

University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo

A Monitoring Report submitted to the MSCHE



2011



Monitoring Report to the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AT ARECIBO

March 1, 2011

Submitted by:

Prof. Juan Ramírez-Silva
Chancellor

Date of Team Visit
April 4 – 7, 2011

Chair of Visiting Team
To be Determined

Prepared by:

Dr. Brenda Laboy
Accreditation Coordinator

Prof. Soriel Santiago
Office of Planning and Institutional Research Director

Dr. Eliana Valenzuela
Acting Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

Prof. Mercedes Pérez de Vives
External Resources Director

Mrs. Katherine Meléndez
Budget Office Director

Task Force for UPRA's Monitoring Report

Dr. Manuel Saponara
Dra. Wanda Delgado
Prof. Cinthya V. Cardona
Prof. Melquiades Adames
Prof. Maritza Rosa
Prof. María Muñiz
Dra. Nilda Fernández
Sra. Omayra Santiago
Sra. Sonia Velez
Sra. Genoveva Rivera
Sr. Obed Cintrón
Sr. Ramón Hernández



Universidad de Puerto Rico en Arecibo

PO Box 4010 • Arecibo, Puerto Rico 00614-4010
Teléfono (787) 815-0000 exts. 1000 / 1005 • Facsimil (787) 880-2245
E-mail rectoria@upra.edu



March 1, 2011

Dr. Elizabeth H. Sibolski
President
Middle States Commission
on Higher Education
3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680

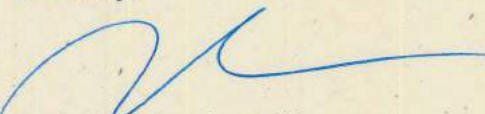
Dear Dr. Sibolski:

The University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo (UPRA) submits its Monitoring Report in response to MSCHE's request that the Institution evidence a sustained ongoing compliance with Standard 3, Institutional Resources and Standard 4, Leadership and Governance.

This document presents the actions taken, progress made, issues to be resolved and plans for resolving them in each of the two standards where concerns were expressed. UPRA responds to Standard 3 to inform of financial plans and budgetary projections, which include the initiatives taken to improve the Institution's finances. In Standard 4, the document evidences the development and implementation of clear institutional policies, specifying the respective authority of the various governing bodies and their respective roles and responsibilities in shared governance.

This report demonstrates our commitment with the continuous improvement of the Institution and its renovation and renewal. We look forward to receiving the distinguished members of the special visiting team to share with them the progress achieved in our endeavors to comply with *MSCHE's Standards of Excellence*.

Cordially,



Prof. Juan Ramírez-Silva
Chancellor

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I. Institutional Overview

The University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo (UPRA) is part of the state-supported university system consisting of eleven campuses. The UPRA was founded in 1967 as the Arecibo Regional College responding to the needs for providing the citizens of the North and North-Central area of Puerto Rico with access to higher education. In 1974, its current permanent facilities, located on a 49 acre lot in the "Las Dunas" sector, Route 129, Highway 653, kilometer 8 in Arecibo, were inaugurated. The Council on Higher Education by virtue of its Certification No. 323 (1980-1981) authorized the institution to expand its offerings to include four-year baccalaureate degree programs. The UPR Board of Trustees authorized the change of the institution's name to the University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo by virtue of its Certification No. 103 (1999-2000).

The institution, through its mission, strives to be a community dedicated to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge, to the study and clarification of values, and to the advancement of the society it serves. UPRA's administrative structure consists of a Chancellor, who is the Chief Executive Officer, supported by the Deans of Academic, Student and Administrative Affairs, the Administrative Board, Academic Senate, Departmental Chairperson and Student Council. The President is responsible for overall coordination of the UPR System, but the Chancellor is directly responsible for operations at the campus level. The Institutional Organizational Chart presented in Appendix I illustrates the lines of responsibility and flow of official communication.

Student enrollment at UPRA for the Fall Semester of academic year 2010-2011 was 4,025 with a full- and part-time faculty of approximately 274. UPRA offers 14 bachelor degree programs, three associate degree programs, and 44 articulated transfer programs (see Appendix II: UPRA Catalog 2008-2011 and Appendix III: Certification No. 44 (2006-2007) of the Board of Trustees).

II. Issues Addressed

On November 18, 2010, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) acted to continue UPRA's probation because of lack of evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standard 3 (Institutional Resources) and Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance). The letter also documented receipt of the Periodic Review Report and noted that the report provided limited information and analysis on Standard 3. This Monitoring Report is in response to MSCHE's request that UPRA document evidence that the Institution has achieved and can sustain ongoing compliance with these accreditation standards. An on-site evaluation in April 2011 will follow submission of the report.

The University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo submits this report to comply with: I. Standard 3 (Institutional Resources) by including the following evidence: 1) five-year financial projections for the UPR System and campus level; 2) institutional pro-forma budgets that demonstrate the institution's ability to generate a balanced budget for fiscal years 2010 through 2015, including personnel, compensations, and other assumptions on which these budgets are based; and II. Standard 4 (Leadership and Governance) by documenting: 3) evidence of implementation of clear institutional policies specifying the respective authority of the different governance bodies and their respective roles and responsibilities in shared governance; 4) evidence that the Board of Trustees assists in generating resources needed to sustain and improve the institution; 5) evidence of a procedure in place for the periodic objective assessment of the Board of Trustees in meeting stated governing body objectives and responsibilities; 6) evidence that steps have been taken to assure continuity and stability of institutional leadership, particularly in times of governmental transition; 7) evidence that the UPR Action Plan is implemented, that is assessed and the data are used for continuous improvement of the institution's processes; 8) evidence that steps have been taken to improve shared governance, especially in documenting how

campus input is solicited and considered in decision making at the System Level; and 9) evidence that communication between the Central administration and the institution and within the institution, is clear, timely, and accurate, and the sources of such communications are clearly defined and made available to all constituents.

III. Institutional Context

Shortly after the September 1, 2010 Monitoring Report was sent, the search committees that had been working on recommending suitable candidates for the position of Chancellor submitted their respective reports to the President of the UPR, as established in the University By-laws. Professor Juan Ramírez-Silva, who had been occupying the position of acting chancellor since his designation on May 20, 2010, was officially appointed Chancellor on September 8, 2010 as evidenced in Certification No.11-(2010-2011) of the Board of Trustees (see Appendix III).

UPRA has revisited MSCHE's *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education* in the process of realistically assessing its strengths and challenges for the purpose of complying with Standards 3 and 4. The institution strongly believes that it is in compliance with all other standards and that, based on the evidence provided in this Monitoring Report, significant progress has been made in addressing those under scrutiny. The process of introspection and self-renewal UPRA has undergone during the past months has led it to embrace more fully its mission, goals and objectives.

IV. Plan of Action

In this Monitoring Report, UPRA documents the follow-up given to its Action Plans and those of the Central Administration which were included in the previous Monitoring Report submitted on September 1, 2010 to assure compliance with MSCHE accreditation for Standards 3 and 4. Updated information on Standard 11, which was addressed in the previous Monitoring Report, is included in Appendix IV.

Both the Systemic and UPRA's Action Plans are guided by the following goals: secure continuity and institutional effectiveness with available resources; maintain and nurture additional sources of funding to continue advancing institutional education, research and service priorities; foster an enhanced institutional climate and identity; cultivate an open university culture; and, revisit and empower leadership and governance at all levels.

The Monitoring Report summarizes the actions taken, progress made, issues still to be resolved and plans for resolving them in each of the two standards where concern was expressed. The information presented in the Action Plans clearly demonstrates how the institution has continued to comply with its mission with its available resources and has succeeded in stimulating a climate of confidence among all sectors of the university community. Updated Action Plans for the two standards are included in Appendix V.

A. Standard 3: Institutional Resources

COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENT NO:

- 1. Five-year financial projections for the UPR System including information for audited financial statements for fiscal year 2010.**
- 2. Institutional pro forma budgets that demonstrate the institution's ability to generate a balanced budget for fiscal years 2012 through 2015, including the personnel, compensations, and other assumptions on which these budgets are based.**

Audited Financial Statements

Due to issues related to the implementation of the University Financial Information System (UFIS) in 2007 and the complexity of the UPR accounting system, the Audited Financial Statement for FY 2010 has not been completed. Externally audited financial statements are prepared by the University of Puerto Rico as a system. Financial information is available for UPRA in its Finance Office and in the IPEDS Finance Reports completed by the Central Administration.

The independent certified public accounting firm of Ernst and Young audited the financial statements of the University of Puerto Rico System for the year ending on June 30, 2009. Among the findings of the audit process were included: (1) "Lack of adequate controls during the implementation of the new accounting system resulted in an ineffective and inefficient financial statements close process"; and (2) "In reviewing and developing the closing process, the University should ensure that it has sufficient accounting personnel with the appropriate experience and training to effectively perform the financial statement close process". To address the concerns noted in the report, implement external auditors' recommendations and achieve timely issuance of future financial statements, Central Administration's Finance Office implemented the following strategies: (1) To speed up the flow of financial information needed to issue the statement draft to be submitted to the external auditors, an external firm with expertise in government accounting processes was contracted; (2) A firm of software specialists has also been recruited to revise UFIS' implementation, devise solutions to improve its performance and develop reports to facilitate access to the necessary financial information to draft financial statements; and (3) Continued efforts toward minimizing accounts receivables are in progress.

In addition, two of the 7 Committees of 7 to be appointed by the President, namely Budget and Finance Committee and Administrative Efficiency Committee (See Appendix VI, UPR Action Plan), are being charged respectively with: (a) evaluating the effectiveness of the existing budget development process and making the corresponding recommendations for improvement; (2) evaluating administrative structures, processes and functions and recommending measures to promote cost effectiveness and efficiency in management with the purpose of improving services at the system and campus levels. The latter is an ambitious longer term undertaking that is being projected over a two year period.

