

Inter American University of Puerto Rico

P O N C E C A M P U S



Middle States Association Self-Study Design

APRIL 3, 2001



**Inter American University of Puerto Rico
Ponce Campus**

SELF-STUDY DESIGN

SUBMITTED TO:

Middle States Association of Colleges
And Schools
Commission on Higher Education

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**Inter American University of Puerto Rico
Ponce Campus**

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INTRODUCTION

Institutional Profile

Inter American University of Puerto Rico is a private institution with a Christian heritage and an ecumenical tradition. It is a non-profit organization that provides college instruction to youth of both sexes. In 1944 the Institution was accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. It was the first four-year liberal arts college to be so accredited outside the continental limits of United States. This accreditation has been maintained since then. The academic programs of the University are also accredited by the Council of Higher Education of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and by the Puerto Rico's Department of Education, which also certifies teachers for the public school system of Puerto Rico. In addition, they are approved by the Federal Veteran's Administration. The Inter American University of Puerto Rico is structured in nine instructional units, a Law School, an Optometry School, and a Central Office for the University system.

It is the largest private university in Puerto Rico with an enrollment of approximately 38,000 students in recent years. The highest governing body of the Inter American University is a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees, whose members are elected by the Board itself without any outside intervention. The President of the University is the Chief Executive and Academic Officer of the Institution.

The Academic Senates in each of the instructional units and the University Council are primarily concerned with the academic well being of the university through the process of academic articulation among the campuses. The Academic Senates establish academic norms subject to the ratification of the University Council and concurrence of the President. Both bodies formulate recommendations on affairs related to educational, administrative and research policy.

Ponce Campus is one of the eleven campuses of the Inter American University of Puerto Rico System. It is a four- year, private, and commuter Campus serving students from 12 towns of the southern region of Puerto Rico.

Of its 4,123 students, 45 % are first generation college students, 100 % are Spanish-speaking, and over 80 % are low income. The "average" student is full time, low income, Spanish speaking, 24 years of age, averaging 13 credits hour per semester. The adult population (non-traditional) makes up approximately 20 % of the student population, and 97% of all the students receive financial aid.

The Ponce Campus offers Associate and Bachelor's degrees, as well as one or two year certificate programs. In addition, it offers a Continuing Education Program to the academic and non-academic university and the external community where a variety of courses, workshops, and training in specialized themes or areas are developed and implemented. It houses a Small Business Development Center, through a cooperative agreement with the United States Small Business Administration. Training, seminars, workshops, advising of new and existing small

businesses, and assistance to minorities (women, veterans, handicap) are among the services offered by the Center.

Seventy-one percent of the faculty holds at least a Master Degree and 26 % holds Doctorate Degrees. Seventy-six of the faculty is full-time, teaching an average of 17 credit hours per semester.

Ponce Campus Governance

The Chancellor, Dr. Vilma Colón, is the Chief Executive and Academic Officer. She heads the Administrative Council integrated by a Dean of Academic Services, a Dean of Administrative Services, a Dean for Student Development and Wellness, a Dean for Technological Services and Academic Information, the Director for the Center of Information Systems and Telecommunications, the Director of the Office for Planning, Evaluation and Development, a Manager for Student Services and a Manager for Academic Services. In addition, a Promotion and Recruitment Officer, a Public Relations Officer, the University Chaplain, an Executive Assistant, the Executive Secretary of the Academic Senate and the Director of the Small Business Development Center completes the Administrative Council.

Appendix A shows the Administrative Structure Functional Chart.

Ponce Campus Mission and Goals

The mission of the Ponce Campus is to prepare direct-service professionals in the areas of education, health, management, and in technical areas for business, industry and commerce. Students are prepared to become contributing members of the society through the acquisition of technological as well as humanistic knowledge and skills. Its diverse academic offerings respond to the needs of the community and the interest of its students, with particular attention to the needs of adults, handicapped and those with special skills. The Campus is committed to quality education as it fosters the incorporation of educational innovations into the teaching-learning process and continuously evaluates student performance to develop students' talent to the maximum. Through this ongoing evaluation process, the Campus has remained a leader in Puerto Rico as an educational laboratory where diverse strategies are implemented to bettering student learning.

In order to be contributing members of the society, graduates are expected to have mastered the necessary skills for successful job performance; the capacity to express themselves correctly in English and in Spanish, both orally and in writing; the ability to effectively utilize technology; the capacity to adopt critical judgments and analytical attitudes; sensitivity to nature and to human creativity; and an understanding of professional ethics.

I. NATURE AND SCOPE

Since the Middle States Team visit in 1992, the Ponce Campus has faced many curricular, student services and administrative changes. Its academic offerings have increased by 43 % and its enrollment by 13 %. Among the most significant changes is the Campus' undertaking of a significant investment in technology; thereby incorporating technology into the teaching-learning process and offering distance learning courses. Future plans include expanded distance learning and Master degrees programs.

The Center for Learning Resources including the library have been transformed into a Center for Access to Information (CAI) In fact, a new Deanship was created to attend these new areas including Distance Learning, Access to Information and Faculty training in technology.

The Academic, Student and Administrative Deanship has been re-structured, the General Education Program (GEP) and the Campus Mission and Goals are under revision. In addition, a Health Science Department, an Assessment Center, an Honors Program, and a Pre-school Center have been created.

Based on these and many others innovative developments in progress, the Comprehensive Model for the Self-Study Report was selected.

The Comprehensive Model in the context of the Characteristics of Excellence will enable teams to focus on the relationship of the characteristics of excellence in terms of strategies, activities, and outcomes as they relate to Ponce Campus mission, goals, and objectives. An analysis of how the Campus' mission, goals, and objectives are considered for the guidance of new development and improvement and how this is evidenced will be emphasized throughout this model. Advanced technological developments, innovative strategies to meet varying educational need and the dramatic changes the Campus has faced in the past year, are important issues that can be properly addressed by this model. Teams, including members of the faculty, administration, and students will address each of the Characteristics of Excellence through the development and formulation of a series of critical questions related to each particular area. The answers to these questions will provide relevant information and explanations, which will be validated by appropriate exhibits and /or samples.

