



**Monitoring Report to the  
Middle States Commission of Higher Education**

**From  
Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico – Ponce Campus**

**Prepared by**

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**October 1, 2007**

**Subject of the Follow-up Report:  
Documenting further progress in (1) the implementation  
of the comprehensive institutional strategic plan (2003-2008),  
and (2) the implementation of comprehensive plans for the  
assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning**

**Accreditation Evaluation Visit  
November, 2003  
Previous Monitoring Report October 1, 2005**

## **2. Issues and Topics Covered**

On March 4, 2004, the Commission of Higher Education (CHE) renewed the accreditation of Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR). A monitoring report was submitted to CHE by October 1, 2005 and accepted on November 16, 2005 by the same body. A subsequent monitoring report was requested by October 1, 2007 requesting the documentation of further progress in the areas of (1) the development and implementation of a comprehensive institutional strategic plan which links long-range planning to decision-making and budgetary processes and (2) the implementation of comprehensive plans for the assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning. Consequently, this monitoring report is divided into two parts.

Each of the above mentioned parts is divided into sub-sections and the second part into three sections in the following manner:

- I. Comprehensive institutional strategic plan (2003-2008)
  - i. Links long-range planning to the decision-making and budgetary processes.
    1. Operational Plans
      - Year 2006-2007 – (new)
      - Year 2007-2008 – (new)
    2. Evaluation of Operational Plans
      - Year 2005-2006 (new)
      - Year 2006-2007 (new)
  - ii. Development of new comprehensive institutional strategic plan (2008-2013)

- II. Implementation of comprehensive plans for the assessment of institutional effectiveness and student learning
  - i. Course level
  - ii. Program level
  - iii. Institutional level
- III. Appendixes
  - Appendix 1: Operational Plans 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 (paper)
  - Appendix 2: Operational Plan 2005-2006 - old (paper)
  - Appendix 3: Achievements Institutional Strategic Plan 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 (paper)
  - Appendix 4: Timetable for new Strategic Plan -2008-2013 (paper)
  - Appendix 5: Institutional Assessment Plan (CD)
  - Appendix 6: Institutional Assessment Survey ((CD)
  - Appendix 7: IAC Mission and Vision (CD)
  - Appendix 8: Chronogram of the Activities of the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) (CD)
  - Appendix 9: Guide for Assessment Committees of the Academic Units (CD)
  - Appendix 10: Competencies and Indicators of Institutional Performance (CD)
  - Appendix 11: Academic Programs put on Moratorium 2005 and 2007, and new Academic Programs that were created (paper)
  - Appendix 12: Guide to Procedures and Forms for the Evaluation of Academic Programs of PCUPR - Draft (CD)
  - Appendix 13: Guide for the Data Collection and Support Center (CADA): Norms and Procedures - Draft (CD)
  - Appendix 14: Report on Assessment Plans of the Academic Units (CD)
  - Appendix 15: Budget required for Implementation of the IAP (paper)

## **Comprehensive Institutional Strategic Plan 2003-2008**

### **3. Institutional Context/Update**

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR) submitted its Strategic Plan 2003-2008 and the operational plans for the years 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006 in the monitoring report submitted on October 1, 2005. Consequently, the operational plans linking long-range planning to decision making and budgetary processes for the last two years (2006-2007 and 2007-2008) are enclosed in this monitoring report due October 1, 2007. This completes the cycle of five (5) years for the current Strategic Plan 2003-2008. The evaluation of the achievements since the last monitoring report for the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years are also included. This completes the last two (2) years since the previous monitoring report of October 1, 2005. The evaluation of an academic year cannot logically be made until its completion. For this reason, the strategic plan for 2007-2008 cannot be entirely evaluated at this time, and the final document for that year is not included in this report.

The Strategic Plan established the Mission and Vision of the Institution for the period 2003-2008 and the Pontifical Catholic University Planning Strategic Model. The Plan established seven priorities areas:

1. Integration of Faith and Life
2. Attention to Student Needs
3. Revision and Update of the Curricula
4. Human resources both academic and non-academic
5. Technological Infrastructure
6. Physical (buildings, laboratories, etc.) Infrastructure

7. Administration and Finances

Each priority area in the plan includes several goals, objectives, and strategies in order to reach the appropriate and successful results during the 2003-2008 period.