Plan of Action

The present financial situation has required the cooperation of all sectors of the University community. As a system, the University of Puerto proposes two strategies within both its systemic and unit Plans of Action to address Standard 3. The goal of the first strategy is to develop and implement financial measures in response to the current fiscal circumstances in order to promote continuity of operations while maintaining academic excellence and institutional effectiveness. The second strategy aims to diversify, attract and broaden additional funding sources to continue advancing institutional education, service and research priorities. Reductions in operating expenses identified as non-essential and identifying areas of opportunities for additional income are essential elements of this process.

The Action Plan included in Appendix V, presents a series of proactive measures and activities that the Institution undertook since the last Monitoring Report was submitted to sustain compliance with standard 3. The table has been updated to indicate the level of compliance with these measures and activities. With respect to the financial measures to promote continuity of operations and institutional effectiveness, the institution proceeded with the following course of action. First, the Institution has offered the campus community clear and precise information on the status of the budgetary situation. Second, the strategies to cover the unforeseen costs that shrink the already tight budget have been widely discussed and disseminated following recommendations made by the Committees of Planning and Budget. The institution continues to ensure a strong linkage between institutional planning, assessment

and budgeting. In addition to offering trainings to administrators, all administrative areas will be cross-trained in the budget and planning process.

Secure Continuity of Operations and Institutional Effectiveness

In an effort to ensure more participation by the university community and strengthen integration between planning and budget, the Central Administration revised its *Guidelines for Budget Formulation*. The revision of this procedure is framed within the *Budget Regulations* approved by the Board of Trustees Certification No. 100- (2005-2006), which promotes alignment between planning and budget, and encourages participation by the university community in the process.

At the campus level, UPRA's Administrative Board had approved a certification for restructuring of the budgetary distribution and allocation process which brings together planning, institutional assessment and budgeting. This certification was recently reevaluated and revised by the Directors of the Budget Office and the Office of Planning and Institutional Research, and submitted for consideration by the Administrative Board, who acted upon it at a meeting held on February 15, 2011 by issuing Certification No. 2010-11-53. The process presented in the Certification has served to direct institutional resources toward the areas in most need. At the institutional level, drawing the budget is the collective task of two committees that work together in the process of aligning planning and budget as mandated by the Administrative Board: the Strategic Planning Committee ascribed to the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR); and the Committee for Budget Analysis, Allocation and Distribution of Resources (Budget Committee). The Strategic Planning Committee is responsible for the identification of institutional priorities based on UPR's and UPRA's Strategic Plans, an analysis of institutional research reports and assessment data results on institutional effectiveness. Relying on the institutional priorities identified by the Strategic Planning Committee as a framework, the Budget Committee is responsible for the budget analysis, and recommends allocations and distribution of resources for each fiscal year. The Budget Committee held five meetings for the budget-formulation process for 2010-2011. In these meetings, the Committee used the general guidelines for the design and formulation of a consolidated and functional budget, as well as the 2010-2011 budget distribution by identified priorities.

Through Certification No. 135 (2009-2010) of the Board of Trustees, the approved budget of the UPR System for fiscal year 2010-2011 was disclosed. After discussing the current budget scenario with the Chancellors of the units, the Central Administration Budget Office issued general guidelines for the distribution of resources. By law, each of the units is required to balance revenues and expenditures and return any unused funds to UPR's General Fund. After undergoing an exhaustive analysis, the proposed distribution of the budget assigned to UPRA, which was \$30,388,984, was presented to and ratified by UPRA's Administrative Board through Certification No. 2010-2011-26. It should be pointed out that 91% of UPRA's budget responds to salaries and fringe benefits, leaving only 9% to cover all operational expenses. When compared to previous fiscal year's allocated budget, the current year represents a decrease of \$4,075,431 in funds as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Comparison of Budget Allocations
for Fiscal Years 2009-10 and 2010-2011

Budget Allocated		Difference	
FY 2009-10	FY 2010-11	Amount	Percent
\$34,464,415	30,388,984	(\$4,075,431)	-13.2%

Cost Control Measures

As a result of the global recession which, according to Puerto Rico Planning Board figures, started impacting the Island's economy since 2006, PR Government Appropriations have steadily declined and currently reflect a reduction of approximately 14% in tax revenues which aggravates central government's deficit. Consequently, the UPR budget confronts a proportional decline for the current and upcoming fiscal years since an important portion of UPR's revenues is calculated based on a percentage of the average of the two prior fiscal years' total government revenues. To offset this decline in funds, the units of the UPR System have continued to implement the Board of Trustees' recommendations regarding cautionary measures as a viable alternative to confront the reduction in operational expenses. In years prior to the current fiscal year, the allocation of the units' assigned budgets was based on the previous year's adjusted budgets, plus recurrent additions to finance salaries and benefits increases. Due to the precarious fiscal situation the UPR System has been facing since FY 2009-10, salary increases, sick-leave reimbursements, promotions and summer session allocations, among others were preemptively eliminated. Other reductions in general expenses were driven by adjustments in materials, service contracts, replacement of retired employees and faculty teaching overload and release time for administrative tasks. Table 2 below presents the control measures taken and demonstrates the dramatic impact of these reductions on this current year's budget. As evidenced by the reductions in this table, the distribution of funds was made possible without significantly impacting academic and support services to students.

TABLE 2
Analysis of Cautionary Measures Implemented for Fiscal Years 2009-10 to 2010-11

Measures	FY 2009-2010	FY 2010-2011		
	Amount ¹	Amount Spent 1 st semester ²	Amount Projected FY ³	Difference
Reduction in Faculty Overload and Compensations for administrative tasks	1,348,445.79	532,367.77	1,064,735.54	(283,710.25)
Reduction in Service Contracts	1,617,588.39	577,332.39	1,154,664.78	(462,923.61)
Reduction in overtime requirements	6,320.36	0.00	0.00	(6,320.36)
Reduction in equipment purchasing and substitution	226,793.61	75,964.40	151,928.80	(74,864.81)
Reduction in photocopying costs	62,480.46	20,608.07	41,216.14	(21,264.32)
Elimination of sick-leave reimbursements to Faculty and Non-Teaching Personnel	959,859.00	0.00	0.00	(959,859.00)
Reduction of UPRA's contribution to retirement fund	400,000.00	0.00	0.00	(400,000.00)
Elimination of HEEND special bonuses	76,307.00	0.00	0.00	(76,307.00)
Total Reductions				(2,285,249.35)

¹ Source: UPRA Available Funds Report, June 30, 2009 and June 30, 2010.

² Source: UPRA Available Funds Report, December 2010.

³ Amount projected to June 2011 by duplicating expenses.

Reductions in freezing vacant non-teaching positions resulted in savings of an additional \$148,887 in fiscal year 2011 and served to bring faculty to staff ratios to more appropriate levels. In addition to this measure, the following positions were frozen: Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Executive Aid to the Dean of Student Affairs, Executive Secretary of Academic Affairs, including faculty release time for public relations and legal affairs. Resource allocation strategies to improve efficiency in the use of human and fiscal resources have included: redistribution of the tasks of administrative personnel; restructuring institutional processes; making more effective use of available technologies; and, merging offices and programs with similar functions.

It is noteworthy that one control measure alone, the elimination of sick-leave reimbursements in excess of 90 days, resulted in savings of almost \$1 M. It should also be pointed out that additional savings may be anticipated as the projected amount for FY 2011 is duplicated for some of the measures for purposes of comparison, but these may vary as the institution continues to proceed with extreme caution in its expenditures. Moratoriums on faculty promotions, sabbatical leaves, new hiring in tenure-track positions, and a substantial reduction in travel funds have also been implemented so as to deal more effectively with the decline in institutional resources. Additionally, a 5% reduction in bonuses/extra-salary compensations for all faculty in administrative positions, including the Chancellor, deans, and department chairpersons has been implemented. It is expected that these efforts to reduce expenditures, specifically in salary and fringe benefits, will move UPRA toward a sustained fiscal stability.

Five-Year Financial Projections

The uncertain economic outlook that frames the next five years represents a challenge to institutional and strategic planning. In order to enhance the Institution's ability to generate a balanced budget for the next five-year period (2010-2011 to 2014-2015), the assumptions upon which the financial projections of the Institution were based in its previous Monitoring Report submitted in September were revised by the Central Administration's Budget Office. After consulting with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Government Development Bank and local expert economists, Central Administration's Finance and Budget Directors, instructed the units to base their financial projections for the five year period on expected revenues taking into consideration the following assumptions: (1) the 4% yearly increase of tuition costs; (2) continuing state support through the 9.6% formula; (3) a relatively stable student population; (4) no additional ARRA funds; and (5) \$40 M from the Stabilization Fee. Conservative assumptions to project future revenues from the General Fund of the State Treasury of Puerto Rico are being used due to the uncertain future of the precarious local economy

In response to MSCHE's requirement to document the development of a long term financial plan, UPRA revised its financial projections through Fiscal Year 2015. The tables and graphs on the following pages contain the current 2010-11 budget and projections for general and external funds allocations for fiscal years 2011-2012 to 2014-2015. Table 3 and graphs 1-2 present the general funds allocations based on the budget assignments identified by the Central Administration for the next five-year period. The figures contained therein take into consideration the thorough analysis of the economic trends for Puerto Rico made by the UPR Central Administration's Finance Office. An economic recovery is expected to favorably impact UPR finances beginning in FY 2013. However, for FY 2012, an initial expected decrease in state revenues of 5.24% was assumed, increasing on an annual basis at the conservative rates of 2.75% in FY 2013, 2.12% in FY 2014 and 2.07% in the last FY 2015 projected. It is evident from these projections that UPRA's budget will not reach levels comparable to fiscal year 2008. Therefore, the institution will have to continue intensifying its efforts to seek alternative funding from external sources.