This approach will demonstrate the Campus compliance with the Characteristics of Excellence, as well as give the Campus a clear idea of its areas of strengths and for future developments. This framework will help the Campus in the development of action plans that address identified areas in need of improvement and highlight strengths. In addition, this approach will reflect and validate the Campus innovations, unique projects and ongoing developments and changes over the past 8 to 10 years.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SELF-STUDY

The Inter American University of Puerto Rico at its Ponce Campus recognizes the importance of a self-study process for the accreditation as a tool that allows it to evaluate its

level of educational effectiveness, integrity, and quality, and thereby maintain the confidence of the educational community and the public it serves.

The Ponce Campus is committed to an accreditation process that ensures a fair and thorough assessment of the educational quality. This process is a major undertaking, which must involve an appropriate proportion of representatives from the faculty, administration, student body, advisory committee, and other interested and affected groups.

Through a process of continuous self-study, the Ponce Campus will determine the effectiveness of its existing academic programs and the plans for future development to meet the Campus' mission, goals, and objectives, and its efficacy in meeting established accrediting standards. It will do so through the assessment of its academic programs and support services based on the Characteristics of Excellence stated by the Middle States Association.

It recognizes that the findings generated by the process strengthen and improve the quality of its academic programs and services. Based on these premises the mission, goals, and objectives for the self-study follow:

Goal To reaffirm the Campus' position as an Institution of Higher Education of Excellence by means of a continuing learning experience through a self-study process , which strengthens its academic programs and support, services and provides for long lasting improvements.

Objectives (a) To generate a carefully planned and well-executed self- study report that contributes to the Campus' ongoing development and as a guide for judging quality effectiveness. (b) To measure the efficacy of our academic programs and support services in light of the Characteristic of Excellence stated by the Middle States Association. (c) To apply the characteristics of excellence in the achievement and evaluation of the Campus mission, goals and objectives. (d) To develop an action plan to address identified areas for improvement. (e) To appraise and strengthen the Campus' achievements.

III. STEERING COMMITTEE AND TEAM ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Selection Process

Following the visit to the Campus of Dr. George Santiago, Executive Associate Director for the Middle States Association on July 12, 2000 Chancellor Dr. Vilma Colón appointed the chairperson for the Steering Committee. On September 6, 2000 The Inter American University of Puerto Rico President Manuel Fernós called a meeting of faculty, administrators and student council members, where he officially opened the Institutional re-accreditation process. At this meeting, the key issues of the self-study process and the timetables were presented and discussed.

Upon consultation with academic leaders, **Steering Committee** and **Executive Committee** candidates were recommended and on September 18, 2000 appointments were made. All accepted this unique and challenging opportunity to participate in a process, which in turn will strengthen their intellectual, professional and personal capabilities.

The **Steering Committee** structure was completed and the members charged with the leadership of the entire self-study process, and assuming responsibility for the design and the effective development of the self-study report. In addition, the **Steering Committee** will review the key issues to be examined, coordinate tasks and activities to help and facilitate the processes; examine, edit, refine and merge reports developed by the teams into the self-study report. In addition, it will request external readers for developing the document's final draft.

The **Steering Committee** will ensure open communication and interaction among and between committees, teams and other Campus constituencies. It will provide documents, reports, publications and other resources needed to appropriate team members. The committee chair will keep the Campus Community and the Chancellor informed through regular self-study progress reports. Once the self-study design and the self-study report are finished, it will be made available to the university's community on the Campus web site. Finally, the **Steering Committee** will be accountable for submitting and following up on the final self-study report.

The **Executive Committee** has been charged with the overall supervision of the self-study process. It will review the questions developed for the process, revise team report drafts and the final report draft for feedback. Finally, it is charged with the development of the executive summary of the self-study report.

By the end of September 2000 and taking into consideration personal and professional attributes and experiences, in addition to other characteristics, seven teams, each team chaired by a leader, were selected. The academic area represented by each team member was also taken into consideration to permit as much Campus-wide participation as possible. It was decided at this time that each one of the team leaders would also be a member of the **Steering Committee**. This structure is consistent with direct interaction and communication among all members. Functions and responsibilities for team leaders were developed and defined. To facilitate integration some of the characteristics of excellence were grouped; consequently, some of the teams will be addressing more than one primary area of inquiry. Some of the team leaders will also have a consultant either from the faculty or the administration with expertise in a their particular field of knowledge. The teams are primary from faculty representatives and within their main responsibilities are the assessment and analysis of the characteristics of excellence in view of the Campus' particular mission, goals, and objectives. Their primary responsibility, after the analysis of the strengths and areas for improvement identified, is to present a proposal for possible courses of action, leading to solutions.

Figure #1 shows the Committees and Teams Structure.

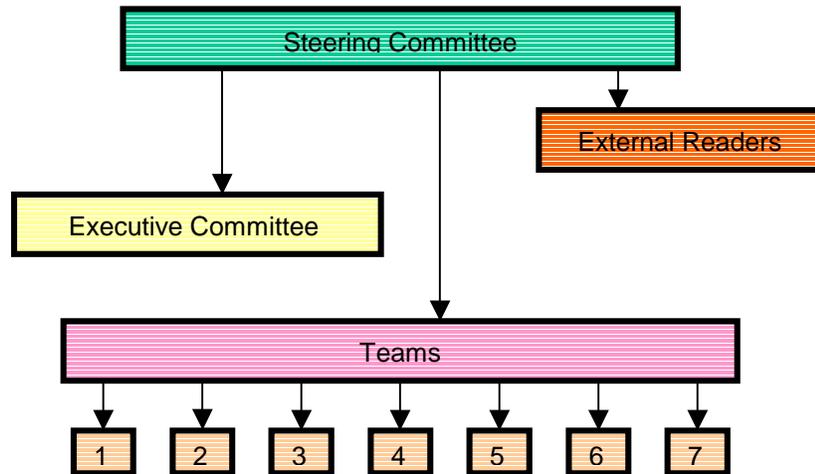


Figure #1

At its first meeting, the **Steering Committee** reviewed the accreditation status, the processes involved in the development of the self-study report for re-accreditation, the Middle States Association Characteristics of Excellence and the timetables. Functions and responsibilities of each committee and team leader, tasks to be accomplished and the commitment of each for an effective outcome, and a comfortable and scholarly experience with the process were discussed and stressed by Chancellor Doctor Colón. The team's structures can be expanded and/or modified, as the processes require; however, consistency will be stressed as much as possible. Each committee or team will determine the most appropriate way to fulfill its responsibilities within the self-study process.