The plan is being monitored by the Institutional Planning Committee (the President, the Vice Presidents, the Executive Directors, the Planning Consultants, and the Coordinator of the Institutional Assessment and Research Office).

Each University main division has submitted its operational plan each year, and at the end of the academic year, each division evaluates it. The main divisions of the University correspond to the following areas:

- University Mission
- Academic Affairs
- Finance Affairs
- Student Affairs
- Planning, Research, and Development
- Integrated Communications and Information

The Institutional Planning Committee has evaluated the results of the yearly operational plans and the Executive Director of University Development, Investigation, and Planning has summarized the achievements of the strategic plan by academic years. To help in the evaluation process, the achievements have been organized in the seven priority areas.

4. **Progress to Date**

Since the last monitoring report due October 1, 2005, each Vice President and Executive Director has submitted the operational plans for the years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008

linking long-range planning to decision-making and budgetary processes.<sup>1</sup> (Copy of these documents in Spanish is enclosed for your information). Even though the operational plan for the year 2005-2006 was already submitted in the prior monitoring report, it is also enclosed because the evaluation of the achievements of that plan could not be made by October 1, 2005.<sup>2</sup> This evaluation was done at the close of the academic year, Summer 2005. A summary of the achievements for the academic years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 are enclosed documenting the success or progress towards the goals set in the Institutional Strategic Plan 2003-2008.<sup>3</sup> This is the equivalent of doing assessment in this area. Furthermore, the achievement of these goals demonstrates the success in linking long-range planning to decision-making and budgetary processes. This was done to insure that sufficient economic funds are available to meet the targets of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008.

Presently, we have started the development of the next Strategic Plan (2008-2013). The process to develop the new Strategic Plan started with a meeting of the Planning Committee of the University Board of Trustees with the President, the Vice Presidents, and the Executive Directors to establish the base of this new Strategic Plan. A timetable to develop the new Strategic Plan (2008-2013) is enclosed in this report.<sup>4</sup>

Recently, the University Board of Trustees, the President, the Vice Presidents, Executive Directors, and the Chancellors from the Arecibo and Mayagüez Campuses participated in a full day workshop to establish the Vision and the main goals for the

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1: Operational Plans 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 (new)

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 2: Operational Plan 2005-2006 (old)

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 3: Achievements Institutional Strategic Plan - 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 (new)

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 4: Timetable for new Strategic Plan -2008-2013

next five years. The workshop was a success, with the participation of more than 80% of the Board and 90% of the University administrators. Environment and marketing studies developed by an external consulting firm (H. Calero Consulting Group) were used as the basis for the Agenda of the workshop. One of the accomplishments of the meeting was to make changes in the Vision. This will be studied and submitted for approval at the next meeting of PCUPR Board of Trustees. Several strategies initiatives such as New Curricular Offerings, Rentability, Stake holders (local and global), Research and Development, and Administrative Structure were established as the areas to be developed in the new Strategic Plan.

## **CONCLUSION**

The 2006-2007 academic year was the fourth year of the implementation of PCUPR Strategic Plan (2003-2008).

The operational plans of the main administrative units under a Vice President or Executive Director were evaluated each year.

These operational plans were prepared with the participation of all the members (faculty and/or administrators) of each unit described above.

The Planning Office then prepared an evaluation report for each year to show how the operational plans have accomplished the goals and objectives established in the Strategic Plan. (Copies have been included.)

Even though one must wait for the final report at the end of the academic year 2007-2008, with very few exceptions, the goals and objectives established in the seven main areas of the last year of the current Strategic Plan 2003-2008 have been accomplished.

A new Administrative System (Banner Sungart) is in the third year of implementation. It is anticipated that at the end of the current academic year (2007-2008) this new complex administrative system will be activated in all University Units. Furthermore, new marketing strategies, such as Telemarketing, have been successful. The number of freshmen students has increased in the last three years.

