts for PCUPR Campuses 2006-2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Cohorts Years</th>
<th>2006 (%)</th>
<th>2007 (%)</th>
<th>2008 (%)</th>
<th>2009 (%)</th>
<th>2010 (%)</th>
<th>2011 (%)</th>
<th>PCUPR Goal (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18 shows that for the Ponce Campus, the retention goal has been fulfilled for all the cohorts from 2007 to 2010. The mean for the first academic year from 2006—2011 is 80% which is an increase of 10% above the retention goal which was 70%. The Mayagüez and Arecibo Branch Campuses have partially fulfilled the retention goals for their cohorts and submitted analytical reports to the Puerto Rico Education Council (PREC). Upon analysis, the Arecibo Branch Campus stated that reasons for not fulfilling retention goals can be attributed to: an increase in the cost of living; marketing competition with new institutions of higher education established in the northern region of the Island; and in the case of education majors, the new requirements of the Department of Education of Puerto Rico which are reflected in the graduation standards of PCUPR. An in-depth study to assess the exact reasons for the decrease in student retention rate has begun, and strategies such as tutoring in science, math and Spanish have been established as well as spiritual support among others. In the case of the Mayagüez Branch Campus, the possible reasons for not achieving the retention rates were not specifically stated in its analysis, but the campus has established a series of strategies to increase the retention rates titled: Student Academic Study Plan. Some of the main strategies are personalized student academic counseling, the establishment of the Teaching and Learning Technological Center, emotional and spiritual support to the students, the performance of annual student satisfaction surveys, and an increase in extracurricular activities. After a series of strategies were developed and implemented, the campus reported its achievements. The development of Institutional Retention Plan 2013-2017 is in progress.

At the graduate level, the first institutional retention plan has been developed and was approved in February 2013 with a projected start date of August 2013. The goal of the plan is to retain 55% of the enrolled students in the first year and 45% in the second year. The achievement of this retention goal will be evaluated at the beginning of the next academic year (2014-2015).

To increase student retention, higher education institutions are continually introducing new and improved educational technology. One of the most important is online offerings of courses and academic programs. At present, PCUPR has aggressively increased the use of this technology to offer online courses. Table 19 shows the total online and blended courses offered during the academic semesters of August 2009 to May 2013 at the three branch campuses. Further information regarding online offerings is found in Chapter 5, Standard 11: Educational Offerings, pages 83-84.

Table 19: PCUPR Online and Blended Courses Offered from August 2009 – May 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th></th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Blended</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Blended</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arecibo</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total PCUPR</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students taking online and blended courses are given appropriate orientation, training, and support. Once a student demonstrates interest in enrolling in an online course, he/she can either go directly to the IDL or the academic department where he/she is given a document outlining the specific requirements and technological skills needed to enroll in the course. Unless the course has specific requirements, the student can directly enroll in the course. If it has specific requirements, the department chair for the course will decide if the student can enroll. The student then proceeds to access the course, establish a password, and learn how to use the Moodle platform and communicate with the professor privately. In addition, there is technical support at each campus. At Ponce, there are 2 technicians (1 full-time and another part-time) under the supervision of the IDL; there is one technician at each of the branch campuses (Arecibo also has a part-time technician for evening courses) who works in coordination with IDL when the need arises. In addition, students at the Arecibo Branch Campus can directly contact the technician in Ponce via telephone. There is also a general forum within each online course where the student can post questions regarding technical difficulties which can be handled directly by the professor or referred to the IDL if necessary.

The university has a well-organized institutional assessment plan to continually identify institutional strengths and weaknesses at all levels. Two of the most important activities are student learning and evaluation of academic programs to increase student learning and retention. The Institutional Retention Plan systematically assesses student learning in order to ensure academic excellence and improve the learning process. Student learning assessment will be further discussed under Standard 14 in the section: **Task Group Five: Findings and Recommendations for Institutional Improvement.**

The recruitment, admission, and retention processes are congruent with the PCUPR student profile. The Institutional Freshman Profile for 2012 indicates that the majority of these new freshmen is women, between the ages of 18-20, and is single. PCUPR first-time students are from the neighboring towns of each campus; seventy percent have attended public schools and come from low-income families; fifty-three percent of the family nucleus is composed of 3 to 4 family members; ninety percent receive federal financial aid; and an average of 53% qualify for remedial help in math, Spanish, or English. Other relevant facts are found in Table 20.

**Table 20: First Time Freshman Student Profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Profile</th>
<th>Ponce (%)</th>
<th>Arecibo (%)</th>
<th>Mayagüez (%)</th>
<th>PCUPR (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>97.47</td>
<td>97.07</td>
<td>98.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 or more</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Attended</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>69.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home</td>
<td>69.96</td>
<td>83.54</td>
<td>85.85</td>
<td>72.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus dorm</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off- campus</td>
<td>22.66</td>
<td>16.46</td>
<td>12.68</td>
<td>20.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEEB: Achievement Test-Spanish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(used for placement)</td>
<td>601-800</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401-600</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-400</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEEB: Achievement Test-English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(used for placement)</td>
<td>601-800</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401-600</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-400</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The PCUPR Undergraduate and Graduate Student Profile for 2012 indicates that overall PCUPR students are from the neighboring towns of each campus; seventy five percent come from or are low-income families (less than $35,000 per year); an average of 54% of the family nucleus is composed of 3 to 4 family members; and an average of 70% are women. In addition, 67% of graduate students are between the ages of 21-30; 62% obtained their undergraduate degrees or equivalent at other institutions; and 91% are studying at the Ponce Campus. Table 21 indicates other relevant data.

Table 21: PCUPR Undergraduate and Graduate Student Profile for 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Profile</th>
<th>Undergraduate (%)</th>
<th>Graduate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>(26-30) 29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>(21-25) 37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civil Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>58.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Non-Catholic</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponce and neighboring towns</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayaguez and neighboring towns</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arecibo and neighboring towns</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living with</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One parent</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>62.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Net Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000-$2,000</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,000-$3,000</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000-$4,000</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Aid</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell Grant</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal loan</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>(Direct loan)80.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional aid</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PCUPR is committed to student academic success by providing an environment where students feel respected, supported, and encouraged. Consistent with the institutional mission and goals, many services and strategies have been implemented to meet the needs of the diverse student body by providing support and guidance to traditional as well as non-traditional students who are older, have disabilities, are foreign, and partake in distance learning, among others. This is evidenced in the discussion of **Standard 9: Student Support Services**. For example,
at the Ponce Campus, the Student Development and Retention program which responds to the director of the Counseling and Orientation Center, serves students who exhibit a high risk of desertion. This program is responsible for organizing workshops dealing with student retention and coordinating periodic meetings and activities with the Institutional Retention Committee. According to the 2012 SSMS, 87% of students perceive that the academic offerings, educational policies, support services, and technology-based teaching provide for the different academic needs of students. In the 2002 SSMS, 77% of students felt that the support programs of the university contribute to the achievement of their goals as a student as compared to 87% in the 2012 SSMS. These percentages indicate that there is a high level of satisfaction among the student population.

As indicated previously, enrollment management involves recruitment, admission, and retention through up till graduation. It is fundamental for PCUPR to keep a satisfied student population persistent and focused on reaching their academic goals. The institutional goal is to guarantee the right conditions for students to successfully obtain their academic degrees indicate institutional effectiveness in reaching its goals. Through the accurate and comprehensive information of assessment results regarding student performance and profiles compiled and analyzed by the IAO and the VPIDRP, a precise composition of the student body and the academic environment of the campus is achieved. This facilitates the institution the development and execution of strategies according to the goals established in the Institutional Strategic Plan 2008-2013. Thus, the strategies will be based on real data and directed to improve the student admission and retention practices and graduation rates. These strategies will include improve marketing and promotion, assessment of physical resources and services, analysis of enrollment trends, comparative monitoring, and the planning of viable projections directed to maintain an increasing students enrollment in accordance with the policies and admission standards of the institution.

STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS
PCUPR has a uniform and organized recruitment program which displays a consistent image of the institution but is also tempered to the peculiarities of each campus. The university webpage gives ready access to potential students to become acquainted with the institution and its academic offerings. At the Mayagüez Branch Campus faculty and students collaborate in the Telemarketing Program to follow-up on recruitment efforts.

The Office of Admissions has an efficient well-structured admission process. This includes all the steps from the very moment the student submits the admission application to his/her final admission. This has been possible due to the continued implementation of the Banner management and information system. This management system provides a tool for organizing student admission and readmission, course registration, and internal and external communication processes as well as facilitating administrative procedures. Integrated enrollment management has created a link between the process of admission and financial aid.

The continued implementation of retention plans at the undergraduate level at all campuses has yielded results which have helped the PCUPR as a whole to assess its effectiveness in order to develop strategies to increase student retention. The Ponce Campus has fulfilled the retention rate goal for all the cohorts from 2007 to 2011, and the branch campuses are analyzing these rates to improve their retention strategies. Strategies emphasized over the past five years include incorporating technology in the teaching/learning process and services, recruitment of faculty with better technological skills, and remodeling of physical facilities.

ISP 2008-2013 contemplates specific strategies for student admission and retention. This in turn is linked directly to the input received from the university’s assessment of student learning and retention, student services, and academic programs at all levels at the three campuses. The results of these assessments are used to develop new teaching strategies, improve and develop new academic programs, and to improve student services.

PCUPR is committed to meeting the demands and needs of a diversified student population and a changing society by establishing new academic offerings. Expanded opportunities in the curriculum and co-curriculum have been implemented in the three campuses. Since the 2003 Self-Study, thirty-four new programs corresponding to the three campuses have been certified by the PREC and are mainly at the bachelor’s and master’s level. Three of
the most notable programs are the Master of Science in Biotechnology (2007), the Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology (2010), and the Bachelor of Architecture (2011). The distribution of these new programs among the three campuses is shown in Table 22.

Table 22: New Academic Programs at PCUPR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Level</th>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate degree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined/Binary Programs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Certificate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulated Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Programs</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These diverse new academic offerings are aimed at increasing the number of students choosing PCUPR for their academic and professional careers thus affirming PCUPR’s mission statement to be the primary option for achieving an integral Christian and academic formation of excellence for the wellbeing of our society and global community. In the 2012 SSMS, 87% of students completely agree that the academic programs of PCUPR satisfy their needs and their future employment expectations. PCUPR is also dedicated to the holistic development of the students it admits so that they can obtain their degrees. In the 2012 SSMS, 90% of students surveyed agree with this statement which further evidences that PCUPR is fulfilling its mission and goals.

CHALLENGES

Although the offices of Admissions, the Registrar, and Financial Aid are linked through the Banner information management system, the enrollment management process is primarily transactional and not an integrated one. This limitation can affect the conversion rate of application to registration.

The timeliness of the admission process at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in comparison with other surrounding institutions is cumbersome in that PCUPR admission replies are slower, thus affecting the ability to effectively compete.

At the branch campuses, both the promotion and recruitment efforts are coordinated and supervised by the Dean of Student Affairs who shares information with the VPIDRP. At the Arecibo Branch Campus, there is an admission officer who responds directly to the Dean of Student Affairs and to the Institutional Admissions Director at the main campus while at the Mayagüez Branch Campus there are two officers who do admissions, recruitment, and promotion. At the Arecibo Branch Campus, there are two recruitment officers but one of these works only part-time. At Mayagüez, the admissions, recruitment, and promotion processes are done by two people indicating that there are not enough personnel for the many tasks required. At Arecibo, there is a need for a full-time recruitment officer to perform more efficient recruitment.

PCUPR has developed and implemented a well-organized recruitment program with the human and financial resources available. During the academic year unexpected events may arise that require the active participation of the Recruitment Office, and there are insufficient funds to have a physical presence and to acquire the promotional material needed for distribution.

The Graduate Catalog does not clearly state the admissions policy, procedures, or requirements as does the Undergraduate Catalog. These appear dispersed throughout the catalog according to the program of interest of the applicant.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1. There must be more integration among the offices serving potential students. Recruitment, admissions, financial aid, and the bursar must be interlinked so that the enrollment management process can be more effective and efficient.

2. The admission process at both the undergraduate and graduate levels must be further streamlined to enable the university to admit students earlier in order to effectively compete with other institutions.

3. Promotion, recruitment, and admission processes at the branch campuses should be further evaluated and restructured including the need for additional human and economic resources.

4. Although there is an assigned budget for recruitment and promotion activities, it should be increased to effectively meet the needs of these tasks and the personnel involved. The resources for continued aggressive marketing campaigns for the promotion of the university and its ample academic offerings and services need to be increased.

5. Efficient assessment strategies to determine the effectiveness of recruitment activities must be implemented and documented.

6. The catalogs should have a uniform format to present clear and precise information regarding the university's admission policy, procedures, and/or requirements for potential applicants. It should not be assumed that a graduate school candidate has had previous contact with PCUPR. However, on the Office of Admissions link on the webpage, this information is well-stated with the exception of the admissions policy.

STANDARD 9: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Standard 9 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution’s goals for students.”

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGES

For this standard the sub-group identified to what extent the institution provides accurate and comprehensive information and advice to the student body regarding academic offerings and financial aid. It also was tasked to determine the effectiveness of current academic offerings and student support services in all locations and using diverse modes of delivery in the assessment of expected student learning outcomes; and finally, it analyzed how student assessment outcomes are used for future strategic planning regarding student admissions, retention, and services as well as for institutional improvement. Documentation is stipulated in the Roadmap of Evidence and available in the institutional resource room.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS

Student support services are essential for an effective teaching/learning process, and students must receive accurate and comprehensive information about the academic opportunities available. As discussed in Standards 6 and 8, the academic program offerings and their requisites are stated in both the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog and on PCUPR’s website under the link Conoce tu Universidad: Información al Consumidor which is a consumer report that facilitates the most important information for the university community in compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008. Support is offered by guidance counselors for first-year and transfer students, department chairs, faculty, and administrative staff who advise students about the requisites and course programming for the different academic programs. Similarly, trained personnel in the financial aid offices located on each campus inform students about the various financial aid programs (federal, state, and institutional) available and advise them regarding the financial aid process. Other important information for undergraduate and graduate students is communicated through pamphlets, bulletin boards, the official course program newspaper edited by the Office of the Registrar, and the institutional webpage.

Consistent with the institutional mission, student support services at PCUPR provide the means for its diverse student population to acquire an education centered in the Christian values. There is a wide range of programs and services which provide for the needs of the student body in areas such as technology, academics, enrollment, counseling and guidance, recreation, sports, and extracurricular activities. Student services as well as student organizations actively support the institution’s mission and goals as a dynamic and creative educational
encounter. The goal is not only to help students attain their educational and professional goals and thusly increase the institution’s retention rate but also to help them become constructive members of the society. Information regarding these services is disseminated through brochures, bulletins, and promotion by Católica Radio and Católica TV. Information can also be accessed through links on the university’s web page. Table 23 summarizes those programs and services available at the campuses of PCUPR.

Table 23: Support Programs and Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Programs and Services</th>
<th>Ponce</th>
<th>Mayagüez</th>
<th>Arecibo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Honors Program</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office for International Affairs (OIRI)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunication and Technology Office</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Services</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Clinic for Community Service</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration and Quality of Life Program</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office for Management of Loss, Bereavement, and Grief</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship and employment office</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring Center</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Resources and Materials Laboratory (LERMA)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen Program</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling and Orientation Center</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaplaincy</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Program</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Aid Clinic</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographic Studio</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office for Students with Disabilities (OSPI)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Office</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Extension Office</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis Torres Nadal Theater Workshop</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Católica Dance Team</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing and Theater Groups</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Choir</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law School Employment Office</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursar’s Office</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Registrar</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Admissions</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Office</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-School Development Center</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start Center</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Postal Office</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking Services (Santander Bank)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unisex Hairstyling Salon</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald E. McNair**</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Federally funded program
** Program ended in May 2012

PCUPR has a student support service structure which is common for all the campuses. Nonetheless, each campus adopts and adjusts these services according to its particular needs. Table 11 reflects the services which the campuses have in common such as library services, chaplaincy, orientation and counseling services, and tutoring.
services, among others. All programs and offices have established procedures for student referral. The referral usually begins with a letter, e-mail, or a completed form from a professor, department director, or dean. Students seeking services without a referral are requested to complete a form. These offices and programs keep records of the services given which are reflected in monthly and/or annual reports. For example, from 2003 to 2012 at the Ponce Campus, TTI served 21,293 students; OIRI - 315 students; the Legal Aid Clinic - 800 students; Health Services - 13,625 students; the Pre-school Center - 486 students; BEV - 60,642 students; and OSPI - 2,475 students.

In addition to the support services for enrolled students, the Ponce Campus has programs geared to potential students in the community. Two such programs are Upward Bound (aimed at high school students) and the recently established Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) in 2011. The EOC has served approximately 1000 participants from four southern municipalities ages 19 or older who are interested in beginning or reinitiating a university career.

At the Ponce Campus, student support services are under the Vice-Presidencies of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Finance and Administration who supervise the qualified and/or experienced personnel who manage these programs and offices. The auxiliary enterprises known as PCUSA (Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico Service Association), which is a non-profit organization that was established in 1956, provides the institution with services such as the Pionera Bookstore, Católica Radio, and the cafeterias of all three campuses. In addition, they manage vending machine contracts, among others. At the Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses, support services are also provided by qualified and/or experienced personnel under the Deanships of Student, Academic, and Administrative Affairs. Communication between the vice-presidencies and deanships allows for the successful integration of student support services as well as improvement to meet the needs of the student population. Improvement of these services is also dependent on its assessment results.

Improvement of support services is also dependent on its assessment results. The IAO is responsible, among other duties, for gathering, analyzing and evaluating assessment data from the respective student services offered by the institution. Assessment strategies include the analysis of institutional satisfaction surveys, satisfaction surveys performed by the program or office, and recommendations given by the students through student representatives and organizations. The Arecibo Branch Campus has even established an e-mail address (expresatepionero@pucpr.edu) to express complaints and recommendations which are tended to by the rector. These strategies show that the institution continually assesses its programs, services, and facilities in order to improve and reinforce them according to student needs and demands. The findings of these assessment strategies are disclosed to the respective units as well as the university community and are used to establish action plans at the operational level as part of the strategic planning process. Table 24 summarizes the level of satisfaction perceived by students in the 2012 SSMS as compared to the 2002 SSMS.