An initial distribution of Middle States Association publications and documents to each committee member and leader among others included: Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education, Designs for Excellence, Framework for Assessment, Outcomes Assessment Plan, and Middle State Association Policies and Procedures.

Certain teamwork leaders received additional documents based on their particular area or task to be accomplished, such as Librarian Evaluator and Distance Learning Program Guides. Basic official documents pertaining to either the Institution or the Campus were also distributed such as: Statement of Ponce Campus particular mission, goals and objectives, previous self-study report (1992) with Middle States Association recommendations, Periodic Review Report (1998), Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Vision 2012, among others.

A file with all the documents needed for the development of the self-study is available at the Steering Committee Chair office and most of the Institution and Campus documents and catalogs are available on the Campus webs site.

A joint meeting with all the members of the teams was held on September 22, 2000. An overview of the accreditation process, the characteristics of excellence and the timetables were presented. From that point on, each committee and team will work on their own, formulating their particular time line and work plan for their corresponding self-study report area.

On November 2000, the Steering Committee Chair and the Academic Services Dean attended the Self- Study Institute held in Philadelphia, and sponsored by the Middle States Association. Upon returning from the Institute a summary of its main points were presented to the Steering Committee members, as well as copies of the most important documents discussed and distributed.

Membership

Committees and team members with academic degree, ranks, and institutional position follows:

STEERING COMMITTEE	
Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
Hilda Grace Nazario, M.S. (Chair)	Associate Professor of Nursing
Alberto Rodríguez, Ed.D.	Associate Professor of English
Bernardette Feliciano, Ed.D	Dean of Academic Services
Edda Costas, M.A.	Dean of Student Development and Wellness
Sharon Clampitt, Ed.D.	Dean of Technological Services and Academic Information
Marcos Torres, M.A.	Director of Planning, Evaluation and Development Office
Milagros Caratini, Ph.D.	Associate Professor of English
Elba Ortiz Padilla, M.S.N.	Assistant Professor of Nursing
Ray Petty, Ed.D.	Associate Professor of Education
Luz Rivera, Ed.D.	Associate Professor of Mathematics
Miguel Morales, M.B.A.	Instructor of Management for Information Systems
Marta Álvarez Torres, Sophomore	Education and Social Science Department Student
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	
Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
Dr. Bernardette Feliciano, Ed.D (Committee President)	Associate Professor of Mathematics Dean of Academic Services
Prof. Alma Segarra, M.A. (Committee Secretary)	Associate Professor of Secretarial Sciences
René Batiz, M.B.A.	Director of Recruitment and Promotion Office
Ms. Jihan Abdallan Cancel , Sophomore	Business Administration Department Student
Madeline Torres. Ed.D.	Associate Professor of Secretarial Sciences
Lucas Mattei, Ph.D.	Associate Professor of History

CHARACTERISTIC OF EXCELLENCE COMMITTEES

1. Mission, Goals and Objectives

2. Organization, Administration, Governance

3. Institutional Changes and Renewal

Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
Madeline Torres, Ed.D. (Team Leader)	Associate Professor of Secretarial Sciences
Alberto Rodríguez, Ed.D.	Associate Professor of English
Aixa Rodríguez, Ph.D.	Associate Professor of Communications
Elia Vega, M.A.	Instructor of Criminal Justice
Jacqueline Álvarez, M.B.A.	Executive Assistant to the Chancellor
María Galarza, M.B.A.	Associate Dean for Extended Educational Programs
Ivette Ramos, M.B.A.	Director of the Small Business Development Center
Raúl Torres, M.P.	Academic Units Evaluator

4. Educational Program and Curricula

5. Institutional Effectiveness and Outcomes

Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
Milagros Caratini, Ph.D. (Team Leader)	Associate Professor of English
Carmen Lydia Martínez, M.S.N.	Assistant Professor of Nursing
Damián Vélez, M.S.	Assistant Professor of Biology
Delia Márquez, M.A.	Associate Professor of Secretarial Sciences
José R.Cepeda, J.D.	Instructor of Criminal Justice
Amari Arabía, J.D.	Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice
Raúl Torres, M.P.	Academic Units Evaluator
María del Carmen Pérez, M.A.	Registrar
Orlando González, M.A.	Director for the Center of Instructional Development
Margarita Nolasco, Ph.D	Associate Professor of Mathematics

6. Facilities, Equipment, and other Resources

7. Planning and Resources Allocation

8. Financial Resources

Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
Marcos Torres, M.A. (Team Leader)	Director of the Planning, Evaluation, and Development Office
Raúl Torres, M.P.	Academic Units Evaluator
Diana Rivera, M.B.A.	Director of the Finance Office
Agustin Echevarría, J.D.	Dean of Administrative Services
Nilda Rodríguez, M.B.A.	Director of the Bursars Office
Ivonne Collazo, M.B.A.	Assistant Dean of Administrative Services
Ivette Ramos, M.B.A.	Director of the Small Business Development Center
Rev. Victor A. Feliberty, M.Div.	University Chaplain
Rafael Balzac, M.B.A.	Associate Professor of Economics
Rafael Santiago, M.B.A.	Academic Services Manager
Antonio Ramos, B.B.A	Director Center Information and Telecommunications

