



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

Periodic Review Report

Presented by:
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Ponce Campus

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

March 9-12, 2003

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Executive Summary

Institutional Overview

Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus (IAUPR-PC), is one of the eleven (11) units of Inter American University of Puerto Rico. Located on Puerto Rico's southern coast near a local airport, IAUPR-PC is a four year, commuter Campus with a student population of 5,367 (Fall Semester 2006-07), mostly from nearby regional towns, but there has also been a recent increase in the number of students residing off Island and studying via the nine (9) distance learning programs offered by the Campus. All of the students are Spanish speaking; fifty-three percent (53%) are first generation college students, and approximately 80% are living below the federal poverty level (based on an average family size of four). The average student is 24 years old and attends class full-time. Approximately seventeen percent (17%) of the student body are admitted as part of the *AVANCE* program which offers services, modalities and schedules designed for the non-traditional adult population. There are ninety-three (93) full-time faculty members, and approximately one hundred and eighty-three (183) part-time faculty teaching IAUPR-PC students. Sixty-three percent (63%) of the full-time professors have at least Master's degree while thirty percent (30%) hold First Professional or Doctoral degrees. Thirty percent (30%) are in different stages of completing their First Professional or Doctoral degrees.

As of 2007, the Campus offers nine (9) technical certificate programs and nine (9) associate degrees of which three (3) are offered through distance learning as well as on-campus. Thirty two (32) bachelor's degrees are offered, six (6) of which are also offered online. The Campus also offers two (2) Professional Certificate programs and four (4) Master's degrees with ten (10) different specializations. A complete list of all academic programs currently offered at the Campus is included as an appendix.

The Campus has three Deans, heading Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Administrative Affairs. The Chancellor, CEO of the Campus, chairs the Administrative Council, which oversees the Deans and Directors. An Enrollment Manager attends to all student services related to admissions, registration, financial aid and collections. The Academic Manager articulates, coordinates and integrates all administrative processes related to the academia. In addition, an Associate Dean is in charge of all affairs related to continuing education, and an Assistant Dean articulates and coordinates all affairs related to the Campus accreditation processes by MSA and the authorization and certification of academic programs issued by the Puerto Rico Council on Higher Education. Another Associate Dean is in charge of the Campus's Distance Learning efforts. Each of the six academic departments is headed by an Academic Director and the services departments and offices are headed either by a Director or a Coordinator. The Ponce Campus organizational chart is included as an appendix.

The Academic Senate, composed of representatives from faculty, administration and students proposes changes related to academic programs and offerings, student and

faculty, manuals, library regulations and procedures, among others aspects of academic life.

The Ponce Campus is committed to providing students, faculty and staff with access to state-of-the-art technology. Blackboard Learning System-Vista is the newly adopted platform by the University system to deliver online courses. The Ponce Campus uses the system extensively as a support tool for on-campus courses as well. Both faculty and students take advantage of the Campus network, Poncenet, by means of a wireless network to access to the Internet, the extensive collection of electronic journals and the Ponce Campus web pages (<http://ponce.inter.edu>) which includes useful information. Every classroom on Campus is equipped with access to the network and data projectors. Full-time faculty members are assigned a computer which in the majority of the cases is a laptop, but part-time faculty members also have access to laptop loans from the Center for Audiovisual Information.

Accreditation Status:

In June of 2003, the Campus received reaffirmation of accreditation, with a request for a monitoring report due on March 1, 2005 which was submitted and accepted by the MSCHE on June 22, 2005.

In February of 2004, the Campus submitted a request for Substantive Change to its accreditation status related to the offering of two associate degree programs offered via distance learning. The MSCHE subsequently included an accreditation status that included distance learning offerings.

In October of 2004, another Substantive Change request was submitted to include Master's Degrees in Education, including Curriculum and Teaching in Spanish, English as a Second Language, History, Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry. In addition, a Master's Degree Program in Criminal Justice and a professional Certificate in Andragogy were also included. The MSCHE reviewed the Campus's accreditation status to include two graduate degrees and a Professional Certificate. A requested monitoring report was submitted by April 2006 and accepted by the accrediting agency.

Another Substantive Change was registered on August of 2005 as the Campus sought to include the Cybernetic Learning Center (CLC) located in Plaza del Caribe Mall within the scope of the campus accreditation as an additional location. Following the submission and acceptance of a monitoring report on April 1, 2006, Dr. Barbara Loftus carried out an on site visit in June of 2007. On November 16, 2007 a revised accreditation status was issued by MSA which included the Plaza del Caribe CLC as an additional location.

Mission and Goals Statement

Inter American University of Puerto Rico's Ponce Campus Mission, revised and approved in January 2003, in accordance with the Institution's mission, establishes as its

main purpose to develop the talents of men and women regardless of their race, color, sex, nationality, social condition, military background, or physical mental or sensorial impediment.

Congruent with this purpose, and committed to democratic and Christian principles, the Ponce Campus's mission is to contribute to ethical, social and cultural activities. In addition, the mission includes occupational and professional preparation of human resources who possess a sense of civic and social responsibility, who can perform as effective leaders in different fields of human activity and who can adapt to different scenarios including those of foreign cultures.

The Ponce Campus's specific mission is to offer educational services of the highest quality to students admitted to undergraduate, graduate, professional and technical programs. The Ponce Campus offers an education of excellence with interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programs related to current market employment demands and with an emphasis on the preparation of professionals who offer direct services to society in the areas of education, social sciences, natural sciences, health sciences, and management; as well as technical personnel for enterprises, government, industry and commerce.

In the preparation of these professionals, a special interest in the development of technological skills, and a humanistic formation necessary for an active and adequate integration into society exists. A variety of academic programs are offered in an effective and efficient manner for both young and adult student populations and in response to student interests and specific needs.

Barriers of time and space have been transcended through the use of technology allowing students to attend to their educational needs at a distance.

The Campus's fundamental commitment is to the quality of the education it offers. For this reason, innovative strategies such as non-traditional study modes, and the regular evaluation of student performance for optimum development of their talents are incorporated into the teaching learning process.

The Mission Statement allows the Ponce Campus to stay in the vanguard, becoming a living laboratory where different strategies are implemented for the continuous improvement of education.

Graduates of Inter American University Ponce Campus are distinguished by:

- Mastery of skills necessary to perform successfully in the workplace and to contribute to the benefit of society
- The ability to express themselves appropriately and correctly orally and in writing
- The ability to effectively use advanced technology

- The ability to adopt a critical attitude towards events and circumstances that surround them
- Awareness of their environment and an appreciation for nature and creativity

The Ponce Campus University Community aspires to achieve the following goals:

- 1 To offer academic programs at the undergraduate, graduate, occupational and professional levels, that meet the needs of the society in accordance with different levels of performance, and with the particular characteristics of traditional and non-traditional students including the adult population.
- 2 To promote an integral education aimed at the effective use of technological advancements such as distance learning; mastery of specialized subject matter and the appreciation of nature and human creativity; thus facilitating the comprehensive formation of individuals.
- 3 To strengthen the teaching and learning process, and encourage research and creative activities in order to achieve optimum student development.
- 4 To encourage faculty's professional development in harmony with their interests, needs and in accordance with the specific expectations within the Campus mission.
- 5 To provide an enriching student life that complements academic formation.
- 6 To provide services of the highest quality to meet the needs of the different sectors of the student population.
- 7 To promote an effective administration, and a healthy financial state, that allows the Campus to offer quality service.
- 8 To increase integration of the Campus and the community that it serves, to such a degree that service objectives can be met.

Approach to Preparing the Periodic Review Report

In preparation for this task, the Campus began by sending key personnel to different workshops and conferences. In December of 2005, two professors (2), one of which is the Assistant Dean of Accreditation, were sent to Baltimore, Maryland to attend the workshop *Periodic Review: Meeting MSA Expectations for Assessment*. These same professors were sent to the *Periodic Review Report* workshop in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in May of 2006. In addition, a group of persons from the University Planning Office, the Assessment Officer, and the Assistant Dean of Accreditation, among others, attended an Assessment Conference specifically addressing the reporting of Assessment Results in San Juan, Puerto Rico in August of 2006.

In January of 2006, a steering committee was formed consisting of members from academic and administrative areas, and collaborators were identified from faculty, administration and student services areas. The tasks were assigned to the steering

committee members based on the content areas for the Periodic Review Report described in the *Handbook for Periodic Review Reports*. Each member of the steering committee was given the task to consult with the different collaborators as well as other members of the campus community in order to gather evidence and information for the different sections of the Report. The Campus's self-study document, the report of the visiting team, the institution's response to the report, as well as letters and follow-up reports were all shared with the steering committee.

IAUPR Central Office organized a institutional committee with the purpose of maintaining consistency among those accreditation affairs common to all units, such as documents and processes lead by the Central System Office related to institutional assessment and others matters.

The Report was written up and circulated for comment among the different collaborators. Then it was distributed electronically to the faculty, students and the university community, for their feedback. It was also sent to the University's Central Office for review. Recommendations, suggestion and comments were analyzed and integrated in the report as needed. The report was edited and once finalized was sent for the corresponding action.

Major Institutional Changes and Developments

Responding to *IAUPR Vision 2010* document, IAU-PC revised its mission and goals inline with those of the institution. (See document in the appendix area). Therefore since its last accreditation in June 2003, the Campus has implemented several changes and developments, starting with a change in the Mission Statement (Standard 1) which was approved by the University's Board of Trustees in January of 2003. The Mission Statement was revised to better reflect the change in direction that the Campus wished to take to include distance learning (Standard 13) and graduate level education (Standard 11) in its offerings. These and other Campus developments are discussed in detail in Section II of this Report.

What you will find in this Report

This report follows the format outlined in the Middle States Association "*Handbook for Periodic Reviews Report, Tenth Edition*". The organization of the report is based on the following areas: Executive Summary, Responses to Recommendations, Challenges and Opportunities, Enrollment and Finance Projections, Assessment and Planning and Budgeting Processes.