<p>| Table 24: Student Satisfaction with Student Support Services - 2012 and 2002 SSMS |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|  | Percent of Satisfaction - 2012 SSMS | 2002 SSMS |  |  |  |
|  | Ponce | Mayagüez | Arecibo | PCUPR | PCUPR |
| According to the mission of PCUPR, the student is the primary beneficiary of institutional activities. | 87 | 82 | 96 | 92 | 73 |
| The treatment that the student receives in the different units reflects Christian values. | 78 | 83 | 85 | 84 | 75 |
| Personnel of the Office of Admissions clarified doubts that arose during the process of submitting documents. | 78 | 81 | 88 | 84 | 77 |
| The support programs of the university contribute to the achievement of my goals as a student. | 83 | 76 | 82 | 87 | 77 |
| There are procedures for evaluating student support services. | 72 | 69 | 76 | 77 | NA |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent of Satisfaction - 2012 SSMS</th>
<th>2002 SSMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The promotion of student support services within the university</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community is effective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The university community (students, faculty, and administrative</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personnel) is well informed about student support services.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The services rendered by the cafeteria satisfy my needs.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The services rendered by the Bursar's Office satisfy my needs.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The services rendered by the Office of the Registrar satisfy my</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The existing procedure for student referral by faculty to support</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>services is adequate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When comparing the percentages of satisfaction expressed by students in 2002 with those of 2012, there has been an increase in the level of satisfaction with the services surveyed. Institutionally, in the 2012 SSMS, over 75% of students surveyed perceive that the student is the primary beneficiary of institutional activities, which includes student support services and that the treatment they receive in the different units reflects Christian values. Likewise, over 75% perceive that university support programs contribute to the achievement of their goals as students. When surveyed regarding particular offices such as Admissions, Bursar, and Registrar, over 75% expressed that these offices satisfied their needs. Although satisfaction with cafeteria services has increased since 2002, institutionally students are still not satisfied with cafeteria service (62%). Students at both the Ponce and Mayagüez campuses expressed less than 75% satisfaction with the promotion and evaluation of student support services. Despite the various modes of informing the community about the existing student support services and programs, less than 75% of students surveyed at all three campuses perceive that the community is well-informed about these. Further documentation for each of the campuses can be found in the Student Satisfaction Survey results analyzed and posted by the IAO on its webpage. RME36

In May 2012, the Graduate School of the Department of Education at the Ponce Campus performed a student satisfaction survey regarding student services and other aspects of university life. The sample included 164 graduate students of which 80% were females and 20% were males. Some of the results indicated the following levels of satisfaction: Financial Aid Office – 69%; online course registration – 81%; computer lab service hours – 75%; cafeteria – 52%; parking facilities – 60%; campus security – 83%, and classroom facilities – 76%. (See RME36.)

STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

One of the goals of ISP 2008-2013 is the establishment of a rapid and effective system for processing documents for student support services based on technological resources that are easily accessed by students and administrative personnel alike. With the utilization of the Banner system and access granted through Acceso Pionero, this goal has been accomplished for services offered by the Offices of Admissions, Registrar, and Financial Aid. The use of an institutional electronic mail system has also allowed for the integration of information and flow of communication among the university community.

In addition to the services offered by TTI, academic units have centers for technical support in computer technologies and software available to students and faculty. This is further evidenced by the perception of faculty and administrators as expressed in the 2012 SSMS, where an average of 84% agree that the academic offerings, educational policies, support services, and technology-based teaching provide for the different academic needs of students. Also, an average of 79% of the administrators and the Board of Trustees feel that PCUPR support services are integrated with the academic programs.
The IAO continually develops tools such as surveys and questionnaires, for evaluating the student services offered by the institution, taking in consideration the mission and vision of PCUPR and the characteristics of academic excellence. The student level of satisfaction with student services, physical facilities, activities, information and communication systems, academic services, and academic support programs have been measured since 2010 at the three campuses. This data has been fundamental for the improvement of these areas as contemplated in ISP 2013-2020.

Key support services have implemented extended hours of service at all campuses in order to meet the needs of the undergraduate and graduate programs.

The university is also involved with the external community, especially those people who may have been high school drop-outs or who have not decided their future occupational goals upon graduation. The EOC Program specifically targets this population in the southern region.

CHALLENGES
As mentioned earlier, according to the 2012 SSMS, less than 75% of students surveyed at all three campuses perceive that the community is well-informed about the existing student support services and programs even though information is distributed through various modes.

Many of the links on the webpage for student services and programs lack precise and/or uniform information about their services. In some cases, the information is limited to a brief description of the service and to the phone numbers and e-mail addresses of key personnel. Seventy-five percent of the services and programs listed in Table 22 have an informative web link.

Although there are mechanisms for student referrals for certain services, these are not uniform. Concrete data gathered by units at all campuses regarding the quantity and origin of referrals and level of effectiveness are not consistently reported.

Branch campuses do not participate in the variety of support programs that the main campus has.

Dissatisfaction with cafeteria services continues to be apparent, especially at the Ponce and Mayagüez campuses. A turnover between 4-6 different concession owners in the last ten years at each of the campuses has not garnered favorable student satisfaction resulting in a lack of patronage.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT
1. Some type of aggressive campaign should be undertaken to emphasize the existing support programs and the importance they have for academic and personal success of the student body among all university constituents. A listing of these services could be posted in each university office as well as open house activities as starting points.

2. All support services and programs should have a link on the PCUPR web page. An effort should be made to provide as much information as possible in a uniform manner.

3. Referral processes should be clear, concise, and uniform for all services to avoid confusion and facilitate the process. A uniform information heading could be used.

4. Assessment of the viability of offering more services at the branch campuses should be conducted; for example, an extension of the Honors Program or a pre-school program.

5. A more thorough assessment to reveal what aspects of cafeteria service need to be improved to increase customer satisfaction should be conducted. Areas to be assessed can be hours of operation, cost, menu, and quickness of service.
Chapter 5 - Standard 10: Faculty; Standard 11: Educational Offerings; Standard 12: General Education; Standard 13: Related Educational Activities; and Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning - Task Group Five

For Task Group V, subgroups were established for each standard to answer the research questions stipulated in the Self-Study Design. The methodology used was the analysis of pertinent documents and data as well as interviews of key personnel. Key documentation used is stipulated in the Roadmap of Evidence or will be available in the institutional resource room.

STANDARD 10: FACULTY
Standard 10 of Characteristics of Excellence states: “The institution’s instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.”

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE
For this standard, a subgroup analyzed how effectively the faculty aids in the achievement of the mission, vision, and goals of the institution in the activities related to teaching and learning, academic advising, assessment of student learning outcomes, research, curricular development and revision, and institutional governance. It was also tasked with assessing the effectiveness of the recruitment, evaluation, retention, and professional development of the faculty in accordance with the mission, vision, and goals of the institution. The subgroup also had to evidence how the institution adheres to principles of academic freedom within the context of its institutional mission. Finally, it analyzed the faculty’s involvement in the strategic planning process.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS
One of the most vital assets of PCUPR is its faculty. As of August 2012, the total number of faculty institutionally is 778 of which 76% are from the Ponce Campus, 13% are from the Mayagüez Branch Campus and 11% are from the Arecibo Branch Campus. According to IPEDS, 82% of PCUPR faculty is classified as teaching faculty whose primary responsibility is instruction or teaching. Table 25 shows major characteristics of the PCUPR faculty profile. Table 26: Full Time Faculty Profile at PCUPR and Campuses illustrates significant aspects of the full-time faculty profile institutionally and by campus.

Table 25: Faculty Profile at PCUPR and Campuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>PCUPR</th>
<th>Ponce Campus</th>
<th>Mayagüez Campus</th>
<th>Arecibo Campus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012 (Total: 778)</td>
<td>2012 (Total: 589)</td>
<td>2009 PRR (Total: 517)</td>
<td>2012 (Total: 105)</td>
<td>2009 PRR (Total: 112)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time to part-time ratio</td>
<td>4:3</td>
<td>5:3</td>
<td>3:2</td>
<td>1:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Degree</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious faculty</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When looking at the data comparing the faculty profiles of 2009 and 2012, it is important to note that each campus submitted its own PRR in 2009. When establishing a comparison between 2009 and 2012, it is evident that there has been an increase in the number of faculty at each campus, and consequently, the institution as a whole. At the Ponce and Mayagüez campuses, the percentage of full-time faculty has increased and the percentage of part-time faculty has decreased while at the Arecibo Branch Campus it has remained the same. There are no significant changes in faculty distribution by gender, mean age, and number of religious faculty.
Table 26: Full Time Faculty Profile at PCUPR and Campuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>PCUPR 2012 (Total: 447)</th>
<th>Ponce Campus 2012 (Total: 363)</th>
<th>Mayagüez Campus 2012 (Total: 54)</th>
<th>Arecibo Campus 2012 (Total: 30)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Contract: Indefinite</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Degree: Master’s</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Service:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years or less</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 years or more</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At all three campuses, the percentage of faculty with doctoral degrees has increased, and markedly so at the Arecibo Branch Campus. There has also been an increase in faculty with terminal degrees due partly to the area of expertise, specifically in the Schools of Law and Architecture. Faculty responsibilities have remained the same, but some colleges and/or departments have seen a decrease in faculty which in turn has augmented responsibilities such as committee work and academic advising despite an overall increase in faculty due to new programs and student enrollment. The Mayagüez Branch Campus has the highest percentage of faculty holding the rank of Assistant Professor and of faculty with an indefinite contract. Sixty-three percent of full-time faculty at the Arecibo Branch Campus has five years or less of service. A comparison of the type of contracts issued is not possible as a new contract classification was established in 2010 redefining the concept of tenure when contracting faculty.

Institutionally, the faculty to student ratio over the past five years has averaged 23 students to a professor as reported to IPEDS for August of each year from 2008-2012. This data excludes the School of Law and the College of Graduate Studies and includes courses at the associate, bachelor, master, and doctoral levels. Table 27 indicates the ratios per campus and institution-wide.

Table 27: Student to Faculty Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAMPUS</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arecibo</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCUPR</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course programming is done almost a year in advance according to enrollment projections based on previous experiences. Deans and academic chairs have input in strategic planning by informing faculty needs to an administrative budgeting committee. After analysis by the committee, if programs do not have the appropriate number of full-time professors needed to meet the academic and service needs of the students, petitions are approved based on the enrollment tendencies. The academic chair petitions the HRO to publish an announcement to that effect. Additional last minute hiring is essentially based on exceeding enrollment numbers which are not available until the semester enrollment begins and approval is subject to an analysis of the available budget within the college or school.
In order to support the institution’s academic offerings, research activities, and service programs, the faculty must demonstrate the professional qualifications, character, and commitment to the institutional mission and goals. The **Faculty Manual** states in the Amendments (2010) to Part IV: “A candidate for a position in the faculty should possess the appropriate academic degree and distinguish himself/herself, not only in its scientific and pedagogical competitiveness, but also in his/her integrity in life.” In addition, it points out that the candidate “.....should be fully respectful of the Catholic doctrine and ethical in its teaching and research, of good moral character and willing to collaborate in achieving the objectives and the mission of the University.” In the section dedicated to the policies and procedure for promotion in rank regarding specific qualitative and quantitative criteria that is assessed, faculty must exhibit: loyalty by fulfilling the ethical norms of the Church and the Institution; academic, professional, or administrative service and dedication to the Institution; and participation in community service.

The faculty demonstrates its commitment with the institutional mission, vision, and goals throughout the courses taught; participation in professional development in and out of the Institution; collaboration in institutional, college/school, and departmental working committees; participation in extracurricular activities organized jointly with students such as workshops, fairs, fund raising and others; and service as moderators for student organizations. Individually, faculty members participate in activities such as catechism, voluntary community work and professional services. All of the aforementioned activities are evidenced annually by the submission of a professional addendum (**Evaluación de Profesores – Formulario Adendo de Información Profesional**) by full and part-time faculty. In addition, since 2005, full-time faculty is required over a three-year period to complete and submit evidence of participation of 10 hours in each of the following activities: institutional, the area of expertise, and technology for a total of 30 hours (Form **VPAA 902 - 1/07 Plan de Mejoramiento Profesional**). This form is not required of part-time faculty.

The faculty’s participation in academic counseling and curricular revision and development are explained in the **Faculty Manual**, Part VI. The academic chair of each academic unit assigns faculty to perform academic advising as well as participate in departmental, college, and institutional curriculum committees. The extent of faculty participation in these activities is continuous which is evidenced by faculty and student perception in the 2012 SSMS where 84% felt that faculty participate actively in academic advising, student learning assessment, and curriculum revision and development.

Further commitment to the institutional mission and goals and input regarding fair practices is evidenced by the participation of the faculty in the legislative process of the university. College/school representatives who serve one, two, or three year terms are elected by the faculty. These senators also participate on ad hoc committees. The **Faculty Manual** in Part IV: 6.2-6.3 also stipulates the avenues that are used to express grievances.

The faculty has become involved in the assessment of student learning outcomes both at the course and program levels as evidenced by the implementation of a comprehensive student assessment plan (2010-2013) in accordance with the institutional goals and competencies. At the course level, the faculty has worked with various direct assessment instruments such as: pre/post-tests, assignments, rubrics, tests, and case study analysis. At the program level, student performance has been assessed by faculty with direct measures such as: practicum, comprehensive and certification exams, and dissertations. This assessment by faculty is geared toward improving the teaching-learning process. (See **PCUPR Monitoring Report 2011**.)

The recruitment, evaluation, and retention of the faculty are in accordance with the mission, vision, and goals of the institution. As discussed under **Standard 6: Integrity**, PCUPR has established a clear and effective procedure with specific criteria for recruiting qualified faculty based on institutional needs. This procedure, found in Part IV of the Faculty Manual, was amended in 2009 and went into effect in August 2010. There is no distinction in the process for hiring full or part-time faculty although there is a different procedure for recruiting and hiring religious faculty. The evaluation process, however, varies in the types of evaluation according to the contract of the faculty member. For example, a part-time faculty member must have a student evaluation, a class visit, and an evaluation
by the department chair during the semester he/she teaches (once a year if contracted both semesters or more than one trimester in an academic year) whereas other faculty members may be evaluated by students only or have a more complete evaluation process which includes a class visit and evaluations by peers, students, and academic chair. The effectiveness of this process is evidenced in submission of a form where the faculty member, after discussing his/her evaluation with the academic chair, must formulate an action plan to correct any weaknesses discovered through the evaluation process. Faculty teaching online courses are evaluated by students who complete an online satisfaction questionnaire at the end of the course. The results are collected by the IDL and are available to the professor teaching the course. If the academic chair wishes to see these results, he/she may request them from IDL and then follow the same evaluation procedure used for all faculty. An evaluation procedure by a faculty committee is presently being contemplated after a pilot evaluation was conducted in 2010.

The institution employs various strategies to achieve faculty retention. One strategy is to promote participation in professional development activities in and out of Puerto Rico. Some of these are subsidized by the institution. Another strategy is the revision of the salary scale based on a comparison with other educational institutions in Puerto Rico as outlined in ISP 2008-2013. Since 2003, the faculty salary scale has been revised nine times. Other economic incentives are an annual Christmas Bonus (which was revised in 2006 based on years of service), and a Defined Contribution Retirement Plan (2005) to which PCUPR makes a qualified contribution of 1%. The previous defined benefit pension plan was frozen in 2003; nevertheless, during the last ten years the institution has made plan contributions for more than thirteen million dollars. PCUPR also provides financial aid for faculty to continue graduate degrees. Between 2004-2012, the institution awarded $277,513.48 for studies. Faculty participation as resources in educational activities is also supported either through released time or financial aid.

The institutional structure for professional development and academic support has consisted of various efforts. At the beginning of each academic year, a three-day period is set apart to present conferences geared towards academic formation in diverse areas. Until 2010, the Institutional Support Center for Faculty coordinated these along with the VPAA. Since then, these have been coordinated by the Offices of the President and VPAA. The Institutional Commission for Curricular Revision (ORCI) also coordinated 102 professional development activities with a total of 2,219 participants from 2009 until May 2012. With regard to effectiveness, in the 2012 SSMS, 78% of the faculty expressed satisfaction regarding the institution providing it with the opportunity to participate in professional development activities. Faculty input regarding institutional support for professional development needs was gathered from the comment section of the activity evaluation forms from the previous year. For the 2013 academic year, faculty will be asked to fill out a form suggesting topics of interest in order to better serve its needs.

As discussed under Standard 6: Integrity, PCUPR in accordance with its mission and vision statements upholds the ideal and pursuit of academic freedom as stated in the Faculty Manual, Part V: Section 2.0 on page 21. Restrictions imposed by the dogma, the morality, and the law of the Catholic Church are not considered unwarranted because of the religious origin, nature, and history of the institution. Forums for the discussion of ideas within an atmosphere of academic respect include departmental, college/school, and general faculty meetings; interdisciplinary and departmental conferences; and University Senate meetings. In both the 2003 SSMS and 2012 SSMS, 90% of administrators (deans and chairs) observed that the faculty enjoys academic freedom in accordance with the mission. Eighty six percent of the faculty now, as compared to 74% in 2003, has the same perception regarding academic freedom.

STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS
As mentioned at the beginning of this standard, the faculty is an important asset for the success of the institution. The number of faculty has increased, and it is relatively stable with 67% working at the institution for more than six years. This stability is further demonstrated in the commitment to the mission of the university through the participation of faculty in diverse academic, professional and service activities. According to the results of the
2012 SSMS, an average of 85% of students and faculty surveyed agreed that the faculty contributes to the achievement of the institutional mission, vision, and goals through its academic, research, and service activities.

In the past ten years PCUPR has reinforced the policy regarding the required academic degree to teach the courses at the different levels promoting the hiring of new faculty with doctorate degrees. This is evident in the increase of doctoral degrees over the past five years.

Regarding recruitment and retention of new faculty, 81% of the administrative personnel surveyed in the 2012 SSMS agreed that institutional policies and procedures assure the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals.

Evaluation of the faculty continues to be a key factor in maintaining a competent, qualified, and committed faculty in keeping with the institutional mission and vision. All faculty are evaluated by at least one section of students on an annual basis with other types of evaluations depending on the contractual nature of the faculty member. Beginning in the January-May 2013 semester, a pilot online evaluation of faculty by all students in the professor’s courses will be conducted with the objective of obtaining an overall profile of the professor’s performance. Active implementation of this online procedure is projected for the August-May academic year.

PCUPR promotes professional development of the faculty both by offering institutional activities within a structured framework or supporting participation in diverse conferences and conventions in the areas of interest or expertise of the faculty.

CHALLENGES
Although the faculty to student ratio institutionally is 23:1, according to the 2012 SSMS, 58% of the faculty felt that the student to teacher ratio is adequate to meet academic needs and provide student services even though there are established procedures to hire additional personnel based on strategic analysis. Last minute hiring of faculty cannot be met due to budgetary constraints which leads to higher class enrollment numbers, more noticeably in the core courses. Faculty perception can be based on the notion of quality versus quantity teaching depending on the number of students in the class.

Although more procedures have been put in place regarding the duties and responsibilities of part-time faculty, 62% of the faculty expressed satisfaction in the 2012 SSMS that the hiring of part-time professors satisfactorily impacts course programming and academic excellence. In addition, 64% of the faculty was satisfied with the commitment demonstrated by the part-time faculty members with the mission, vision, goals, and objectives at the department, college, and institutional level.

According to the results of the 2012 SSMS, 62% of the faculty perceives that the results of procedures regarding faculty recruitment, retention, and evaluation are adequately communicated to the interested parties. In addition, 68% felt that the faculty evaluation procedure is adequate in order to make decisions regarding professional development, contract renewal, and promotion in rank. Lastly, 69% expressed satisfaction with faculty evaluation and promotion processes being in accordance with the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of PCUPR, a statistic which was 68% in the 2003 SSMS.

Although 91% of the faculty perceives it has the freedom to propose changes which help authorities to better comply with or achieve the institutional mission, participation in the strategic planning process is limited to input given at the departmental, college/school, or general faculty meetings.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT
1. Despite budgetary concerns, the faculty to student ratio should be analyzed on a course content basis. Writing courses, oral communication courses, courses that depend on lab facilities and those of a remedial nature among others should not exceed the institutional student to teacher ratio.