The administration Planning Committee (the President, the Vice Presidents, the Executive Directors, and the Planning Consultants) will be responsible for developing and completing the new Strategic Plan. It is hoped that the new Plan will be finished by the end January 2008 and presented to the Board for final approval during February or March 2008.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANS FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING**

### **Issues and Topics Covered**

This report documents the development and implementation process of the Institutional Assessment Plan<sup>5</sup> at Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR). This plan covers the development of an institutional assessment culture and the assessment of the following areas:

- Assessment of institutional effectiveness
- Student learning assessment at the levels of
  - Institutional
  - Programs
  - Classroom

### **3. Institutional Context/Update**

On January 26, 2006, the new Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) was formed to implement the Institutional Assessment Project. The President of PCUPR named the members of the IAC with recommendations from the vice-presidents and rectors. This committee was composed of professors, administrators, and students of the Institution. The Committee designed an institutional model for the elaboration and implementation of the assessment plans of the units of PCUPR at the institutional, programs, and classroom levels.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 5: Institutional Assessment Plan

#### **4. Progress to Date**

Members of the IAC presented the Institutional Assessment Project<sup>6</sup> to the STAFF members (consisting of the Vice-Presidents and Executive Directors) of the Presidency of PCUPR and to the University Board of PCUPR on September 7 and November 23, 2005, respectively. On January 26, 2006, the new Institutional Assessment Committee was formed. The President of PCUPR named the members of the new IAC taking into consideration the recommendations of the Vice-Presidents, Rectors, and Deans of PCUPR. This committee was composed of professors, administrators, and students of the Institution. To select three (3) student representatives of the IAC, eleven (11) undergraduate students in first, third, and fourth year at PCUPR Ponce Campus were interviewed. The IAC selected one (1) representative to the committee from each year.

On March 10, 2006 members of the IAC presented the Institutional Assessment Project (IAP) to the Faculty at the Faculty Assembly. In addition, during the January 2006 semester, members of the IAC completed a cycle of orientation concerning the IAP for various sectors of the university community: Deans, Directors, and Academic and Non-Academic Coordinators. These orientations were offered at meetings of the Executive Committees of the College or Campus. These meetings were intended to inform the directors of the units or departments about the implementation of the IAP, emphasizing the importance of establishing Assessment Committees in their

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

units. At some of the activities, an opinion survey known as the IAP Survey was conducted.<sup>7</sup>

The IAC has met on 24 occasions between February, 2005 and August, 2007. The work of the IAC and its subcommittees has been focused on the following:

- I) Discussion and revision of the IAC Objectives.
- II) Preparation of the IAC workshops schedule.
- III) Establishment of the IAC workshop schedule.
- IV) Composition of the IAC Mission and Vision<sup>8</sup>.
- V) Planning of the itinerary for the design of the *Guide for Assessment Committees of the Academic Units* of PCUPR. Working groups for the development of the Guide were established.
- VI) Planning of the presentation of the *Guide for Assessment Committees of the Academic Units*.
- VII) Follow-up of achievements, areas needing improvement, and expectations of the Assessment Committees of the academic units in the design and development of their Assessment Plans.
- VIII) Review of the Assessment Plans of the academic units.
- IX) Planning of workshops on Assessment of Student Learning for the academic units participating in the implementation of their Assessment Plans. These workshops are sponsored by the Institutional Assessment Office and the Institutional Curricular Revision Office.

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix 6: Institutional Assessment Survey

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix 7: IAC Mission and Vision

- X) Planning for the review and adjustment of the Assessment Plans of the academic units.