Since no recommendations were given to the Ponce Campus as a result of the last Evaluation Team visit, the report focuses primarily on the Ponce Campus's major challenges and current opportunities resulting from its revised Mission Statement, including the development of graduate level offerings and distance learning.

Section III of the report provides an analysis of enrollment and finance trends and projections for the next five years as well as the assumptions on which they are based. Section IV includes a detailed discussion of the assessment process and plans both at the institutional and student learning levels. Finally, the last section of the report includes a discussion of institutional planning and how these processes are linked to budgeting processes.

Documents included as appendixes are those requested in the handbook, in addition to documents that support or enhance several sections of the report.

This report covers the academic years from June 2003 to June 2007.

Section I: Response to Recommendations

Inter American University of Puerto Rico's Ponce Campus received its final report from the Evaluation Team representing the Middle States Commission on Higher Education after studying the Campus's Self-Study Report and a visit to the campus on March 9-12, 2003.

No recommendations by the team were given in this report; however several valuable suggestions were given by the evaluation team which the Campus carefully considered. These suggestions were for the most part related to Assessment activities, an area that is covered quite extensively in this Periodic Review Report. Other suggestions were related to planning and finance, areas that are also discussed in the corresponding sections of this report.

In general, the Evaluation Team reported that the Ponce Campus had met all the characteristics of excellence and many strengths and commendations were pointed out.

At its June 25-26, 2003 session, the MSCHE acted to reaffirm Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus's accreditation. A monitoring report documenting the development and implementation of a comprehensive written plan for the assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning was requested to be due by March 2005. The monitoring report submitted by the campus was accepted by the MSCHE on June 22, 2005. The Campus was asked to submit information related to further development and implementation of the Assessment Plan in the Periodic Review Report. Section IV of this report: Assessment Processes and Plans cover this area in detail.

Section II: Major Challenges and/or Opportunities

The last evaluation visit found the Campus on the cusp of some very innovative changes that, because of the period covered by the Self-Study Report, were not included in the evaluation, but were already well underway at the time. Among those changes was the adoption of the newly revised Mission Statement, the implementation of Distance Learning with several programs offered completely online, initiation of the Campus's first academic offerings at the graduate level and the opening of several community computing centers known as Cybernetic Learning Centers in different parts of the Island including one in a nearby shopping mall. These innovations, coupled with revamped efforts on assessing learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness have provided the Campus with many opportunities to learn and grow since the last visit and at the same time presented challenges for future developments.

Mission Statement

The Campus Mission Statement was revised and approved by the Board of Trustees in January of 2003, to better reflect the change in direction that the Campus wished to take to include distance learning (Standard 13) and graduate level education (Standard 11) among other areas in its offerings. A great deal of reflection was given to the proposed changes before submitting them to the President and the Board of Trustees. The changes reflected in the new Mission Statement guided the presentation of principle changes and progress of the Campus described in this Periodic Review Report. The revised Mission Statement can be found in Executive Summary of this report.

Distance Learning: Opportunities

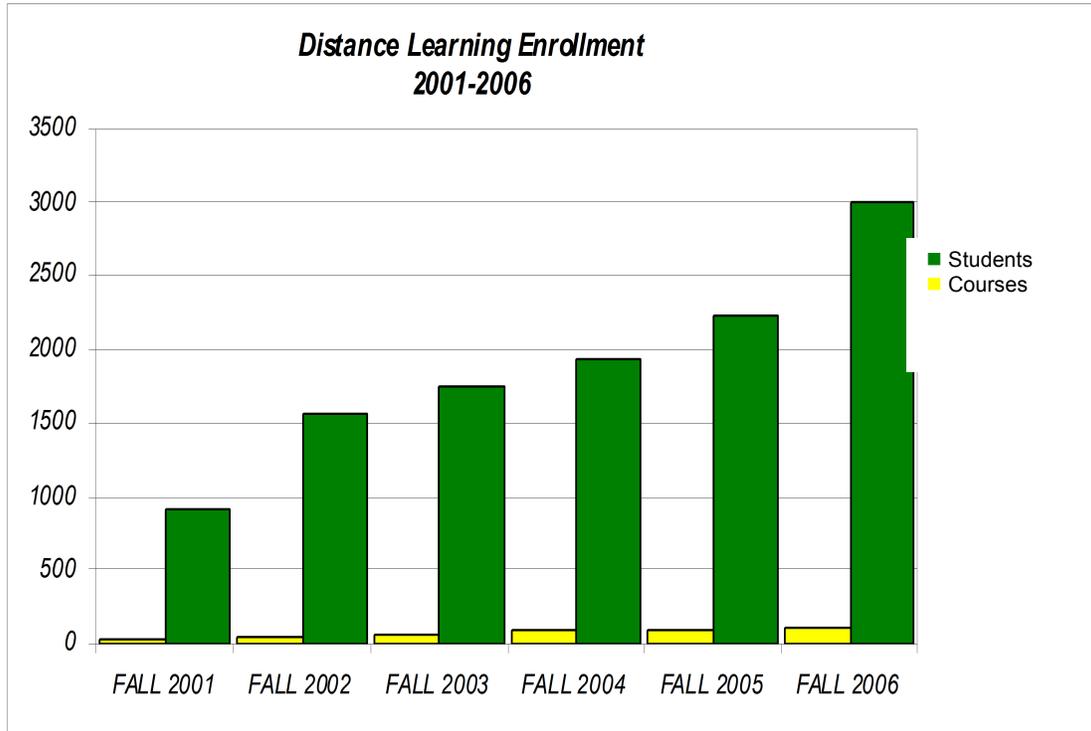
The first major change to arise as part of the change in Mission was the opportunity to raise Distance Learning from being an experimental albeit successful educational innovation to the status of significant academic offering of the Campus. The development of a campus "without boundaries" (IAUPR Vision 2012) provides access to educational opportunities to students who, because of geographic or social factors, would not otherwise be able to complete their academic goals. The first two programs to be recognized by the Middle States Association in 2004 were the Associate Degrees in Business Administration and in Accounting. As a result, the accreditation status was reviewed to include distant learning offerings. Later, seven additional undergraduate degrees were authorized by the Puerto Rican Council on Higher Education to be offered in their entirety at a distance (online). Although the majority of the students registered in online courses are on-campus students who take one or two courses online, the number of students registering entirely online has increased significantly since the last accreditation visit. As a result of the development of new distance learning programs as well as a variety of additional courses offered using a virtual format, the Campus has been able to transcend spatial boundaries and reach out to students worldwide.

From the Fall of 2002 with 24 courses on line and 473 in enrollment, to the Fall of 2006 with 93 courses and 2,225 in student enrollment, the Campus has experienced a 379% increase in the past five years.

Figure 2.1 shows the significant enrollment growth in this new modality in the past five years. This increase, when compared with total student enrollment on campus, reveals a marked tendency for the selection of distance learning as an alternative mode of study.

With the Institution’s opening of a new Cybernetic Learning Center in Orlando, Florida, the Campus now has the opportunity to reach this population more easily. The large Hispanic population in this state has already begun to show interest in many of the programs currently offered by the Campus, and the possibility of developing programs that meet the specific needs of this demographic and geographic area is a possibility for the near future.

Figure 2.1:



ent 2001-2006

Distance Learning Enrollment

Faculty training in the areas of course development, use of the Blackboard Vista platform for delivery of online courses and the pedagogical aspects of teaching and managing online courses has been ongoing since 2003 (See Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2
Faculty Development in Distance Learning Modalities

Distance Learning: Challenges

Although Distance Learning has provided the University and its students with great opportunities for growth, several challenges related to this offering have arisen. One of the major challenges is the cost-effectiveness analysis. This type of innovation is much too complex to analyze based on simple income-expenditure analysis. Other factors, including the number of classrooms that would be needed to accommodate these additional sections, the additional parking space required if these students were to come to campus and the amount of time these students spend “taking-class” from their homes and not using Campus facilities all need to be considered. So cost analysis needs to consider not only what the Campus spends in software licenses, faculty development and technical personnel versus the income generated through enrollment, but also the relative savings that may – or may not—be occurring as a result of this type of program offering. The Campus is working closely with the IAUPR Central Office in developing a model that would allow the Institution to analyze cost-effectiveness of distance learning. In addition, and closely tied to the cost-effectiveness issue, is that of assessing learning outcomes and retention of the distance learning students. The Campus is working arduously to develop effective data collection and measurement strategies specifically designed for this type of modality and student population.

Another challenge for the distance learning programs has been the development of services for these students and faculty training, all of which have been met satisfactorily by the Institution. The Campus created an Associate Dean’s position in 2003 with support personnel specifically to work with the students and faculty. The Enrollment Management Office has designated a person to serve as liaison to off-campus and off-Island Distance Learning Students (or prospective students), and the Information Access Center has paid special attention to ensuring that Distance Learning students have access to information and services offered by the librarians. The great majority of the electronic journals and databases are available off-campus through remote login. The library staff have created and maintained an online newsletter titled CAI@Distancia which disseminates information about the Center’s services and resources available for distance learning students. Librarians are also available to distance learning students through a dedicated e-mail address.

Tutoring services are currently available through online modules and by telephone, but as the number of off-campus and off-Island students registered in online courses continues to grow, innovative means for meeting the demand will need to be developed. Similar challenges will exist for services such as those provided by the professional counselors on site.

Faculty Training is ongoing, and provides the Campus with the challenge of training not only its full-time faculty but also the increasing number of adjunct faculty that will be needed as the distance learning program continues to grow. This is a challenge that the Campus is fully prepared to meet with two Blackboard Certified Trainers on Campus, and funding from the Campus budget for faculty development in this area is readily available.

Promotion and recruitment efforts specifically directed towards prospective off-Island students have proven to be particularly challenging. Identifying possible advertising sources in different parts of the world is something new to the Campus and the Institution in general. Combining efforts with the Central Office to develop strategies that will emphasize not only the Institutional Distance Learning Project but also Campus-specific programs is an area that needs attention in the future.