2. Part-time faculty needs to be integrated with the full-time faculty. This can be done by requiring the attendance of part-time faculty to at least one meeting at the beginning of the semester and another at the end in which they can express doubts and share experiences. They can also be asked to submit written recommendations regarding the course curriculum and other aspects. In addition, full-time faculty can serve as mentors or collaborative partners to foster institutional commitment.

3. There must be a more open and effective communication process regarding faculty recruitment, retention, and evaluation between faculty and administrators. More faculty involvement has to occur and the results of this must be shared.

4. There should be faculty representation at the institutional level regarding the strategic planning process. This could be a professor elected by the members of the University Senate.

STANDARD 11: EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS
The institution’s educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher educational mission. The institution identifies student learning and goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGES
For this standard, a sub-group examined the congruence between educational programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels and their related support activities with the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the institution. It was also tasked with evidencing that the educational programs at all levels and modes of delivery exhibit the academic content, rigor, and quality consistent with the programs or degrees offered as well as determining whether these academic programs are adequately supported with the necessary human, physical, instructional, technological, and fiscal resources. Finally, the sub-group had to assess to what extent these educational programs are achieving expected student learning outcomes and evaluate the implementation of the results of program and student learning outcomes assessment in the strategic planning process.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS
PCUPR continues to offer academic programs in day, evening, Saturday, semester, and trimester sessions at its three campuses and nine additional locations (eight on the island and one in Alabama). Conscious of the emerging diversity in the student body, the institution has added 34 new academic programs for a total of 157 institutional programs since the 2003 Self-Study of which 16 are in moratorium. At the three campuses there is one new doctoral program, and there are 10 new masters, 9 bachelors, and 6 associate degrees as well as 7 binary/combined programs and one certificate program. Among these new programs the most outstanding have been the establishment of the Bachelor in Architecture and the Bachelor and Master of Science in Biotechnology. Listed below are the active educational programs offered by college at the campuses. Each program is identified in parenthesis with the letters corresponding to the campus in which it is offered (PC-Ponce Campus, AC- Arecibo Branch Campus, and MC- Mayagüez Branch Campus). All new programs after the 2003 Self-Study appear marked with an asterisk.

- College of Arts and Humanities
  - Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts(PC,AC,MC)
  - Bachelor of Arts in: Public Administration(PC), Criminal Research(MC), History(PC), Fine Arts(PC), Political Science(PC), Criminology(PC,AC,MC), Hispanic Studies(PC), Philosophy(PC), French(PC),
English(PC), Music(PC), Sociology(PC), Social Work(PC,MC), Pre-Law(PC), and Political Science and Law(PC)

- Professional certificates in: Religious Studies(PC), Grammar and Composition(PC), Literary Analysis(PC) and Puerto Rican Literature(PC)
- Master of Divinity(PC)
- Master of Arts in Hispanic Studies(PC), History(PC), and Painting and Drawing(PC*)
- Combined program leading to a Bachelor degree in Fine Arts and a Master degree in Painting and Drawing(PC*)
- Combined program leading to a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and a Master of Arts in Social Science in Criminology(PC*)

College of Business Administration

- Associate Degree in Applied Science in Business Administration(AC,MC), Technological Support(AC,MC), Hotel and Restaurant Administration(MC), Secretarial Sciences(PC,MC), Office Techniques(PC,AC,MC), Tourism Techniques(PC), and Supervision Techniques and Personnel Management(AC*)
- Associate Degree in Medical Office Billing and Administration(MC*,AC*)
- Bachelor of Business Administration in: Accounting(PC,AC,MC), Communication Media in Business(PC,MC), Entrepreneurship(PC,MC), Tourism Entrepreneurship(PC), Finance(PC), General Business(PC,AC,MC), Entrepreneurial Law(PC), International Business(PC), Management(PC,AC,MC), Marketing(PC,MC), Office Administration(PC,MC), Public Accounting(PC,MC), International Business and Logistics(PC*), Radio and Television Production(PC), Professional Experience in Business(PC), Advertising(PC), Human Resources(PC,MC), International Public Relations(PC), Information Systems(PC,AC,MC), Office Systems(PC), Hotel and Restaurant Administration(MC), and Electronic Business (MC*)
- Bachelor of Science in Technology and Office Systems(PC,AC,MC)
- Professional Certificates in Accounting(PC), Human Resources(PC), Management(PC), Management Information Systems(PC) and Transportation and Maritime Logistics(PC*).
- Master of Business Administration in: General Business(PC), Accounting(PC,AC*,MC), Management(PC,AC*), Human Resources(PC,AC,MC), International Business(PC), Finance(PC,AC*), Marketing(PC,MC), and Management Information Systems(MC)
- Master of Science in Office Administration(PC)
- Combined Program leading to a Bachelor and a Master in Business Administration in Accounting(PC,AC*)
- Combined Program leading to a Bachelor in General Business and Master of Business Administration in Management, General Business, or Human Resources(PC)
- Combined Program leading to a Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Business Administration in General Business(PC)
- Doctor of Business Administration(PC)

College of Science

- Articulated Associate Degree in Nursing BSN/AND(PC*)
- Associate Degree in Science in Optics(AC*,MC), and Pharmacy Technician(MC*)
- Bachelor of Science in: Biology(PC,AC,MC), Biotechnology(PC*,AC*), Chemistry(PC), General Science(PC,AC,MC), Environmental Science(PC,AC*), Mathematics(PC), Nursing(PC), Psychology
(PC,AC*), Medical Technology(PC), Scientific Product Sales and Distribution(MC), and Forensic Psychology(MC*)

- Bachelor in Health Sciences (Non-Invasive Cardiovascular Technology) (PC)
- Advanced Certificate in Medical Technology(PC)
- Master of Science in Chemistry(PC), Environmental Science(PC*), and Biotechnology(PC*).
- Master of Science in Nursing in Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing(PC)
- Transfer program leading to a Bachelor of Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico(PC)
- Binary programs leading to the combined degrees of:
  - Bachelor of Science in General Science and Master in Public Health with Ponce School of Medicine(PC*)
  - Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Bachelor of Science in Engineering in consortium with Case Western Reserve University(PC)
  - Bachelor of Science in General Science or Biology and Doctor in Biomedical Science with Ponce School of Medicine(PC*)
  - Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine in consortium with Ponce School of Medicine (PC)
  - Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine in consortium with Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra in the Dominican Republic(PC)
  - Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in consortium with the University of Wisconsin(PC)
  - Program leading to the Bachelor of General Science and Doctor of Pharmacy with Nova Southeastern University(PC)
  - Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in consortium with the University of Veterinary Medicine of Mississippi State(PC*)
  - Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine in consortium with Monterrey School of Medicine(MC*)

- College of Education
  - Associate Degree in Applied Science in Fashion Design(PC)
  - Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education in: General Education(PC,AC,MC) Special Education(PC,AC,MC), Primary Education(PC,AC,MC), Physical Education(PC,MC), English(PC,AC,MC), Visual Arts(PC), Music(PC), and Autism(AC*)
  - Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education in: Visual Arts(PC), Biology(PC,AC,MC), General Science(PC), Family and Consumer Science(PC), Business Education(PC), Physical Education(PC,MC), Spanish(PC), History(PC,AC), English(PC,AC,MC), Mathematics(PC), Music(PC), and Chemistry(PC)
  - Bachelor of Science in Family and Consumer Science(PC)
  - Bachelor of Science in Sports Science in Physical Conditioning (PC)
  - Master of Arts in Education(PC)
  - Master of Education in Administration and Supervision(PC,AC*,MC), Business Education and Office Systems(PC), Early Childhood(PC,AC,MC), Professional Counseling(PC), Teaching of English as a Second Language(PC), Educational Psychology(PC), and Curriculum and Teaching(PC,AC*) (History(PC), Physical Education(PC,MC), Biology(PC), Special Learning Disabilities(PC), and Chemistry(PC)).
  - Master of Religious Education(PC)
- Doctor of Education: in Educational Management (PC), in Curricula and Teaching (PC), and in Professional Counseling (PC*)
- The Institute of Graduate Studies in Behavioral Science and Community Affairs
  - Master of Social Science in Criminology (PC, MC), Public Administration (PC), and Rehabilitation Counseling (PC*)
  - Master of Science in Psychology in Clinical Psychology (PC, AC) and Industrial/Organizational Psychology (PC)
  - Master of Social Work in Clinical Area (PC, AC*)
  - Doctor of Philosophy in Industrial/Organizational Psychology (PC) and Clinical Psychology (PC)
  - Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology (PC)
- School of Law
  - Juris Doctor (PC)
  - Combined Program leading to Juris Doctor and Master of Business Administration (PC)
- School of Architecture
  - Bachelor of Architecture (PC*)

All programs are accredited by PREC and MSCHE. The following programs require specialized accreditation by professional agencies: nursing (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing); the bachelor’s and master’s programs in social work at the Ponce Campus (Council on Social Work Education); medical technology (National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences); rehabilitation counseling (Council on Rehabilitation Education); and law (American Bar Association). The institution is seeking professional accreditation for architecture (National Architectural Accrediting Board) and education (Teacher Education Accreditation Council).

Educational programs at the undergraduate and graduate level promote and support the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of PCUPR as reflected in the catalogs where each school and college states its objectives aligned with the institutional mission, vision, and goals. In turn, each program has its own objectives which also reflect the goals of the discipline as well as those of the institution and are aligned with the institutional competencies. This is evidenced in the institutional assessment forms LOA-02, DT1, and DT2 mentioned previously in **Standard 1: Mission and Goals.** Students acquire knowledge and develop skills, Christian values, and positive attitudes through the teaching–learning experience as stated in the different syllabi which clearly indicate the mission of the university. The curricula and extra-curricular activities sponsored by the programs (developed by individual faculty, academic departments, and/or student organizations) reflect the university’s mission to educate not only from the viewpoint of the discipline but also taking into consideration the moral, spiritual, and ethical needs of the community it serves. This is evidenced in the level of satisfaction expressed in the 2012 SSMS, where 90% of students agree that the mission of PUCPR is congruent with the academic programs and their related activities, and 92% agree that the values of love, justice, and respect for the dignity of the human person are reflected in activities involving teaching and academic counseling.

Educational programs possess the academic content, rigor and quality according to the degree offered. This is evidenced by the constant curriculum revision performed by each program and the now systematic evaluation of programs by IAO according to the evaluation manual for academic programs (**Manual para la Evaluación de Programas Académicos en la PUCPR**). This manual contains a guide to evidence the quality and effectiveness of academic programs based on the assessment of outcomes in areas such as curriculum; student learning; physical, fiscal, human and learning resources; and the integration of technology using qualitative and quantitative criteria. Programs are evaluated by students (**EPA-01**), faculty, (**EPA-02**), and an external evaluation committee (**EPA-05**), and an action plan is formulated based on the findings (**EPA-04**). The assessment of student learning outcomes is integrated in this process at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. One example at the undergraduate level was the curriculum revision performed by the English Department in the
sequence of its core courses. This revision, based on an analysis of CEEB scores and diagnostic testing in terms of student learning outcomes, has led to the creation of a new course (English 109) and the revision of existing ones (English 115 and English 201 – formerly English 114). The School of Law has also incorporated various strategies based on the results of student performance on the Puerto Rico Bar further discussed in Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning, page 95.

As mentioned under Standard 7: Institutional Assessment, from 2009-2013, 76 academic programs were evaluated which resulted in the placement of 5 in moratorium from 2011 to 2011. By the end of the 2011-2016 assessment cycle, a total of 193 programs will have been evaluated (some of which will have been evaluated individually by campus although they are offered institutionally). In addition, academic content, rigor, and quality are further evidenced through acceptable compliance by existing accreditation agencies for specialized programs.

Undergraduate and graduate courses differ in content and depth, emphasizing higher critical thinking skills and research at the graduate level. In 2010 PCUPR established a policy for academic research (Política de Investigación Académica, see [RME9]) whose objectives are to promote among faculty and undergraduate and graduate students the development of research projects which will expand existing knowledge, improve and better understand the discipline, and ultimately offer solutions to existing societal and global challenges. Research integrity involving human subjects is further safeguarded by the IRB as mentioned in Standard 6: Integrity. Research has been established as a priority area for strategic planning; a corresponding budget has been assigned; and an institutional catalog has been already published with over 100 research papers and a second edition projected for publication in the spring 2013 semester.

The Information and Technology Literacy Program, initiated in 2008, has given support to the different departments, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels regarding the incorporation of information literacy. All course syllabi include objectives related to information literacy and technological competency skills to aid students in their studies and research. Since 2008, 193 activities regarding information literacy and technological skills have been offered to the faculty and students institution-wide. The effectiveness of the incorporation of information literacy and technology in transforming the teaching-learning experience is revealed by an average of 85% satisfaction expressed by students, faculty, and administrators in the 2012 SSMS.

Undergraduate four-year programs at the bachelor’s level range from a total of 120 -145 credits with a standard core of 68 general education credits. The rest of the credits are stipulated by the academic program and can range from approximately 20-25 credits at the college/school level and 39-57 credits in the area of specialization. The programs for public accounting and architecture are designed as five-year programs with a total of 150 and 192 credits respectively; nevertheless they are also required to have a core of 68 credits. Graduate programs at the master’s level range between 36 to 54 credits, and doctoral programs range from 52 to 80 credits. Information regarding the distribution of credits and course requirements are available through the departments and in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs which are accessible online. The catalogs are updated every four years. The present catalogs cover the years 2011-2014.

PCUPR authorizes students to take credits in another academic institution provided certain conditions are met. These conditions are published in the PCUPR Undergraduate Catalog on page 65 as revised and approved in November 2009. Transfer of credits from other institutions (PCUPR Undergraduate Catalog, pages 56-57) [RME4] is evaluated by the deans of each college/school who determine which credits are to be validated. Transfer credits will be given for courses in which the grade obtained is C or higher and are equivalent or substitutes for courses required in the PCUPR curriculum. Some colleges/schools have a table of courses from local universities and their corresponding PCUPR equivalencies; otherwise, transfer students are required to submit descriptions for the courses to be validated, or these are checked online. These descriptions are verifed by the corresponding academic chair who recommends to the dean whether the course should be validated.
Until December 2012, PCUPR had nine off-site locations recognized by MSCHE: three are of a religious nature (Seminario Mayor Interdiocesano - Ponce, PR; Seminario Santa María de los Ángeles – San Juan, PR; and Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word – Birmingham, Alabama); and the other six are academic and located in Ponce, Bayamón, or Guayama. The San Juan Seminary recommends professors to the institution which in turn approves their hiring contrary to the Ponce Seminary, whose professors are from the Ponce Campus. Programs offered at the academic off-site locations have faculty that is from the Ponce Campus which controls scheduling and planning. These sites have the appropriate physical facilities and technology to sustain the programs offered. Syllabi are institutional sustaining uniformity and academic excellence.

PCUPR, as an educational system, offers traditional, hybrid, and online courses to meet the needs of a diverse and changing student body. Students also have the opportunity to challenge courses by taking a comprehensive exam. Until 2010 students had the options of taking courses by independent study or by contract. All courses, regardless of their modality, follow an institutional syllabus; what vary are the techniques and strategies used in instruction. In addition, course syllabi state the institutional mission and terminal and behavioral objectives in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domain as to what is expected in terms of student learning outcomes.

There is an institutional policy for distance learning which stipulates a defined procedure for: identifying suitable courses for online teaching; training professors; evaluating online courses; and assigning faculty compensation for credit hours. Both the academic chair and a departmental committee must certify that the online course complies with the content and rigor of the traditional one. A comparative study of the grade average of 49 online and traditional courses determined that there were no significant differences between these two modalities. Online courses are updated every semester by the professor teaching the course in terms of strategies; when there is a syllabus revision these changes must also be incorporated into the online course content. There are presently a total of 106 professors certified to offer online courses which demonstrates the institution's commitment to continued academic excellence. The aforementioned characteristics demonstrate that these courses exhibit the same academic content, rigor, and quality consistent with the programs or degrees offered.

The procedure to validate student identity is currently under revision to ensure student identity verification and protection of student privacy in compliance with accreditation-relevant federal regulations. The current practice is that student enrollment for the online course is uploaded from the Banner system to the Moodle platform where the student can access the course by using his/her Acceso Pionero username and password. In addition, some professors are giving a mandatory in-class test to verify student identity; conducting personal interviews with students before the initiation of course activities or during office hours; holding on-site discussion sessions; or contacting outside sources to proctor exams.

At the different campuses there are resources to support and provide access to online learning and serve the needs of a changing student body. Technologically, there are several computer labs and videoconference rooms throughout the different colleges/schools of the Ponce Campus in addition to the two technological labs of IDL; the Arecibo Branch Campus has 4 video conference rooms, a multimedia room, and 2 computer labs available for distance learning and online courses; and the Mayagüez Branch Campus has one videoconference room and 5 multimedia rooms for online courses. Each campus has a budget for technology, and the IDL has a separate operating budget which includes accounts for software, general equipment, and salaries for faculty involved in designing online courses. The IDL oversees the design and implementation of online courses, and its operating budget has increased from $92,553 in 2008 to $181,485 in 2012. It also offers ongoing training and support for faculty teaching online courses institution-wide.

As mentioned previously, PCUPR has highly committed and qualified faculty and administrative staff to sustain its academic programs. In addition, since 2008, facilities have been acquired and remodeled such as the Fortezza Building for the establishment of the School of Architecture and the facilities to establish CEIBA. The construction of the BTOLL of the School of Law was completed. Laboratories and technological facilities were improved at all...
campuses including the establishment of video-conference rooms and the acquisition of computers and Smart boards. Title V grants at the Ponce and Arecibo campuses were utilized for the technological renovation of classrooms and the acquisition of technological equipment for teacher preparation of educational tools to enhance student learning in the impacted courses. The Arecibo Branch Campus also received $3.2 million in 2010 under Title V - New Opportunities in Science (NOIS) for the construction of classrooms and laboratories in the areas of science and biotechnology. There are also various institutional programs/centers that support the academic offerings as well as students who are talented, at risk for desertion, or have other academic, social, or personal needs. In addition to those mentioned in Standard 9: Student Support Services, some of these are:

- The Institutional Honor Program promotes the development of professionals committed to Christian values and with the capacity to assume positions of leadership in society. Students are required to maintain a 3.5 GPA as well as have active participation in different types of student organizations and community service.
- The College of Science Research Center facilitates the development of research projects in chemistry, biology and other science-related areas. It gives support to science students and professors and promotes the involvement of these students in research internships both in and outside of Puerto Rico.
- CEIBA promotes scientific research in biological control, plant genetics, bioinformatics, and microbiology among others. It seeks to strengthen productivity and commercial capabilities of the island’s southern region.
- The Student Support Services Program (Programa de Servicios Educativos) serves students who have basic academic skills, have a low income, and/or are first generation college students. The services rendered include: academic skill development; academic, personal, and vocational counseling; and tutoring which are intensive during the first year. Mentoring continues until graduation.

The fiscal resources for academic programs are distributed according to the institutional priorities as established in the ISP, the institution’s financial capacity, and the operational plans of the different units. In addition, funding for programs is obtained as a result of proposals submitted through the Office of External Resources. During the past 5 years, 101 proposals were submitted by the different campuses and 35 were approved. Most of these proposals involved curriculum innovation, community services, technological improvement, and student support. The alignment of the effectiveness of academic offerings, student support services, and available resources (human, physical, technological, and fiscal) is measured through satisfaction surveys (e.g. NSSE and IAO satisfaction surveys) and discussion by academic personnel at all levels leading to corrective strategies as needed as part of the strategic planning process for assessing student learning outcomes.