The *Chronogram of the Activities of the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC)*<sup>9</sup> describes the history of the activities and meetings of the Institutional Assessment Committee. As established in the IAP document, the committee members attended workshops and conferences in and outside of Puerto Rico. These workshops helped in the identification and preparation of assessment strategies and techniques necessary to implement the IAP. The following is a listing of the activities for professional improvement attended by members of the IAC during academic years 2005-2007:

- I) Annual College Board Conference 2005: Excellence in Academic and Support Services: Fundamentals for Retention at K–16 Levels. Paradisus Puerto Rico Resort, Rio Grande, Puerto Rico (November 3-4, 2005).
- II) Conference: BEAMS Overview: Building Engagement and Attainment of Minority Students. A partnership between the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education and the National Survey of Student Engagement, with support from Lumina Foundation for Education. Sponsored by the Higher Education Council of Puerto Rico (CESPR, for its initials in Spanish), the University of Puerto Rico – Cayey Campus, Carlos Albizu University and Compact Campus. Botanical Gardens, University of Puerto Rico (August 26, 2005).
- III) Middle States Commission on Higher Education: Student Learning Assessment Conference. Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards (September 29-30, 2005).

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 8: Chronogram of the Activities of the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC)

- IV) 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference: Putting Assessment to Work at Texas A & M University, College Station, TX (February 23-25, 2006).
- V) Programs Evaluation: Fundamental Elements for Institutional Effectiveness. PCUPR Ponce Campus (August 4, 2006).
- VI) Middle States Commission on Higher Education Assessment Workshops: Student Learning Assessment for Beginners, Assessing Student Learning in General Education, and Institutional Effectiveness for Beginners. San Juan, PR (August 21-22, 2006).
- VII) Alignment: Objectives-Activities Assessment: "A Different Experience in a Different Classroom". PCUPR Ponce Campus (September 29, 2006).
- VIII) 1<sup>st</sup> Private Higher Education Congress in Puerto Rico: Contributions and Challenges of the Association of Private Colleges and Universities (ACUP, for its initials in Spanish). Representatives of the IAC presented the Conference Institutional Assessment Project 2005-2010: Seeking Excellence in the Processes and Procedures that Reflect our Mission as a Living, Academic Service Community. Caribe Hilton Hotel, San Juan, PR (October 20, 2006).
- IX) Workshop Construction of Operational Objectives for committee members. PCUPR Ponce Campus (October 27, 2006).
- X) Workshop *Guide for Assessment Committees of Academic Units*. Participation of IAC members, members of Assessment Committees of Academic Units and administrators. PCUPR Ponce Campus (February 9, 2007).

- XI) *2007 MSCHE Assessment Workshops. Getting Started with Assessment in General Education and Understanding and Using Assessment Results.* University of Puerto Rico, Ponce Campus (August 6-7, 2007).
- XII) *2007 Beams Mid-Year Meeting.* New Orleans, LA (March 2007).

As part of the implementation process of the IAP, the *Guide for Assessment Committees of the Academic Units*<sup>10</sup> was developed. This document will facilitate the development and implementation of assessment plans of academic units in line with the Institutional model. This consists of two parts: the first part provides general information on the assessment process, specifically at Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico. The second part offers directives for the design and implementation of the unit's assessment plan, including a model of the Assessment Plans of the Units.

In this Guide the roles of the Institutional Assessment Office, the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC), the Assessment Committees of the Units (ACU) and the functions of the President of the Assessment Committee of the Units are established. In addition, the Guide contains a model for designing Assessment Plans based on the Institutional Model (IAP). The following is a presentation of the components of the Institutional Model of the Plan included in this Guide.

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<sup>10</sup> Appendix 9: Guide for Assessment Committees of the Academic Units

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### PREAMBLE

This includes the Mission and Vision of the unit, a brief summary of when it was established, its programs, faculty, students and personnel. In addition it includes the formal and informal assessment processes performed previously.

#### a. INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

##### 1. Establishing the need for assessment.

Briefly explain how important it is that the perform a process of assessment of results.

##### 2. Assessment Purpose

Describe the purpose of assessment in the unit and the characteristics involved in this process.

##### 3. Administration of Assessment

(Describe how the assessment process will be performed in the unit).

##### 4. Chronology of Assessment

Describe in chronological order the sequence of formal and informal assessment events in the unit during the previous five (5) years.

#### b. ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Report establishes the content and schedule to be followed during the assessment process in the unit.

#### c. APPENDICES

Include a copy of assessment instruments.