Cybernetic Learning Centers (CLC): Opportunities

Related to the Distance Learning offerings, the Campus initiated conversations with Plaza del Caribe Mall, a large shopping complex, located about two miles from the campus, with the goal of establishing a center at the Mall. The initial idea was to provide a place for prospective students to inquire about University offerings, provide preliminary admissions and registration services, and – what is today the principle use of the center – to provide distance learning students with easy access to up-to-date computers and internet access for their online courses. This center serves students who do not have access to internet from their homes, and as a place to take their proctored exams in the hours of Mall operation (7 days a week, 9:00a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 11:00a.m. – 5:00p.m. on Sundays).

The Center was visited by the Evaluation Team representing the MSCHE in June of 2003 and it was commended as “state of the art center for employing technology”. In June of 2007, Dr. Barbara S. Loftus, Vice President, Middle States Commission on Higher Education carried out an on-site visit focused on verification of the information originally included in the August 2005 substantive change proposal for an additional location. The agenda included a visit to the facilities and an evaluation of resources available to students, an analysis of IAUPR-PC capabilities to manage and deliver programs at a distance from the campus and meetings with faculty members and administrative staff who use and/or manage the Center. On November 16, 2007 a revised accreditation status was issued by MSA which included the CLC as an additional location.

This Center, unlike any other on the Island and possibly elsewhere in the world, has won local and international recognition including:

- 2005 Arch of Europe award, Frankfurt, Germany; Gold Category – Award for Quality and Use of Technology to Serve Clients. Awarded by Business Initiative Directions (BID) Spain.
- 2006 International Star of Quality award, Paris France, Silver Category – Award for Quality and Use of Technology to Serve Clients. Awarded by Business Initiative Directions (BID) Spain.
- 2007 Century International Quality Era Award,, Geneva, Switzerland – Diamond, Category – Award for Quality, Innovation and Use of Technology to Serve Clients Awarded by Business Initiative Directions (BID) Spain.

- 2006-07-Quest Competition Winner; Manufacturers Association of Puerto Rico –winner in the category of Best Project in the Service Sector for the Southern area and Island wide.
- 2006 Best Services Enterprise award – Plaza del Caribe Mall- Ponce 2006

Both the Puerto Rican Council on Higher Education and the Middle States Association has recognized the Plaza del Caribe Cybernetic Learning Center as an Additional Site for offering instruction. It is currently used to offer some courses from the graduate programs and from the Business Administration undergraduate programs. This site attends approximately 1,150 persons monthly including IAUPR-PC students, high school students from the area and visitors from different parts of the world.

As a result of the increased exposure of the University through its distance learning students and its first Cybernetic Learning Center, different public and private organizations have asked the Ponce Campus to create additional Centers in nearby towns.

Three additional Cybernetic Learning Center have been established in the towns of Yauco, Juana Díaz and Coamo. At present, another Center in the town of Villalba is in the planning stage. The Coamo Center was authorized by the Puerto Rico General Education Council (PRGEC), the official government agency that authorizes and certifies technical programs, to offer technical certificates courses (non academic programs). This has provided the Campus with the opportunity to connect with the community it serves in a new and exciting way as well as to provide additional services to its students – both online and on-campus from these places; however there are no immediate plans to convert these other centers in additional locations for academic offerings.

Cybernetic Learning Centers: Challenges

Like the distance learning programs, determining cost-effectiveness of the Cybernetic Learning Centers is quite a challenge for the Campus. The Plaza del Caribe Mall site pays a significantly lower rent than other locales in this commercial center, but it is still considerable. Determining whether this cost is effective is not an easy task. Unlike stores located in the mall, the Center has no direct income. Student registration costs are not directly tied to services offered at the CLC; however, the Campus is working with the Central Office on formulas that will allow us to assess this particular service-oriented aspect of the Campus in financial terms. The other Centers that have opened have little or no rent costs due to a collaborative agreement between the Campus and the municipality government of each town. However the investment in terms of equipment and personnel needs to be assessed in relation to the services offered at these sites.

Graduate Studies: Opportunities

Another opportunity for growth resulting from the change in Mission has been the initiation of graduate level studies at the Ponce Campus. Beginning with a Master's Degree program in Education and Curriculum with six (6) different specializations, the Campus has provided teachers from the area with the possibility to develop in their field of expertise as well as increase their knowledge in the area of curriculum design and evaluation. Subsequent to the approval of the Master's in Education, the Campus received authorization from the Puerto Rican Council on Higher Education to begin the Master's Programs in Criminal Justice, Master's in Education in Teaching at the Elementary Level and Master's in Business in International Business Administration. The latter includes four (4) areas of specialization. The interest in these programs has been exceptional, and enrollment has exceeded projections for various terms (See Table 3.5 in section III of this report.), this in spite of the existence of nearby competing institutions offering these same types of programs.

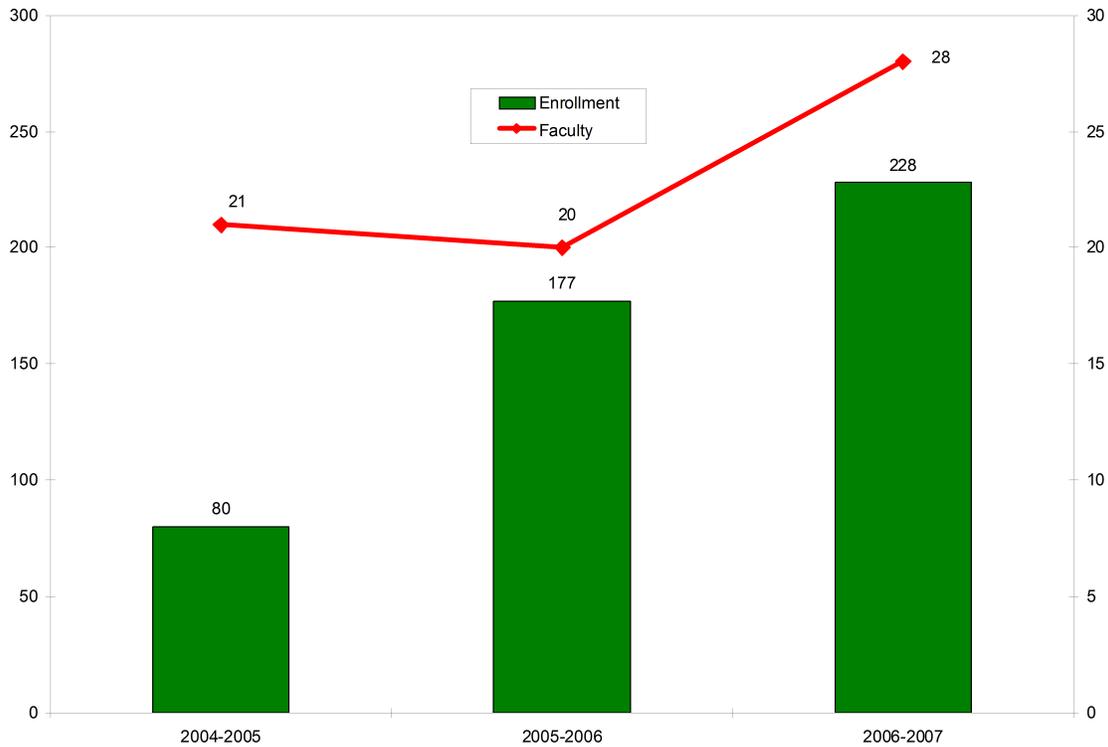
Figure 2.3: Graduate program enrollment by trimester from 2004-05 to 2006-07

Graduate Studies: Challenges

Faculty

Incorporating graduate level studies posed several challenges for the Campus including the hiring of qualified faculty (See Figure 2.4) and preparing library and other student services for this type of program and students (Tables 2.1 and 2.2). Fifteen (15) full-time faculty members are currently completing their doctoral studies. Some of these are potential candidates for teaching in the graduate program. The Campus has supported these efforts through several strategies including: scholarships, release-time, and payment of travel expenses, class schedule arrangement, leaves and sabbaticals.

*Figure 2.4: Graduate Program Enrollment and Full Time Faculty with Doctoral Degrees 2004 to 2006-07**



**Source: PC Enrollment report for August (Fall) Terms*

Information Access Center

The Center for Access to Information worked closely with faculty to develop its collections for the graduate programs, and of course the challenge was not only to select appropriate materials but to assign appropriate budget for their acquisition. A summary of budget allocation and acquired resources by academic program for the last three years can be observed in tables 2.1 and 2.2.

Table 2.1: Assigned Library Budget by Graduate Programs

| Graduate Program | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 | 2006-2007 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| International Business Administration | \$14,000 | \$12,000 | \$12,000 |
| Education and Curriculum | \$20,000 | \$16,000 | \$14,000 |
| Elementary Education | N/A | \$14,000 | \$12,000 |
| Criminal Justice | \$3,100 | \$3,000 | \$3,000 |

Table 2.2: Resources for Graduate Programs requested by faculty to

Strengthen the library collection (2004-07)

| Graduate Program | Recommendations |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| International Business Administration | 21 |
| Education and Curriculum | 762 |
| Elementary Education | 105 |
| Criminal Justice | 179 |
| Total | 1,067 |

The Information Access Center was also presented with the challenge to provide these new students with Information Skills instruction appropriate for their level. In 2005, the Coordinator for Information Skills administered a Needs Study for Information Literacy to students from the different graduate programs. Short and long-term action plans were then developed taking into consideration the graduate students' reported needs, preferences and learning styles. In addition, a separate study room was designated and equipped for exclusive use by these students.

Section III: Enrollment and Finance Trends and Projections

Both enrollment trends and finances at Inter American University of Puerto Rico's Ponce Campus have been stable and based on reliable assumptions. The Campus has consistently met projected enrollment and income over the years covered by this report. Finances are congruent with expected enrollment and Campus has little or no long term debt to hinder its development.