As part of the institutional assessment process, departments revised student learning outcomes in their programs by aligning them with the institutional competencies and professional standards within the curriculum of major courses producing a matrix to assess student learning for the next three years (2010-2013). As a consequence of this process, action plans are created to improve student learning outcomes, especially in those disciplines with low retention rates. The institutional student profile upon graduation reflects the expected student learning outcomes according to the institutional competencies outlined in the ISP, specifically Priority Area #2, Institutional Goal #3: To increase student retention by effectively meeting students’ needs.

Presently, student learning assessment and its results for the institution are evidenced by the benchmarks based on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Results of NSSE identify, document, and inform student performance in the freshman and senior classes and the institutional practices committed to educational outcomes. This allows PCUPR to evaluate the qualities of its student population relative to other institutions by focusing on student perceptions and behavior and effective educational practices. In 2011, the NSSE was administered for the third time at the Ponce Campus and for the first time to students at the Mayagüez and Arecibo Branch campuses. The results were shared with the academic community in January 2012 to establish the necessary intervention strategies to address the findings. Table 28: Multi-campus Benchmark Report for NSSE 2011-PCUPR reveals how PCUPR students perceive activities as related to the five clusters of effective educational practices in comparison to the statistics of NSSE participating institutions. Overall, PCUPR students at both the freshman and senior levels reflected similar or higher scores as the NSSE participating institutions with the
exception of the cluster regarding enriching educational experiences. Since 2011, PCUPR has been addressing the issue of increasing internship experiences and strengthening the foreign language program as possible strategies for improvement in this area.

Table 28: Multi-campus Benchmark Report for NSSE 2011 - PCUPR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Ponce</th>
<th>Mayagüez</th>
<th>Arecibo</th>
<th>PCUPR</th>
<th>NSSE-2011 (751 Participating Institutions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of Academic Challenge (LAC)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE)</td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FY = First Year; SR = Senior

Other forms of direct assessment used to evidence that graduates upon completion exhibit the expected student learning outcomes are reflected in specialized board exams, certification tests, and comprehensive exams at the graduate level. Examples include:

- the medical technology program where the percentage of students who passed the bar exam for the academic years 2008-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 were 83%, 69% and 100%, respectively;
- the nursing program (the pass rate for the licensing exam is 68%) where PCUPR students scored 51% in 2009, 61% in 2010, 80% in 2011, and 79% in 2012 as compared to the Puerto Rico national mean which was 51%, 56%, 69%, and 77% respectively;
- the undergraduate education program where education majors in Spanish, English, and math must pass the teacher certification test (PCMAS); for the years 2008-2010, the results for each of these areas were:
  - in Spanish, PCUPR students scored 77%, 77%, and 72% respectively as compared to the overall Puerto Rico pass rates of 79%, 76%, and 54%;
  - in English, PCUPR students scored 70%, 71%, and 71% respectively as compared to the overall Puerto Rico pass rates of 60%, 62%, and 82%;
  - in Math, PCUPR students scored 80%, 66%, and 84% respectively as compared to the overall Puerto Rico pass rates of 73%, 60%, and 81%; and
- the School of Law where the pass rate for the Puerto Rico Bar exam for the past five years has ranged from 24% to 60%; in 2008, a course was created to prepare students for the bar exam by strengthening analytical and test-taking skills, and now this course is under revision.

In order to meet the needs of the diverse student body as well as the needs of the local and global communities, PCUPR is in the process of developing new educational programs. These programs are consistent with the institutional mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the institutional strategic planning process and are being contemplated in ISP 2013-2020. As part of this process, the appropriate financial, human, and physical resources are being considered for effective planning and implementation. Some of these projected programs at the main campus and branches are: a certificate in science in pre-optometry (MC); an associate degree in medical office management and billing (for all campuses); an online BA in Liberal Studies in programs such as tourism and criminology; a BA in Theater (2014 or 2015); a BSSED in Fashion Design; a BSEEd in Sign Language Interpretation; an MS in Applied and Integrated Neuroscience; an MBA in Project Management; a Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology (AC); and an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Teaching in Physical Education (MC).
STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PCUPR continues to strengthen and update its academic offerings based on the analysis of emerging needs of the student body and the local and global communities. The addition of 12 new academic programs and the projection of 20 programs denote its commitment to maintaining academic excellence and competitiveness while fulfilling its vision of being the primary option to achieve an integral Christian and academic formation.

Since 2005, the IAO has made great strides in developing an organized assessment culture to evidence the alignment of the courses and programs with the institutional mission, vision, and strategic goals. During 2009-2010, IAO reorganized the assessment process and instituted a transition to direct assessment of student learning outcomes aligned to institutional competencies and to program learning goals as well as the systematic evaluation of academic programs. By the end of the assessment cycle 2011-2016, a total of 193 individual programs will have been evaluated. In the next assessment cycle, program learning goals will be aligned to PCUPR graduate competencies as defined in the 2013-2020 Institutional Strategic Plan and to standards of professional accrediting agencies.

PCUPR has made a conscious effort to assure that institutional syllabi are uniform so as to maintain academic content, rigor, and quality throughout its academic offerings at all its campuses and locations. Syllabi objectives are now stated in terms of expected student learning outcomes in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

The incorporation of technology has continued to enrich and transform the teaching-learning experience, as revealed by the level of satisfaction in the 2012 SSMS with an average of 85% of the students, faculty and administrators in agreement as compared to 84% in the 2002 SSMS. Financial investment in technological facilities and improvements at all campuses is a continuing priority as mentioned in Standard 3: Institutional Resources.

Research has been established as a priority area in ISP 2008-2013, and as a result a corresponding budget has been assigned for its implementation. The publication of an institutional catalog with over 100 research papers at all levels, especially at the master’s and doctoral levels, and a second edition projected for publication in the spring 2013 semester is a clear indication of PCUPR’s commitment to promote and support scholarly research. In the 2012 SSMS, 85% of students agreed that PCUPR promotes research and publication within its academic programs.

Since the 2009 PRR, distance learning through videoconferencing and the programming of online courses have become an integral part of the educational offerings at PCUPR. The IDL has established an institutional structure for the creation of online courses and the corresponding technical support, the training and certification of qualified faculty, and the evaluation/assessment of online courses and faculty. Because of this commitment, the institution has substantially increased the IDL budget over the past five years, in addition to investing in technological infrastructure with internal and external funds.

As mentioned in Standard 9: Student Support Services, according to the 2012 SSMS, 87% of students agree that the support programs contribute to their academic goals, and 88% feel that the educational resources enrich their learning experience which demonstrates that the overall perception is that educational offerings have more than satisfactory assistance.

Assessment at the program level has allowed for actions to be taken based on quantitative and qualitative data. For example, since 2011, PCUPR has been addressing the issue of increasing internship experiences and strengthening the foreign language program in response to the NSSE 2011 results. Also, the improvement of student performance in the nursing licensing exam can be attributed to the incorporation of new strategies and activities and the addition of two new online courses designed to develop the technological skills necessary for online test-taking. Departmental rubrics have been incorporated to assess critical thinking skills, oral
communication skills, and nursing intervention skills. Similarly, action plans have been implemented in other departments across the curriculum.

Institutional goals that are being considered in ISP 2013-2020 include providing students with cultural and work-related experiences among others so that PCUPR graduates have a global perspective by increasing cultural trips and internships; continuing to provide accessible, efficient and effective services in order to increase student retention and achievement of academic goals; and offering a competitive, creative, innovative, and pertinent curriculum based on the current workplace reality and the social doctrine of the Church.

**CHALLENGES**

The Information and Technology Literacy Program instituted in 2008 has lost momentum and continuity since 2010. Although information literacy skills have been incorporated in the syllabi across the curriculum, there has not been substantial assessment as to its impact. Student and faculty have focused perception on the use of technology, but formal instruction in information literacy skills is not institutionalized and is performed on a course to course basis.

Although the procedures regarding the transferring of credits is published in the PCUPR Catalog, according to the 2012 SSMS, an average of 67% of students and faculty perceive that the process of validating transfer credits is clearly established, published, and known by the university community. Because the transfer of credits is performed at the school or college level by the different deans, there is no uniformity in the validation of courses from other universities. For example, some colleges have validation tables for other institutions while others do not or have not been updated.

According to the 2012 SSMS, an average of 58% of students, faculty, and administrators feel that online courses have the same rigor and content of the traditional ones while an average of 61% of students, faculty, and administrators perceive that online course professors receive the necessary training and support. In addition, an average of 61% of students and administrators agree that online student identity validation is appropriate. However these percentages do not reflect the perception of students and faculty who have experience with online courses.

As class enrollment has increased and new programs have emerged, a lack of classroom space has become evident, especially at the Ponce Campus. The College of Graduate Studies and the College of Science are the ones with the most urgent need of space. Some departments are also in need of more office space for professors.

According to the 2012 SSMS an average of 42% of faculty and administrators felt that the course syllabi used in the branches are the same as those used at the Ponce campus. However, from March to May 2012 a new institutional syllabus format was presented to all faculty and is available on the Faculty page in Acceso Pionero. This perception is compounded by the fact that 68% of administrators expressed in the survey that communication among administrators of the different units, offices, and campuses is effective.

Although 85% of students in the 2012 SSMS agree that PCUPR promotes research and publication, an average of 59% of faculty and administrators feel that the graduate programs do. This is not indicative of the efforts made by the university since 2011 to enhance research and publication at the graduate level.

A drawback encountered in the assessment of courses and programs has been that some units have not submitted or completed their assessment action plans. The objective of student learning assessment is precisely to gather the necessary evidence to substantiate that learning outcomes are achieved and if not, to formulate and perform the necessary strategies to accomplish these.
Although there is an increasing number of students taking online courses (see Standard 13, Related Educational Offerings, Table 32: Impact of Student Learning) and the student body is becoming more diversified, there are still no online programs being offered at the institution. This not only affects how PCUPR meets the demands of a changing market but also limits its competitiveness both academically and economically.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1. The Information and Technology Literacy Program should be revisited to institutionalize a specific course or courses where the basic information literacy skills can be taught. This can be channeled through the Freshman Orientation Program in collaboration with library services or be incorporated in the existing introductory course to technology and computer skills. Continued efforts should be made for programs to include these skills in all pertinent courses.

2. Clear and uniform procedures for the transfer of credits should be instituted. One possible solution is to create a database in the Registrar’s Office so that once a course has been validated, it appears in the system allowing for uniform institutional transfer of credits.

3. More extensive promotion and orientation is necessary regarding online courses. Data does not support the perception expressed by students and professors that answered the SSMS regarding content and rigor. This could be because students and/or professors have either never taken or taught online courses. Similarly, the IDL should actively promote more activities and workshops for professors teaching online courses in addition to the technical support that it already provides.

4. More rigorous measures should be put in place regarding student identity validation in online courses. One possibility is to have students take at least one test under supervised conditions whether on or off campus with a valid student photo identification. Another possibility is to require that students acquire available security technology for test-taking (e.g. Secure exam Remote Proctor.)

5. The institution must continue to make a conscientious inventory of classrooms and availability for scheduling purposes. Office space for faculty is a must and should be prioritized.

6. Faculty in the different disciplines from all campuses should meet every semester to discuss syllabi and other pertinent issues. This can be done through videoconferencing if necessary. The VPAA should ensure that all academic chairs have the departmental syllabi updated and in keeping with the institutional format. A uniform checklist can be distributed for this purpose. Communication among administrators at all levels and campuses must be constant to ensure uniformity regarding the curriculum.

7. A priority area added to ISP 2008-2013 is that of research to stimulate academic research and publication among faculty and students, especially at the graduate level. More aggressive promotion and orientation as well as incentives are needed to inform faculty and students of existing endeavors and involve them in future ones to achieve a true research culture.

8. Promoting an assessment culture should be a priority at all levels. Documentation should be part of the annual reports of each department and school/college. Annual action plans should be submitted to the chair, dean, and IAO.

9. The development of online programs must be contemplated as a priority goal in ISP2013-2020 so as to attract and better serve the diverse needs of students within and outside the immediate region as well as expand the reach of the university in the global community.
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.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE

For this standard, a sub-group analyzed to what extent changes have occurred in the general education curricula to meet the needs of the changing student population and external community as well as comply with the mission, vision, and goals of the institution. It also analyzed how assessment of student learning outcomes demonstrate the achievement of the institutional goals and objectives and have impacted the revision of the general education curricula. Finally the sub-group was tasked with identifying how the university’s planning, resource allocation, and assessment processes reflect institutional commitment to general education goals.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS

The PCUPR general education curriculum complies with the mission, vision, and goals of the institution in that it aims to educate students in accordance with the values of the Gospel as well as the disciplines of current scientific knowledge by providing them with the necessary skills to become socially and morally responsible citizens that respect the dignity of every person. To this end, the general education curriculum of the undergraduate programs of PCUPR consists of 68 credits distributed in ten core knowledge areas which are distributed as in follows: 9 credits in theology, philosophy, English, Spanish, and humanities; 6 credits in social science, political science, mathematics, and general science; 3 credits in music or art; and 2 credits in physical education. Particular courses in the core subjects of math, Spanish, English, and science vary according to placement scores achieved in the CEEB and or college requirements. In addition, all students are required to take either one or two non-credit orientation courses regarding university life.

The core courses emphasize the skills needed to develop the eight competencies established by the institution as expected learning outcomes upon graduation, namely: demonstrating openness and religious knowledge as fostered by the Catholic Church; employing critical thinking and creative techniques for solving problems; applying effective communication skills to express ideas, opinions, and emotions in order to maintain interpersonal and collaborative relations effectively; demonstrating respect for diversity of values, cultures, and points of view as well as tolerance for ambiguity and openness to change; applying ethical principles to cultural and human responsibilities when confronting challenges in one’s personal, family, community, and professional life; utilizing diverse qualitative and quantitative methods when confronting problems requiring the search for truth; managing information and technology appropriately; and employing conflict management skills.

The current general education curriculum was approved 20 years ago. There have been no major changes in the number of credits required and in the distribution of the general education requisites in the last ten years. However, in 2010, a conceptual framework for revising the core curriculum was presented but has not been approved by the corresponding units under the VPAA. The core curriculum revision however is contemplated for ISP 2013-2020. Departments have made course syllabi changes which include innovative teaching strategies (e.g. application of constructivism), curriculum sequence changes without altering the number of credits required (English Department core courses), and evaluation criteria, among others. The incorporation of advanced technology has expanded within the last six years within the core curriculum. Examples of this are the establishment or upgrade of computer labs in all colleges and schools, especially those intended for teaching English, foreign languages, and music. New and specialized equipment has been acquired for teaching courses, for example in fine arts; and virtual classrooms have been established. Many general education courses (e.g. history, English, Spanish, and math) are also being offered as online courses. Until May 2012, the Institutional Office for Curriculum Revision (ORCI) worked with institutional curriculum revision, the incorporation of technology and other innovative teaching strategies in the educational encounter, and professional development for faculty.
The assessment of student learning outcomes has begun to be integrated in the revision process of the core curriculum. As mentioned in **Standard 11: Educational Offerings**, the curriculum revision by the English Department in the sequence of its core courses is an example. This revision, based on an analysis of CEEB scores and diagnostic testing in terms of student learning outcomes, has led to the creation of a new course (English 109) and the revision of existing ones (English 115 and English 201 – formerly English 114). Because of this initiative, the Spanish Department is also in the process of revising its core courses and sequence.

The structure of the general education curriculum provides for the development and enhancement of the skills and abilities needed for the academic major or concentration. **Table 29: General Education Program Skills Applied to Academic Major** demonstrates that the core courses are aligned with PCUPR learning outcomes in accordance with the essential skills outlined by MSCHE. This structure is clearly indicated in the assessment documents dealing with student learning outcomes and the process of alignment of institutional competencies with general curriculum goals that was performed and incorporated in the syllabi. These documents are available at [https://www.mipucpr.org/avaluo/](https://www.mipucpr.org/avaluo/) and in the Office of Institutional Assessment. In the 2012 SSMS, an average of 80% of students, faculty, and administrators expressed that the general education curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and skills to support the specialized curriculum.

**Table 29: General Education Program Skills Applied to Academic Major**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PCUPR Learning Outcomes (Institutional Competencies)</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Essential Skills: MSCHE Characteristics of Excellence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Demonstrate openness and religious knowledge that is offered by the Catholic church in helping to find the truth.</td>
<td>Theology, Philosophy</td>
<td>Oral and written communication skills; Critical analysis and reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: The use of critical thinking skills and creative techniques to solve problems.</td>
<td>All core courses</td>
<td>Technological competency; Oral and written communication skills; Critical analysis and reasoning skills; Scientific and quantitative reasoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Apply effective communication skills to express ideas, opinions and emotions that help maintain interpersonal relations and effective collaboration.</td>
<td>All core courses</td>
<td>Technological competency; Oral and written communication skills; Critical analysis and reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Demonstrate respect towards diverse values, cultures and points of view show tolerance toward ambiguity and opened to change.</td>
<td>Political science, Philosophy, Sociology, History, English, Spanish</td>
<td>Technological competency; Oral and written communication skills; Critical analysis and reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Apply ethical principles in their cultural and human responsibilities when confrontation challenges in their personal life such as with their family, community and profession.</td>
<td>History, Philosophy, Sociology, Political science</td>
<td>Technological competency; Oral and written communication skills; Critical analysis and reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Utilize diverse quantitative and qualitative methods when problems arise in search of the truth.</td>
<td>Math, Biology, Sociology, Philosophy, Political science</td>
<td>Scientific and quantitative reasoning; Technological competency; Oral and written communication skills; Critical analysis and reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Manage information and technology appropriately.</td>
<td>Math, Chemistry, Biology, Music</td>
<td>Scientific and quantitative reasoning; Technological competency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8: Employ skills to manage conflicts.</td>
<td>Theology, Philosophy, Political science, Sociology</td>
<td>Technological competency; Oral and written communication skills; Critical analysis and reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are some measures of direct assessment related to student learning outcomes at the institutional level which evidence proficiency in oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and technological competency. All three branch campuses collect evidence of student learning at the program level focusing on the assessment of learning outcomes or summative assessment. The evidence includes results from completed capstone experiences such as research projects, internships, comprehensive exams, dissertations, theses, and oral defenses; scores and pass rates on licensure/certification exams; and the rating of student skills by field experience supervisors. As mentioned in the 2011 Monitoring Report, some examples are the undergraduate course: Internship in Tourism Entrepreneurship (TOUR 498); the comprehensive exams at the master’s and doctoral level at all campuses; entrepreneurial projects at the Mayagüez Branch Campus, as well as the professional certification exam in Optical Sciences at both Arecibo and Mayagüez.

Institutional goals regarding general education are supported by ISP 2008-2013 Priority Area III: Updating the Curriculum in the area of distance learning and curriculum revision. One of the institutional goals is to promote a culture of distance learning through the incorporation of technology in the teaching/learning processes. To this end, the majority of core courses have been placed online with the appropriate academic, technological, financial, and human resource support. As explained previously in Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal and Standard 3: Institutional Resources, operational plans linked to the institutional strategic plan and its priorities indicate the necessary strategies to support the achievement of these goals. The institutional goal for curriculum revision focuses on strengthening this process to meet the needs and demands of the students while maintaining academic excellence. The revision of general education courses (math, science, English, Spanish, political and social sciences, art, music, theology, philosophy, and history) has slowly begun as part of the emerging assessment culture incorporating new strategies and technologies. ISP 2008-2013 clearly indicates the support to the IAO as an essential component of curriculum revision. Projections for ISP 2013-2020 include revising the general education curriculum by 2015 in areas such as the continued development of communication skills, the promotion of undergraduate research, and developing heightened awareness towards Catholic, moral, and ethical values through the study of the arts and humanities.

STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS
A primary strength of the general education curriculum is that its basis is the mission, vision, and goals of the institution which are integrated in the ten core disciplines. The core courses strengthen the skills needed to develop the eight institutional competencies that will identify the PCUPR graduate. This is further corroborated by student perception expressed in the 2012 SSMS where 85% agree that the core curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and skills to support the specialized curriculum.

Despite the fact that the general education curriculum has not been revised in 20 years, individual programs within the core have incorporated innovative strategies and technologies to improve student learning outcomes. For example, the English Department at the three campuses utilizes pre-post testing as direct assessment for course improvement as well as student placement.

Many of the general education courses are offered online which directly impacts the needs of a diverse student body, many with technological preferences.

The IAO has been a key component in promoting curriculum revision based on assessment of student learning outcomes. In the transition cycle of 2009-2012, emphasis was placed on the core curriculum courses in those departments which offered them using first indirect and then direct measures of assessment.

CHALLENGES
The most apparent challenge for the institution is the fact that the general education curriculum has not been revised in the last 20 years. The competitive educational market, the student profile, and the local and global demands have changed drastically in the past two decades.
The PCUPR Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2014 establishes that the general education curriculum for bachelor degree programs has a standard core of 68 credits. However, review of the different program requirements as stated in the catalog revealed a discrepancy in the number of general education credits required by different programs of study. The number of credits required for bachelor’s degrees ranges from 56 to 73.

Although in the 2012 SSMS an average of 80% of students, faculty, and administrators expressed that the general education curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and skills to support the specialized curriculum, an average of 72% feel that there is an appropriate balance between general education courses and those in the major field of study. (It is important to note that the percentage of faculty and administrators surveyed was 70% and 71% respectively while the percentage for students was 75%.) A possible interpretation of this is that there are too many credits in the general education curriculum as compared to the specialization.

Despite the efforts made by the IAO, resistance to and a lack of continuity regarding assessment hinder evidencing student learning outcomes effectively at the core level. This in turn affects the ability to reinforce the institutional competencies necessary for successful achievement in the programs of study as well as the type of committed individual the institution expects to graduate.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1. As part of institutional strategic planning, curriculum revision must be a priority for ISP 2013-2020 with the corresponding human, fiscal, physical, and technological support. Above all, the IAO must receive the necessary support as a key element in the curriculum revision process.

2. As part of this self-study process, measures have already being taken to analyze why there is a discrepancy in the credits required in the general education component. The institution needs to decide whether these discrepancies are justified, and if they are not, remedy them immediately. Justified discrepancies or remedies must be publicized through an amendment to the catalog and communicated to the university community.

3. As part of the necessary revision of the core curriculum, the faculty and administrators must collaborate in an open discussion involving the whole university community regarding the balance between general education courses and the courses in the major field of study. Possible alternatives can be an institutional faculty meeting dedicated solely to this discussion or a series of town hall meetings which include students, faculty, administrators, trustees, and members of the external community (such as possible employers).

4. Administrative efforts must be made at all levels to ensure that assessment processes are undertaken and completed. Action plans need to be submitted in a timely fashion and followed. The institution must provide the necessary support (e.g. time, financial support, and orientation) in order for this to occur. More institutional assessment measures for evidencing proficiency in key skill areas must be implemented upon degree completion.

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.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE
The sub-group for this standard was tasked with analyzing that related educational activities such as basic skills or developmental courses; certificate programs; evaluated experiential learning; non-credit offerings; branch campuses, additional locations, and instructional sites; distance education; and contractual relationships ensure institutional integrity while complying with the mission, vision, and goals of the institution and the expected outcomes.
ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS

In the context of this standard, PCUPR consistent with its mission provides a series of related educational programs and activities that support its institutional goals. These programs and activities must reflect the integrity of the institution and adhere to the standards for accreditation. Because improving student learning outcomes is an institutional priority if students are to become professional and ethically responsible members of society, the following educational programs and activities were analyzed to demonstrate compliance with the aforementioned aspects.

Basic Skills

PCUPR offers remedial courses and provides support services for students not fully prepared for college work or who do not have specific skills required for some courses in the curriculum of the program to which they were admitted. Students who are admitted and do not have all the skills necessary for achieving their educational goals, should have the opportunity to benefit from courses, services, and activities that can prepare them for success. This is consistent with the institutional mission and goals and is perceived as such by 84% of the faculty according to the results of the 2012 SSMS. The university complies with this aspect of integrity.

PCUPR identifies students not fully prepared for college work in the content areas of Spanish, English, and math based on achievement scores in the CEEB. To support these students academically, they are placed in remedial courses.

The Office of Freshman Students is responsible for the orientation of students regarding the remedial courses in which they were placed. In addition, professors teaching these courses indicate to the students the remedial nature of the course when given the course introduction the course. Although remedial courses have credit hours which are taken into account when determining academic load, they do not carry academic degree credit. Students can take them concurrently with enrollment in degree credit courses.

According to data obtained from reports of the Office of Freshman Students and statistics provided by TTI:

- During the last five academic years, 38% of entering freshmen were placed in Spanish 001; 33% in English 001/109, and 28% in Math 121. Enrollment in remedial courses per academic year and campus is included in Table 30: Enrollment in Remedial Courses.

- For the same period of time, the percentage of approval in remedial courses was as follows: 83% in Spanish 001, 77% in English 001/109, and 44% in Math 121. The minimum passing grade is D, except for students in BS in General Science who must obtain a grade of C or higher in Math 121.

Table 30: Enrollment in Remedial Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish 001</td>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>461 (44.7%)</td>
<td>453 (39.2%)</td>
<td>445 (36.2%)</td>
<td>484 (34.5%)</td>
<td>462 (38.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arecibo</td>
<td>13 (25.5%)</td>
<td>45 (50.0%)</td>
<td>14 (43.5%)</td>
<td>19 (23.5%)</td>
<td>7 (18.4 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
<td>124 (43.5%)</td>
<td>95 (37.0%)</td>
<td>114 (40.1%)</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 001/109</td>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>451 (40.3%)</td>
<td>388 (35.6%)</td>
<td>382 (31.1%)</td>
<td>440 (31.3%)</td>
<td>394 (32.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arecibo</td>
<td>16 (31.4%)</td>
<td>34 (37.8%)</td>
<td>9 (22.0%)</td>
<td>21 (25.9%)</td>
<td>14 (36.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
<td>122 (42.8%)</td>
<td>94 (36.6%)</td>
<td>99 (34.9%)</td>
<td>115 (35.3%)</td>
<td>124 (37.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math 121</td>
<td>Ponce</td>
<td>371 (36.0%)</td>
<td>295 (25.5%)</td>
<td>356 (29.0%)</td>
<td>392 (27.9%)</td>
<td>301 (25.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arecibo</td>
<td>14 (27.5%)</td>
<td>39 (43.3%)</td>
<td>14 (34.1%)</td>
<td>31 (38.3%)</td>
<td>11 (29.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mayagüez</td>
<td>29 (12.3%)</td>
<td>22 (11.0%)</td>
<td>26 (12.2%)</td>
<td>25 (9.4%)</td>
<td>6 (2.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentage calculations based on total enrollment of incoming freshmen at each campus.
Faculty, physical facilities and fiscal resources needed to offer remedial courses are provided by the departments that offer them. Remedial courses are taught by regular faculty members of the departments. Although there are not specific funds allocated for remedial courses, departmental budgets provide for them as they do for any course offered by the department. Remedial courses are assessed as part of the departmental assessment schedule and revision of content and methodology follows institutional policies for curriculum revision and approval, like any other course.

Besides offering remedial courses, PCUPR provides a variety of support services that all students can take advantage of, and especially underprepared students. Faculty, department chairs, and counselors promote participation in and refer students to both personal and academic support services, such as tutoring and orientation and guidance.

- **Tutoring:** The Institutional Tutoring Center offers tutoring for science, math, languages, and social science courses. During the last five years the number of students served by the center range from 448 to 648 per year. Table 31 reflects student participation and the results obtained in courses in which they received tutoring services demonstrating that services offered by the center were effective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>% of Approval</th>
<th>% Withdrawals</th>
<th>% Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the College of Science, a Title V Project: **Transforming Science Instruction** provides supplemental instruction sessions for Biology 108, Chemistry 105, 106, and 231 and Math 141 – 142. Also computer assisted instruction resources are available through the Learning Management System (LMS) platform Moodle [http://titulovtsi.pucpr.edu](http://titulovtsi.pucpr.edu) and through You Tube at [http://www.youtube.com/titulovtsi](http://www.youtube.com/titulovtsi). The Student Support Services Program (known as Servicios Educativos which is part of the federally funded TRIO Program) provides tutoring and skill development courses to its participants as mentioned in **Standard 9: Student Support Services.** This program has been at PCUPR for the last 40 years and serves 150-200 students per year.

- **Institutional Counseling and Orientation Center:** The center offers a two semester course focusing on skills for success at the university. The course is part of the curriculum of the freshman year and is offered by professional counselors. The center also provides individual, academic, vocational and personal counseling.

- **Other support services:** Various programs and offices previously mentioned in **Standard 9: Student Support Services** provide services and activities which can help students deal with situations that can affect retention and achievement of academic goals (e.g. **OSPI**, the Interdisciplinary Clinic for Community Services, Quality of Life Program, chaplain services, the Financial Aid Office, and others).

According to the 2012 SSMS, 76% of students consider that remedial courses and support services offered by the Institution contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and skills that permit them to satisfactorily pass the courses in their field of study. However, an average of 62% of faculty and administrators consider that remedial courses and support services offered contribute to success in courses of the student’s field of study.

**Certificate Programs**

PCUPR is authorized by PREC to offer pre-baccalaureate, post baccalaureate, and graduate level certificate programs. In order to propose the establishment of any academic program to the council, institutional procedures require that the proposal be endorsed by departmental, college, and institutional curriculum committees and be approved by University Senate. The proposal must include clearly stated goals; objectives; admission criteria;
The program’s goals and objectives must be articulated and aligned with the institutional mission, goals, and objectives. As with any academic offering, certificate programs are subject to evaluation regarding alignment with the institutional mission, goals, and objectives by curriculum committees and the University Senate. The operation, administration, and assessment of certificate programs are performed according to institutional policies and procedures thus ensuring integrity and compliance.

Thirteen pre-baccalaureate certificates have been authorized for the three campuses. However, only the Arecibo Campus has offered three of the thirteen authorized programs from 2006-2010. Certificates were offered in Biotech Lab Assistant, Information Systems Assistant, and Pre-School Teaching with a total of 53 enrolled students and 22 graduates in that four-year period.

The only post-baccalaureate certificate program offered by PCUPR is the Certificate in Medical Technology at the Ponce Campus. The program has been accredited by PREC and the National Accrediting Agency of Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) since 1975. PCUPR offers both the post-baccalaureate certificate and the BS in Medical Technology. The curriculum of the certificate program is the curriculum of the professional component of the BSMT Program. Admission to the certificate program is granted only to students who already have a bachelor’s degree and have satisfactorily approved prerequisite science courses of the professional component. During the last five years, 60 to 85% of students enrolled in the Medical Technology program are enrolled in the certificate program. Expected student learning outcomes are reflected by the pass rate on the licensing/certification exam.

PCUPR is authorized to offer graduate level certificates in the following areas: Literary Analysis, Puerto Rican Literature, Grammar and Composition, General Business, Management, Accounting, Human Resources, Management Information Systems, and Transportation and Maritime Logistics. The certificate in Transportation and Maritime Logistics is offered in consortium with the Maine Maritime Academy, which provides faculty for specialized courses. All of the graduate certificate programs are active, but only the certificate in Transportation and Maritime Logistics has complied with enrollment expectations.

The curriculum of the graduate professional certificate programs consists of regular courses from the MA in Hispanic Studies and the MBA program. Because of this, these certificate program courses are accepted for completion of a graduate degree program at PCUPR, provided they are requisites for or qualify as electives of the graduate program of interest. A limited number of credits from certificate programs offered by other institutions can be transferred to PCUPR programs. Deans and program directors are responsible for evaluating documents submitted by candidates and determining if courses are equivalent in content, level, and academic rigor to PCUPR courses. Student learning outcomes for certificate programs in business are outlined in key courses as evidenced in the alignment matrix form for institutional competencies LOA-02 (Evidence available in the IAO.).

**Experiential Learning**

PCUPR recognizes college-level experiential learning which is derived from work, structured internships, and specialized trainings. Policies and procedures to assess learning and award academic credit were developed and approved for graduate programs. The policies and procedures were proposed by academic departments, evaluated by curriculum committees, endorsed by the Institutional Academic Council and approved by the University Senate. According to the procedure, the student requests validation of experiential learning activities and submits evidence that support his/her request and allows evaluation of the level, quality, and quantity of time of the learning experience; the course(s); and the number of credits to be awarded (a maximum of 6). The request must be endorsed by the student’s department chair and dean. A professor, knowledgeable in the subject area, is designated by the chair of the department of the course for which the experience is to be validated. Based on this evaluation, the department chair and dean of the unit can decide on the approval of the experience for the course. If the request is approved, the student enrolls in the course and pays the corresponding tuition.

**RME52**
The policy of awarding credit to experiential experiences was later extended to the undergraduate level through the BS in Liberal Arts which provides for approval of up to 30 credits by validation of experiential learning activities. This program was created in 1999 precisely for non-traditional students and in response to the diversity of needs of this population. There are program forms and checklists for validating these experiences. Requests for validation of experiential learning activities from undergraduate students in this program are few; one reason could be that federal funding such as the Pell Grant does not pay for credits awarded by experiential learning. PCUPR also recognizes other forms of experiential learning experience at the undergraduate level such as the validation of international cultural travel organized by the History and Fine Arts Department and the English and Foreign Language Department; summer research internships; and internships in government agencies. Evaluation of these experiences can be a final test, essay, portfolio, or summative evaluation by supervisors of the experience.

**Non-credit Offerings (Continuing Education)**

PCUPR has two types of non-credit offerings: courses that are graduation requirements and continuing education courses or activities. Non-credit courses that are graduation requirements (such as Orientation 003 – 004, research/clinical practicums, dissertation seminars, and internships) are developed, approved, implemented, and assessed according to institutional policies and procedures. As all regular credit courses, they must have course syllabi which indicates the expected student learning outcomes and corresponding assessment and evaluation criteria; and they must be consistent with the institutional mission and goals, program goals and objectives, and graduate profile thus assuring integrity.

PCUPR has a continuing education office at all three campuses. There is one coordinator responsible for the operation of the offices in Ponce and Mayagüez; there is also an office of continuing education and a coordinator for the School of Law. The Arecibo Branch Campus has a coordinator, and it contracts professional services to develop and offer workshops to meet the particular requests and needs of government and non-government agencies. For example, funds were awarded to the Arecibo Branch Campus by the Puerto Rico Department of Education to develop and offer training programs to science and math teachers.

Continuing education courses and activities are designed by university academic units and professionals from the community, who must submit proposals to the Office of Continuing Education at least 30 days in advance if the activity is for students and the general public, and 70 days in advance if it is for health professionals. The coordinator is responsible for revising the proposal and determines if it complies with the institutional policy and procedures. Only activities appropriate and compatible with the institutional mission and goals are authorized. The proposal must include: title, objectives, methodology, and contact hours; to whom it is addressed; when and where it will be offered; and the curriculum vitae of the presenters. If the activity is addressed to health professionals, it must also include copies of pre and post tests and of written materials to be distributed. Continuing education activities are not validated or transferred to degree programs.

**Branch Campuses, Additional Locations, and Other Instructional Sites:**

PCUPR is a university system composed by three campuses: Ponce, Mayagüez and Arecibo. The main campus is located in Ponce, and it has an instructional site in Coamo which offers general education courses. Additional locations are in: San Juan (BA in Philosophy for seminarians at Santa María de los Angeles Seminary); Bayamón (DBA Program offered at *Universidad Central de Bayamón*); Ponce (BA in Philosophy for seminarians at the Interdiocesan Seminary *Regina Cleri*) and Birmingham (BA in Philosophy and Communications for seminarians offered at the Franciscan Missionary of the Eternal Word Seminary). Since 2009 the Ponce Campus has two more additional locations: the School of Architecture in the downtown area of Ponce and the Center for Teaching and Research in Biotechnology and Agro-biotechnology (CEIBA) in the outskirts of Ponce. The Ponce Campus offered graduate programs at the following corporate sites: Veterans Hospital in San Juan (MSN Program: 2005 – 2007); Baxter Pharmaceutical (MBA: 2009 – 2012) and Pfizer Pharmaceutical (MBA; 2008 – 2012), both located in Guayama.
Since the 2003 Self-Study, PCUPR has experienced a substantive change in its administrative structure. In the Statement of Accreditation Status (SAS) of November 2009, the MSCHE requested that the next Self-Study of PCUPR clarify the relationship between the Arecibo and Mayagüez campuses with the Ponce Campus, including planning processes (Standard 2); budgeting (Standard 3) and governance (Standard 4). The PCUPR administration, according to the revised definition of an independent education site established by MSCHE, analyzed the relationship between the Ponce campus and the Mayagüez and Arecibo campuses. The Mayagüez and Arecibo campuses are locations of PCUPR that are geographically apart. These campuses offer courses in educational programs leading to a degree and have their own faculty and administrative organization (their own operational budget and physical resources to operate with a certain degree of autonomy from the main campus of Ponce); however, they did not meet all the criteria to be an operationally independent educational site. The criteria which the branches did not meet were: (1) under governing body policy, having substantial financial and administrative independence from the home institution, including matters related to personnel; (2) under governing body policy, being empowered to initiate and sustain their own academic programs (the development of new academic programs is subject to the approval of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the University Senate); and (3) having degree-granting authority in the state or jurisdiction where they are located (academic degrees are conferred by the Board of Trustees). Therefore, PCUPR requested that MSCHE revise its 1996 decision to include the Arecibo and Mayagüez campuses within the scope of the Ponce Campus governance structures. This would mean a main campus located in Ponce with branch campuses in Arecibo and Mayagüez. On June 28, 2011, the Executive Committee for Substantive Change of MSCHE approved the accreditation of PCUPR as a single institution with three campuses: Ponce as main campus and Arecibo and Mayagüez as branch campuses. The impact of this organizational change has not been substantial as the branch campuses were not wholly independent bodies with regard to governance, planning, and budgeting and were subject to the policies and procedures stipulated in the Bylaws and Faculty Manual. In terms of educational offerings, the impact has been negligible because the processes have always been approved through the existing structures (e.g. the University Senate approves new educational programs) present at the main campus in Ponce.