Maintain and Nurture Additional Sources of Funding

It is worthwhile pointing out that during the current fiscal year, as shown in Table 3 and Graphs 1 and 4, almost \$3 M in external state funds were generated by the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies (DECEP). However, projections for the next five year period have been tempered by a modest 5% annual increase, due to increased competition for external funds and cuts in federal programs. Graph 3 demonstrates that external funds represent approximately 15% of UPRA's general budget funds. The projected increases over the five years on the average basically maintain this percentage.

Table 4 and Graph 5 below present a breakdown of external resources received by source of funds during the current fiscal year and projected for fiscal years 2012 to 2015. The largest amount received is from state funds, which includes monies from the Puerto Rico Legislative Scholarship and Continuing Education projects financed by the local Department of Education and Justice Department. It is evident from the data shown in this table and graph that federal funds received from the US Department of Education Title V and Student Support Services programs and other federal agencies, such as NASA and the Department of Agriculture, representing over \$1 M, also account for a substantial amount in external resources allocations. Tables 5 - 6 and Graph 6 illustrate the trends in external funding during the past three-year period, which demonstrates that there has been a sustained effort on the part of the institution to maintain and nurture additional sources of funding.

Table 3
General and External Funds Allocations
Academic Years 2010-2011 to 2014-2015

Campus: Arecibo

Description	Actual Budget		Budget Projections		
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Budget General Funds *	\$ 30,388,984	\$ 28,795,463	\$ 29,588,307	\$ 30,214,815	\$ 30,841,518
Budget External Funds **	\$ 4,738,267	\$ 4,975,181	\$ 5,223,939	\$ 5,485,136	\$ 5,759,392

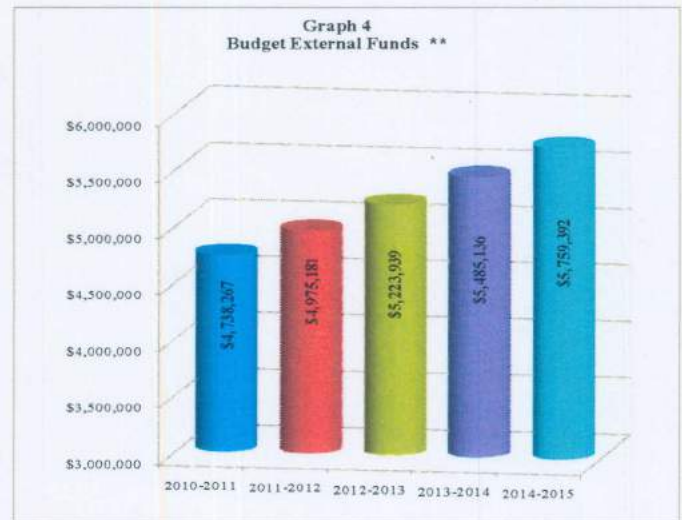
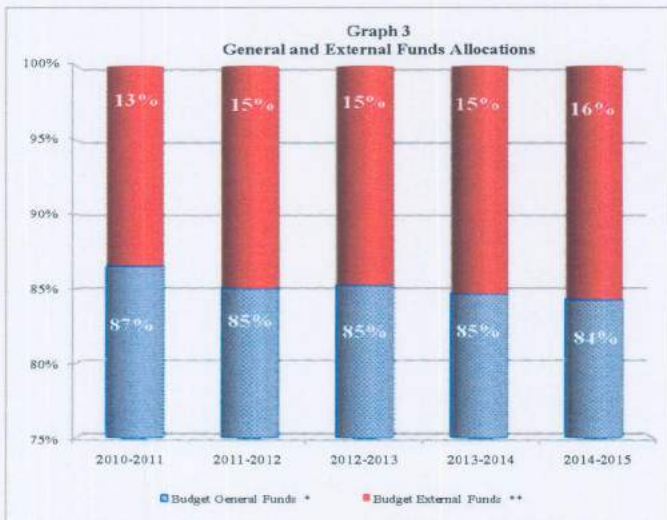
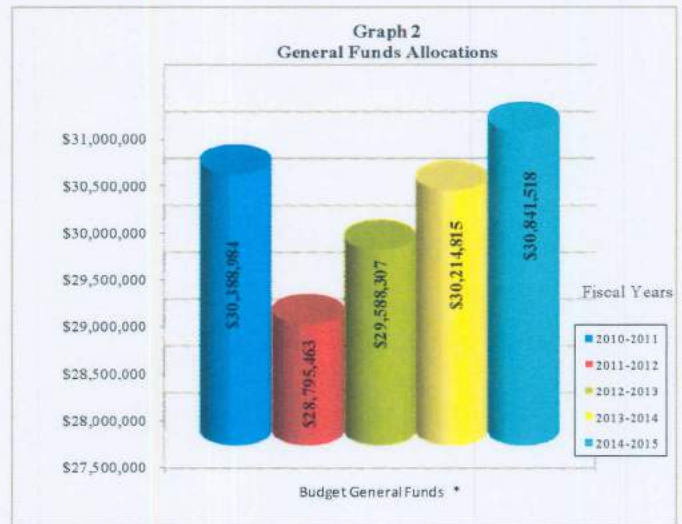
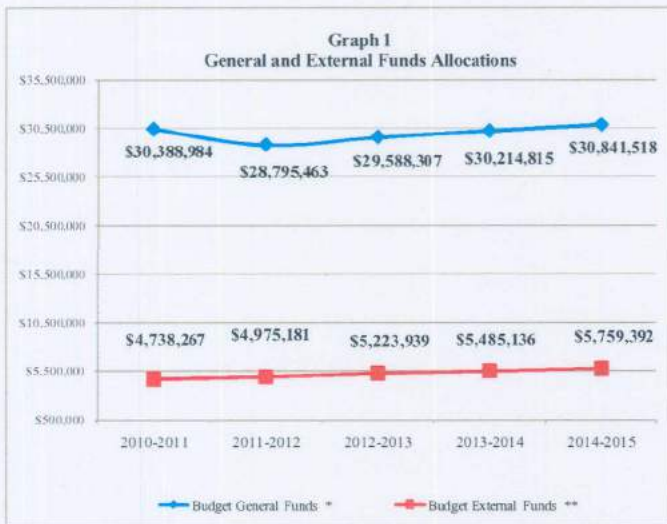


Table 4
External Resources Received and Projected
Academic Years 2010-2011 to 2014-2015

Campus: Arecibo

Sources	Funds Received		Projected funds		
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
State Funds	\$ 3,621,210	\$ 3,802,271	\$ 3,992,384	\$ 4,192,003	\$ 4,401,603
Private Funds	\$ 49,444	\$ 51,916	\$ 54,512	\$ 57,238	\$ 60,099
Federal Funds	1,040,438	1,092,460	1,147,083	1,204,437	1,264,659
Other Funds	27,175	28,534	29,960	31,458	33,031
Total	\$ 4,738,267	\$ 4,975,181	\$ 5,223,939	\$ 5,485,136	\$ 5,759,392

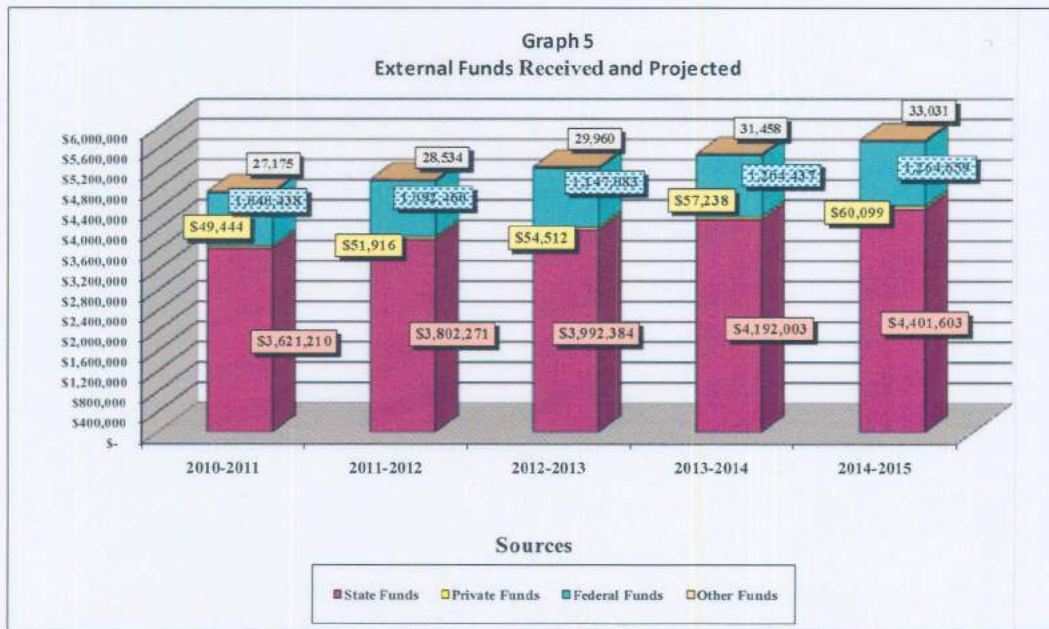
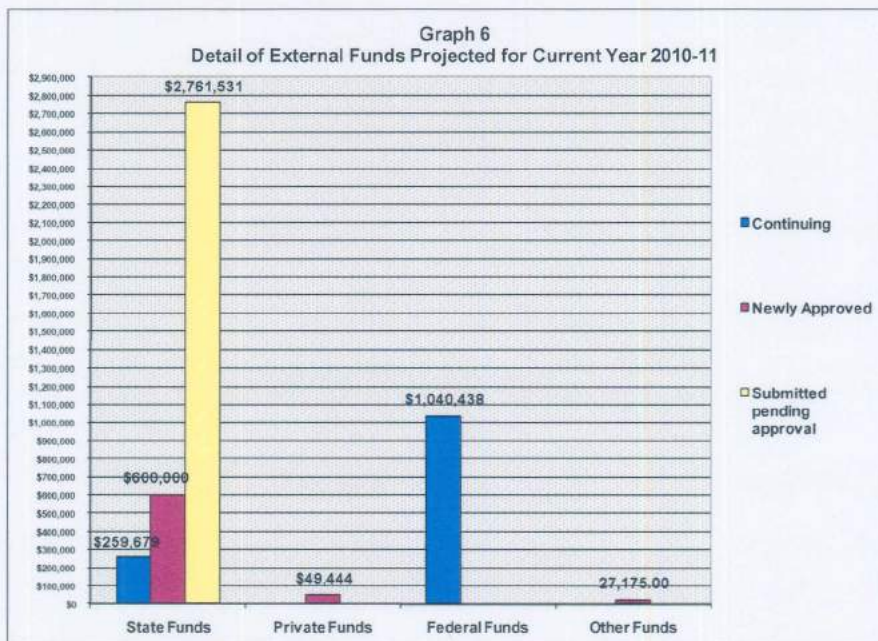