9. Students Affairs	
Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
Edda Costas, M.A. (Team Leader)	Dean of Students Development and Wellness
Héctor Martínez, M.Ed.	Director of the Counseling and Orientation Center
Miriam Martínez, M.A.	Student Services Manager
María Silvestrini, B.A.	Librarian
Héctor W. Colón, M.S.	Instructor of Mathematics
Carlos Vélez, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor of Biology
Herminio Rodríguez, M.B.A.	Assistant Professor of Accounting
10. Library and Learning Resources	
Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
Sharon Clampitt, Ed.D. (Team Leader)	Associate Professor of English
María del Carmen Varela, M.L.S.I.	Librarian
Idalia Molina, M.L.S.	Librarian
Manuel Bahamonde, M.A., M.Div.	Assistant Professor of Religion
Lamberto Vera, Ed.D.	Associate Professor of Education
Brunilda Figueroa, M.A.	Specialist of Technological Services for Academic Information
11. Faculty	
Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
Lucas Mattei, Ph.D. (Team Leader)	Assistant Professor of History
Angel Ríos, Ph.D.	Associate Professor of Environmental Sciences
Edwin Blanco, Ed.D.	Professor of Ethics
Marlene Portuondo, M.Ed.	Assistant Professor of Education
Lilliam Valle, M.A.	Assistant Professor of Spanish Language
Carlos Oliveras, M.S.	Associate Professor of Physics
Benjamín López, M.S.N.	Assistant Professor of Nursing
Angela López, M.B.A.	Assistant Professor of Accounting
José Muñoz, B.S.	Statistician
12. Catalogs, Publications and other Promotional Material	
Name and Academic Degree	Rank and Institutional Position
René Batiz, M.B.A. (Team Leader)	Director of the Recruitment and Promotion Office
Yvonne Guadalupe, B.S.	Public Relations Officer
Dilia Rodríguez, M.Ed.	Assistant Dean of Students Development And Wellness
Beatriz Navia, M.A.	Instructor of Education and Social Sciences
Eileen Ortiz, M.B.A.	Instructor of International Commerce
Lourdes Díaz, M.S.	Assistant Professor of Biology

IV. CHARGES TO SUBCOMMITTEES

Answers to the following questions will provide the relevant information and findings that will guide the examination and analysis of the self-study processes. While these are not the only questions and not all the questions formulated may lead to significant findings, they are intended as a starting point and a guide to direct the main body of the self-study report. The Ponce Campus recognizes that institutional integrity is one of the attributes, which permits an educational institution to provide the most conducive environment for achieving its mission and goals and for the pursuit of learning. Therefore, institutional integrity will be addressed, discussed and validated through integration in each one of the Characteristics of Excellence (see figure # 2).

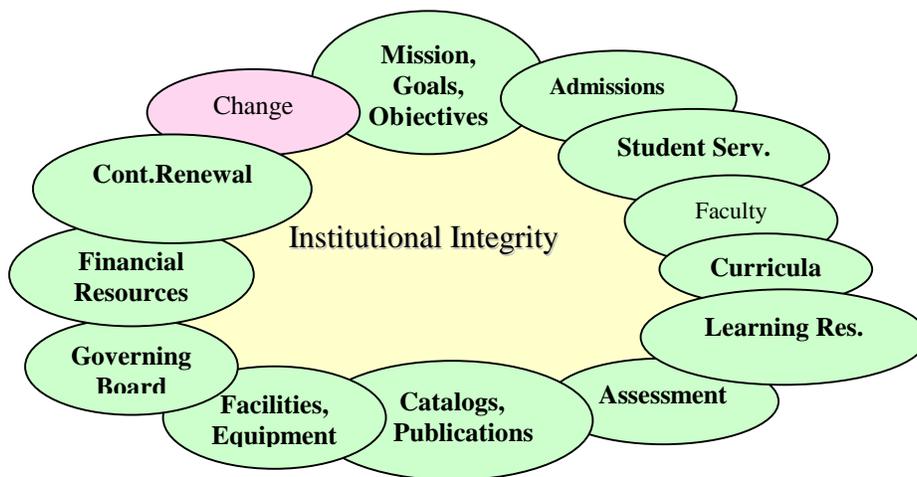


Figure #2

Each team is asked to study their assigned area according to the guidelines presented in *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*. Initially they were charged with the development of questions, which they felt addressed the Campus' effectiveness within the framework of its mission and goals. Then they were charged with assessing and analyzing strengths, areas for improvement and the consistencies within the Campus' mission and goals and its performance. Finally they were charged with the formulation of an action plan. The result of these processes will constitute the main body of the self-study report, where each one of the twelve Characteristics of Excellence will be outlined as follows:

Mission, Goals and Objectives

Premise: A basic Characteristic of Excellence in an educational institution is the clear expression and active pursuit of its mission and goals in relation to its students. It is essential that goals and objectives are understood and utilized within the institution as a guide for its actions.

How does the Ponce Campus provide for the development of a self-directed, life-long learner with the knowledge, competencies, skills, attitudes and values that would facilitate his/her transition into society and into the work force?

How does the Ponce Campus respond to the needs of the external community?

To what extent are institutional mission and goals congruent with the Ponce Campus mission and goals?

Are student services and curricula congruent with the Campus mission and goals?

How is campus integrity reflected in its mission and goals?

How does the Central Office support the Campus' implementation of its mission and goals?

Organization, Administration and Governance

Premise: An institution will retain excellence as an educational institution with a competent, imaginative, responsible administration and governing board. Their importance is measured by the degree to which they facilitate excellence in teaching and successful learning. Likewise, effective organizations provide for empowerment of all constituent groups and opportunities for collegial and collaborative participation.

Is the organizational structure of the Campus congruent with the achievement of its mission and goals?

Is the current structure appropriate and sufficient to carry out the mission?

How does the Campus governance deal with external factors that may influence the present and future of academic services?

Are there appropriate, effective and representative structures of committees, senate, teams, and associations that allow involvement of the different constituencies of the Campus?

Do the Institutional bylaws clearly establish the duties and responsibilities of faculty, students, and administrators?

How does the Campus Administrative Council support and promote participation of the university community in planning and decision-making processes?

How does the Academic Senate contribute to advancing the Ponce Campus' mission, goals and objectives?

How does the Central Office support the planning and decision-making processes of the Campus?

How are the administrators evaluated? What is done with the results that affect their behavior?