As mentioned in Standard 11: Educational Offerings, educational programs at the undergraduate and graduate level at all three campuses promote and support the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of PCUPR as reflected in the catalogs where each school and college states its objectives aligned with the institutional mission, vision, and goals. Students acquire knowledge and develop skills, Christian values, and positive attitudes through the teaching–learning experience as stated in the different syllabi which are institutional and clearly indicate the mission of the university. These educational programs possess the academic content, rigor and quality according to the degree offered. This is evidenced by the constant curriculum revision performed by each program and the now systematic evaluation of programs by IAO according to the evaluation manual for academic programs and the institutional assessment plan and schedule. The assessment of student learning outcomes is integrated in this process, and the data from all the branch campuses is gathered by the IAO which performs comparative analysis for institutional improvement. This analysis is shared with the university community and is used in strategic planning at the operational and institutional levels. Department chairs or program coordinators and their faculty are responsible for preparing action plans to take care of results of assessment and implementing them. Deans and rectors, as direct participants of the budgeting process, are in charge of requesting funds to provide for the human, fiscal and, physical resources that branch campuses and other instructional sites need to comply with action plans and for fulfilling not only their goals but also for contributing to the fulfillment of the institutional mission, vision, and goals.

Faculty at all the campuses are subject to the same hiring and evaluation procedures and must meet all the requirements and follow the same norms stipulated in the Faculty Manual and By-Laws. Programs offered at the additional locations (except Birmingham, AL) have faculty that is from the main campus which controls scheduling and planning. These sites have the appropriate physical facilities and technology to sustain the programs offered.
**Distance Learning**

During the last ten years PCUPR has strengthened its efforts to train the faculty in the incorporation of technology in teaching and to provide the equipment and infrastructure to support technology-based instruction. Policies and procedures were developed and approved to implement these initiatives in accordance with the mission, vision, and goals of the institution and maintaining institutional integrity. Faculty has been required to complete a minimum of ten hours of training in the area of technology as part of the professional development plan. To further improve the educational encounter and in keeping with the demands of a technology-driven generation, the Distance Education Policy was developed and approved in 2005, and faculty training in the development of online and hybrid (blended) courses initiated. ([See Standard 11: Educational Offerings and Roadmap of Evidence: Política Institucional de Educación a Distancia](#).)

In 2009 the IDL was established, and it is responsible for training and certifying faculty to design, develop, and offer online and hybrid courses as well as providing technological support. According to the Distance Education Policy, academic departments are responsible for certifying that the courses comply with the standards of content and academic rigor while the Institute is responsible for the technological aspects. The number of courses offered, teacher certifications, and students impacted have increased significantly from 2009 as shown in Table 32.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 32: Impact of Distance Learning</th>
<th>2009-2010</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of online and hybrid courses</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of sections</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student enrollment</td>
<td>1,289</td>
<td>2,307</td>
<td>4,345</td>
<td>7,026</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As mentioned in **Standard 11: Educational Offerings**, since the 2009 PRR distance learning through videoconferencing and the programming of online courses have become an integral part of the educational offerings at PCUPR. Because of this commitment, the institution has increased the IDL budget from $92,552 to $182,213 over the past five years, in addition to investing in technological infrastructure with internal and external funds. (**ISP 2008-2013 Priority Area III: Updating the Curriculum** prioritizes distance learning as one of the institutional goals; namely to promote a culture of distance learning through the incorporation of technology in the teaching/learning processes. To this end, the majority of core courses have been placed online with the appropriate academic, technological, financial, and human resource support. Comparative analysis of student learning outcomes has demonstrated that there is no significant difference between traditional courses and online courses. As the institution moves forward, projections are to offer complete academic programs (beginning with the Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts) through this modality.

**Contractual Relationships**

As an academic institution, PCUPR recognizes that the quality of education is not only defined by its level of technical and professional instruction but rather by enhancing the person as a whole. PCUPR seeks to improve the ways in which it provides the best education possible to its students; one way is to enter into consortia agreements or contractual relationships with other institutions to expand the scope of academic offerings and enrich the academic experience.

For over three decades, PCUPR has entered into agreements and consortia relations with other universities and institutions, locally and abroad. This provides for the mobility of intellectual, scientific, humanistic, and cultural resources between the university and other institutions, as well as for opportunities for obtaining second degrees. These relationships have been initiated and operated by specific departments and approved by the VPAA. Since the last self-study, PCUPR has entered into contractual agreements with universities in Canada, Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, Mexico, the USA, Spain, and Italy. These agreements include a wide variety of
academic fields, such as business administration, economics, sciences, industrial development, medicine, law, theology, culture, and humanities.

In order to safeguard the institution’s responsibility over contractual relationships and affiliated providers and ensure integrity with regard to its mission, vision, and goals, the Institutional Office of International Relations (OIRI) was established in August 2010. OIRI developed the framework to sustain the principles, rules and procedures which regulate the actions and decisions taken by the university regarding international relations. It assists in the implementation of the norms for entering into consortia agreements or contractual relationships with other institutions. Through these agreements the academic and cultural enrichment of students has been strengthened. Maintaining existing consortia and contractual relationships and acquiring new ones are strategies that support the goals and objectives of ISP 2008-2013 in Priority Area II (Attention to Student’s Needs) to increase student enrollment. Projections for ISP 2013-2020 makes providing students with cultural and work experiences which transcend geographic boundaries an institutional goal.

The institution has policies and procedures to ensure that there is adequate review and approval of the performance of the contracted party regarding the following areas:

- Admissions criteria – Students participating in the student mobility/exchange programs must follow regular PCUPR admissions procedure even though OIRI makes the final evaluation and recommendations. OIRI also evaluates admissions criteria of institutions abroad, and if they do not comply with the PCUPR mission, goals and objectives, the application is rejected.
- Appointment of faculty – Exchange or visiting professors must have the favorable recommendation of the academic chair and deans who evaluated the candidates according to institutional qualifications and departmental needs. A legal firm evaluates visas, legal documentation, and clearance from Homeland Security, before OIRI recommends hiring.
- Content of courses or program – OIRI evaluates course titles and descriptions in order to provide and certify equivalency and prepare the possible validation.

**STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

PCUPR has systematic procedures for identifying underprepared students and for providing developmental courses and support services that can prepare them for achieving their educational goals. For example, as a result of the assessment of first year courses in the English Department, the content of remedial course ENGL 001 and that of ENGL 110, which was the lowest level English course for academic degree credit, were integrated into one remedial course: ENGL 109. The new course includes attendance at one session of computer lab work per week for practicing oral communication. Pre and post tests are administered to determine effectiveness of the new course, which was offered for the first time in January 2011. Another example is the study conducted in 2011 by a committee composed of faculty of the Math and Physics Department to determine the effect of MATH 121 on student achievement in MATH 141 (for science majors) and MATH 151 (for business majors). The results of the study indicated that 30.8% of students that approved MATH 121 (grade C or higher), approved MATH 141, and 78.6% students that approved MATH 121, passed MATH 151. Based on the results of the study, Math faculty recommended that (1) science majors and business majors should have different remedial courses in math; MATH 121 could stay as a remedial course for business majors and a new course for science majors should be designed; and (2) the minimum passing grade in the new remedial course should be B for science majors and C for business majors in Math 121. According to the 2012 SSMS, 75% of students feel that the remedial courses and the support services offered by the Institution contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and skills that permit them to satisfactorily pass the courses in their field of study.

The Institutional Tutoring Center and projects sponsored by external funds for providing tutoring and other academic support services play an important role in fostering student achievement. According to the 2012 SSMS, 85% of students surveyed felt that tutors and mentors contribute to the achievement of student goals as compared to 68% in the 2002 SSMS.
PCUPR has two certificate programs at different levels that have been quite successful. The post-baccalaureate certificate in Medical Technology is recognized for its quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational effectiveness. From 2008 to 2011, the average percentage of students who passed national certification (the American Society for Clinical Pathology Exam) the first time they took it was 71%; the pass rate average was 89% for students who took the exam a second time with the pass rate in 2010 and 2011 being 100%. PCUPR is the only institution in Puerto Rico that offers a professional graduate certificate in Transportation and Maritime Logistics. Besides the certificate, the program has also sponsored five annual conferences on topics related to transportation and maritime logistics in which there have been more than 100 participants including faculty, students, and representatives from the government and private sector.

PCUPR policy and procedures for validation of experiential learning in graduate programs provide for recognition of college level learning from other sources and facilitate the student’s progress without compromising the quality of the degree he/she is looking for. In addition, opportunities for validation of experiential learning at the undergraduate level are also available.

PCUPR non-credit offering programs for health professionals at the three campuses are authorized by the Puerto Rico Health Department. PCUPR acts as a provider of continuing education activities for 22 groups of health professionals whose license certification boards are under the Department. Since May 2011 the Arecibo Continuing Education program has received external funds of $1,150,000 for developing and offering training programs for educators. Other non-credit offerings also attend the needs and interests of the internal and external communities.

PCUPR has extended opportunities to a variety of students through its additional locations. Individuals have been able to obtain graduate degrees through the offering of graduate programs at corporate sites and the establishment of an extension in the San Juan metropolitan area to offer the doctoral degree in Business Administration. The creation of CEIBA, a modern and very well equipped facility, is unique for teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in biotechnology and agro-biotechnology, conducting research projects, and offering continuing education for the community. The establishment of the School of Architecture also offers the southern region of Puerto Rico another educational alternative in the study of architecture and its related fields.

PCUPR campuses have the same policies and procedures for the development, implementation, administration, and assessment of academic offerings and are subject to the approval of the VPAA. These policies and procedures ensure that the institution complies with licensing requirements of PREC and that academic offerings within the system meet academic standards of content, skills, rigor, and excellence. In addition, rectors and/or deans from the branch campuses are members of the University Senate, the councils for academic and graduate studies, and other advisory boards, thus participating in the development of institutional policies and procedures, planning, and budgeting.

Promoting distance learning has become a key strategy in meeting student needs and updating the curriculum. As a result of the increment in online courses, PCUPR is addressing the needs of not only the non-traditional student but the demands of a technological generation. To satisfy these demands, teachers have been trained, courses have been developed, and student learning outcomes are being analyzed. These offerings have had an impact on both undergraduate and graduate courses at the three campuses. To maintain our academic offerings attractive and consonant with the changing workplace, PCUPR projects the creation of the first online program in the next two years.

For over three decades PCUPR has maintained consortia with other institutions providing students the opportunity of obtaining second degrees, such as the BS-MD Program in Consortium with the Ponce School of Medicine. Students have also benefited from scholarships to attend other universities. For example, five students from the Department of Social Work received scholarships during the academic year 2011-12 to attend Pontifical
Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, and one scholarship was awarded to a student for an exchange program at Pontifical Catholic University of Chile during fall semester 2012. Under the student mobility/exchange program overseen by OIRI, PCUPR received 10 students from Italy, Brazil, and Haiti during academic year 2011-2012 and the same number of PCUPR students attended universities in Brazil, Italy, and Chile. Arrangements have been made to sponsor the enrollment in spring 2013 of PCUPR students at Pontifical Catholic University of Rio do Janeiro, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Pontifical Catholic University (Spain), Navarra School of Business (Spain), Valladolid University School of Law, Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Milan, Italy) and at Universitas degli Studi di Firenze in Italy. Law students have also participated in summer programs in International Law at Fundacion Ortega y Gasset in Toledo, Spain.

PCUPR has facilitated to students, faculty, and the community the opportunity of obtaining degrees from international universities. The most recent example is the new master’s program in Canon Law offered at Pontificia Universidad de Salamanca in Spain.

**CHALLENGES**

Even though studies have been conducted in the areas of English and math regarding remedial instruction in their core courses, no follow-up studies or research has been done for Spanish 001 in the last five years. This is essential for curriculum revision and the basis for assessing student learning outcomes in this course. According to the results of the 2012 SSMS, 72% of students surveyed perceive as adequate the orientation they receive about remedial courses as compared to an average of 50% of faculty and administrators. On the hand, while 76% of students felt that remedial courses and support services offered institutionally contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and skills that permit them to satisfactorily pass the courses in their field of study, an average of 62% of faculty and administrators perceive it as such.

Only the post-baccalaureate certificate in Medical Technology and the graduate certificate in Transportation and Maritime Logistics have fulfilled enrollment expectations. Other certificate programs have been discontinued due to poor enrollment, as seen at the Arecibo Branch Campus. Similarly, although the Mayagüez Branch Campus planned to offer the certificate program in Culinary Arts and is authorized by the PREC, the program has not started.

There is a need for documentation of student learning outcomes in all certificate programs. At this juncture, there is no available data for certain certificate programs.

There are no systematic procedures for validation of experiential learning in undergraduate programs; supporting evidence required is not uniform. Understandably, policy and procedures for validation of experiential learning are not well known in the academic community; an average of 65% of faculty, administrators and students consider that the process of validating transfer credits and work experience is clearly established, published and known by the university community. There is no evidence of training or development for those who evaluate experiential learning.

According to the results of the 2012 SSMS, 62% of faculty and administrators consider that the continuing education program responds to the needs of the community and is compatible with the institutional mission and goals; in the 2002 SSMS the level of satisfaction was an average of 63% among deans, department chairs, and faculty.

Although the institution has developed and implemented policies and procedures to ensure that academic offerings meet standards of quality at all instructional sites, the results of the 2012 SSMS suggest that faculty and administrators do not perceive it that way. According to the survey, 69% of faculty and administrators perceive that courses and programs offered at all levels by the institution in its campuses and off-campus locations comply with the standards of content, skills, academic rigor, and academic excellence; similarly, 41% perceive that course
syllabi used at branch campuses are the same as those used at the main campus in Ponce. This is further compounded by the perception of an average of 62% of administrators and trustees that communication among administrators among the campuses is effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Basic Skills
1. The institution should continue to validate criteria and update procedures for identifying underprepared students, placing these students in remedial courses, and referring them to support services.
2. The effectiveness of remedial courses (math, Spanish, and English) must be monitored on a consistent basis. One possible strategy can be pre-post testing and the analysis of the data obtained.
3. There must be follow-up on action plans made as a result of assessment of remedial courses. Academic chairs must work with the IAO to guarantee that corrective measures are put in place based on evidence gathered to achieve expected learning outcomes.
4. Orientation regarding remedial courses and corresponding support services should be done on an institutional basis in which faculty and administrators are actively involved and knowledgeable about these courses in order to effectively communicate how these courses benefit the student.

Certificate Programs
1. In order to offer competitive pre-baccalaureate certificate programs and meet enrollment expectations, needs assessment studies must be performed to effectively address workplace demands of certain groups.
2. Colleges offering certificate programs must collaborate with the IAO in obtaining assessment data required for the evaluation of these programs and the achievement of student learning outcomes.
3. PCUPR must actively promote graduate level certificates as options for obtaining success in the job market and explore the possibility of new online graduate professional certificates in areas not offered by other institutions. Active promotion and needs assessment through local media and parishes, professional conferences and bulletins as well as the university website are possible strategies that can be used.

Experiential Learning
1. Clear and systematic procedures should be developed, implemented, published, and communicated to the university community for the validation of experiential learning in undergraduate programs. These should clearly state that credits are awarded for demonstrated learning and not merely for experience.
2. Some type of training or orientation should be developed so that effective assessments can be performed by those involved in evaluating experiential learning.

Non-credit Offerings (Continuing Education)
1. PCUPR must continuously monitor community needs and interests regarding continuing education in order to accurately identify and provide activities which meet those needs and are compatible with the institutional mission and goals. To ensure compatibility and institutional integrity, all documents, policies, and procedures should clearly state the institution’s mission, vision, and/or goals.
2. The university community should receive a calendar of Continuing Education activities through the university website and e-mail so that it is informed of the different campus offerings.
3. Strategies should be implemented to involve the internal and external community in continuing education activities. Some of these can be: providing attractive incentives to academic units that design, develop, and offer continuing education activities; hiring professional services to write proposals to procure external funds for the development of custom made courses for industry and public and private agencies; and making alliances with professional organizations whose members must provide evidence of continuing education for license re-certification.
Branch Campuses, Additional Locations, and Other Instructional Sites
Examination and analysis of proposals for new programs and courses should be more rigorous to ensure that the institution can provide the resources (human, fiscal, and physical) not only to initiate the offerings, but to sustain standards of excellence.

1. Representatives from branch campuses should be incorporated in departmental curriculum committees at the main campus in Ponce to promote effective participation in curriculum revision, design, development, and assessment. There are already existing institutional guidelines for course syllabi; the revision of these should be a collaborative effort across campuses. For example, professors from the different campuses and instructional sites offering the same courses can have at least one meeting per semester/trimester to share strategies, techniques, and resources for teaching and assessing course content.

2. The integration of the three campuses into one system requires more effective communication mechanisms (two way channels) and the strengthening of collaborative efforts between them. Communication between administrators of all units and educational sites should not be top-down or bottom-up but horizontal.

Contractual Relationships
PCUPR must continue exploring possibilities of expanding consortia agreements to include other universities and academic fields. This can be done by strengthening the resources of OIRI.

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.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE
The sub-group for this charge was tasked with analyzing how the institutional assessment plan regarding student learning has evolved with the institutional mission and is linked to the vision and goals of the institutional strategic plan and the goals of higher education. It also had to evidence that the institutional assessment plan related to student learning is a well-documented and sustained process with institutional support at all levels and that results are shared and discussed with appropriate constituents in order to improve the teaching-learning process and the institution as a whole. Finally the sub-group studied how the implementation of the institutional assessment plan regarding student learning has reflected that students at graduation or through capstone courses and experiences are meeting the expected student learning outcomes.

ANALYSIS OF CHARGES: FINDINGS
The evolution of assessment at PCUPR has been a ten year long process. In 2003, the MSCHE Evaluation Team made the following recommendation: “The Institutional Assessment Plan needs to be implemented with ongoing evaluation strategies to insure student learning consistent with the mission, strategic plan and goals of academic programs. The assessment plan must provide evidence that student learning assessment information is used to improve teaching and learning and institutional effectiveness.” In response to this recommendation, PCUPR institutionalized the assessment process by reorganizing the Office of Institutional Assessment (OIA).

Between 2003 and 2004 the office staff attended workshops and conferences related to assessment in and outside Puerto Rico. The Mayagüez and Arecibo campuses, which at that time received separate accreditation, appointed a committee to prepare their assessment plans and develop a first draft of such plans.

Assessment Plan
During 2004-2005, the first meetings on institutional assessment were held with representatives of all PCUPR campuses and the drafting of a proposal for an Institutional Assessment Plan was begun. This proposal was based on the model Outcomes Assessment in Higher Education (2002) by Castelli & Green. After its approval in 2005, the President named an Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) whose task was to develop an Institutional
Assessment Plan based on the original proposal. At the institutional level, an Executive Assessment Committee was appointed to develop the Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP) 2005-2010. In October 2005, the approved IAP was sent to MSCHE and subsequently presented to the institution as a whole.

In 2006-2007 the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) was established with two co-chairs, representatives from all colleges, campuses, the student body, non-academic units, and the accounting and finance office. During that year, assessment committee guides which included assessment procedures and forms were drafted and distributed to academic and non-academic assessment committees. During 2007-2008 all academic units at all campuses were given orientation regarding the creation of their final assessment plans. IAP 2005-2010 was originally aligned to the ISP 2003-2008 which took into consideration the seven priority development areas; it was later realigned to ISP 2008-2013 which included the assessment of student learning outcomes. IAP 2005-2010 was amended in 2009 after receiving the Report of the Evaluation Team to the 2009 PRR regarding Standard 14.

Assessment Process
The IAP has been divided into three distinct assessment cycles. From 2007-2009, the cycle focused on indirect assessment by academic units. Activities included the assessment of institutional competencies in syllabi in a total of 339 courses from the three campuses (Form CAI-01) and the identification of assessment instruments and/or techniques used in the courses (Form CAI-02). Results demonstrated that the most used by the faculty were pre-posttests, homework assignments, rubrics, tests, and case studies. In addition, retention data were collected (Form CAI-03) demonstrating that the general student retention in the three campuses was 66%.