Assumptions

Enrollment and Campus finances are closely related since tuition provides for over 80% of its income. Projections are based on historical data from the past 10 years providing numbers to work with a multiple regression formula which includes the number of students and the number of credits per student per term. Historically, the Spring (January-May) semester enrollment is lower than the Fall semester and this is also taken into consideration.

High school graduation rates and other external factors such as the Island's economy and competing institutions of higher education in the area are also taken into consideration for yearly enrollment projections and budget planning.

In addition, when a new academic program is contemplated, initial enrollment is calculated at 25 students a year for undergraduate programs and 10 students a year for graduate programs. Appropriate retention rates are also considered when projecting enrollment in new programs over a 5 year period.

The Campus keeps a close eye on enrollment trends considering both the number of students and the number of credits per student, and adjusts projections accordingly. For example, after observing a steady decline in student enrollment in the second Summer session (July) and a proportionate increase in enrollment in the two-week intensive terms which run just prior to initiation of the Fall and Spring semesters, the Campus decided to eliminate the July term. The Campus now uses this time to carry out major physical plant and maintenance projects that might otherwise interfere with academics in regular terms.

Enrollment Trends

As can be seen in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, annual enrollment at the IAUPR-PC has stabilized at around 5,000 students. In the current year (2006-07), enrollment was at 5,062 in the Fall semester and 4,880 in the Spring, both terms with a little over 12 credits per student.

Also noticeable in these tables is the elimination of the second summer session mentioned previously as well as a decline in the October and March terms reserved for the non-traditional students admitted under the Institution's AVANCE program. This is not entirely unexpected since students from this program are free to register in regular

terms, and many of the non-traditional modalities such as independent study and courses by contract are also offered in the regular terms.

Table 3.1: July to December enrollment (2003-2007)

| ACADEMIC YEAR | JULY 2nd Summer Session | | AUGUST Fall Semester | | OCTOBER Fall Trimester | |
|----------------|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|
| | Students | Credits | Students | Credits | Students | Credits |
| 2003-04 | 507 | 3.45 | 5070 | 12.24 | 67 | 11.63 |
| 2004-05 | 504 | 3.47 | 5127 | 12.33 | 50 | 10.56 |
| 2005-06 | 425 | 3.40 | 5161 | 12.10 | 40 | 11.00 |
| 2006-07 | 0 | 0.00 | 5062 | 12.10 | 11 | 8.50 |
| AVERAGE | 478.67 | 3.44 | 5105 | 12.19 | 42 | 10.42 |

Table 3.2: January to June enrollment (2003-2007)

| ACADEMIC YEAR | JANUARY Spring Semester | | MARCH Spring Trimester | | JUNE 1st Summer Session | |
|----------------|----------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------|
| | Students | Credits | Students | Credits | Students | Credits |
| 2003-04 | 4606 | 12.21 | 116 | 10.11 | 940 | 3.76 |
| 2004-05 | 4807 | 12.10 | 85 | 10.60 | 804 | 3.50 |
| 2005-06 | 4896 | 12.00 | 51 | 9.60 | 887 | 3.70 |
| 2006-07 | 4880 | 12.05 | 75 | 11.50 | 650 | 3.50 |
| AVERAGE | 4797.25 | 12.09 | 81.75 | 10.45 | 820.25 | 3.62 |

Table 3.3 shows the increase in enrollment in the two-week intensive terms offered at the beginning of August and January before regular Fall and Spring semesters begin.

Table 3.3: Two-week intensive term enrollment (2003-2007)

| ACADEMIC YEAR | AUGUST (Intensive term) | | JANUARY (Intensive term) | |
|----------------|----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| | Students | Credits | Students | Credits |
| 2003-04 | 1298 | 2.2 | 788 | 2.5 |
| 2004-05 | 1294 | 2.4 | 727 | 2.8 |
| 2005-06 | 1541 | 2.4 | 1163 | 2.5 |
| 2006-07 | 1533 | 2.3 | 1056 | 2.7 |
| AVERAGE | 933.5 | 2.62 | 1416.5 | 2.32 |

Enrollment projections have been consistent with actual enrollment for these years as can be seen in table 3.4. The number of credits taken per undergraduate student in the regular term has also stabilized around 12 but there has been an increase in retention rates from 87.18 in 2003 to 96.40% in 2006-07.

Table 3.4: Undergraduate enrollment projection versus actual enrollment (2003-2007)

| Fall Term | Projection | Achievement | % |
|-----------|------------|-------------|------|
| 2003-04 | 5050 | 5064 | 100% |
| 2004-05 | 5000 | 5128 | 103% |
| 2005-06 | 5050 | 5158 | 102% |
| 2006-07 | 5140 | 5062 | 98% |

The Campus was able to make decisions about eliminating the July term partly due to the success of the two-week intensive terms, but also because it initiated its first graduate programs in 2004 which provided an additional source of enrollment and additional terms. The graduate programs are offered on a trimester basis: August-October, November-February and March-May. Table 3.5 notes that projections for enrollment in the graduate programs have consistently been met and often exceeded in the period covered by this report.

Table 3.5: Graduates enrollment projection versus actual enrollment (2004-2007)

| Academic Year | Trimester | Projected | Achieved | % |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|--------|
| 2004-2005 | August-October | 75 | 80 | 106.7% |
| | November-February | 68 | 80 | 117.0% |
| | March-May | 60 | 79 | 131.7% |
| 2005-2006 | August-October | 175 | 176 | 100.0% |
| | November-February | 203 | 180 | 88.7% |
| | March-May | 180 | 222 | 123.3% |
| 2006-2007 | August-October | 195 | 228 | 116.9% |
| | November-February | 135 | 222 | 164.4% |
| | March-May | 100 | 219 | 219.0% |

Financial Trends

Because of its stable enrollment figures, and accurate predictions, the Campus has a solid financial situation that permits its continuing development. It has been able to contribute to payment of systemic services offered by IAUPR Central Office while investing in the development and maintenance of Campus physical plant and infrastructure without incrementing debt.

As mentioned previously, finances are tightly linked to enrollment trends, since 80% of the Campus income is derived from tuition. In the past 5 years, the Ponce Campus operational budget has increased annually by approximately 4%. For the Fiscal Year 2002-03, the operational budget was \$18,790,801.00, and five years later (2006-07) it had increased to \$22,578,630.00 in 2006-2007. Therefore the Campus has reached and exceeded the projected income observed in table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Projected versus actual income (2002-2007)

| Academic Year | Total Annual Income | | |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | Projection | Actual | Difference (+) |
| 2002-2003 | \$18,790,801.00 | \$19,688,492.32 | \$897,691.32 |
| 2003-2004 | \$20,289,439.82 | \$20,558,844.66 | \$269,404.84 |
| 2004-2005 | \$21,379,294.50 | \$21,763,748.11 | \$384,453.61 |
| 2005-2006 | \$22,846,423.00 | \$23,280,346.72 | \$433,923.72 |
| 2006-2007 | \$22,578,630.00 | \$23,053,371.52 | \$474,741.52 |

Table 3.7 illustrates the projected and achieved enrollment income for each of the academic terms 2006-07.

Table 3.7: Projection vs. enrollment and accumulative incomes 2006-07

Also because of its solid financial status, the Ponce Campus has been able to invest close to eight (8) million dollars of its operational budget in permanent improvements during the past five years (See Table 3.8). These projects included the optimization of electrical plants with sophisticated equipment for more efficiency, development of specialized technical laboratories, landscaping, further development of the Campus technological infrastructure (including the Cybernetic Learning Centers) and construction of recreational-sport facilities. This was done without incurring in debt that would hinder future development.

Table 3.8: Investments in permanent improvements (2001-2008)

| Fiscal Year | Budget (in millions) |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2002-2003 | \$1.58 |
| 2003-2004 | \$2.24 |
| 2004-2005 | \$1.47 |
| 2005-2006 | \$2.07 |
| 2006-2007 | \$1.04 |
| Total | \$8.40 |

Debt Management

Preferring to work with funding from the annual operational budget in recent years, the Campus debt is steadily decreasing. In fact, the annual repayment of the current debt represents only 0.03 % of the total annual budget, and continuous assessment and structured planning have resulted in an effective balance between revenues and expenses at the Ponce Campus.

Financial Statements and Auditing

The development of financial statements and auditing are carried out at the Institutional level, and not at the Campus level. (IPEDS and institutional auditing reports are included as appendixes).

Enrollment and Financial Projections

Table 3.9 provides a five-year enrollment and budget projection starting from the current year 2007-08. These figures are consistent with the current economic situation predicted by the Puerto Rico Planning Board. To obtain the projections, an equation which uses 10 year data of freshman, juniors, seniors, and sophomores students to predict Fall enrollments were applied. Using SPSS an additional column was created to confirm previous enrollments and predict 2008-09 to 2012-13.

Fall (august) enrollment data are used as the data base to predict further enrollment and therefore budget decisions. The R-Square and R-Square Adjusted shows that this model adequately predicts future enrollments.

The Regression Equation formula used to predict enrollment from 2008-09 to 2012-13 is as follows:

$$R\text{-Square} = 0.998, \text{ Adjusted } R\text{-Square} = 0.992$$

Table 3.9: Fall Enrollment vs. Budget Projection (2007-20013)

| Fiscal Year | Enrollment | Budget |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| August 2007-08 | 5476 | \$23,053,372 |
| August 2008-09* | 5345* | \$23,975,506 * |
| August 2009-10* | 5394* | \$24,694,772 * |
| August 2010-11* | 5413* | \$25,435,615 * |
| August 2011-12* | 5448* | \$25,689,971 * |
| 2012-13* | 5455* | \$26,460,670 * |

*Projected

Figure 3.1 shows the alignment between previous, current and projected fall enrollment and budget from 2003-04 to 2012-13. Budget projections for 2008-09 to 2012-13 consider an increase of 2-3% of previous year budget.