Table 5
External Resources Received and Projected
Academic Years 2007-2008 to 2011-12

Sources	Funds Received			Projected funds
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
State Funds	\$ 2,721,195 66%	\$ 2,725,779 67%	\$ 2,922,343 70%	\$ 3,621,210 76%
Private Funds	\$ 79,525 2%	\$ 70,977 2%	\$ 70,977 2%	\$ 49,444 1%
Federal Funds	\$ 1,294,078 31%	\$ 1,200,583 30%	\$ 1,166,757 28%	\$ 1,040,438 22%
Other Funds	\$ 44,573 1%	\$ 42,180 1%	\$ 10,030 0%	\$ 27,175 1%
Total	\$ 4,139,371	\$ 4,039,519	\$ 4,170,107	\$ 4,738,267

Table 6
Detail of External Funds Projected for Current Year 2010-11

Source	Continuing	Newly Approved	Submitted pending approval	Total
State Funds	\$ 259,679	\$ 600,000	\$ 2,761,531	\$ 3,621,210
Private Funds		\$ 49,444		\$ 49,444
Federal Funds	\$ 1,040,438			\$ 1,040,438
Other Funds		27,175.00		\$ 27,175
Total	\$ 1,300,117	\$ 676,619	\$ 2,761,531	\$ 4,738,267



The Chancellor has intensified efforts to increase and diversify external resources by developing new initiatives that will supplement revenues coming from state and federal sources. Among other endeavors in this direction, the Chancellor has strengthened alliances with community-based organizations, private and government entities; established collaborative agreements with the Arecibo, Camuy, Vega Baja and Orocovis municipalities; coordinated with stateside universities, such as Florida International University, University of Miami, Miami Dade Community College and Pan American University (Texas), among others, to promote student participation in exchange programs; fostered alumni donations through annual activities by appointing a Coordinator for the Office of Development and Alumni (ODA); restructured the External Resources Office so as to include the ODA and appointed as Director a person with extensive experience in grantsmanship who responds directly to his Office. To achieve more positive results in the search for external funds, during the Spring semester, two additional faculty members with expertise in research and grantwriting have been given release time to assist in this process. A series of workshops on the grants writing process have been scheduled, three of which have already been offered during the month of February. Other sources of funding with potential for growth include increasing and diversifying Continuing Education and Professional Studies' (DECEP) academic and short course offerings through self-financing methods; and the implementation of the concept of extended university through which degree-granting programs are made available and adapted to non-traditional students' needs.

Table 7
Budget distribution and projections by Program

Summary of Operating Expenses allocated budget for the Program
For five fiscal years from 2010-2011 to 2014-2015

Program	Actual Budget		Budget Projections		
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Instruction	\$ 16,489,260	\$ 15,349,924	\$ 15,718,536	\$ 16,160,131	\$ 16,160,131
Research	\$ 27,557	\$ 27,557	\$ 27,557	\$ 77,557	\$ 87,557
Academic Support	\$ 1,977,337	\$ 1,834,347	\$ 1,959,737	\$ 2,094,649	\$ 2,333,934
Student Services	\$ 2,297,836	\$ 2,232,164	\$ 2,282,164	\$ 2,282,164	\$ 2,411,432
Institutional Support	\$ 4,382,105	\$ 4,383,106	\$ 4,383,106	\$ 4,383,106	\$ 4,592,691
Infrastructure Maintenance and Operation	\$ 5,214,889	\$ 4,968,365	\$ 5,217,207	\$ 5,217,208	\$ 5,255,773
Totals	\$ 30,388,984	\$ 28,795,463	\$ 29,588,307	\$ 30,214,815	\$ 30,841,518

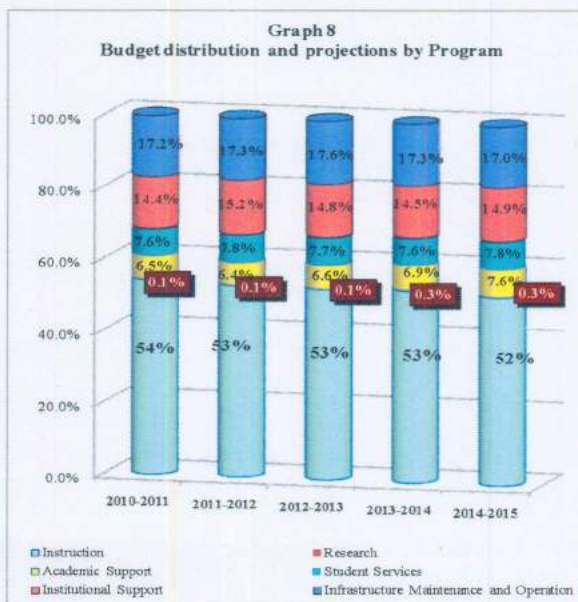
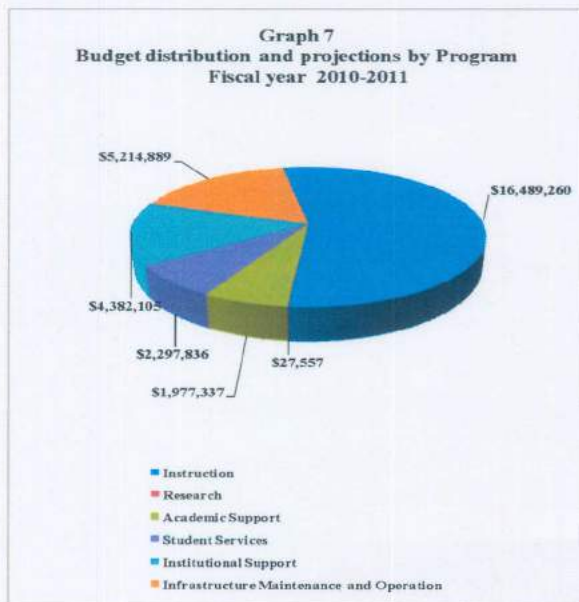


Table 7 and Graphs 7 – 8 show the actual FY 2011 and forecasted budget distribution by General Ledger programs for fiscal years 2012-2015. Instruction, which includes funds allocated for academic semesters, summer and honors program offerings, represents well over half (54% in current FY 2011) of the total budget distribution across the board, thus demonstrating the priority standing that is ascribed to it. Table 8 and Graphs 9 – 10 present the trends in the distribution of the budget allocations according to budget line category.

Table 8
Budget distribution and projections by Category Expenses

Summary of Operating Expenses allocated budget by Category
For five fiscal years from 2010-2011 to 2014-2015

Campus: Areibo

Program	Actual Budget	Budget Projections			
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Salaries	\$ 20,180,334	\$ 18,953,950	\$ 19,518,911	\$ 19,925,042	\$ 19,991,165
Fringes Benefits	\$ 7,785,376	\$ 7,418,239	\$ 7,560,875	\$ 7,646,339	\$ 7,718,958
Teaching Assistantships-Materials, Services and Supplies	\$ 2,396,983	\$ 2,396,983	\$ 2,478,229	\$ 2,591,019	\$ 3,006,395
Travel Expenses	\$ 18,415	\$ 18,415	\$ 22,415	\$ 22,415	\$ 50,000
Equipments	\$ 7,876	\$ 7,876	\$ 7,877	\$ 30,000	\$ 75,000
Totals	\$ 30,388,984	\$ 28,795,463	\$ 29,588,307	\$ 30,214,815	\$ 30,841,518