The Institutional Assessment Committee included in the Guide a series of instruments or forms to be used to gather information concerning Student Learning Assessment at the institutional,

programs, and courses levels. Student Learning Assessment will show that students acquired the knowledge, skills, and competencies in accord with institutional goals. Systematic student learning assessment is essential to quality evaluation and provides information leading to the improvement of learning processes.

### **Course Level**

Student Learning Assessment at the course level includes assessment of the effectiveness of the skills and abilities relating to the requirements of the following Competencies and Indicators of Institutional Performance<sup>11</sup>.

- a) Comprehension of the religious dimension of the human person and the responses offered by the Catholic Church and the Christian faith
- b) Critical and creative thinking
- c) Effective communication and communication relationships
- d) Mental attitude and flexible criteria
- e) Social responsibility and multi-cultural sensitivity
- f) Technology and computer literacy
- g) Quantitative literacy

From February to March 2007, the Assessment Plans of the Academic Units of PCUPR were developed as part of the Institutional Assessment Project with direct repercussions of the project on the curricular review and renovation project. The Assessment Committees of the Academic Units considered these competencies in the design and development of their plans and incorporated instruments to accomplish direct and indirect assessment of student learning.

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<sup>11</sup> See Appendix 10: Competencies and Indicators of Institutional Performance

Ninety per cent (90%) of the units (41/46) complied with the assignment to design, develop, and submit their assessment plans for the first phase corresponding to the assessment cycle 2007-2010. The IAC determined that the uniform alignment of the assessment plans is a priority. Next, the Co-Presidents of the IAC selected five professors for the *Evaluation Committee for Assessment Plans (CEPAU*, for its initials in Spanish). CEPAU evaluated the assessment plans of the academic units during June 2007. This Committee performed the following tasks:

1. Meetings to organize, coordinate, plan, follow through the process of evaluating the assessment plans of the academic units.
2. Designing a working plan for the CEPAU.
3. Establishing evaluation criteria for the assessment plans of the academic units.
4. Constructing a holistic rubric to determine the level of compliance with established criteria.
5. Evaluating the assessment plans of the academic units using the rubric constructed to this end.
6. Completing a comparative analysis to determine the conformity of the assessment plans of the academic units with the guidelines established by the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC).
7. Determining whether the assessment plans of the academic units are aligned with each other and with the Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP).
8. Writing a report with the findings and recommendations for the assessment plans of the academic units.

9. Submitting a report to the Institutional Assessment Office, with a copy to the Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs on or before July 6, 2007.

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico has participated during the past four years in the *BEAMS Project: Building, Engagement, and Attainment of Minority Students*, directed by the *Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)* located in Washington, D.C. and sponsored by the coalition *Alliance for Equity in Higher Education*. This is a consortium project with universities in Puerto Rico and the United States to develop a data bank and statistics on undergraduate students from minority groups. As part of our participation in the BEAMS project, in March 2007, the questionnaire *National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)* was administered to seniors and first-year students of PCUPR. In August 2007, PCUPR received the NSSE Institutional Report 2007. This report included comparative statistical information on universities in the United States and Puerto Rico. The NSSE questionnaire examined five effective educational practices: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Enriching Educational Experience and Supportive Campus Environment. The results of the statistical analysis of this report were used to improve the educational experience of our students inside and outside of the classroom. For more information, see the webpage [www.nsse.iuv.edu](http://www.nsse.iuv.edu).

## **Program Level**

When developing the plan, the assessment committees of the units considered the assessment of the academic learning of the students, the physical and technological facilities, and the services offered in support of their academic programs. The form for assessment of student learning included the areas to be evaluated, goals and objectives (according to the working or operational plan of each unit), the courses, programs, or experiences in which information was to be compiled. In addition, the strategies to be used to fulfill the assessment (direct and indirect measures), the instruments, date or period during which information was to be gathered, level of achievement expected, and the person or unit responsible for completing the process were assigned. The CEPAU evaluated the Form for Student Learning Assessment of the Assessment Plans of the Units. The Committee recommended a deadline, at the beginning of the academic year 2007-2008, for the units to revise and improve their assessment plans. The CEPAU recommended using as a reference the *Guide for Assessment Committees of the Academic Units*. Once they have been reviewed, the assessment committees of the units will submit a copy to the Institutional Assessment Office. The deadline for submitting in the corrected assessment plans along with the recommendations of the CEPAU was September 14, 2007.