From 2009-2010, the institution transitioned from indirect learning assessment to direct learning assessment. To achieve this, the IAO and IAC developed the planning matrix for the assessment of student learning in general education programs (LOA-01) and in academic programs (LOA-02). Working documents were used to align the student graduate profile with institutional competencies as well as align these with the curriculum of academic programs (DT-1 and DT-2). After an orientation process, 92% of the academic units aligned program and major course learning goals with institutional competencies and developed the student learning assessment matrices for the next three years. During this transitional phase, academic assessment plans began to be developed. From 2009-2011, IAO received 85% of the assessment plans for the 2010-2013 Student Learning Assessment Cycle: 107 of 133 programs (81%) at the Ponce Campus; 40 of 42 programs (95%) at the Mayagüez Branch Campus; and 23 of 26 programs (89%) at the Arecibo Branch Campus.

The third cycle (2010-2013) initiated with a pilot study of assessment of courses in general education and major fields of study. It involved direct assessment of student learning outcomes through implementation of assessment plans. Since 2011 most programs have started assessment of major courses according to their stipulated timetables. Group training and orientations were offered to the faculty of the various schools on the implementation of the new cycle of assessment and the collection and handling of assessment facts pertaining to student learning. During this cycle, student support services and the different vice-presidencies also drafted and submitted assessment plans. For the 2011-2012 academic year, the three campuses were integrated to the student learning assessment process except for the School of Law and the School of Architecture. At the end of this cycle, a new seven-year cycle will begin which will be aligned to ISP 2013-2020. Figure 10: PCUPR Assessment Process summarizes how the 2007 to 2013 assessment cycles have been implemented.
Institutional Resources and Commitment to Support Assessment

One of the most necessary aspects for assessment to be effective in its implementation is the institutional support that it must have. As can be observed in the evolution of the assessment process, since 2003 PCUPR has invested financial, human, technological, and physical resources to foster, implement, and sustain an assessment culture within an organizational structure. The assessment process has an institutional budget to sustain the IAO and its personnel and activities, which are contemplated in the IAO’s operational plan. These include an institutional office, a director, an administrative secretary, and a statistician as well as the activities of supervising, advising, analyzing data, and training. The budget for the IAO in 2008-2009 was $143,349, and in 2012-2013 it was $151,763 for an increase of 6%.

The IAO guides and supports the three campuses in the implementation of assessment and supervises the corresponding units in the effective assessment of the execution of their operational plans. Through these standardized operational plans derived from the ISP, planning, budget allocation, and assessment are now linked. This relationship indicates that there is support at all levels for assessment. Additional expenses for assessment activities are covered by the unit as necessary. For example, the Arecibo Branch Campus funded the expenses for an academic assessment coordinator. The Mayagüez Branch Campus also has an assessment coordinator paid by its budget. Administrators promote and encourage an assessment culture by providing time and resources to attend trainings and workshops at the different campuses, in Puerto Rico, and in the United States.

With regard to student admissions, retention, and support the IAO uses tools such as surveys and questionnaires for evaluating the student services offered by the institution. The student level of satisfaction with student and academic services and support programs have been measured since 2010 at the three campuses using NSSE results and institutional satisfaction surveys. For example, this data has been fundamental in the improvement of cultural experiences by offering cultural travel internships and the creation of OIRI in response to the NSSE 2011 results in particular. Dissatisfaction with campus security has led to an investment in better illumination throughout the campus. Assessment results have also been the basis of projected strategies for ISP 2013-2020 such as restructuring tutoring services and centralizing services in the Student Center.

The IAO, under the VPIDRP, works in collaboration with this vice-presidency and its personnel to facilitate, through institutional research and assessment, the qualitative and quantitative analysis of academic and non-academic activities stemming from the now eight priority areas of ISP 2008-2013. The institutional assessment process provides the necessary data for effective decision-making based on the specific objectives in each priority area and where necessary, linked to a budget in order to achieve the institutional mission and goals through the efficient use of its resources.

The assessment process is an integral aspect of the university’s commitment to sustaining and enhancing academic quality and positive student experiences. It is an inclusive, participatory, and comprehensive process that generates data to be used for curricular revision, teaching improvement and accreditation expectations as
well. PCUPR can evidence the assessment process, which is implemented in the different units and branch campuses, through the IAO. Until 2012, IAO had a center (CADA - Centro de Acopio y Apoyo) for gathering assessment data on assessments provided. This center has now been merged with the Institutional Statistics Office to offer a sole and trustworthy source of data.

Information and reports regarding assessment processes, outcomes, and data are available on the webpage of IAO, which is accessible to the internal community through the institutional portal Acceso Pionero. In addition, colleges and academic departments are responsible for maintaining the information and evidence in their respective units. Furthermore, the institutional assessment process is evidenced by documentation such as the Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP), unit assessment plans, planning matrices, annual reports, reports on findings submitted by IAO to the three campuses, and program evaluations.

Indirect Assessment
As an institutional process, the IAP has clearly articulated student learning outcomes aligned with the institutional competencies at the undergraduate and graduate levels for all its campuses. The assessment results are analyzed and used to establish comparative benchmarks among the different campuses. Student learning assessment and its results for the institution are evidenced by the benchmarks of the NSSE 2011-PCUPR whose results identify, document, and inform student performance and the institutional practices committed to educational outcomes. In the discussion of Standard 11: Educational Offerings, a comparison of the three PCUPR campuses to the NSSE participating institutions revealed how PCUPR students perceive activities related to clusters dealing with level of academic challenge and active and collaborative learning. The percentages indicated in Table 33: NSEE 2011-PCUPR Senior Student Skills and Experiences are an indirect measure of the skills and experiences of seniors at PCUPR as related to institutional competencies specifically in the areas of employing critical thinking and creative techniques for solving problems and applying effective communication skills to express ideas, opinions, and emotions in order to maintain interpersonal and collaborative relations effectively. The analysis of this comparative data allows PCUPR to gauge the consistency among the campuses regarding student learning outcomes. This shared information allows for institutional improvement.

Table 33: NSEE 2011-PCUPR Senior Student Skills and Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE ITEMS</th>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
<th>ARECIBO</th>
<th>MAYAGÜEZ</th>
<th>PONCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMIC AND INTELLECTUAL EXPERIENCE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made a class presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked with other students on projects during class</td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENTAL ACTIVITIES SKILLS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings</td>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information or experiences into new complex interpretation</td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods</td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations</td>
<td></td>
<td>91</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING AND WRITING SKILLS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of written papers or reports between 5-19 pages</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicum, internship, field experience</td>
<td>Done</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language coursework</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Direct Assessment-Program Level

At the program level, PCUPR performs program assessment for all academic degree programs structured in three-year cycles. This assessment is performed by campus even if the program is offered at all three campuses. This extensive evaluation must demonstrate how the curriculum supports student learning outcomes and how outcomes are assessed and used to improve learning competencies and skills, the quality of teaching, and cost-effectiveness of the program among other issues.

At this stage the evidence for summative assessment includes the analysis of results obtained from completed capstone experiences such as research projects, internships, comprehensive exams, dissertations, theses, and oral defenses; scores and pass rates on licensure/certification exams; and the rating of student skills by field experience supervisors. The following are some examples of summative assessment at the program level for both undergraduate and graduate programs since 2008 and how it has been used to improve or implement actions regarding student learning.

College of Education: Teacher Certification Exam Results (PCMAS)

As a strategy to improve performance in the Teacher Certification Examination (PCMAS) given by the College Board Office of Puerto Rico, PCUPR established an institutional version of the exam known as Pre-PCMAS. A comparative analysis of students at the Ponce Campus taking both the Pre-PCMAS and the PCMAS in the areas of fundamental knowledge and communication skills as well as diverse content areas in 2007-2008 and 2009-2010 resulted in an increase in the number of students passing the official certification exam. These results are reflected in Tables 34 and 35.

### Table 34: Comparison of the Pre-PCMAS and PCMAS: Fundamental Knowledge and Communication Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>EXAM</th>
<th>Number of Students Taking Exam</th>
<th>Fundamental Knowledge in Education</th>
<th>Knowledge in Elementary Education (ELED)</th>
<th>Knowledge in Secondary Education (SEED)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% Approved</td>
<td>% Approved</td>
<td>% Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>Pre-PCMAS</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PCMAS</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>Pre-PCMAS</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PCMAS</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 35: Comparison of the Pre-PCMAS and PCMAS for the Diverse Content Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>EXAM</th>
<th>Number of Students Taking Exam</th>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
<th>SPANISH</th>
<th>HISTORY</th>
<th>ENGLISH</th>
<th>MATH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% Approved</td>
<td>% Approved</td>
<td>% Approved</td>
<td>% Approved</td>
<td>% Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>Pre-PCMAS</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>PCMAS</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>Pre-PCMAS</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>PCMAS</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the institutional level, in order for the College of Education to evidence that PCUPR undergraduate teacher education candidates have the fundamental and communicative competencies required for effective teaching, the results of the PCMAS Fundamental and Communicative Competencies were used as indicated in Table 36: Fundamental & Communicative Competencies for PCUPR Students. General analysis of the data involved a comparison of mean scores of PCUPR teacher candidates, statewide population results, and the required passing score as established by the Department of Education of Puerto Rico (DEPR) which is 92.

### Table 36: Fundamental & Communicative Competencies for PCUPR Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PCUPR Campuses by Year</th>
<th>PCUPR Teacher Candidates</th>
<th>Statewide Population</th>
<th>Difference of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arecibo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings indicate that the total mean score of PCUPR teacher candidates was higher than the mean cut-off score required by the DEPR for the years 2010-2012 in Fundamental & Communicative Competencies (96 for PCUPR as compared to 92 required by DEPR).

Benchmarking across the campuses using evaluations by external professional organizations related to different disciplines is in an initial stage with the institutional accreditation visit of the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) for the area of education at the undergraduate level in 2013.

**College of Science: BS in Nursing**

The pass rate for PCUPR students taking the bar examination for licensed nursing meets the standard of the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission which states that the licensure exam pass rate will be at or above the national mean as indicated in Table 37: General Exam Pass Rates. Although the Nursing program complies with the standard, it has incorporated new strategies and activities in the course NURS 498 and has added two new courses to the curriculum: NURS 299 and 499, which are on-line courses designed to improve student performance on the licensing exam and to incorporate the development of technological skills necessary for online test taking. Also, the faculty has integrated departmental rubrics in courses to assess critical thinking skills, oral and written communication skills, and nursing intervention skills in student learning.
Table 37: General Exam Pass Rates 2008-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>PCUPR Pass Rate %</th>
<th>PCUPR Pass Rate First Time Takers %</th>
<th>Puerto Rico Pass Rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS in Nursing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS in Nursing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BS in Medical Technology/Medical Technology Certificate
In 2009-2010 the School of Medical Technology designed a series of strategies involving changes in the curriculum for improving student performance in the Certification of Technologists of the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP). The changes were incorporated in two stages during August 2011 and August 2012. The school also implemented the use of departmental rubrics for assessing communication skills, case studies, teamwork, and conflict management in courses. Table 38: Pass Rate for Certification by ASCP indicates the pass rate for the past five years. Students taking the ASCP are certified to practice both in the United States and Puerto Rico. Nevertheless, students can opt to take the Puerto Rico State Board which only certifies them to practice in Puerto Rico. This occurred in 2011 increasing the overall pass rate for 2011-2012 to 90%.

Table 38: Pass Rate for Certification by ASCP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=13</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N=12</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N=15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Time</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL % PASS</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional and Graduate Programs - PCUPR Law School
The school has consistently remained in compliance with the ABA standards during three or more of the past five years. One of these standards is that the bar pass rate for the institution be within a 15% margin of the state pass rate average. As Table 39 shows the state overall bar pass rate has been declining since 2008, from an average of 55% to 36% in March 2013. PCUPR Law School has had a declining rate as well but always within the 15% margin.

Table 39: Bar Exam Pass Rate First Time Takers – PCUPR vs. State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Date</th>
<th>PCUPR</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Approved PCUPR</th>
<th>Approved State</th>
<th>PCUPR Pass Average (%)</th>
<th>State Pass Average (%)</th>
<th>Difference (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2008</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2008</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>257</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 2008</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2009</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>227</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 2009</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2010</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2010</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>229</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 2010</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a result of this declining pass rate, in fall 2010 the Law faculty approved initial changes in the academic program regarding required and elective courses and the credit allocated to them. The revision considered the number of credits required towards completion of the degree, the distribution of required courses versus electives, the correlation between the mandatory subjects and those covered in the bar exam, and offerings in specific subject matters such as Maritime, Governmental, and Notary Law. The course offerings also included new trends in technology.

Graduate School in Education - Doctoral Program
One of the goals of the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Education is to provide opportunities for research as an effective and necessary means to contribute to the field of education. The total number of research projects since 2008 has been 118 of which 56% were in the area of Curriculum and Teaching and 44% were in the area of Educational Management as illustrated in Table 40.

Table 40: Graduate Research Projects 2008-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and Teaching</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Management</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Research Projects</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment of the effectiveness of the doctoral program is measured by the results obtained on the comprehensive exams. Table 41 indicates that the average academic achievement demonstrated by doctoral students specializing in Curriculum and Teaching ranged from 70 to 76.4 percent while those in the specialty of Educational Management fluctuated between 71.9 and 79.9 percent.

Table 41: Average Scores obtained in Written Doctoral Comprehensive Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and Teaching</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Management</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Administered in December

Doctoral students must also pass an oral comprehensive examination. Table 42 shows that during the 2008 – 2013 assessment cycle, the average scores for Curriculum and Teaching students ranged from 66 to 80.25 percent while the scores of students in Educational Management ranged from 75.3 to 88.6 percent.

Table 42: Average Scores Obtained in Oral Doctoral Comprehensive Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and Teaching</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Management</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Administered in January
Strategies implemented by the Graduate School of Education to improve performance on the comprehensive exams and the presentation of dissertations include the establishment of a research room to review published doctoral dissertations and research and the evaluation of the Doctoral Graduate Program in 2012-2013. The action plan for future implementation includes a review of the course syllabi in accordance with the demands of the professional world; a program curriculum review to integrate institutional goals relating to volunteerism, the Social Doctrine of the Church, research, and publication; improvement of the technological infrastructure; and the strengthening of student research skills.

College of Graduate Studies in Behavioral Sciences and Community Affairs: Graduate School of Psychology

Students in the Graduate School of Psychology of the College of Graduate Studies in Behavioral Sciences and Community Affairs take the psychology licensing examination. Table 43: PCUPR Pass Rate Percentages for the Psychology Licensing Examination presents the results of the examination for PCUPR students administered by the Board of Examiners of Psychologists of Puerto Rico. The first-time takers pass rate for 2009 PCUPR candidates was 54% which was 18% below the national pass rate for all psychology schools in Puerto Rico. In 2010, the pass rate was 50% which was 23% below; and in fall 2011 the pass rate was 64% which was 10% over the national pass rate.

Based on these results and to improve student learning outcomes, the Graduate School of Psychology adopted the following strategies: to integrate material to the courses pertinent to the topics presented on the licensure exam by August 2011; to provide a license exam review to students through the Office of Continuing Education beginning in January 2012; to revise the curricular sequence by adding a review seminar upon completion of program courses by August 2012; to modify the content offered in the social psychology, personality theories, and human development courses; and to add a course on learning and motivation to the curricular sequences of the school by August 2012.

Table 43: PCUPR Pass Rate Percentages for the Psychology Licensing Examination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>PCUPR Pass Rate Spring 2009 %</th>
<th>PCUPR Pass Rate Fall 2009 %</th>
<th>Puerto Rico Pass Rate Spring 2009 %</th>
<th>Puerto Rico Pass Rate Fall 2009 %</th>
<th>PCUPR Pass Rate Spring 2010 %</th>
<th>Puerto Rico Pass Rate Spring 2010 %</th>
<th>PCUPR Pass Rate Fall 2011 %</th>
<th>Puerto Rico Pass Rate Fall 2011 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Psychology Program</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial and Organizational Psychology Program</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychology Program*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCUPR Graduate School of Psychology</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Time Takers PCUPR**</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCUPR**</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Program affiliated to the Graduate School of Education
** Includes all programs

In summary, all three branch campuses are collecting quantitative and qualitative data regarding student learning at the program level (summative assessment) to indicate that upon graduation, students are meeting the expected learning goals. The evidence includes results from completed capstone experiences such as research projects, internships, comprehensive exams, dissertations, theses, and oral defenses; scores and pass rates on licensure/certification exams; and the rating of student skills by field experience supervisors. As aforementioned, when results do not reach the expected goal, affirmative actions are taken such as curriculum revision, development of skill-oriented courses, changes in teaching methodology, and specialized seminars, among others. (More detailed information is found in the 2011 Monitoring Report.) Academic chairs are responsible for summarizing assessment data at the program level (Assessment Form LOA-5) and sharing it with their
respective deans; strategies can then be formulated for those outcomes which merit special attention. Finally, as part of the assessment data gathering process, candidates for graduation must complete a program evaluation questionnaire in which the student evaluates acquired skills and knowledge consistent with the institutional expected learning goals (CAI-05A). This information allows for affirmative action to be taken as a result of these findings.

Direct Assessment-Course Level
During the 2010-2011 academic year, the IAO began the integration of direct measures in the assessment of student learning in order to provide evidence that students were developing the general competencies as well as the specific skills of the courses in which they were enrolled. In fall 2010, direct student assessment was integrated into a small group of courses at the Ponce campus allowing assessment evidence to be collected from 45.7% of the projected courses to be evaluated that semester. More courses selected by the academic departments were integrated in spring 2011, obtaining assessment results for 57.8% of the courses projected. These pre-selected courses include internships, practicums, core courses, and capstone courses. The achievements for the 2010-2011 academic year were the integration by the faculty of more varied direct methods of student learning assessment as well as the collection of evidence of said assessment in 56% of the projected courses to be assessed. The following are some examples of direct assessment at the course level for both undergraduate and graduate courses and how the results of this assessment have been used to improve or implement actions regarding student learning.

Assessment of PCUPR English Core Courses
One of the competencies for the graduate profile of PCUPR students is “effective communication skills to express ideas, opinions and emotions so that they may maintain interpersonal and collaborative relations effectively. During the academic years of 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, the English Department at the Ponce Campus assessed the grammar, vocabulary, and reading skills for the general education course English 001, the writing skills for the general education courses English 114, 214, and 383, and the oral skills for the general education course English 115. In order to assess the objectives of these courses, several assessment measures were used. Pre-post tests were given to a sample of English 001 students. Writing samples were collected at the beginning and end of the semesters from a representative sample of students enrolled in the English 114, 214, and 383 courses and were analyzed with rubrics. Oral proficiency of English 115 students was also analyzed at the beginning and end of the semester using a rubric. For all courses, a score of 70% or higher indicated mastery of skills. The expected outcome was that 70% of the students sampled master basic grammar, writing, or oral skills. The assessment results enabled the faculty to revise the English curriculum, creating a new general education curriculum sequence in English at the institutional level, thus affecting all three branch campuses. This sequence was approved and went into effect in August 2011 with progressive revisions in the following two years. An immediate result was the creation of a composite course (English 109) which replaced ENG 001 and ENG 110 and a change in sequence of ENG 115 and ENG 114 (now ENG 201).