Figure 3.1: Previous and Current Enrollment and Budget Projection

Section IV: Assessment Processes and Plans

Introduction

Since the last MSA Self-Study Report, Inter American University of Puerto Rico- Ponce Campus (IAUPR-PC) has been involved in an outcome assessment crusade. In 2004, key personnel from the Office of Evaluation and Planning and the Deanship of Studies participated in the 14th Annual Institutional Effectiveness Associates Workshop presented by Dr. James Nichols at New Orleans, Louisiana. That workshop gave the Campus a broad idea of what institutional effectiveness and outcomes assessment meant when related to accreditation. The assessment techniques and strategies used up to that point by the Campus were not, in reality, considered learning outcomes assessment, since the activities carried out by the Campus were focused on the collection of data related to processes instead of the outcomes of student learning. They were indirect measures of assessment instead of direct student learning outcomes. Becoming aware of this motivated a revision of the existing Campus academic and non-academic assessment plans.

In February of 2005, Dr. Nichols offered a three day workshop *Improving Student Learning based Upon Assessment Results* to the faculty and administrators of IAUPR-PC. Subsequently, the Campus began the revision of the Master Assessment Plan (MAP) and assessment strategies. New plans for the Teacher Education Program, Business and Masters degree programs were drafted, and presented to Dr. Nichols at the 15th Annual Institutional Effectiveness Associates conference, that summer. He approved the efforts and made additional suggestions for the development and implementation phases of the Campus assessment project.

The Campus has identified more than 40 educational programs that needed a revision of their initial outcome assessment criteria. The Administrative Support Service offices were also asked to revise their outcomes criteria to better comply with the MAP requirements. Priorities were set with an emphasis on the educational programs. In the interim, personnel of the Office of Evaluation and Planning and the Deanship of Studies continued professional development in the area of assessment. Personnel from these offices participated in the following workshops:

- Applied Statistics for Institutional Research, Planning and Management Institute sponsored by the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) in Indianapolis (2005)
- 2006 Foundations II Institute: Advanced Practice of Institutional Research sponsored by AIR in Atlanta, Georgia.
- 2006 National Student Satisfaction and Engagement (NSSE) Summer Academy at Rio Grande, PR. This academy was sponsored by the Building Engagement and Attainment of Minority Students (BEAMS) Project.
- 2006 Institutional Effectiveness Assessment for Beginners Workshop, Assessing Student Learning in General Education and Assessing Student Learning in Academic Programs. These workshops were sponsored by MSA in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Meanwhile, the IAUPR-PC was accepted as one of the 2005 BEAMS Cohort. The Building Engagement and Attainment of Minority Students project (BEAMS), is a partnership between the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education, and the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) funded by Lumina Foundation for Education. BEAMS is a 5-year initiative to improve retention, achievement, and institutional effectiveness at Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) that are members of the Alliance. Participating institutions include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (MSIs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (NSSE, n.d). Participation in this program required the administration of the National Student Satisfaction Survey (NSSE) to a sample of freshman and senior students from the 2005 cohort. The goal was to improve the undergraduate experience on Campus, focusing on those aspects that foster student engagement and retention. All of these strategies were incorporated in the Master Assessment Plan.

IAUPR-PC Assessment Process

According to Nichols, institutional effectiveness is the process of improving quality by assessing achievement of goals and adjusting services to achieve future goals For IAUPR-PC, institutional effectiveness is achieved through the improvement of their programs and student services, as proposed in its mission and goal statement. Those efforts are channeled through its Master Assessment Plan (MAP) wick it is included in the appendixes section.The IAUPR-PC Master Assessment Plan (IAUPR-PC-MAP) presents the Campus’s particular assessment design focusing on two principal areas: program level and service level assessment activities, and their relation to the IAUPR-PC mission and goals. (See Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Relation of Assessment Levels to Mission and Goals Statement



Levels and Phases of the Master Assessment Plan

The Ponce Campus MAP organizes assessment activities at two levels: programs and services. The **Programs Level Assessment** includes information related to the Ponce Campus goals one through four. It includes all the academic degrees and the General Education program (GEP). For this area, the Office of Evaluation and Planning and the Office of the Dean of Academic Studies worked together with the faculty towards the development of academic outcome assessment plans based on Nichols (2005) framework for every academic program.

The **Services Level Assessment** level is comprised of information about the services provided to the academic community and is related to goals five through eight of the Campus Mission Statement. The Campus definition of *services* includes all of the Campus support activities available for students, faculty, staff and the external community. These include admissions, registration, financial aid, counseling, library services, laboratories and other academic and student support areas.

Each one of the program and service assessment plans designed to measure the student learning outcomes or student services were constructed using four phases: design, implementation, data collection and evaluation. **The Design phase** includes the identification of the principal outcomes from each area and the preliminary performance indicator for each one, whereas the **Implementation phase** is concerned with the development of instruments, including the sequence of the validation process. The logistics of the plan are developed, including time frame schedules and by whom the schedules are going to be executed. Desired performance is determined and measured through a variety of instruments or sources in the **Data collection phase**. Surveys, statistical reports, retention, graduation and transfer rates, state government reports, and satisfaction surveys and other means of measure are used. The University System Central Office facilitates data and Institutional Statistical Reports to be used for institutional analysis and comparability. Lastly, the **Evaluation phase** involves the analysis of the performance indicators to make proper adjustments if needed. Institutional decisions are tied to assessment results.

Results

Since the last Evaluation Visit, the Campus has made great strides in its student learning outcomes assessment efforts. An assessment and monitoring officer was recruited and assigned to the Deanship of Studies. Besides dealing with the academic component of the assessment paradigm; the primary purpose of this Office includes but it is not limited to; the coordination and implementation of in-house faculty workshops on student learning assessment, in addition to working and collaborating with the faculty on the formulation of academic program assessment plans with emphasis on student learning assessment. The institution does not mandate how student learning assessment is to be accomplished, however the Master Assessment Plan sets forth shared educational values, principles and

goals, and recommends a variety of measures to determine the extent to which administrative processes and student learning assessment is occurring and supported. Each academic program and associated students services defines its own specific student-learning goals that are appropriate and meaningful to the program or the service. The assessment office and its officer have been an important component in this endeavor. They have trained, collaborated and assisted the faculty in the formulation of academic programs assessment. As a result 94% (32) of current academic programs have developed their assessment plans. Programs that have not completed the design phase are those of new creation. It is expected that new programs will have the assessment plan completed by their third year of implantation. Meanwhile, efforts are directed to the Collection and evaluation phases of the remaining programs. The structure and main components of the plans are incorporated into the Master Assessment Plan which can be found in the appendixes of this report. The next sections will present assessment results for each of the levels described in the MAP.

To develop and implement assessment plans for each of our campus programs proved to be a formidable task. Developing individual program assessment plans has consumed more time and required more follow-up than the Campus initially anticipated. The Dean of Studies has continually spoken at faculty meetings about the status of plans based on the four phases, and yet at the time of this report, many programs were just beginning the implementation phase (A table showing stage of implementation progress by program is included as an appendix.) However, the development of a culture of evidence has slowly arisen and various data collection instruments have been selected, or developed and revised. The results and their impact on program curriculum have been disseminated to the faculty and university community thus systematically providing feedback to staff and students about the importance of assessment activities. For this section, some of the more significant activities are presented from the General Education Program, Faculty development and programs which require students to take external certification or licensing examinations.

Program Level Results

General Education Program

The IAUPR General Education Program (GEP) is made up of five major components: Basic Skills, which includes English, Spanish, Math and Information and Computer Literacy; Philosophical and Esthetic Thought, Christian Thought, Historical and Social Context, Scientific and Technological Context, as well as a Health, Physical Education and Recreation component. Assessment efforts have initially focused on the Basic Skills component. The General Education curriculum was revised prior to the assessment process. Faculty members were trained in item construction by the College Board Officers in order to develop a battery of tests to measure English, Spanish, math and other skills. In 2005, the design and validation of those tests began and are now in the final phase.

In a second phase of the GEP assessment project, and following the same methodology, a test was constructed to assess other components of the GEP that were not included initially in the first battery of test. The Ponce Campus faculty participated in the validation phase of these exams. The tests are expected to be implemented Institution-wide during the academic year 2008-09.

In the meantime, the IAUPR-PC administered the National Student Satisfaction and Engagement (NSSE) survey in 2005 to collect additional information about its students' engagement and how they compare to students from other institutions. The results showed that in general, students from the Ponce Campus, although of traditional university student age, are in other aspects essentially non-traditional in nature. The following section describes in detail each of the categories included in the NSSE instrument.

Benchmarks of Educational Practices

In the Benchmarks of Educational Practices measured by the NSSE, the IAUPR-PC performed very similarly to their peers in the continental United State terms of perceived Levels of Academic Challenge, Student Faculty Interaction, and Enriching Educational Experiences. They also showed similarities in the Active and Collaborative Learning, and Supportive Campus Environment benchmarks. (Figure 4.2)

Figure 4.2: Educational Practices

Legend: **LAC**=Level of Academic Challenge **ACL**=Active and Collaborative Learning
SFI=Student-Faculty Interaction **EEE**=Enriching Educational Experiences **SCE**=Supportive Campus Environment

In the section referring to mental activities emphasized as part of the coursework, NSSE results showed that IAUPR-PC students perceived that the mental activities, as part of their coursework are similar to those students enrolled at US peer institutions. (Figure 4.3)

Figure 4.3: Perception of students as to mental activities required for coursework

Note: the question is: During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities? 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much

Another area measured by the NSSE is Reading and Writing. In this area, the Campus showed a slightly lower mean than its peers. This area measures areas such as the number of books read by students (both textbooks and books read for enjoyment or enrichment), and the number of written papers or reports (20 pages or more, between 5-19 pages and fewer than 5 pages). Table 4.1 shows the results in this area.

| Item | | INTER-Ponce | Selected Peers | Sig a | Effect size b |
|---|----|-------------|----------------|-------|---------------|
| Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings | FY | 2.73 | 3.25 | *** | -.55 |
| | SR | 2.75 | 3.17 | *** | -.42 |
| Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment | FY | 1.76 | 2.06 | *** | -.34 |
| | SR | 1.95 | 2.21 | ** | -.27 |
| Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more | FY | 1.87 | 1.31 | *** | .83 |
| | SR | 2.21 | 1.74 | *** | .59 |
| Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages | FY | 2.21 | 2.48 | *** | -.30 |
| | SR | 2.51 | 2.74 | * | -.23 |
| Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages | FY | 2.28 | 3.35 | *** | -.99 |

| | | | | | |
|--|----|------|------|-----|-------|
| | SR | 2.67 | 3.20 | *** | - .45 |
|--|----|------|------|-----|-------|

Table 4.1: NSSE Results for Reading and Writing

Note: a Items with mean differences that are larger than would be expected by chance alone are noted with one, two, or three asterisks, referring to three significance levels (p<.05, p< .01, and p<.001). b In practice, an effect size of .2 is often considered small, .5 moderate, and .8 large. A positive sign indicates that your institution’s mean was greater, thus showing
Item scale: In a typical week, how many homework problem sets do you complete? 1=none, 2=1-2, 3=3-4, 4=5-6, 5=more than 6

Because the students were slightly lower in these areas, the campus incorporated computerized modules related to reading and writing skills in Spanish Virtual laboratories required for all Spanish courses. In 2009, the NSSE survey will be administered again and improvements are expected.