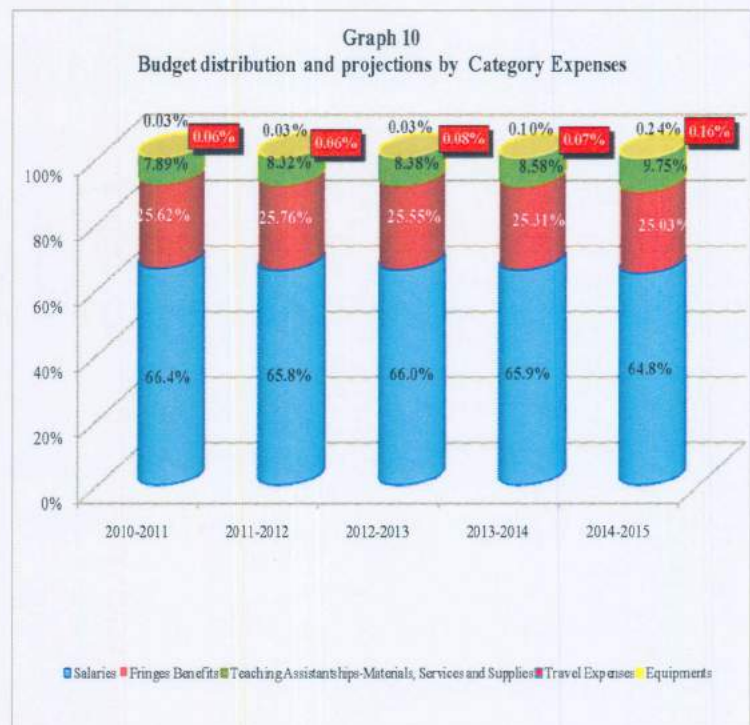
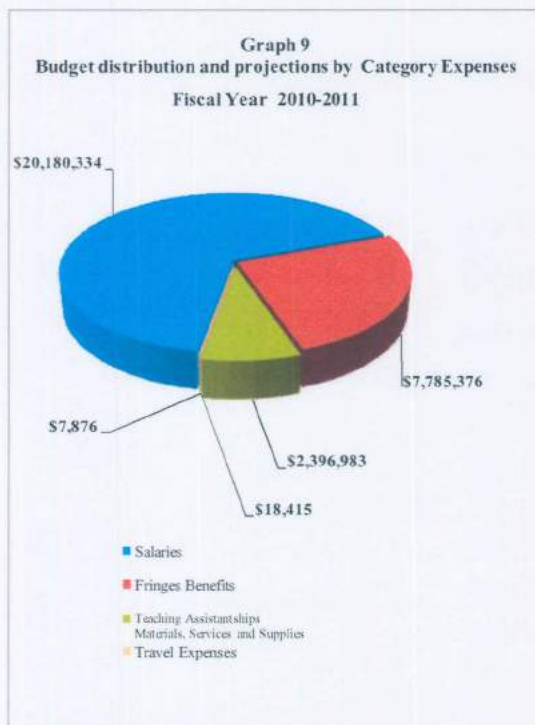


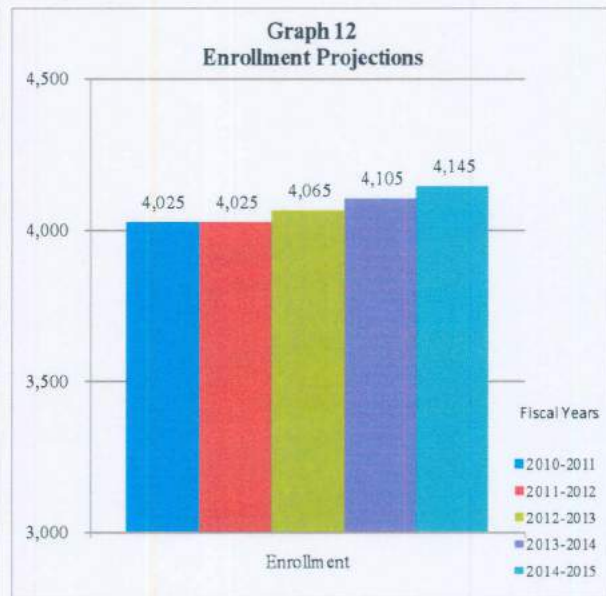
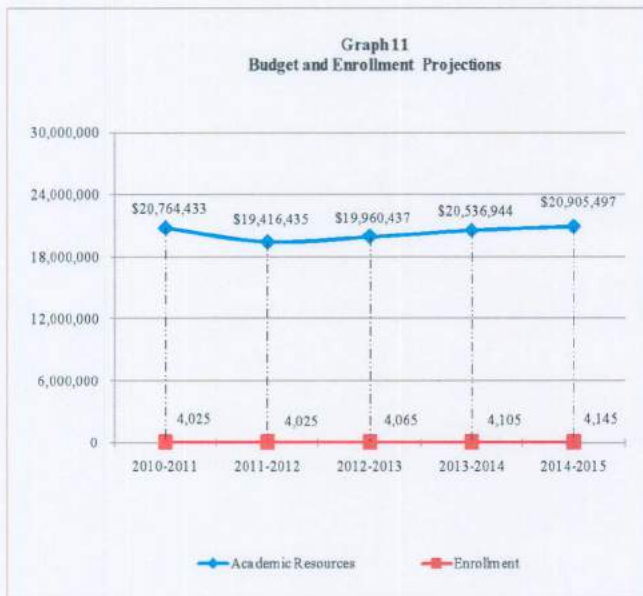
Table 9
Academic Resources and Enrollment Projections

Academic Years 2010-2011 to 2014-2015

Campus: Arecibo

Description	Actual		Projections		
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Academic Resources	\$ 20,764,433	\$ 19,416,435	\$ 19,960,437	\$ 20,536,944	\$ 20,905,497
Enrollment	4,025	4,025	4,065	4,105	4,145

Considering the financial situation described above, and making necessary adjustments to ensure academic excellence and quality support services, the institution has projected a slight increase in enrollment of approximately 1% annually for academic years 2011-12 to 2014-15. The present enrollment figure of 4,025 will increase by about 40 students annually reaching 4,145 in academic year 2014-15. Table 9 and Graphs 11 – 12 present budget and enrollment projections for the next four years.



As demonstrated in the previous tables and graphs, budget decisions at UPRA were made to minimize budget cuts at the academic level and absorb these reductions in the general accounts. The budgetary decisions taken by the Central Administration and UPRA's administrators, which are outlined above, guarantee that the institution will continue to operate within the context of its characteristic academic excellence despite the fiscal challenges faced during the next five years. The University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo is committed to strengthening its resources through enrollment management, strict financial planning strategies, and identification of innovative ways of achieving efficiency in its operations.

B. Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

Overview

The Act of 1966 and the *UPR General By-laws and Regulations* define two levels of authority for the autonomous academic unit within the University of Puerto Rico. As shown in the Organizational Chart presented in Appendix I, the College's leadership is exercised by the Chancellor, supported by his office staff, the deans, the Administrative Board, the Academic Senate, departmental chairpersons and Student Council. The Administration, with the advice of the Administrative Board, the Senate, and other institutional committees, promotes the effective fulfillment of UPRA's mission and helps to comply with the parameters of excellence determined in the *Strategic Plan 2008-2014*, (Appendix VIII).

The Chancellor presides over the Academic Senate and the Administrative Board. He also sits at the University Board and represents the institution in the capacity of chief executive officer. His functions and responsibilities are stipulated in Section 19.3 of the *UPR General By-laws and Regulations*. In addition to the Academic Senate and the Administrative Board, there are other advisory committees at UPRA that help formulate policies, and provide for ample participation of faculty, students and other community members. Several consulting committees exist through which the faculty is given the chance to participate in policy-making.

Faculty also participates in the decision-making process through formal faculty meetings, which take place at least once per semester. Faculty members vote in favor or against issues that may interest them, or delegate participation to elected representatives on working groups. The Chancellor has the prerogative of creating *ad-hoc* committees to attend to specific situations or issues that arise, where faculty, almost always, has the largest participation.

Students at UPRA have representation on the University Board, the Administrative Board, and the Academic Senate. There is also participation at several institutional and departmental committees. The main mechanism for student participation is through the Student Council, which gathers delegates from each of the academic departments. Council representatives from every campus Student Council in the UPR system take part in the UPR General Student Council.

COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENT NO:

3. Evidence of implementation of clear institutional policies specifying the respective authority of the different governance bodies and their respective roles and responsibilities in shared governance.

The governance structure of the UPR is highly inclusive providing for the participation of faculty and students at all levels. Institutional actions have been implemented to ensure that advisory and governing bodies, as well as institutionally recognized organizations and committees fully understand their roles and responsibilities, set for their contribution to the accomplishment of the institution's mission and goals in the most effective and efficient manner. In compliance with the UPRA's Action Plan, specific activities are in place to revise governance structures' composition, roles and responsibilities to ensure their effective participation in carrying out the institution mission and goals in compliance with the applicable law and regulations and accreditation standards regarding institutional integrity, leadership and governance, and best practices.

Another initiative taken by the institution to ensure that individuals are more closely aligned with appropriate offices and responsibilities was the revision of the organizational structure, which is currently under the consideration of the Administrative Board. The institution has also focused on defining clear

processes for evaluating deans and department chairs. These processes were approved by Certification No. (2010-2011-18) of the Academic Senate.

General Student Bylaws

- **Electronic Vote.** Recognizing that over time, student participation in assemblies and in the election of its leaders and representatives has steadily declined, that none of the campuses have adequate physical facilities to hold a substantial number of students and that this generation mostly interacts with peers through virtual means, the UPR vigorously endorsed the approval of Law No. 128, of August 11, 2010, which amended the University Law to implement a secret and electronic vote mechanism for students' elections and assemblies, in order to expand and facilitate opportunities for the greater majority of students to freely participate and provide input in decisions that directly affect them. On October 29, 2010 the Board of Trustees posted the proposed amendments to receive input from the community. At UPRA Ad-Hoc committees were created to work on changes to the internal regulations of the Board regarding procedures for voting utilizing electronic means (Administrative Board Certification No. (2010-2011-36). It is expected to be implemented in the fall semester 2011-2012.
- **Student Code of Conduct** A compilation of the rules of student conduct contained in the General Student Bylaws—the UPR Student Code of Conduct (SCC)—has been posted in the UPR webpage and deployed by the Deans for Students Affairs to disseminate widely in multiple formats, share and discuss with elected student leadership. The SCC will be sent and explained to every freshman along with the admission letter to the UPR (UPR Action Plan). At UPRA, the Dean of Student Affairs and the Student Council are in charge of disseminating the Student Code of Conduct. The SCC was disseminated by *Cartero El Lobo* and is posted on the web page.
- **Eligibility Criteria.** A proposal to amend the General Student Bylaws requiring all elected student leaders to fully meet eligibility criteria, not only in order to qualify to be elected but also throughout the length of their terms, is being submitted to the Board of Trustees to be considered at their march 2011 meeting. Though consistent with the quest for excellence that shapes UPR's mission, the current Bylaws are not sufficiently clear to that effect. This action will promote active participation in leadership of students that model best academic practices and accomplishment of the institution's mission and goals. At UPRA, the Internal Student Bylaws and the Student Manual are under the consideration of the Student Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate. Both documents are expected to be available in August, 2011.