Revision of Math 141 at PCUPR
As mentioned previously in Standard 13: Related Educational Activities, page 85, faculty of the Math and Physics Departments studied the effects of MATH 121 on student achievement in MATH 141 for science majors. Further discussion revealed that students placed directly in MATH 141 were also experiencing difficulty in passing the course. Although further study is warranted, the following immediate measures were taken: a new book enriched with a greater variety of problems is now being used and different assessment strategies are being used by professors in order to compare results and take further action. These assessment strategies include frequent short exams or quizzes and kwl (know, want to know, have learned) charts, among others.

SOWK 207 and SOWK 432-433: Ponce Campus
The assessment process in the BA in Social Work began with the selection of four courses (SOWK 207, 209, 210 and 432-433). Tests, assignments, cooperative work within the classroom, debates, speeches, and other activities
were used as assessment instruments. Other indirect assessment instruments were used. Table 44: Social Work Course Assessment Outcomes describes the results of this assessment process with regards to the relationship between the outcome measures and BSW program objectives as part of the compliance with the accreditation standards required by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Table 44: Social Work Course Assessment Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ACTION TAKEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Introduction to Social Work (SOWK 207) | • Rubric to evaluate the acquired knowledge and the application of the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). This is aligned with objectives 6 and 9 of the Social Work Program.  
• Questionnaire for the assessment of skills and knowledge in the course | Areas of weakness, as perceived by the students in the questionnaire:  
• Skills and knowledge of social work practice  
• Application of the Code of Ethics to the profession  
• Intervention methods | During the January-May 2011 semester there was greater emphasis on the weak areas; the discussion of these topics was intensified.  
More homework and activities to determine the level of knowledge in said activities. Were given.  
A pre and post-test was given. |
| Integrative Field Practicum and Seminar I  
SOWK 432-433 | • Rubrics were used to assess student performance and experience in the practicum and in the Practicum Portfolio. | • The evaluation of the work done in the site agency as well as in the community was graded as excellent or good by 98% of students.  
• The skill of direct service to individuals was mastered by 96%.  
• When offering direct service to families, 75% mastered the skills.  
• When offering direct service to groups, 79% mastered the skill.  
• Eighty-eight percent mastered the skills of writing social histories, interviews, reports, and letters.  
• In the evaluation of personal and professional development, and the identifying components that define the social worker, 99% of students mastered the skills. | During the January-May 2011 semester pre and post-tests were given.  
Existing teaching strategies were continued. |

Faculty and administrators continue to improve course assessment plans in order to effect curriculum and program changes that will focus on weaknesses and lead to accomplishing the goals of the BSW and compliance with the standards of the CSWE.

COMP 498: Ponce Campus

The assessment of student performance (in the course COMP 498 (Computer in Business Internship) for spring 2011 indicated that at the end of the internship, 98.7% of students mastered essential skills in their field. Table 45: Student Performance Assessment- Computer in Business Internship COMP 498 indicated student mastery in
skills such as: managing word processors, operative systems, and data bases; working with spreadsheets and graphic presentations; and designing web pages.

**Table 45: Student Performance Assessment- Computer in Business Internship COMP 498**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>(%) Middle of Internship</th>
<th>(%) End of Internship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuality</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work appropriate attire</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Relationships</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing communication skills</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral communication skills</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to understand instructions</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to follow instructions</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in learning</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills to manage word processors</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills to manage operative systems</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills for designing and using spreadsheets</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills for designing graphic presentations</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills to manage data bases</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills managing the Internet and web page design</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective time management</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of completed work</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional attitude</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>95.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>98.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arecibo Branch Campus: Alignment of Courses to Institutional Competencies

During the semester of January 2011, student learning outcomes (which are aligned to the institutional competencies) were assessed in 24 courses from different programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels at the Arecibo Branch Campus. Seventy percent of the students demonstrated that they have developed institutional competencies of critical thinking and creative techniques in solving problems in courses of their academic programs. The campus has developed an action plan with various activities emphasizing the development of the institutional competencies to further improve student learning. Twelve workshops and activities with the participation of 258 students were held in order to help them improve their learning outcomes. Seventeen workshops in the development of information literacy and the appropriate use of technology were offered by library personnel to 201 students.

The Effectiveness of Institutional Assessment

As mentioned earlier, the assessment process is an inclusive and participatory one. Academically, there is faculty participation at the departmental, college, and institutional levels. This is reflected in the 2012SSMS where 84% of the faculty agreed that they participate actively in academic advising, student learning assessment, and curriculum revision and development. Nevertheless, the perception regarding the assessment process is a less than satisfactory one. According to the 2012 SSMS, an average of 55% of faculty and administrators expressed that the faculty is satisfied with the assessment process and the communication and implementation of assessment results in the improvement of student learning.

In order for assessment to be effective, the results or outcomes must be shared with the corresponding constituents and the general community in order for these to be informed and action to be taken. Student learning assessment information and data are discussed and shared through various channels. Twice a year, IAO publishes the electronic bulletin *Avalúo Informa* which includes assessment information of all campuses. It also sends program evaluation reports to academic deans and chairs who should be discussing them with the corresponding faculty. Academic chairs are responsible for summarizing assessment data, analysis, and instruments at the program level (LOA-05) and sharing this information with their respective deans so that for
those outcomes which merit special attention strategies can be formulated. College and departmental assessment committees are supposed to disseminate assessment results to the respective faculty for action plans to be developed and implemented. It is the submission and implementation of action plans at all levels that demonstrate if the means of communicating and sharing of this information is effective. As of 2012, 81% of the 36 departments scheduled for program evaluation have submitted their action plans. For May 2013, departments that have had program evaluations must submit evidence of the achievements obtained based on the implementation of strategies.

In the 2011 PCUPR Monitoring Report, the issue of how assessment results of student learning outcomes are used to inform and improve decision-making regarding student learning in areas such as curricular development, teaching strategies, and faculty development was addressed. Examples included:

- institutional curricular revision and development in English and Math courses in the undergraduate program based on pre-post testing;
- actions taken by the faculty to improve the comprehensive exam pass rates in the Graduate Studies Program at the Mayagüez Branch Campus by using a humanistic/constructivist methodology and designing test exercises similar to the ones in the comprehensive exam;
- faculty development for the improvement of teaching and learning methods, introducing effective teaching techniques, and using technology and basic resources at the Mayagüez Branch Campus through the Title V Grant (HIS-Invigorating the Learning/Teaching Environment in the Classroom). This included a series of workshops on assessment, the design of instructional modules, assessment strategies for learning, and the use of blogs in the classroom.

STRENGTHS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Since the 2003 Self-Study and the MSCHE Evaluation Team Visit recommendation, PCUPR has implemented a well-structured institutional assessment plan with ongoing evaluation strategies to insure student learning consistent with the mission, strategic plan, institutional competencies, and academic program goals. Through the establishment of an institutional assessment office with the necessary human, financial, physical, and technological resources evidence of student learning assessment information is collected and used to improve the teaching/learning process and demonstrate institutional effectiveness.

The current IAP has evolved in the last five years to include three different cycles as the assessment culture has progressed. This plan, linked to the ISP 2008-2013, has advanced from indirect assessment to program evaluation based on direct and indirect assessment of both the general education and professional competencies in student learning. This has been the groundwork that will now lead to the next IAP linked to the upcoming ISP 2013-2020.

The direct impact of student learning assessment has been informed decision-making based on shared information throughout the campuses. Although this sharing of information is its initial stages, it is an improvement to the unstructured format of before.

The development of action plans based on concrete findings has led to taking affirmative actions at the course and program levels. One major accomplishment in response to the needs of graduate students in the research writing process has been the hiring in 2012 of a specialized consultant. This consultant aids students in research design, data collection, and statistical analysis of results. This consultant travels to all three campuses in order to improve the academic and scientific quality of the research performed at PCUPR.

In order to evidence that expected student learning outcomes have been reached in accordance with institutional competencies, capstone courses have been identified throughout the academic programs to track students at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of their studies. The systematic analysis of pass rates on comprehensive exams, professional certification, and licensure exams reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the programs.

As mentioned in Standard 7: Institutional Assessment, 409 PCUPR alumni were surveyed via telephone between September and December 2010 to discover their perceptions about PCUPR, their Alma Mater. The results were:
- eighty-five percent were satisfied with the quality of the academic programs offered at PCUPR;
- seventy-nine percent were satisfied with the variety of courses offered;
- eighty-two percent were satisfied with the general education that they received;
- seventy-nine percent were satisfied with the intellectual atmosphere at the institution;
- eighty percent mentioned that their major courses adequately prepared them for the work force;
- eighty-four percent indicated that their academic program contributed to the development of their moral and ethical value system in order to confront the challenges in their professional careers; and
- eighty-six percent expressed that the experiences acquired on campus contributed to their personal and spiritual growth.

These percentages are a clear indication that the mission and goals of the institution are being achieved.

CHALLENGES

Even though PCUPR has developed the IAP aligned with ISP 2008-2013 and the institutional learning competencies, instilling a true assessment culture has been a difficult endeavor. Therefore, the biggest challenge we face is improving the perceptions regarding assessment in order to improve the second most challenging aspect: communication among all levels. According to the 2012 SSMS:

- an average of 69% of faculty and administrators perceive that the learning assessment and institutional assessment processes are aligned;
- an average of 68% of faculty and administrators perceive assessment results are used to make decisions regarding curriculum revision, teaching strategies, course planning, student admission, and student retention and support; and
- sixty-four percent of administrators feel that the means used to communicate and share information regarding assessment results is effective.

Communication regarding assessment does not progress effectively through the established channels within the assessment structure.

Another challenge is consistently closing the loop of the assessment cycle; namely once data have been gathered, a thorough written analysis must be done with the corresponding action plan to implement strategies for improvement and then evidencing the achievements obtained.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1. In order to change perceptions regarding the IAP and its procedures as this plan comes to an end, the IAO should meet with all the constituencies, and specifically the faculty, to first: review the evolution of the assessment culture at PCUPR; second, to emphasize the exact procedures which are essential to course and program evaluation; and third: indicate what aspects of assessment will be addressed in accordance with the upcoming ISP 2013-2020.

2. The channels of communication regarding assessment must be improved. This includes more aggressive but clear and concise orientation to deans and directors reinforcing the need to discuss the findings of the assessment process and the implementation of action plans.

3. It is essential that the assessment loop be closed. The faculty, chairs, and deans must complete the follow-up process to action plans by implementing and evidencing the achievements reached in written reports (minutes, bulletins, webpages, presentations, etc.).

4. Effective and efficient assessment reporting practices should be implemented in order to communicate data and results to the whole community at regular intervals. Student learning assessment outcomes should be reported at departmental, college, and general faculty assemblies.

5. The collection of data for assessment purposes should be simplified. This could be done through the acquisition of an accountability management software system designed for such purposes.
Conclusion

Since January 2012 Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico has been engaged in a comprehensive self-evaluation process that has incorporated all constituencies of the university community. Through this self-study process, the university assessed its performance based on the fourteen standards stipulated in Characteristics of Excellence. As a result, it has informed the institutional strategic and operational planning process and will enable us to address the challenges of the next decade. As stated in the Self-Study Design, the primary goal of this process has been to evidence institutional effectiveness in accordance with the mission, vision, and goals of PCUPR in order to promote self-understanding and renewal. This was accomplished through an analytical and reflective self-assessment process to identify effective strategic planning consistent with the MSCHE standards of excellence along with the assessment of student learning outcomes to form students who are professionally and personally prepared to be members of a dynamic society within a Christian perspective.

Since the last self-study several challenges have been addressed. Firstly, there is a stable administrative and financial structure; a well-defined and financially supported strategic planning process has been implemented in ISP2008-2013 and its assessment has been part of the foundation of the upcoming ISP2013-2020; a stable student enrollment has been maintained institutionally; and an integrated management information system that supports the academic, financial, and administrative activities (Banner) has been established, thus improving student services as well as the planning and budgeting processes.

Above all, the mission permeates all the processes and activities of the university: academic, administrative, financial, physical, and technological. Key accomplishments have been in the areas of organized strategic planning and assessment. With a new vice-presidency for institutional development, research, and planning, these areas are now connected to improve institutional effectiveness along with appropriate assessment. The Institutional Assessment Office responds to this vice-presidency and through the development of assessment cycles, an assessment culture has evolved both institutionally and academically. In addition, PCUPR has invested heavily in new programs to meet the needs of Puerto Rico, especially the southern region of Puerto Rico.

During this process, the university has recognized that it faces challenges that must and will be addressed. Among the most pressing are: the need to address the cultural and religious distancing among students; uniformity and effective communication and participation regarding institutional policies and procedures, especially where the faculty is concerned; revising the general curriculum; acquiring a true institutional mentality across the campuses with a better flow of communication; and finally, engaging all constituencies in the established assessment processes and culture to close the loop for institutional improvement.

As we plan prospectively for the next ten years, PCUPR looks to the challenges that the socio-economic, demographic, technological, and competitive environment will present as the student profile is further transformed to one of limited financial resources with diverse needs and expectations. Consequently, PCUPR envisions continuing to serve the Puerto Rican community as a primary Christian academic option as well project itself globally, by forming capable and ethical professionals at the service of the community embodying the institutional mission and goals and becoming agents of social change. This will be achieved through strategies such as promoting curricular and extra-curricular volunteerism; fostering cultural trips and internships locally and abroad; offering better in-house and online student services; increasing student employment opportunities; developing online programs and academic offerings based on market trends; integrating research at the undergraduate and graduate levels; and supporting assessment at all levels.

Above all, PCUPR recognizes both its strengths and weaknesses as we enter the next decade of the 21st century. It views this self-study process as an on-going assessment which will benefit not only the institution, but the Puerto Rican community that it serves within the Caribbean region and the global community to which it belongs.
Road Map of Evidence

Chapter 1 - Standard 1: Mission and Goals and Standard 6: Integrity – Task Group One

Standard 1: Mission and Goals
RME1: Professional Development Activities Sponsored by the Institute for the Social Doctrine of the Church 2009-2013
RME2: PCUPR Graduate Profile 2008-2013
RME3: Assessment Forms:
   LOA-02 (Matriz para el Avalúo del Aprendizaje Estudiantil en los Programas Académicos)
   DT1 (Relación de Competencias Institucionales, Competencias Profesionales y de Programas)
   DT2 (Mapas de Alineación de Competencias y Cursos)

Standard 6: Integrity
RME4: PCUPR Bylaws, Article XIV
RME5: PCUPR Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs
RME6: Huellas del Futuro
RME7: Faculty Manual (Acceso Pionero: Facultad tab)
RME8: 1) Ad campaign: “Sabemos de qué estás hecho.” (We know what you’re made of.)
   2) Ad campaign: “Escoger lo que vas a estudiar tiene su ciencia.” (Choosing what you want to study is a matter of science.)
   3) Ad campaign: “Otros imaginan cómo será el futuro. Nuestros estudiantes ya lo crean.” (Others imagine how the future will be. Our students are already creating it.)
   4) Ad campaign: “¡Vive tu futuro hoy!” (Live your future today!)
RME9: Política de Investigación Académica
RME10: Institutional Review Board (Junta de Revisión Institucional)
RME11: Publication Policy (Política de Publicación)

Chapter 2 - Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal); Standard 3: Institutional Resources; and Standard 7: Institutional Assessment – Task Group Two

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal
RME 13: Minutes of the Board of Trustees, February 9, 2011 (and certified by the secretary of the Board, Dr. Jorge I. Vélez Arocho on May 23, 2013) approving the addition of Research as a new priority area
RME 14: Sample of Operational Plans
RME 15: Institutional Model for Unit Operational Plans
RME 16: Informe al Comité de Planificación de la Junta de Síndicos: Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho, Presidente, 19 de marzo de 2012.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment
RME19: Informes de Hallazgo del Avalúo
RME20: Planes de Acción (Avalúo Académico)
RME21: Avalúo Informa (Boletines)
RME22: Avalúo Institucional-Recinto de Ponce: Encuestas de egresados (dic. 2010)
Chapter 3 - Standard 4: Leadership and Governance and Standard 5: Administration – Task Group Three

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance
- RME23: PCUPR Bylaws, Article V

Standard 5: Administration
- RME24: Bylaws, Article VII and Article VIII, Section 8, Part D
- RME25: Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 6
- RME27: Administrators’ Profiles and Credentials
- RME28: List of Administrative Management Workshops (Talleres de Gerencia Académica) and Institutional Professional Development Workshops (2008-2012)
- RME29: Evaluación del Personal Académico Administrativo-Formulario 1
- RME30: Formulario de Análisis y Plan de Acción

Chapter 4 - Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention and Standard 9: Student Support Services – Task Group Four

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention
- RME31: Guías de identidad y marca (Acceso Pionero: Identidad y Marca tab)
- RME33: Solicitud de Licencia de Renovación: INFORMES DE CUMPLIMIENTO por cohorte de estudiantes nuevos de acuerdo con su Plan de Retención – Mayagüez and Arecibo Branch Campuses)
- RME34: Mayagüez Branch Campus - Student Academic Study Plan
- RME35: Institutional Graduate Level Retention Plan

Standard 9: Student Services
- RME36: Avalúo Institucional: Encuestas de Satisfacción Estudiantil Subgraduada y Graduada

Chapter 5 - Standard 10: Faculty; Standard 11: Educational Offerings; Standard 12: General Education; Standard 13: Related Educational Activities; and Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning – Task Group Five

Standard 10: Faculty
- RME37: Evaluación de Profesores – Formulario Adendo de Información Profesional
- RME38: Form VPAA 902 - 1/07 Plan de Mejoramiento Profesional
- RME40: Formulario de Reacción a la Evaluación – Formulario 9
- RME41: Cuestionario de Satisfacción Estudiantil-Cursos en línea

Standard 11: Educational Offerings
- RME42: Manual para la evaluación de programas académicos en la PUCPR
- RME43: Formularios para la Evaluación de Programas Académicos.
- RME44: PCUPR Undergraduate Catalog, pages 56-57: Transfer of credits from other institutions
- RME45: Modelo de Prontuario Institucional
- RME46: Evaluación Cursos Tradicionales vs. Online
- RME47: Política Institucional de Educación a Distancia
- RME48: Title V Report and Technological Equipment-Arecibo Branch Campus
- RME49: Student Graduate Profile (Documentos de Referencia: Perfil del Egresado Años 2008-2013)

Standard 12: General Education
- RME50: PPT Presentation English Department
- RME51: Assessment Forms: CAI-01C and LOA -01

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities
- RME52: Validación de cursos por experiencia profesional
- RME53: Continuing Education Services and Activities at the Arecibo Branch Campus
RME54: Procedimientos y requisitos generales para someter actividades al Instituto de Educación Contínua de la PUCPR
RME55: Statistics on Distance Learning Offerings by Campus and Colleges: 2009-2012
RME56: List of Consortia Agreements between PCUPR and Other Universities and Institutions

**Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning**
RME57: Resumen de enmiendas al Plan de Avaluo Institucional
RME58: Resumen de enmiendas al Plan de Avalúo Institucional; Assessment Activities-Arecibo and Mayagüez Branch Campuses).
RME59: ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES AT PROGRAM LEVEL IN THE COLLEGE OF SCIENCE 2009-2013
RME60: Assessment Form LOA-5
RME61: Assessment Form CAI-05A