What professional development opportunities exist for administrators?

How is integrity reflected in the Campus' governance and administrative structures?

What is the relationship between the Ponce Campus administrators and the Board of Trustees?

Institutional Change and Renewal

Premise: Change and renewal are essential characteristics of educational vitality. The willingness to seek to improve approaches, determine the efficacy of something previously untried, test hypotheses, and resist complacency are signs of institutional vigor.

What internal and external forces have led to the Campus revision of its mission and goals?

What are the major events which have caused or might cause significant changes in the Campus?

How are the changes evaluated, importance determined and priorities established?

How have advances in information technology influenced the Campus' overall operations?

What studies, evaluations or assessments have led to significant changes on the Campus?

What impact have the Campus innovations had on the academic and support services?

What innovations in teaching are currently in process at the Ponce Campus?

Are the innovations and changes consistent with the Campus' mission and goals?

Are the innovations and changes at the Campus consistent with the development and strategic plan?

What is the relationship between the Campus' changes and innovations and the Institution's Central Office?

Educational Programs and Curricula

Premise: The quality of educational programs is measured by the extent to which the curricula, activities, academic and other support services foster the achievement of the Institutional and Campus goals.

How do the curricula and academic services advance the achievement of institutional mission and goals?

How do academic programs respond to students' and society's needs?

Which academic projects have been developed in the Campus in the past five years to assist students with special talents?

How does the Campus encourage innovations and curriculum development?

How is the technology integrated into the academic programs?

How does the General Education Program help the Campus in advancing its mission and goals?

How has distance learning impacted curricular offerings?

What are the trends for distance learning on Campus?

To what extent does the Central Office support and encourage the development of new academic offerings and program revisions?

How is the integrity of the curricula protected?

Institutional Effectiveness and Outcomes

Premise: Institutional effectiveness and assessment focus on the extent and degree of student learning and the instruction and services which support that endeavor. It is measured by the extent to which an institution achieves its established goals and objectives. Equally important in a university community setting, is the help a diverse population of students receive in order to achieve its academic goals.

What are the Campus' guidelines and procedures for assessing its overall effectiveness? Are they congruent with the Institution Assessment Plan?

Which administrative procedures have been revised or established to improve institutional assessment? What has caused this revision?

What studies, assessment, evaluations have lead to significant changes on Ponce Campus?

What are the performance indicators of the Ponce Campus educational effectiveness? State the instruments, means and other measures used such as attrition, retention, graduation rates, State Board licensure results, employment, satisfaction and others.

How were the performance indicators for educational effectiveness selected and established?

What are the intended outcomes of the academic programs? Do they relate to the Campus mission and goals?

How are the students basic skills assessed? How are the results used to help the student achieve their academic goals?

How are the assessment outcomes used to improve teaching and learning?

How do faculty contribute to the assessment and improvement of academic programs?

How are the student's attitudes, social and ethical values, commitment to scholarship and lifelong learning assessed?

What are the tools used to assess facilities, resources and support services?

How outcomes assessment affects the Campus ongoing self-review, decision, making, planning, resource allocations, and improvement?

How is the Campus assessment plan revised and assessed?

How is the Campus community kept informed about educational effectiveness indicators and its results?

How does the Central Office supports the Campus ' Assessment Plan?

Facilities, Equipment and other Resources

Premise: Many resources provide tangible support for an institution's instructional programs. Part of the duty of the governing board or its administration is to be aware of and employ the full resources of the institution to support current programs and to assure stability over time.

Does the budget adequately support the institution's instructional programs and facilities?

How do allocation of funding for facilities, equipment and other resources enable the Campus to accomplish its goals and objectives?

Is the development of facilities, equipment and other resources contemplated in the Campus Strategic Plan?

Are the facilities adequate to support teaching and learning?

Is the technological infrastructure adequate?

Does the Technology Plan provide guidance in decision-making? Is it tied to the Strategic Plan?

Has the Campus a Facilities Master Plan? Is it tied to the Strategic Plan?

How effective is the Central Office in coordinating the development and updating the University systems technological resources?

Planning and Resources Allocations

Premise: Institutional goals and objectives must provide the foundation for sound institutional planning. The nature and quality of such planning are among the basic indicators of institutional strength. While plans are always subject to change, without plans an institution can quickly lose its sense of purpose and direction.

What is the scope and effectiveness of the Ponce Strategic Planning Process?

How is the Strategic Plan updated and made current?

To what extent do policy-making and resource allocation help achieve campus mission and goals?

To what extent do the mission and goals serve as guidelines for the planning and decision-making process of the Campus?

Do the guidelines include an analysis of the internal and external forces on the institution in order to test working assumptions and priorities?

What is the relationship between the planning process and budgeting?

How is Institutional Strategic Planning integrated into the Campus Strategic Planning?

How are appropriate constituencies involved in the planning process – i.e., faculty, administrators, the president, students, trustees, alumni, and others?

How is the Campus community kept informed about the planning process?

What are the steps in the planning process including development, resource allocation, implementation, and assessment?

How does the Central Office supports the resource and allocation needs of the Campus?

Financial Resources

Premise: Since financial sufficiency is a fundamental aspect of institution viability, financial planning is essential. The institution, through its governing body, must ensure that available or attainable fiscal resources can support programs.

How does the budget support the programs and services offered?

Do the procedures for accounting, financial reporting, and auditing conform to standard practices of the Inter American University of Puerto Rico system?

Does the budget reflect revenue that may be reasonably expected from available or attainable physical resources?

What factors are taken into consideration for budget adjustment?

What is the relationship between the once Campus budget and Central office?

Student Affairs

Premise: Students are the primary beneficiaries of an institution's educational mission. In assessing its goals and objectives, an institution must have knowledge and understanding of contemporary and emerging student's population. This knowledge goes beyond demographics, and it can influence all the academic services offered.

How do students services and policies correspond with the Campus mission, goals and objectives?

How do co-curricular activities complement the academic program?

How are recruitment, retention, and financial aid activities related to each other?

What support services are available to help students succeed academically and personally?