Faculty development

The Ponce Campus shares the belief that a culture of evidence should be encouraged throughout the university community in order to fully implement assessment with the goal of making or modifying changes needed by the Campus and its students. To that effect the Deanship of Studies, in its commitment to provide faculty with the knowledge necessary to design and implement assessment at the program level, has established training of faculty and personnel on all aspects of assessment as a priority during these past five years. These learning activities have included in-house training, as well as training offered outside the Campus and off-Island. The entire faculty has participated in a variety of training activities as well as benefitting from individual and group meetings to provide further assistance and feedback.

Figure 4.4 presents the number of faculty development workshops offered in the area of assessment during the past five years. A table with details of faculty development in the area of assessment is included as an appendix area.

Figure 4.4: Faculty Development Activities in Assessment

Assessment through external certification or licensing examination results

This section includes assessment results from the Teacher Education Program, Nursing and radiology technician programs. The students from these programs must pass an external certification or licensing examination in order to practice their profession. For each certification or licensing examination, IAUPR-PC results are compared to the Island-wide results.

Teacher Education Program

The outcomes of the IAUPR-PC Teacher Education Program were one of the Campus's primary concerns. In 1999, students from this program were not showing an acceptable pass-rate on the certification exams which are composed of three parts: General Knowledge, Professional Knowledge and Specialization.

The College Board of Puerto Rico and Latin America Office (CEEB) developed the Teacher Certification Test (TCT) to be use in Puerto Rico (CEEB, 2005a). The *Pruebas para la Certification de Maestros* (PCMAS in Spanish) were developed in an effort to systematize the criteria for the teacher selection process. The exam consists of a two-part tests; the first one is called the Basic Competencies Test, which consists of two sub-tests.

The first subtest of the Basic Competencies area is Fundamental Knowledge and Communications. This test measures student knowledge in the areas of humanities, natural sciences, social studies and math. It also measures competencies in computer and reading and writing in Spanish and English.

The second subtest measures Professional Competencies at the Elementary and Secondary (Junior High and High School) levels. Fundamentals in education, methodology, teaching strategies, learning evaluation and measurement are tested for both levels.

The second part of the test is the Specialization test, which measures secondary school level graduates' knowledge in the areas of Spanish, English, Math, Sciences and Social Studies/History. Required passing scores for all of these tests are listed in Table 4. 2.

Table 4.2: Teacher Certification Tests Passing Scores

| Test | Passing Scores prior to 2005-06 | Passing scores* 2006-07 |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Fundamental knowledge competencies | 89 | 92 |
| Professional competencies | 84 | 89 |
| Specialization subtests: | | |
| Spanish | 84 | 87 |
| English | 85 | 98 |
| Social Studies/History | 85 | 96 |
| Sciences | 85 | 94 |
| Math | 80 | 88 |

*Note: The Education Department of Puerto Rico increased passing scores for 2006-07

To become a certified teacher, Elementary Education graduates need to approve the Fundamental Knowledge and Professional Competencies Test. Secondary Education graduates need to approve the Fundamental, Professional and Specialization Test.

All Teacher Education Programs (TEP) in Puerto Rico are evaluated using the percentage of students who pass those tests. Any Teacher Education program with less than 75% of its students obtaining passing scores is considered *at risk*.

Every year, more than 2,000 teacher candidates take the Teacher Certification Tests (CEEB, 2005b). The summary of pass rates for Puerto Rico show that on average, graduates obtained better passing rates on the professional competencies test than in the Fundamental Competencies test. On the same test, IAUPR-PC showed lower than the average scores which, in combination with average results on the professional competencies tests, put its Teacher Education Program *at risk* in the 2002-03 and 2003-04 academic years (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3:

Pass Rates for PR and IAUPR-PC Teacher Certification Exams

| Academic Year | Fundamental Competencies | | Professional Competencies | | Summary Pass-rate | |
|---------------|--------------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| | PR | IAUPR-PC | PR | IAUPR-PC | PR | IAUPR-PC |
| 2000-01 | 89 | 82 | 91 | 90 | 86 | 75 |
| 2001-02 | 85 | 84 | 87 | 81 | 79 | 78 |
| 2002-03 | 84 | 67 | 87 | 92 | 77 | 67 |
| 2003-04 | 86 | 75 | 91 | 87 | 82 | 73 |
| 2004-05 | 87 | 78 | 91 | 89 | 82 | 76 |
| 2005-06 | 87 | 82 | 91 | 95 | 82 | 80 |

Source: www.title2.org

Results from the 2002-03 and 2003-04 examination results showed that close to 50% of the thirty-two (32) Teacher Education Programs in Puerto Rico were below the 75% of students passing the Teacher Certification Test.

The Campus and its faculty immediately set out to analyze the existing situation and to formulate possible solutions. One of the first actions taken was to regain control of the candidate pool. Although the Institution has a special admission policy for these students and a general academic progress policy, in the process of implementing a new version of the Student Information System which permitted students to register via the Web interface, control over who was able to register in education courses, and overseeing academic progress of the students in the program was temporarily lost. The Campus immediately began to implement technological as well as administrative controls to assure that only candidates that met the admissions criteria for the program were allowed to register in the education courses. As a result, a new policy for academic progress specifically designed for teacher education students was implemented in 2004 requiring students to maintain at least a 2.30 GPA during their first 44 credits, 2.45 from 45 to 59 credits, and 2.50 until they graduated. However, this policy was later revised to require these students to maintain a general average of 2.50 for the duration of their university career. The Campus also took internal measures to implement what it is now officially called the *Pre-Teacher Education Program*, which allowed potential candidates to declare their major in education, but in order to be officially admitted to the Teacher Preparation Program, they had to successfully complete their first year of study and meet the established criteria. These criteria include a minimum 2.50 GPA, and eighteen (18) credits approved including three (3) specific courses with at least a C grade in order to be officially admitted to the Teacher Preparation Program. Technological restrictions were put into place so that these students could not register in an Education course without prior approval from the Department Chair.

Additional investigation revealed that IAUPR-PC students approved the professional and specialization tests but consistently did poorly or failed in the general knowledge section of the test. The Campus found that after the IAUPR General Education Program was revised, the specific content covered by the certification exams was not given the same

emphasis. The Campus countered this by establishing special sections of General Education courses for Education students. Faculty was oriented as to special areas of emphasis needed, and students were encouraged – although not obligated—to register in these sections. In general several actions were taken to improve the instructional program. Examples are: 1) basic skill courses for the TEP, 3) basic skill courses were revised to align course content with Teacher’s Certification Test content approach, 4) academic counseling was reorganized to facilitate the process, and 5) requirements for undergraduate admissions, graduation and academic performance were reviewed.

In addition, computerized modules with core concepts such as English, Spanish, mathematics, methodologies among others, were developed to strengthen areas of the professional courses. These modules are available to all students registered in the Teacher Education Program.

The different strategies implemented by the Campus produced acceptable results for Teacher Education Program graduates as seen by examination results for the years 2004-05 and 2005-06. In both years, the percentage of our graduates surpassed the 75% required by the local law to be classified as a satisfactory program performance, and are performing more closely to students Island-wide. Figure 4.4 shows the reduction in the gap between IAUPR-PC students and the Island average.

Figure 4.4: IAUPR-PC Teacher Certification Exam Results 2002-2005

Nursing Program

Graduates from the associate and bachelor degrees in nursing have also shown improvement in the results of the state licensing examination. They are performing at similar or higher levels than the average for Puerto Rico. Students from the associate degree level have consistently obtained better passing rates than the state average. (Figure 4.5) However, at the bachelor's degree level, mixed results were found.

After assessing these results, it was found that the examination had been revised and updated by the State Board of Nursing and that new material or concepts were added. Faculty found that the nursing curriculum at that level did not emphasize this new material. Therefore, a committee was formed at the Institutional level to revise and update the curriculum, and new content was incorporated as needed. A seminar for content review and simulation exams was developed and implemented. The Institution expects to see the results of this revision in the near future.

Figure 4.5: Nursing Licensing Examination Results 2004-2006

Radiological Technology

Results on the Radiology Technician licensing exam revealed that graduates from the IAUPR-PC associate degree have consistently surpassed the state average (see figure 4.6). A seminar directed to review the critical concepts and course components of the program was implemented for candidates to the state board exams. The seminar has been welcome and the majority of the candidates are participating. Faculty continue to assess student performance on these exams in order to make any necessary changes in curriculum or teaching strategies.

Figure 4.6: Radiology Technician Licensing Examination Results 2003-2006

Service Level results

Service level assessment has been focused on two principle areas: General Satisfaction with the Institution and Satisfaction with Student Services provided by IAUPR-PC.