Commitment with an Open University Culture

One of the 7 Committees of 7 to be appointed by the President, the Open University Committee, is being charged with drafting an official statement with the principles and expectations that entail the Open University Culture, and recommending a set of strategies, measures and protocols conducive to sustained compliance with policies that support uninterrupted continuity of institutional mission (UPR Action Plan- See Section on The Role of the 7 Committees of 7 of the UPR). UPRA's Academic Senate supports this initiative, and all the information regarding this committee was posted at *Cartero El Lobo* and the Web page. This committee will include representation from all the university community.

Provided that policies to support the continuity of operations and the academic process are in place, the University faces the challenge of transforming the aforementioned cultural elements into an Open University Culture that encourages freedom of speech, provides and protects the appropriate spaces

for respectful debate and dissent germane to the very nature of a higher education environment, while safeguarding the rights and responsibilities of all members of the University community and the continuity of the institutional education, research and service mission. To that end and in compliance with UPR Action Plan, the President and the Vice President for Academic Affairs have been actively encouraging commitment with the Open University Culture in all sectors of the University Community to guarantee the continuity of the education, research and service mission. UPRA sent a communication through the *Cartero El Lobo* indicating the areas designated outside the campus for free expression and student protests.

Since the onset of the April – June 2010 student conflict, the President and the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs increased the periodicity of opportunities to advise the Board of Trustees, the University Board, the Chancellors, the Deans for Academic Affairs, Deans for Student Affairs, and other groups with the capability of disseminating the message throughout the system and to University stakeholders, on the need for ongoing and sustainable compliance with accreditation and licensing standards and criteria regarding continuity of academic offerings to maintain eligibility for funding from the HEA and other external funds to advance the institution's mission (UPR Action Plan).

Internal dialogue and advice on these topics were included in electronic releases to the internal and external community and discussed in the following meetings:

- President with Chancellors and staff (seven meetings)
- Board of Trustees (three meetings)
- Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees (one meeting)
- Academic Deans' meetings (four meetings).
- Student Affairs' Deans meetings: (one meeting)
- Finance and Budget Directors (one meeting)
- Presidents of the General Student Councils on accreditation and eligibility requirements to HEA funding (one meeting)

Empowerment of Leadership and Governance Constituents

The UPR is committed to the empowerment of its leadership and governance constituents. As proposed in the UPR Action Plan (I.C.1), the President has required Chancellors and staff to participate in a series of workshops and trainings to prompt a collective understanding of their tasks in collaboration with their constituents in policy development and decision making, as well as within the University system, which among others included:

- Parliamentary Procedures: November 24, 2009
- Appeal Processes Workshop: October 13, 2010
- Conflict Resolution Strategies Workshop: TBA

Additionally, the first of a series of workshops to support the self evaluation process of the Board of Trustees took place on February 25, 2011. Administrators at all levels will also be required to participate in conflict resolution trainings to guarantee an effective prevention and managing of potentially conflicting situations.

COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENT NO:

4. Evidence that the Board of Trustees assists in generating resources needed to sustain and improve the institution.

In order to assist the institution with needed resources to supplement revenues and continue to effectively achieve its mission, the Board of Trustees, President, Vice President for Research and Technology and Chancellors, are actively pursuing augmenting and diversifying sources of funding. Also, federal and state grants plus other strategic financial opportunities have assisted the institution with much needed resources to supplement revenues and continue to effectively achieve its mission. Federal grants have been received from such agencies as the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the National Foundation for the Humanities, among others.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the direction, quality and integrity of the institution, the approval and update of its development plan and the oversight of its implementation and progress. It is also responsible for the approval of the budget recommended by the President, assisting in the development of resources to sustain and improve the institution, and the establishment of institutional policies and Bylaws.

The Board is actively fulfilling its fiduciary responsibility including assisting in generating resources for the Institution. In 2003-2004 the Board explicitly articulated this responsibility by constituting a Special Committee for the Development of External Resources through Certification No. 4 (2003-2004), to carry out activities to attract private donations and other nongovernmental funding, setting fundraising goals for the Board, developing and coordinating activities toward this end.

Since then the Central Administration Office of Development and Alumni (ODA) has supported and strengthened fundraising efforts and initiatives at the central and unit levels in collaboration with the Board of Trustees Development Committee, the Chancellors, campus' Alumni Offices and External Resources Offices, to promote donations and alliances with community, private and government entities to attract additional funding sources.

In 2008, the Board broadened the Committee's charge to include overseeing the implementation of the UPR Fundraising Plan, and further develop the Endowment Fund, among others, through Certification No. 11 (2008-2009). In 2009, the Committee developed an institutional fundraising policy both at the campuses and system levels contained in Certification No. 36 (2009-2010). UPRA has supported various fundraising initiatives. The External Resources Office was restructured to include the Development and Alumni Office starting in September 2010. It has undertaken the emblematic philanthropy projects sponsored by the UPR, serves as a liaison with UPRA's Jaime Benítez Foundation and the Retirees Association, and coordinates activities for raising funds, such as the celebration of the International Spanish Congress and the Voice Festival, among others. As of January 2011, UPRA had contributed \$20,277 to UPR's Endowment Fund. Strategies to increase donations to the Endowment Fund were discussed at a meeting held with the Jaime Benítez Foundation on January 21, 2011. Another issue discussed was the current state of affairs of UPRA's budget. (Refer to Plan of Activities of the Office of Development and Alumni for academic year 2010-2011.)

To temper the current and expected decline in state funding in the upcoming years, the Board of Trustees has taken the following steps to create alternate sources of funding (UPR Action Plan):

- Implementation of a Stabilization Fee of \$800 per academic year, effective in year 2010-2011
- A \$100 M line of credit from the Government Development Bank
- Additional student aid funding and expansion of existing programs to help needy students tackle the Fee.
 - Special Scholarship Fund of the University of Puerto Rico. By Law No. 176 of November 2010, the Senate of Puerto Rico committed to transfer to the University 10% of the of the Additional Lottery net yearly income for not less than \$30 M per year, for the creation of a Special Scholarship Fund for graduate and undergraduate student aids.
 - Increase Funding for the Federal Work Study Program. The State Government assigned an additional \$1.7 M to the Federal Work Study Program funding of the UPR from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds of the State. Of these funds, 107 students from UPRA will benefit from work experiences in the private and public sectors.
 - Fundraising Activities. As part of the President and the Board of Trustees' efforts to assist in generating resources a series of fundraising activities are underway coordinated by the ODA (UPR Action Plan). A string of special events and other fundraising activities organized on a recurring basis to attract donations from alumni, parents of students and employees of the University, including telephone monitoring or *phonathon*, concerts, dinners, etc.

President and Chancellors

The President and Chancellors, in collaboration with the President of the Commission on Education, Non Profit Organizations and Cooperatives of the House of Representatives, of Puerto Rico submitted an amendment to the University Law. The amendment will require all governmental departments, boards, administrations, offices, subdivisions and public corporations under the Executive Branch to commit not less than 15% of their total budget to contract professional, consulting, academic, research, training services and the like, from the Divisions of Continuing Education and Professional Studies and Intramural Practice by faculty and researchers of the UPR System. Currently, the amendment is under review by the House of Representatives Commission.

Research Funding

UPRA receives indirect cost funds from research and institutional projects currently active, which are reimbursed at the systemic level by Central Administration. For fiscal year 2010, the institution was reimbursed a total of \$46,723.

COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENT NO:

5. Evidence of a procedure in place for the periodic objective assessment of the Board of Trustees in meeting stated governing body objectives and responsibilities.

Assessment Efforts by the Board of Trustees to Date that impact UPRA

As articulated in the University Law and the UPR General Bylaws, the Board of Trustees is responsible for the direction, quality and integrity of the institution, the approval and update of its development plan and the oversight of its implementation and progress. Through Certifications No. 136 and 138 (2003-2004) respectively, the Board set out to establish an institutional effectiveness and

programmatic evaluation culture mandating the systematic internal assessment as well as external assessment through professional accreditation of all academic programs and services. At UPRA, the following programs were accredited: Elementary Education and Physical Education for the Elementary Level Programs by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE); Office Systems by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP); Computer Sciences by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology - Computing Accreditation Commission (ABET-CAC); the Nursing Department by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC); and the library by the Library Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).

Currently, the following academic departments are in the process of coordinating their respective accreditation processes: Business Administration, Physics-Chemistry, and Tele-radial Communications. The Business Administration Department will be visited by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) in March 2011. The Physics-Chemistry Department submitted its letter of intent to the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Technology Accreditation Commission (ABET-TAC) in January 2011. The Accrediting Council on Education Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) will be visiting the Tele-Radial Communications Department in 2012.

The Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the Offices of Planning and Institutional Research of the University System, is developing several initiatives of institutional research. For example, a socioeconomic profile of the student body to assess the effectiveness of current and additional financial aid programs in maintaining accessibility, and promoting informed decisions regarding the future allocation of student aids and programs, and a study of tendencies in admissions and the enrollment process, among others.

To further develop a culture of assessment, the Board of Trustees issued a Policy on the Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness through Certification No. 136 (2003-04) that promotes the discussion of relevant topics in the advisory bodies. At UPRA, an agenda of topics relevant to institutional research and assessment has been included in the calendars of the Academic Senate and Administrative Board on an annual basis since 2005-06. Additionally, the Board of Trustees issued Certification No. 3 (2009-2010), which defines a set of 30 indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the UPR Planning Agenda, Ten for the Decade. At UPRA, indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of each of the goals in its Strategic Plan: 2008-2014 were established.