Are admission policies congruent with admission requirements of the academic programs?

How is the diversity of the student populations taking into consideration when developing students' services?

What support services are available for the special student population?

What are the components parts of student services at the Ponce Campus?

What measures have been taken to promote a healthy climate for learning?

How are the Campus policies on alcohol, drug use, and sexual harassment implemented?

To what extent does the Central Office impact student services and activities on the Ponce Campus?

How is the integrity of all the processes related to student services maintained?

What are the professional development opportunities for student's affair personnel?

Are the structures and staffing appropriate to support student's services?

How are the faculty integrated into co-curricular aspects?

How are the student services integrated into the academic aspects?

What retention initiatives are in place? Are they effective?

Library and Learning Resources

Premise: The library and its educational resources facilitate a vital role in enabling the institution to fulfill its mission and goals. It provides to the university community the facilitation of learning and education among its constituents and helps them to become "life long learners."

Are the educational resources sufficiently comprehensive and up-to-date to support the Campus undergraduate programs including print, non-print and electronic resources?

Is the library purchasing enough new resources to maintain current in each field of instruction?

How do faculty and professional library staff participate in collection development and evaluation?

What library services and resources are available off-campus, and how are they provided?

Is there a formal plan for incorporating and assessing information literacy skills in the teaching-learning process?

Are instructional, reference and bibliographic services offered to students, faculty and administrative staff to enable them to identify their information needs and to access, evaluate and utilize the information effectively?

Are library staff qualified and of sufficient number to adequately meet the needs of students, faculty and its administrative personnel?

Are the location and layout of the library convenient for users?

Is the library open, with competent professional help available, at the times when users can conveniently use it?

How effectively are the collections being utilized?

Can any relation of collection utilized be traced to the teaching-learning activities used in different courses?

What are the plans for professional development opportunities for library staff?

Faculty

Premise: Faculty must consist of competent, dedicated individuals, academically prepared and qualified who are responsible for innovation, flexibility and responsiveness, interwoven with quality instruction and student centered. Excellence in instruction is the key goal of the institution, and the Campus should be genuinely committed to it.

What are the roles and responsibilities defined for faculty?

Does all faculties possess the academic qualifications necessary for their corresponding academic program?

How does the faculty evaluation process relate to continuing professional development and strengthening of the teaching and learning process?

To what extent has faculty participated in academic senate and student organizations?

What strategies does the faculty use to assess student learning?

What institutional support is provided to faculty for research and professional development?

How does the Central Office support and encourage faculty development?

How is the integrity of the teaching and learning process supported?

Catalogs, Publication and other Promotional Material

Premise: The Institutional Catalog is the primary publication with which all others must be consistent in content and philosophy. The honesty and accuracy of all official and auxiliary publications reflects on the institution integrity, promoting public trust and the confidence of the educational community.

What kind of information does the University's catalog offer in order for the students to make "informed decisions about their education"?

Are all auxiliary publications consistent with the catalog?

How does the Campus monitor the accuracy and honesty of the information published?

Is the Faculty Handbook comprehensive and clear enough as to orient and guide the faculty in their rights and responsibilities?

Is the Student Handbook available and clear enough as to guide and communicate to the student the policies and regulations related to their rights and needs?

V. OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

The Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus (IAUPR-Ponce) has been involved in ongoing outcome assessment since the last Self-Study review, three years ago. In the past few years the Office of Planning and Evaluation (OPE) has developed a comprehensive assessment plan that emphasizes the collection of data related to the accomplishments of the Campus's mission and goals. The Plan presents our particular definition of assessment, outcomes, programs, services and students. It is focused in three main levels: students, programs and services. (Figure #3)

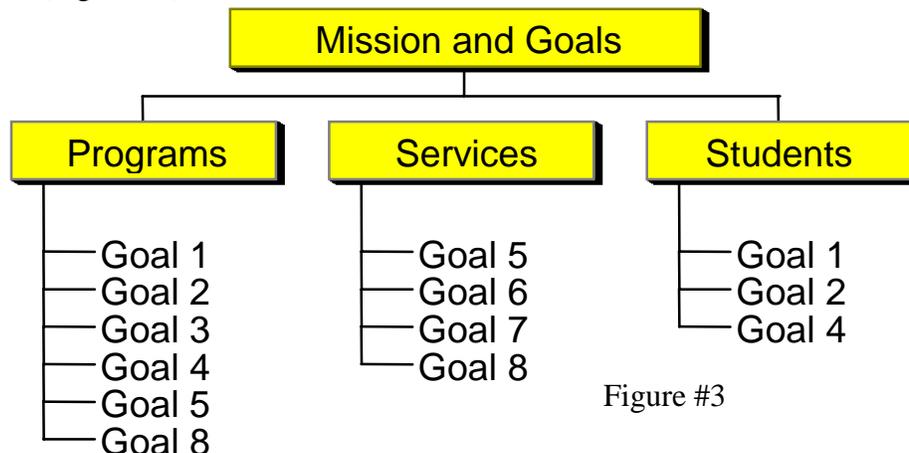


Figure #3

Students Level Assessment

At this level the OPE has developed a comprehensive systematic student survey process which includes: Cooperative Institute Research Program – Freshmen Student Survey (FSS) and College Student Survey (CSS), Freshmen Academic Need Assessment Inventory, Use and Abuse Drugs Questionnaire, Institutional Retention Graduation and Transferred Rates, among others.

Programs Level Assessment

The OPE and the Academic Deanship (AD) have been working with the faculty on the development of academic outcome assessment plans for every academic program based on Nichols (1995) framework. The plans will give direction on program evaluation to determine its effectiveness. Some of the outcomes identified by the faculty are: program retention and graduation rates, employment rates, board and certifications rates, competency based inventories, technology skills, students satisfaction with academic programs, rates of students entering graduates schools, employers questionnaire, among others.

Services Level Assessment

According to our definition, services include all of the Campus support activities available for students, faculty, staff and the outside community. These include admission, registration, financial aid, counseling, the Information Access Center, Computer and Science Labs, Medical Services, etc. Using a variety of instruments, the OPE collects data to measure and improve student services.