General Satisfaction with the Institution

At the institutional level, the National Student Satisfaction and Engagement (NSSE) survey also provided the Campus with valuable information about student satisfaction. A comparison of answers between IAUPR-PC students and peer institutions in 2005 to the question: *How would you evaluate your entire experience at this institution?* IAUPR obtained slightly better averages from freshman and a higher evaluation from the senior students (See Figure 4.7).

Other institutionally developed surveys showed similar results. Every two years, the Vice Presidency for Academic and Student Affairs and Systemic Planning (VPASASP) administer an institutional undergraduate satisfaction survey. For this study, the IAUPR system presents data related to the average of all nine campuses that offer undergraduate degrees. This instrument measures student satisfaction with the faculty, academic offerings, enrollment processes and five additional institutional service areas.

Figure 4.7: NSSE - General Satisfaction with the Institution

Table 4.5 shows that IAUPR-PC student satisfaction surpasses the institutional average in all the categories measured in 2004-05 and 2006-07 administrations. The only areas that showed a reduction in student satisfaction were related to the Enrollment processes and Physical installations.

The decrease in the area of Enrollment Management Services from 2004 to 2006 specifically showed a lower level of satisfaction related to communications from outside the Campus. These results coincided with technical problems with the external telephone lines during the time the questionnaire was administered. The decrease in satisfaction with Physical Installations seems to correspond to recent construction projects that were taking place on Campus during the survey administration.

Table 4.5: Satisfaction level by category: Ponce Campus as compared to IAUPR System

| Category | 2004-05 | | 2006-07 | |
|---------------------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | IAUPR-P | IAUPR | IAUPR-P | IAUPR |
| | C | | C | |
| Faculty | 92 | 91 | 92 | 91 |
| Academic Offerings | 90 | 87 | 89 | 87 |
| Enrollment Processes | 86 | 80 | 82 | 73 |
| Physical Installations | 88 | 84 | 85 | 82 |
| Complementary Academic Services | 87 | 86 | 88 | 84 |
| University Climate | 88 | 84 | 87 | 83 |
| Student Services | 85 | 78 | 83 | 78 |
| University Life | 83 | 77 | 84 | 79 |
| Average | 87 | 83 | 86 | 82 |

Student Services

Every two years, the Campus's Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning administers the IAUPR-PC Services and Installations Survey to a sample of students. Results show a continuous improvement in levels of satisfaction with the offices that provide direct service to the students (see Figure 4.8). In general, all the offices that provide direct services to students obtained satisfaction levels over the standard of 70%.

Figure 4.8: Satisfaction with Direct Student Services 2001-2005

In the Enrollment Management Services offices, with the exception of the financial aid office, all the offices obtained 70% satisfaction levels or higher from the students.

The weak economy of the Island, together with increases in gasoline prices, electricity and other areas that impact the ability of students to finance their studies severely taxed the resources available for students from the Financial Aid office. This may help explain the lower levels of satisfaction with the Financial Aid Office in comparison to other Enrollment Management areas.

On the other hand, assessment of students' perceptions of physical installations, classrooms and laboratories revealed high levels of satisfaction. Recent investments in computer and sciences labs, addition of another parking lot and installation of a central air conditioning system for all the classrooms seemed to have met with student approval.

Figure 4.9: Satisfaction with Enrollment Management Services

Figure 4.10: Satisfaction with Installations

Distance learning and Cybernetic Learning Centers

Because Distance Learning was a recent addition to the newly revised mission, assessment strategies have been initiated at the Service Level while program level assessment is being worked on by faculty from the different academic programs offered online. Initial findings in this area include that four of every ten (38%) students reported having taken at least one distance learning course while enrolled on Campus. Two out of every three students (64%) have used the Cybernetic Center service, and more than 80% of the students reported high satisfaction levels with these centers. Combined, the distance learning program and the Cybernetic Centers obtained 75% satisfaction or higher.

Limitations

In spite of the success in implementing assessment plans at both the program and service levels, as a result of these processes, the Campus has become aware of many of its limitations. As mentioned in the introduction to this section the time required to train faculty and develop individual program assessment plans was severely underestimated.

In spite of repeated progress reports and calls for action by the Dean of Studies and the Chancellor at faculty meetings, some programs are still in the design phase: developing and validating instruments. (See table 4.6) This is true for newly authorized programs and for the General Education Program. The priority assessment activities of the GEP are directed to their first category: basic skills in Spanish, English and mathematics. The program five's remaining categories are in the design phase.

Continued assistance to faculty with all processes related to test construction, data collection and keeping a schedule of continuous training and feedback has also been ongoing. The Campus realizes that developing a culture of evidence is a gradual process, and is optimistic that once the instruments have been developed and validated within the next year, great progress will be seen.

As of this report, the computations related to important information such as retention and graduation rates were still based on manual tallies. Currently, IAUPR-Central Office is in the process of developing an electronic tracking system to facilitate retention and graduation accurate rates data. Therefore automatic computing of retention and

graduation rates based on data from the Student Information System is something to which the Campus looks forward.

Table 4.6 Academic Programs: Stage of Assessment Activities

Department of Business Administration

| <i>Programs</i> | <i>Design Phase</i> | <i>Implementation Phase</i> | <i>Collection Phase</i> | <i>Evaluation Phase</i> |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Accounting (A.A.S.) | | X | | |
| Accounting (B.B.A.) | | X | | |
| Business Administration (A.A.S.) | | X | | |
| Business Adm. in Enterprises and Man. Dev.* (B.B.A) | X | | | |
| Communications: Journalism (B.A.) | | X | | |
| Finance (B.B.A.) | | X | | |
| Hotel Management (B.B.A.) | | X | | |
| Human Resources Management (B.B.A.) | | X | | |
| Industrial Management (B.B.A.) | | X | | |
| International Business (B.B.A.) | | X | | |
| Marketing (B.B.A.) | | X | | |
| Networks and Telecommunications (B.S.) | | | X | |
| Office Systems Management (A.A.) | | | X | |
| Office Systems Management (B.A) | | | X | |

Department of Education and Social Sciences

| <i>Programs</i> | <i>Design Phase</i> | <i>Implementation Phase</i> | <i>Collection Phase</i> | <i>Evaluation Phase</i> |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Criminal Justice (B.A.) | | X | | |
| Education (B.A.) PEM: All concentrations | | | | X |

Department of Health Sciences

| <i>Programs</i> | <i>Design Phase</i> | <i>Implementation Phase</i> | <i>Collection Phase</i> | <i>Evaluation Phase</i> |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Health Sciences: Administration (B.S.) | | X | | |
| Health Sciences: Education (B.S.) | | X | | |
| Nursing (A.A.S) | | | | X |
| Nursing (B.S.N.) | | | | X |
| Occupational Therapy Assistant (A.A.S.) | | X | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Optical Sciences Technology (A.A.S.) | | X | | |
| Physical Therapy (A.A.S.) | | X | | |
| Radiological Science (B.S.): CTM Resonance | | X | | |
| Radiological Technology (A.A.S.) | | | | X |

Department of Science and Technology

| <i>Programs</i> | <i>Design Phase</i> | <i>Implementation Phase</i> | <i>Collection Phase</i> | <i>Evaluation Phase</i> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Biology (B.S.) | | | X | |
| Biomedical Sciences (B.S.) | | X | | |
| Computer Science (A.A.S.) | | X | | |
| Computer Science (B.S.) | | X | | |
| Microbiology (B.S.)* | X | | | |
| Environmental Sciences (B.S.) | | X | | |

General Education Program

| <i>Programs</i> | <i>Design Phase</i> | <i>Implementation Phase</i> | <i>Collection Phase</i> | <i>Evaluation Phase</i> |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Basic Skills (English, Spanish, Comp.& Math) | | X | | |
| Philosophic and Esthetical Thought | X | | | |
| Christian Thought | X | | | |
| Historical and Social Context | X | | | |
| Scientific and Technological Context | X | | | |
| Health, Physical Education and Recreation | X | | | |

Graduate Programs

| <i>Programs</i> | <i>Design Phase</i> | <i>Implementation Phase</i> | <i>Collection Phase</i> | <i>Evaluation Phase</i> |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| International Business Administration (M.I.B.A.) | | X | | |
| M.Ed. in Curriculum & Teaching | | X | | |
| M.Ed. in Teaching at the Elementary Level | | X | | |
| Criminal Justice (M.A.) | | X | | |

* New Programs

Future steps

The magnitude of the assessment documentation required for future accreditation procedures made clear that a technological alternative to collect and report outcomes results was needed. For this purpose, the Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning licensed *Weave Online*, a web-based assessment system developed by Virginia Commonwealth University for ongoing planning and evaluation from individual programs up to the institution level (weaveonline.com). This system will allow IAUPR-PC to support a culture of evidence, and help to manage and monitor planning and assessment activities and outcomes across the campus. The Campus expects to have program and service assessment plans, and data entered in the system by 2009. Also, in 2009, a second administration of the NSSE survey is planned. Results will help to better

understand students' engagement within the Campus and tailor strategies to improve student success.

Section V: Institutional Planning and Budgeting

Inter American University of Puerto Rico's Ponce Campus is well aware of the importance of strategic planning and the linkage of this planning to resource allocation for its development. The Campus planning process includes the development of a five-year strategic plan based on the Institution-wide planning process which guide all eleven Inter American University units. The System Central Office has established general policies and procedures to insure consistency in follow-up, review and updating of documents and procedures. The main documents used as guides are "The norms and procedures for the development of the annual budget (Circular Letter # F1000-010)" "The norms and procedures for budget ammenments (Circular Letter #F0105-004)" and "Annual guides for operational planning and budget". The strategic plan is analyzed and reviewed annually as part of the budget preparation process at the Campus and Institutional levels.