Periodic Assessment Initiative

In order to support an objective periodic assessment of the Board of Trustees in meeting stated objectives and responsibilities, the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs developed and submitted to the President a rubric draft based on expectations contained in Standard 4, Leadership and Governance, and MSCHE's publication *Governing Boards*, to assist the body in identifying areas of strength and areas in need for improvement in their current practices. At UPRA, a rubric designed to evaluate the functioning of this advisory body is currently being constructed and under the consideration of the Chancellor and the Academic Senate. On February 25, 2011, an external consultant with extensive expertise in accreditation and experience as a Governing Board member will assist the Board in refining the rubric according to its particular profile, needs and priorities, and on launching the self assessment process. Based on the self assessment findings, the external consultant will design and offer a workshop or series of workshops to the Board of Trustees beginning no later than April 2011 (UPR Action Plan).

Another one of the 7 Committees of 7, the Leadership and Governance Committee, to be appointed by the President, is being charged with revising institutional leadership and governance structures, roles and responsibilities, based on an analysis of the Law and regulations in alignment with applicable standards, as well as current best practices in higher education, and making recommendations

to promote their effective participation in carrying out the institution's mission and goals (UPR Action Plan). Their task includes suggesting guidelines for the review of the internal regulations of all leadership, advisory and governing organizations and bodies, including the Board of Trustees, in compliance the applicable law and regulations, accreditation standards and best practices. The purpose of creating an Ad Hoc Committee is to foster an independent evaluation process to serve as a starting point to assist institutional leadership and governance bodies rethink critical aspects of its structures, roles and responsibilities to promote effective participation and collegiality.

Both the self assessment and the Ad Hoc Committee on Leadership and Governance external evaluation processes will feed each other to assist the Board of Trustees in further improving its effectiveness in the exercise of their roles and responsibilities towards advancing the institution's mission, goals, planning and priorities, and to further clarify at all levels their specific authority, roles and responsibilities in shared governance in alignment with applicable laws and regulations.

COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENT NO:

6. Evidence that steps have been taken to assure continuity and stability of institutional leadership, particularly in times of governmental transition.

The UPR has undergone periodic changes in leadership while maintaining the necessary level of continuity and stability in key areas to carry on with its mission. In compliance with University Law, as amended, the Board of Trustees is composed of 17 members including one student and two faculty members elected by their peers for a one year term, and 14 citizens designated by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate of Puerto Rico, of which at least 5 should be UPR alumni, who serve for 6 year terms each. The profile of current members evidences the body's diversity, concurrent with Commission's expectations. The mix of senior and new Board members supports continuity, at the same time, the influx of new approaches and ideas.

UPRA's Academic Senate is composed of fifteen (15) senators elected by their respective academic departments and four student representatives. Of the 15 senators, eight (53%) have served for more than one term or have been reelected to form part of this deliberative body. As regards the composition of the Administrative Board, the President of the UPR is an ex-officio member, the Chancellor is the President of this deliberative body, which also includes the deans, four department heads appointed by the Chancellor, two senators elected among the members of the Academic Senate and a student representative as set forth in Certification No. (1999-2000-74). Only four (33%) of the Administrative Board's 12 members have served for more than a year. (See Appendix VIII for information on current members of both deliberative bodies.)

Chancellor Juan Ramírez-Silva, had been occupying the position of acting chancellor since his designation on May 20, 2010, as evidenced in Certification No. 11 (2010-2011). The campus consultation process, which took approximately four months, is summarized below:

- Input received from UPRA's Academic Senate consisted of appointing Search Committees comprised of faculty, staff and students.
- Campus Search Committees reviewed candidates' credentials, interviewed them, and coordinated opportunities for the candidates to make presentations to the University Community, and to receive constituent's input.
- Three members of each Campus Search Committee were appointed by the Board of Trustees to a Systemic Search and Consultation Committee which evaluated the recommendations from the Academic Senates and recommended candidates in order of preference.

- The Board of Trustees' Search Committee reviewed the Systemic Committees' recommendations and in turn formulated their recommendations to the Board of Trustees who appointed the Chancellor.

After recommending the suitable candidates for the position of Chancellor and submitting their respective reports to the President of the UPR, as established in the University By-laws, Ramirez- Silva was officially-appointed Chancellor on September 8, 2010.

On October 21, 2010, the Academic Senate agreed to participate in the process of searching and consulting with the university community for candidates to hold the positions of the Deans of Academic, Administrative and Students Affairs. A Search and Consultation Committee composed of six senators was elected among the members of the Academic Senate and a student senator agreed to receive nominations of candidates for these positions by November 10, 2010. The Senate composed a profile of the ideal candidates to occupy the positions of the respective deanships and posted it in UPRA's *Cartero El Lobo*. The Chancellor sent a written communication on November 15, so that the non-teaching personnel would also set up a similar committee and stipulated November 30, as the deadline for submitting its report with recommendations for candidates. After the established deadline, the Chancellor notified the President of the candidates chosen and it is up to the Board of Trustees to approve or disapprove their appointment within a term of 60 days according to Article 37, section 37.3.1 of the UPR General By-laws.

In order to maintain a significant number of key leaders, the Chancellor filled management positions with personnel with vast experience in the same post or office, to warrant the adequate expertise and historic memory to assure continuity and stability in institutional leadership. Appendix VIII contains examples of the significant number of officials in positions of confidence that have supported stability and continuity of the UPRA agenda in their respective areas across administrations.

COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENT NO:

7. Evidence that the UPR Action Plan is implemented, that it is assessed and the data are used for continuous improvement of the institution's processes.

Since 1975, the University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo has embraced accreditation as its leading credential to validate and strengthen the quality and integrity of its endeavors relative to internationally recognized standards of excellence, and to prove itself worthy of public confidence and support. But the student conflict from April- June 26, 2010, prompted the MSCHE to place on probation 10 of the 11 campuses of the UPR System, including UPR Arecibo. To confront these unprecedented challenges and recognizing the utmost importance of recuperating the institution's traditional good accreditation standing to continue the effective accomplishment of its mission, UPRA'S Action Plan for Ongoing and Sustained Compliance with Leadership and Governance, Educational Offerings, and Institutional Resources Standards of Excellence was developed to address MSCHE's concerns and expectations underlying the probationary actions in context with the relevant elements of each of the standards, through: (1) an introspective identification and critical self assessment of the historical elements underlying the institutional culture, the events, circumstances, and; internal and external environmental factors that prompted these actions; (2) a thorough analysis of institutional strategic priorities, challenges and opportunities at its present juncture.

Through the Action Plan, the University set forth an ambitious agenda of institutional change aligned with the prevailing values and expectations of higher education institutions, aimed to: (1) foster an enhanced institutional climate and identity; (2) cultivate an Open University Culture; (3) revisit and

empower leadership and governance at all levels; (4) guarantee sustained length, rigor and depth of academic offerings; (5) secure continuity and institutional effectiveness with available resources, and; (6) maintain and nurture additional sources of funding to continue advancing institutional education, research and service priorities, (7) guarantee sustained length, rigor and depth of the academic offerings.

Representatives from all campuses recommended by their Chancellors, were appointed to the Systemic Task Force, that together with the Think Tank refined and added dimension to the initial critical self assessment, goals and actions with the particular perspectives from their respective campuses to assemble the UPR Action Plan, with the endorsement of the body of Chancellors and the President of the UPR. Consequently, the Plan is two-fold, with one Plan at the system level and individual plans for each of the 10 campuses included in the Commission’s actions, framed by the goals included in the UPRA’s Action Plan (see Appendix V).

To assess the activities of the Action Plan at UPRA, the Chancellor appointed a Task Force, which consists of 17 members, including professors, non-teaching personnel, student representatives, members of the Academic Senate and Administrative Board, so as to assure representation of all sectors of the UPRA community in offering suggestions on the process of compiling, writing and effectively responding to the Monitoring Report. The Task Force is committed to the continuous improvement of these activities and institutional processes.

The implementation and assessment of UPRA’s Action Plan consists of documenting compliance evidence of the 47 specific activities at the unit level distributed under six goals. Data and supporting documentation have been collected, reviewed and organized in Table 10. This table summarizes the level of progress versus expected outcomes of the 35 activities in UPRA’s Action Plan. It shows that 37 or 79% of the proposed activities are already in compliance or in progress.

Table 10
Outcomes Assessment of UPRA’s Action Plan

Goal	Number of Activities under Goal	Activities Initiated	Activities in Progress	Activities in Compliance
I.A	6	1	3	2
I.B	6	--	2	4
II.A	5	--	1	4
II.B	6	2	3	1
II.C	9	6	1	2
III.A	15	1	--	14
Totals	100% (47)	21.3% (10)	21.3% (10)	57.4% (27)

The following description summarizes the updated action plan.

Action Plan A. Foster an Enhanced Institutional Climate and Identity

UPRA continuously promotes an institutional climate of mutual respect and collaboration among all constituents. At the executive level, the chancellor holds meetings with deans to discuss issues concerning the Institution and the System. The main issues are taken up to the deliberative bodies that serve an advisory function in the decision-making process. This opens up opportunities to promote the participation of faculty and student representatives. The main decisions approved by certifications are discussed in departmental meetings and advisory committees. The Academic Senate informs students

about its decisions and activities through the General Student Council (GSC). In other cases, official and internal communications are channeled through publications on the web, radio, newspapers, surveys, and electronic mail.