Data Gathering

Data is gathered from a variety of sources including existing documents, statistical reports, questionnaires, interviews, surveys, institutional studies, web page documents, internal and external evaluations, among others.

Specific and detailed descriptions of all the data generated by the research process for the self-study and necessary to support the self-study report will be transcribed and stored in DOCUSHARE software. The Middle States Association Evaluation Team will be able to download the documents during the phases of reviewing, clarifying and broadening information needed for their evaluation process. A description of DOCUSHARE software follows.

This software permits users to share documents stored in a secure, controlled environment over the web. All changes to documents are immediately accessible to authorized users. Saving documents in this software is done directly from Microsoft Office Programs into file folders similar to Windows format. Documents are displayed in multiple locations with hyperlinks that point to the most current version of the file. New versions of the documents can be added safely, because the software tracks versions and modifications as well as maintaining the original version intact.

VI. INVENTORY OF SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

An inventory of supporting documents that could be useful in the development of the self-study has been assembled and made available to all teams and committees. Most of the institutional and Campus documents and publications can be downloaded from our web site: <http://ponce.inter.edu>. In addition various offices have been asked to make relevant reports and data available to team members.

The team members have been involved in researching existing data and reports. The Middle States Association publications, as stated early in this report, have been made available to all committees and team members. We realize that as the self-study process move on, some of these documents will need to be reviewed and updated.

To facilitate the process of identifying and handling documents, they have been grouped into five categories: Institutional Documents, Ponce Campus Documents, Middle States Association Publications, Auxiliary Publications, and Others. A partial list of the most important documents follows:

Institutional Documents

General Catalog (1999-01)	Pastoral Plan (1999)
Faculty Handbook (1998)	Student Financial Aid Guide
Faculty Evaluation Manual (1997)	Student Regulations (2000)
Administrative Handbook	Annual Report
Assessment Plan	Governing Documents of the Academic Senate
Strategic Plan	Five Years Development Plan
IAUPR Vision 2012 (1996)	

Ponce Campus Documents

Mission, Goals and Objectives Statement (1990)	CHE Self Study Report (1995)
Student's Manual (1999)	MSA Annual Institutional Profile
Student Organizations Guide (1999)	Periodic Review Report (1998)
Freshman Orientation Guide (1999)	Annual Report
Assessment Plan	Security Manual
Emergency and Crisis Management Plan	Five-Year Development Plan
Strategic Plan	Academic Financial Information Guide (1999)
MSA Self- Study Report (1992)	

Middle States Association

Procedures and Policies Manual (1999)
 Characteristic of Excellence (1994)
 Designs for Excellence (2000)
 Framework for Outcomes Assessment (1996)

Outcomes Assessment Plan (1998)
 Distance Learning Guidelines (1997)
 Librarian Evaluators (1997)
 Chairing and Hosting an Evaluation Team Handbook for Evaluators (2000)

Others

Policies and Regulations for Sexual Harassment
 Policies and Regulations for Drugs and Alcohol Use
 Human Resources Policies
 Total Quality Management Manual
 Federal Regulations for Handicapped, for Occupational Security and Safety

Equal Opportunities Employment, and Others
 Institutional and Campus Statistical Reports Prevention Manual (999)
 Institutional and Campus Information System and Telecommunications Center

VII. TIMETABLE

The timetable for the Campus self-study report began in August 2000, and will culminate in the Fall Semester of 2002, followed by the site visit of the Middle States Association Evaluation Team in February on March 2003. Each committee and team leader is charged with the planning and implementation of their corresponding timetable.

TIMETABLE FOR THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS OF MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION ISSUE ON AUGUST 2000

ACTIVITIES	DATES FOR VPAASP	COMMENTS	DATES FOR PONCE CAMPUS
PHASE I August to December 2000 SELF-STUDY DESIGN			
Steering Committee Designation	August 2000	See p.21 Role of the Steering Committee in Designs for Excellence: Handbook for Institutional Self-Study	September 18, 2000
Orientation visits to the campuses by VPAASP Steering Committee works on Self-Study Design	September to December 2000	Discussion of Timetable, Assessment Plans and Self-Study Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See p. 11-18, Designs for Excellence: Handbook for Institutional Self-Study • See p. 19-20, Designs for Excellence: Handbook for Institutional Self-Study "Assessment" Plan will be included as an Appendix 	October 9, 2000

ACTIVITIES	DATES FOR VPAASP	COMMENTS	DATES FOR PONCE CAMPUS
Letters sent to Chancellors by MSA requesting date for Self-Study preparation visit	October 2000	Campus will choose from the following dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feb. 26-27, 2001 • March 5-9, 2001 • March 12-16, 2001 Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs and Systemic Planning will coordinate schedule with M.S.A.	March 13, 2001
Two representatives from each Campus and Central Office will be invited to participate in the Self- Institute in Philadelphia, PA	November 8 to 9 2000	Dr. Bernardette Feliciano – Dean of Academic Services Prof. Hilda Grace Nazario – Chair of Steering Committee	Attended Nov 7 to 10
MSA staff liaison, Dr. George Santiago, Jr. conducts Self-Study preparation visits to each institution, meetings include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Board of Trustees • President, President staff • Chancellor (alone) • Chancellor with S.C. Chair • Steering Committee • Chancellor Cabinet • Students (representative group) • Faculty (representative group) 	February .to March 2001	Dr. Santiago will discuss the Draft of Self-Study Design, and Re-accreditation Process	March 13, 2001
Submission of Self-Study Design To MSA	April 20, 2001		April 2, 2001
Review of designs by MSA staff liaison (approval process)	May 1, 2001		June 2001
PHASE II August to December 2001 SELF-STUDY DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS			
Data gathering and analysis by Self-Study work groups on campuses and Central Office	August to December 2001	Outcomes analysis according to Characteristics of Excellence ** Steering Committee and Sub-committees begin drafting Self-Study	September 2001
Reports of Self-Study by work groups	August to December 2001	Reports must be in agreement to Characteristics of Excellence **	October 2001
Steering Committee and Sub-Committee begin drafting Self-Study Report	August to December 2001	Executive Committee examines and give feedback to the committees and teams	November 2001
PHASE III January to May 2002 SELF-STUDY COMMUNITY REVIEW			
Integration of work group reports in Self-Study	January to March 2002		Jan. to Feb. 2002
MSA staff liaison selects Chairs for visiting team & institutions approve selection.	January 2002		