Planning

The Strategic Plan, which is based on IAUPR *Vision 2012*, and the Institutional and Campus Mission and Goals contains nine principal areas:

- **Students:** includes student profile, historical data, enrollment trends and objectives, and five-year recruitment and retention strategies.
- **Academic offerings:** incorporates an academic program analysis, regional needs, other institutions' offerings and a five-year academic plan.
- **Faculty:** provides a faculty profile and information related to their degrees, ranks, course load and professional development.
- **Religious life:** addresses the Socio-Moral Infrastructure Project and the Religious Life Office's work plan.
- **Management:** discusses changes in University administration and discusses techniques, such as TQM, for reorganization.
- **Public relations and Campus image:** deals with IAUPR-PC's public relations, promoting the Campus through local media, in coordination with IAUPR Central Office.
- **Technology:** explains technology updating and maintenance, including the telephone system, LAN management, security and software, and licensing, among others.
- **Physical installations:** focuses on construction projects, with cost estimates, the projected year of development, new construction and maintenance.
- **Finances:** details managing the auxiliary enterprises, such as campus bookstore, cafeteria and others.

Through SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats), every sector of the Campus becomes involved with defining priorities and developing strategies for a five-year period.

At the beginning of each academic year, the Chancellor shares these priorities with faculty, students and administrative staff. Feedback helps in making adjustments and updating them.

The Strategic Plan is tied into the Annual Work Plan and Budget in determining resource allocation. The process begins in October when each IAUPR unit presents its enrollment projections for the following year. These are determined through an analysis of data including internal and external factors. This process is discussed in detail in section III of this report. The Work Plan is evaluated based on an annual review of the Strategic Plan. The Work Plan's activities may be revised based on results of an analysis of external changes and/or the need to complete activities from the previous year.

Budget Development

IAUPR-PC's budget is the financial manifestation of the Campus' Annual Work Plan. Academic Department Directors, Deans and administrative officers with budget management responsibilities work together on its development. They determine priorities according to annual Institutional priorities, the Campus Strategic Plan, projected income and estimated expenditure. Once analyzed, reviewed and validated, the final approval of the budget is the Board of Trustees' responsibility.

Every October, the Vice-President for Academic and Student Affairs and Systemic Planning (VPASASP), in coordination with the Institution's Finance Office, begins the budget process for the next academic year. They request student enrollment estimates from each unit. From this data, IAUPR System Central Office uses projected income and expenditures to prepare the Budget Development Guidelines and Procedures. These establish the Institutional parameters for budget development which occurs in five phases. Phases one to three occur on the campuses; phases four and five at the IAUPR Central Office.

On the Ponce Campus, the budget planning responds to projected academic program needs, as developed in working plans for faculty, coordinators and academic directors. It takes into account the maintenance of existing programs and the development of special projects requested by supervisors and office directors for campus and academic technology, student services, administrative operations, construction and infrastructure.

The Chancellor convenes the Budget Committee which includes the Evaluation and Strategic Planning Director, the Finance Officer, the Deans and the Human Resources Director. The Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning (OESP) works out Campus guidelines, dividing the budget process into three phases. Phase One takes place in offices and academic departments; Phase Two in the Deans' Offices; and Phase Three with the Chancellor. They allocate resources according to Campus and Institutional guidelines and priorities as well as departmental Work Plans, always keeping identified needs in mind. A detailed description of each phase is presented in the following section.

Phases of Budget Planning

Phase One

In the initial planning and budget phase, Academic Department Directors consult faculty in preparing their annual work plans and budget requests. They assess their current and future directions including any new academic programs being contemplated. They plan special academic projects requiring new equipment or materials, work out estimated costs and define needs and aims, all of which are included in the annual Departmental Work Plans. Other Office directors carry out a similar process with the personnel under their supervision, defining the direction of their work areas and developing annual Work Plans. The Projects, along with the Work Plans are submitted with their corresponding budgets for consideration at budget levels two and three.

Phase Two

In Phase Two, the Deans revise budget requests made by offices and departments under their supervision, and in accordance with previously established Campus and Institutional priorities. Budget requests for Projects are reviewed, and to avoid partial or incomplete funding, are totally accepted, rejected or postponed for the next year. After revising Work Plans and project budget requests, the solicited budget is submitted to the Chancellor for Phase three (3) of the Planning and Budget Process.

Phase Three

The Chancellor reviews all budget requests, assures that they are aligned with yearly priorities and the strategic plan then makes final adjustments. The Campus contribution for systemic services is calculated and a budget request, balanced in accordance with projected enrollment and income sources is submitted to the Central Office for the final phases of the process.

Phases Four and Five

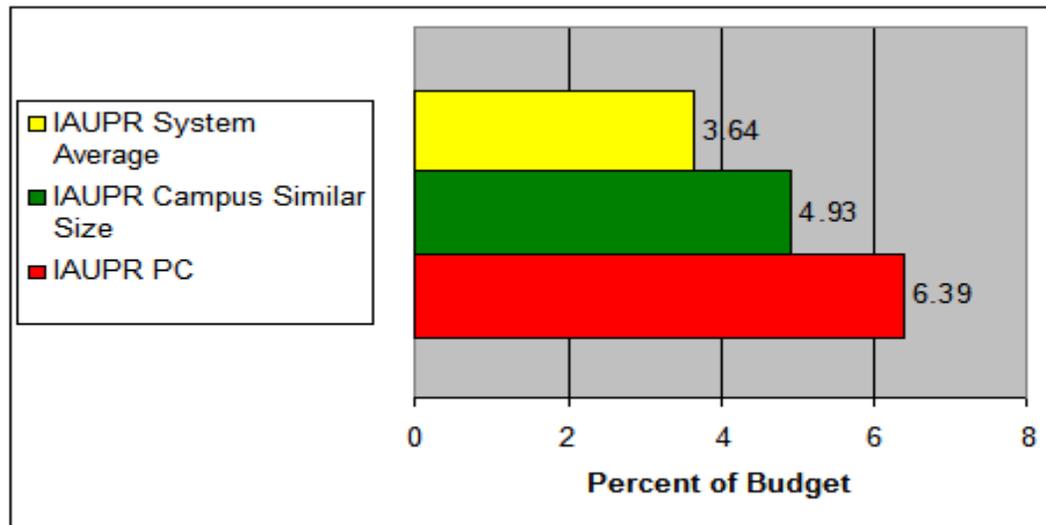
Once the System Central Office receives the Campus budget for review and revision, the Vice-presidency for Managing Finances and Systemic Services discusses the request with the Campus. Revisions are made if necessary taking into consideration additional external or systemic factors, and the final version is submitted to the Board of Trustees. After Board's final approval, the funding becomes available to the Campus at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1st).

Each Campus office or department manages its budget according to Institutional budget control procedures.

Resource Allocation

The Campus budget allocation is divided by functions and over 50% of the budget is directly related to offering of instructional and academic services. These ratios highlight IAUPR-PC's commitment to supporting educational advancements. In fact the Campus exceeds Institutional parameters for allocation of budget for scholarships. The Campus allocates approximately \$1,100,000.00 for student scholarship representing 5.9% of the Campus budget (2006-07) as seen in figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Allocation of Resources for Scholarships (%)



Source: IAUPR Vice-Presidency for Management Finances and Systemic Services (2005-06)

Budget Allocation clearly the ability of the Campus to reach and surpass projected incomes, to respond to additional academic requirements and to meet unexpected expenses. This information underlines the Campus' determination to serve its students, both regular and non-traditional, to continue improving the teaching/learning process, to remain a laboratory for experiment and innovation, to support academic the many other elements necessary for a sound education.

Linkage between Budgeting and Planning

As evidenced in the previous sections, planning and budgeting processes are intimately linked at both the Campus and Institutional levels. The Strategic Plans and resulting Institutional Priorities drive the budgeting process. Both are continually reviewed and revised according to analysis of internal and external factors affecting the Campus. The development of master degree programs, the Cybernetic Learning Centers, the remodeling of new facilities for the Health Science Department and the distance education programs were projects planned and stated as priorities for the Ponce Campus,.

The requested and approved budget was adjusted to respond accordingly to the financial needs of these well planned projects. For example a new account was added for the graduate studies department in order to assign a separate budget for the department's financial needs. As a new department, it was not previously considered for budgetary purposes. Similarly, a separate budgetary organization was set up for distance learning management, and the budget for this area has increased 67% over a three year period. Another example of planning tied to budgeting can be seen in the support for the Cybernetic Learning Center and the Health Sciences department. From the academic years 2005 to 2007 the amount allocated for the Cybernetic Learning Center's management has increased 20.5%, and the Health Science Department benefited from a budgetary increase of 271.5%. This included financing for relocation and remodeling of the health science facilities, including state-of-the-art technology and equipment.

TABLE 5.1 Budget adjustments for priority projects

| Project | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | Percentage increased |
|--|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Cybernetic Learning Centers | \$331,862.00 | \$327,977.00 | \$400,188.00 | 20.5 |
| Health Science Department: Facilities Remodelation | \$749,136.00 | \$1,034,750.81 \$1,700,000.00 | \$1,082,707.00 | 271.5 |
| Distance Learning Project | \$219,296.00 | \$480,539.00 | \$366,171.00 | 67 |

Source: IAUPR-PC Deanship of Administration

Conclusions

As can be seen throughout the report, the Ponce Campus has made great progress since its last accreditation visit. Its new mission has guided the development of Graduate Programs, Distance Learning and the inclusion of an additional site in the form of the innovative creation of the Cybernetic Learning Center.

In addition, it has strengthened its Health Science Department by relocating it near the Ponce School of Medicine in newly remodeled facilities. This provides the University with a unique opportunity for further collaboration with the Medical School.

Most importantly, the Campus has learned and grown through its assessment efforts. Although the creation of a *culture of evidence* takes time, the Campus has made great strides in the areas of faculty development and the creation of individual program assessment plans. Results have already been seen in those programs that can be measured through student success on external certification examinations, and the Campus has taken both curricular and administrative actions when performance was not up to expectations.

The future is bright for the Ponce Campus. As a financially stable campus, with clearly defined goals and strategies, it will continue to develop and strengthen its offerings. Assessment efforts are the priority for upcoming years, as well as continuing to work towards those goals and objectives established in its Mission Statement.