With regard to the evaluation process of the academic programs, the first evaluation cycle for the students, faculty, and directors was completed. This study identified areas of strengths and needs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The *Institutional Assessment Office* completed the cycle of orientations and presentations of the results of the Progress Reports of the Academic Programs Evaluations (2004) to the colleges and campuses. The directors of each academic

program were asked to complete the Form for the Report of the Institutional Evaluation of Academic Programs Committee. Afterwards, the directors of each program evaluated presented their input concerning the evaluation and completed the Reaction to Program Evaluation Form. The Institutional Assessment Program recommended that the meta-evaluation process of the Academic Programs of Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico be completed. In addition, certain academic programs were placed on moratorium and new academic programs were created.<sup>12</sup>

The Institutional Assessment Office provided orientation to the directors and coordinators concerning the second cycle of evaluations of academic programs (2006-2007) with twenty (20) or fewer students (Forms for Students, Faculty, and Director). The Institutional Assessment Office received the completed evaluation forms (Students, Faculty, and Director). Eighty four percent (84.1%) 74/78 of the academic programs were evaluated (Colleges of Education, Business and Graduate Studies). In order to structure the process of the evaluating programs at PCUPR, the Institutional Assessment Office and professional internship students compiled the Institutional norms, procedures and forms which apply to the evaluation program process into the *Guide to Procedures and Forms for the Evaluation of Academic Programs of PCUPR - Draft* (May, 2007).<sup>13</sup>

### **Institutional Level**

The systematic assessment of student learning is essential to evaluate quality and provide information leading to the improvement of learning processes at the Institutional level. The Institutional

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix 11: Programs put on Moratorium 2005 and 2007, and new academic programs that were created

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix 12: Guide to Procedures and Forms for the Evaluation of Academic Programs of the PCUPR - Draft

Assessment Committee will make use of direct and indirect measures of the students' learning process at the course and programs levels to provide evidence of the development of the institutional *Competencies and Performance Indicators* that we wish of our graduates. The director of each academic unit will include in the annual report a section relating to the assessment of his/her unit, which will be sent to the IAC. The IAC, in collaboration with personnel of the Data Collection and Support Center (CADA, for its initials in Spanish), will collect, organize, and analyze the information provided in the annual reports of the units. The IAC will prepare an annual report that contains the essential findings of the reports of the academic units. The IAC Annual Report will be submitted to the Presidency of Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico. The Institutional Assessment Office and the CADA will retain a copy of the Annual Reports of the IAP.

By re-structuring the offices of Institutional Assessment, the Strategic Planning Office, and the Statistics Office additional space was identified to rehabilitate the Institutional Assessment Office and locate the physical facilities of the CADA. The Institutional Assessment Office and professional internship students completed the draft of the *Guide for the Data Collection and Support Center (CADA): Norms and Procedures - Draft (May 2007)*.<sup>14</sup>

During the first cycle of Assessment of Student Learning which will be completed at the end of academic year 2009-2010, the assessment of the *Competencies and Performance Indicators* of the profile of graduates of the institution and service will be performed.

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<sup>14</sup> See Appendix 13: Guide for the Data Collection and Support Center (CADA): Norms and Procedures - Draft

## **CONCLUSION**

In this first phase of the assessment project at PCUPR, corresponding to the cycle of assessment 2005–2010, the assessment of student learning; our reason for existence and the center of our efforts, programs, and services as a university community, is contemplated. Assessment of learning contributes to the determination of how well processes are being accomplished and whether these facilitate the achievement of established educational objectives. In addition, it provides information on the efficiency and effectiveness of educational services. The *Institutional Assessment Office* continues to facilitate qualitative and quantitative analyses of processes proper to academic and non-academic efforts (student services), working in the seven areas for priority development established in the Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) and in the eighth area of *Assessing Assessment*. The new *Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC)* consists of administrators, professors, students and personnel from other institutional entities. The IAC collaborates closely with the Institutional Assessment Office in the implementation and evaluation of the IAP. Until now, the most significant achievements of the Institutional Assessment Project are the following:

1. The *Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC)* designed and completed the *Guide for Assessment Committees of Academic Units*. The Guide includes an institutional model for the development and implementation of the assessment plans of the units. Each Dean or Rector named the members of the Assessment Committees of his/her respective academic units. The Assessment Committees of the Academic Units (ACAU) were provided with orientation on the Institutional Assessment Plan.

2. Ninety percent (90% or 41/46) of the Assessment Committees of the Academic Units of PCUPR worked with the IAC and submitted the first draft of the *Assessment Plan of the Academic Unit*. It is a significant achievement that 90% of the units complied with this assignment. Given that this is the beginning of the assessment project at the institution, a base that will facilitate improvement in the units to attain an assessment culture at the institution was obtained. Each academic unit will have an Assessment Committee with representation from some of the following: students, faculty, staff, and the director. The Committee will have the responsibility to supervise whether the performance indicators comply with the expectations laid out in the operational plan of the unit. The assessment committees of the academic units will assess student learning, co-curricular activities, and student services. The IAC will review and evaluate the periodic and annual reports submitted by each unit as the result of fulfilling of the action plans.
3. The Institutional Assessment Plan provides the opportunity to reflect on our assessment processes. An important aspect of the assessment of assessment is to determine whether the assessment process is directed to improving the units. To assure this the Committee for the Evaluation of Assessment Plans (CEPAU, for its initials in Spanish) was formed to evaluate the plans of the academic units during June 2007. The CEPAU established criteria for evaluating the assessment plans of the academic units, constructing a holistic rubric to determine the level of compliance. In

addition, CEPAU performed a comparative analysis to determine the level of uniformity of the academic units with the Institutional model provided in the Guide for Assessment Committees of the Academic Units. Finally, CEPAU wrote an evaluation report of assessment plans, with findings and recommendations directed to revision and improvement of the assessment plans<sup>15</sup>. The objectives that guided this effort are: to achieve maximum uniformity among all the plans of the primary units and their sub-units; and to achieve excellence in the learning assessment of students of PCUPR. Through Assessing Assessment a culture conscious of the benefits of assessment and of new approaches to the learning-teaching process will be encouraged. At the end of this evaluation process, CEPAU established that: a) although orientation was provided and the *Guide for Assessment Committees of the Academic Units* was distributed to the units along with instructions and an institutional model for developing these plans, there was nonetheless a diversity of styles; b) some assessment plans were incomplete, limited, or submitted after the committee had already evaluated the unit or demonstrated difficulties in the construction of the plans; c) difficulties in the composition of goals, objectives, strategies and performance indicators was evident; d) the assessment plans of the units and sub-units lack uniformity in certain aspects such as the Vision and Mission, register of historic events of the unit, among others. On the basis of these conclusions CEPAU recommended the following: a) that a

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<sup>15</sup> See Appendix 14: Report on Assessment Plans of the Academic Units

deadline be established at the beginning of academic year 2007-2008 for the units to revise and improve their assessment plans; b) that the plans be done in collaboration or with open communication to achieve alienation of the assessment plans of one unit, with the IAC Guide, and with the institutional model; c) that technical individualized support be offered to the units in the composition of the vision, mission, goals, objectives, strategies, and achievement indicators through the Office of Curricular Revision; d) that competence training be offered to the units and sub-units in areas needed of the components of the assessment plan.

9. The budget assigned by PCUPR<sup>16</sup> to support the Institutional Assessment Project has been adequate for development of activities for design, training, implementation, and evaluation of the Institutional Assessment Plan and the assessment plans of the units. The budgeted amount invested in the Institutional Assessment Plan between August 2005 and August 2007 was approximately \$216,359.00.

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<sup>16</sup> See Appendix 15: Budget Required for Implementation of the IAP