ACTIVITIES	DATES FOR VPAASP	COMMENTS	DATES FOR PONCE CAMPUS
MSA staff liaison builds evaluation Teams	February to March 2002		
Community review of Self-Study	April 2002		February to April 2002
VPAASP review drafts of Campus Self-Study Report	May 2002		Send in April 2002
Chairs of Teams and Chancellors approved members of evaluation teams	May-June 2002		May to June 2002
PHASE IV August to December 2002 SELF-STUDY SUBMISSION OF THE REPORT TO THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE OF MSA			
Campus review drafts of Self-Study according to recommendations of the VPAASP	August to October 2002		August to October 2002
Preliminary one-two visit by Chairs to Campuses and Central Offices	October to November 2002	The Design and Self-Study Draft will be sent in advance. The agenda of the visit will be similar as the Self-Study preparation visit in February-March 2001.	August to September 2002
PHASE V January to May 2003 SELF-STUDY EVALUATION COMMITTEE VISIT TO CAMPUS AND RESPONSE TO THE VISIT FINAL REPORT			
Submission of Self-Study to the Evaluation Team and MSA	January 2003	All support documents of the Self-Study must be in English such as : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Handbook • Student Manual • Catalogs • Strategic Plan • Assessment Plan • Information and Telecommunication Plan 	December 2002
Visit of the Evaluation Team to the Inter American University	March 2003		March 2003
Committee on Evaluation Reports meets in P.A.	May 2003		April 2003
Institutional Response to MSA Visit Report	May to June 2003		July 2003
MSA Commission meets to act on re-accreditation of the Institution	June 2003		

List of Abbreviations:

VPAASP: Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs and Systemic Planning

MSA: Middle States Association

SSR: Self-Study Report

S.C : Steering Committee

* The chapter on Governing Board will be included in Central Office Self-Study.

** Characteristics of Excellence

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Institutional Integrity | 10. Organization, Administration and Governance |
| 2. Mission, Goals and Objectives | 11. Governing Board* |
| 3. Students | 12. Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources |
| 4. Faculty | 13. Catalogs, Publications and Other Promotional Materials |
| 5. Educational Program and Curricula | 14. Institutional Change and Renewal |
| 6. Library and Learning Resources: Access and Utilization | 15. Additional Policy Statements and Publications |
| 7. Institutional Effectiveness and Outcomes | |
| 8. Planning and Resource Allocation | |
| 9. Financial Resources | |

VIII. EDITORIAL FORMAT

The report will address both process and content. It will integrate the responses to the questions previously formulated, methodologies, findings for the analysis of strengths and limitations and, an action plan with recommendations. The drafts will be reviewed and edited before integrating them into the final report. The team's final report will be concise, adherence to the charges outlined, and with a maximum of twenty double-space pages. Graphics or figures will be reduced, properly identify and integrated within the body of the report when appropriate. Appendixes and bibliographies will be submitted with the report. Specific and detailed description of all data generated by the process and necessary to support the self-study will be transcribed and stored in DOCUSHARE software (See description of this software in Section V). Finally the teams reports will be submitted in a hard copy and on diskette, using Microsoft Word Version 2000, Times New Roman, 12 point double space.

The final report to be submitted to the Middle States Evaluation Team will be in single space, Times New Roman Font, 12 point, with primary, secondary and tertiary headings. The number of pages of the body of the self-study report will not exceed 100 pages (both sides) or 200 pages (one side). It will be stored in DOCUSHARE and in the Campus Website.

IX. FORMAT OF THE SELF-STUDY

PROPOSED OUTLINE FOR THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMAPRY

Findings

Overview of the Self-Study Process

Recommendations

TABLE OF CONTENT

Introduction

Institutional Profile

Ponce Campus Profile
Methodology

TEAM WORK FINDINGS ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Chapter I Mission, Goals and Objectives**
- Chapter II Organization, Administration and Governance**
- Chapter II Institutional Program and Curricula**
- Chapter IV Institutional, Effectiveness and Outcomes**
- Chapter V Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources**
- Chapter VI Financial Resources**
- Chapter VII Students Affairs**
- Chapter VIII Library and Learning Resources**
- Chapter IX Faculty**
- Chapter X Catalogs, Publications and Other Promotional Material**

FINAL REMARKS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIXES

X. PROFILE OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

Inter American of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus, respectfully requests that the members of the Middle States Association for the evaluation visit include at least four members with basic proficiency in the Spanish language including the Chair and the evaluator for student affairs. The team members should be familiar with and understand our cultural heritage, within a diverse student body. It is important that our uniqueness in the context of our “Puerto Rican” nature be considered. Members should be also familiar with a private institution with various campuses and similar in size and purpose. Specific areas of expertise, which would assist the process, include:

Experience with the incorporation of technology into the teaching-learning paradigm, distance learning and understanding of the changing nature of technology on the Campus

Faculty from the following disciplines: Business, Health Sciences, Education and Criminal Justice.

Librarian evaluator open to non-traditional administrative library structures and roles.

The others members should be from the areas of student services, outcomes assessment and finances.

REFERENCES

Inter American University of Puerto Rico, (1999) General Catalog 1999-200, San Germán, Puerto Rico: Publishing Center.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2000), Handbook for Institutional Self-Study Philadelphia, PA.

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Middle States Commission on Higher Education (1998). Policies and Procedures. (5th Ed.). Philadelphia, PA.

Nichols, J.O. (1995) A practitioner's handbook for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Outcomes Assessment Implementation New York: Agathon Press.

Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus (1990). Mission, Goals and Objectives Statement Ponce, PR.

APPENDIX

One (1) appendix is enclosed.



PONCE CAMPUS FUNCTIONAL CHART