Among the actions taken-as part of the UPRA's Action Plan- to develop and strengthen the institutional climate and identity, which includes maintaining effective open communication channels with personnel in leadership and governance positions and the university community, are the following:

- Scheduling on a more frequent basis meetings with student leaders, faculty, labor union leaders and the external community as evidenced by meetings held by the Chancellor during the current academic year 2010-2011. The Chancellor, together with the Acting Dean of Student Affairs, held seven (7) meetings with the Student Council where matters pertaining to the student conflict, new processes in student economic aid and projections for the academic year were discussed. He held a meeting with the Association of Teaching Personnel (APDA by its Spanish acronym); two with the Workers' Union to discuss the labor situation and payroll reductions; and four (4) meetings with the Association of Non-teaching Personnel (HEEND by its Spanish acronym) to discuss payroll reductions, and the issue of leaves of absence and economic aid for non-teaching personnel currently studying.
- The Acting Dean of Administrative Affairs held seven (7) meetings with labor union leaders. Issues pertaining to negotiations regarding renovation of contracts, reasonable accommodations to comply with Law 51, the situation of the breakdown of the air conditioning campuses, and employee uniforms were discussed.
- The Acting Dean of Students Affairs sustained four (4) meetings with student leaders to discuss the roles and functions of UPRA's Student Council.
- The fall faculty meeting was held on November 1, 2010. The following topics were discussed: the Chancellor's report summarizing the work undertaken from May 20 to November 1, 2010, emphasizing four areas, namely: the Chancellor's Office, and academic, student and administrative affairs. In the upcoming faculty meeting scheduled for March 15, institutional committee reports will be presented, UPRA's current budget status, and matters pertaining to accreditation issues will be discussed and analyzed. Usually, the Chancellor sustains a minimum of two faculty meetings per academic year, one each semester.
- The official electronic mail, known as *Cartero el Lobo*, has posted more than 35 communications, which have included academic calendars, letters convoking faculty members to meetings, dates for final examinations and the state of affairs of the current University situation, among others. In order to improve the procedures for sending communications through the *Cartero el Lobo* website a protocol was submitted by the Communication and Access Committee to the Administrative Board. This was approved through the Certification No. (2010-2011-54).
- The *NORMATECA*, a collection of norms, by-laws, policies and procedures of the Academic Senate and Administrative Board, has been updated through the digitalization of 848 new certifications for a total of 1,360 digitalized certifications to date. It is expected that the *NORMATECA* will become a standard online service at www.upra.edu. At its January 24, 2011 meeting, the Systems and Procedures Committee was charged with the task of discussing, analyzing and recommending actions for the implementation of an institutional policy on systems and procedures at UPRA. Additionally, the Committee will classify all certifications according to the codes for topics and categories utilized by the Central Administration.
- The Institution has also offered training on effective dialogue, and conflict mediation and resolution, among other related topics, to administrators at all levels and staff. A conference on *Successfully Controlling your Emotions* was offered on October 8 to UPRA's supervisory

academic and administrative personnel. On February 25, another conference on *Conflict Management* was offered to all mid-level management personnel.

Action Plan B. Cultivate an Open University Culture

In order to assure a better integration and participation of the Institution with the institutional community to promote an Open University Culture, the Institution has discussed Certification 90 (2004-05) of the Board of Trustees. This issue will continue to be disseminated through UPRA's web page, blogs, meetings and other electronic and written means of communication, as part of licensing and accreditation requirements. The most recent actions taken in the Institution in this respect include:

- All communications regarding UPRA's accreditation status were sent to the university community through the *Cartero el Lobo* and disseminated through the webpage. This issue was also discussed in the Academic Senate in an extraordinary meeting, the Administrative Board and in meetings with Department Chairpersons.
- Implementation of a mechanism in UPRA's web page through the link *Exprésate*, meaning express yourself, in which the university community can expose any matters or concerns relating to institutional effectiveness.
- An orientation to the Jaime Benitez Foundation was offered on January 19, 2011, regarding the accreditation processes.
- A broad-based activity to promote and maintain an open university culture will be offered in March with the internal and external community to provide opportunities for generating and sharing ideas. The Jaime Benitez Foundation and the Alumni Association will collaborate in this activity.

Other measures taken include the creation of an Access and Communication Committee, which has met on several occasions (Dec. 3, 2010, January 18 and 26, and February 3, 2011) whose tasks consist of revising the implementation of Certification No. 90 (2004-05) of the Board of Trustees. This committee is also in charge of establishing the protocols for maintaining an open university culture, strengthening communication channels, and offering orientations to the university community.

To ensure integration of the University with its external constituents, the following projects that have a direct impact and/or benefit the surrounding community have been carried out. Examples include projects of illumination, offering short courses through the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies (DECEP), such as language classes in English and French, baking and confectioning, and College Board and EXADEP reviews. UPRA has also offered socio-cultural activities, such as the Voice Festival which took place on December 2, 2010. These actions are part of Goal 5 of UPRA's Strategic Plan which entails commitment with the sustained continuity of the institutional mission and educational offerings.

It should be noted that the main entrances to the campus were kept open to guarantee free access at all times, as part of the President and Chancellors' Continuity and Security Plan. In partnership with state and city governments, security and prevention measures were strengthened for the welfare of the academic and general community. Provided that policies to support the continuity of operations and the academic process are in place, the University faces the challenge of transforming the aforementioned cultural elements into an Open University Culture that encourages freedom of speech, provides and protects the appropriate spaces for respectful debate and dissent germane to the very nature of a higher education environment, while safeguarding the rights and responsibilities of all members of the University community and the continuity of the institutional education, research and service mission.

In addition, one of the 7 Committees of 7 to be appointed by the President is the Open University Committee. This Committee is being charged of drafting an official statement with the principles and expectations that entail the Open University Culture, and recommending a set of strategies, measures and protocols conducive to sustained compliance with policies that support uninterrupted continuity of institutional academic and administrative operations.

Action Plan C. Revisit and Empower Leadership and Governance at all Levels

In regard to the roles, functions and responsibilities of the governance structure, the Institution ensures an effective participation of the different governing bodies. University regulations provide for the appointment of acting chancellors and other academic administrators at all levels while the nomination process is underway. This process consists of appointing search committees at the academic and administrative levels, establishing criteria for selecting, interviewing and evaluating suitable candidates, and submitting their respective reports with recommendations to the President, who after consultation with the Board of Trustees, appoints the new Chancellor. The Academic Senate prepared and approved profiles of candidates aspiring to the positions of both Chancellors and Deans, which are contained in Academic Senate Certification No. (2009-2010-17) and Certification No. (2010-2011-15) and included in Appendix III. As mentioned earlier, Professor Juan Ramírez-Silva was officially-appointed Chancellor on September 8, 2010, following established University By-laws (Certification No. 11(2010-2011) of the Board of Trustees contained in Appendix III). Appointment of the deans is still under consideration.

There is evidence to support the contention that the Academic Senate complies with the duties and responsibilities inherent to this governing body. During the present academic year 2010-2011, the Academic Senate has held seven (7) ordinary and three (3) extraordinary meetings.

- At its third meeting which took place on August 26, 2010 were selected the professors that will represent the Senate on the University Board and the Administrative Board (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11- 4, Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11- 5; Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-6, Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-7 respectively).
- At its fourth meeting held on September 9, 2010, members of the permanent committees of the Academic Senate for the current academic year were selected. These committees include Academic Affairs, Faculty Affairs, Student Affairs, Rules and Regulation and the Agenda Committee; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-8). The composition of Ad-Hoc Committees created to study multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary courses offered at UPRA; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-9) and the one which establishes the policies for the conservation of historical documents were changed; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-10). At this meeting the academic senators expressed their concerns that the Monitoring Report previously submitted to the MSCHE did not adequately represent UPRA's state of affairs; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-11).
- On its October 21, 2010 meeting, the Academic Senate agreed to participate in the process of searching and consulting with the university community for candidates to hold the positions of Deans of Academic, Administrative and Students Affairs Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-12). It also recommended that the Administration consult with the academic departments, regarding admission, quotas, GAI (IGS), consolidation, moratorium or elimination of academic programs, (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-13 and Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11 14).

- At the meeting, held on October 28 2010, the Academic Senate composed a profile of the ideal candidates to occupy the positions of the representative deanships and posted it on UPRA's website; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-15).
- At the meeting held on November 30, an Ad-Hoc Committee was established to evaluate the Proposal of Distance Education Courses; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-16). Procedures for informing absences, and making up classes and administrative tasks during teaching periods were also discussed; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-17). Additionally, rubrics for the evaluation of the functions and performance of teaching faculty in administrative positions such as: Chancellor, Deans and Department Chairs, were also approved; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-18).
- At the last senate meeting of the fall semester held on December 16, 2010, it was agreed that a single document containing the rubrics for the evaluation of the administrative personnel would be prepared; (Academic Senate Certification No. 2010-11-21). Also, the Chancellor requested that the Committee on Rules and Regulations express its position on defining the maximum period of time that interim chancellors and their staff can serve in this capacity. The institution needs to develop a policy to deal effectively with changes in leadership and establish a plan to achieve a seamless transition. As such, one of the 7 Committees of 7, to be appointed by the President, Consulting and Transition Processes Committee, is being charged with evaluating the effectiveness of search, consulting and transition processes in the University and to draft a proposal to review and update all aspects of such processes (UPR Action Plan I.C.8) (See Section on The Role of the 7 Committees of 7 of the UPR).
- At the first Academic Senate meeting of the spring semester held on January 27, 2011, the rubrics to evaluate the functioning of this deliberative body according to its internal regulations was presented. It is further suggested that assessment on a continuous basis be implemented to evaluate the effectiveness of key personnel exercising leadership and governance roles.

The Administrative Board considered to be the Chancellor's advisory organism is UPRA's other governing board. During the present 2010-2011 academic year, the Administrative Board has held five (5) ordinary and two (2) extraordinary meetings. The topics discussed at the meetings include:

- Amendments to the Academic Calendars for the first and second semesters of academic year 2010-2011 and summer 2011 respectively; (Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-11-32, Certification No. 2010-11-33 and Certification No. 2010-11- 38).
- The Administrative Board dealt with the approval of the distribution of UPRA's assigned Budget, control measures taken in academic offerings and employees' children Preschool (Daycare) Center; collaborative agreements between US universities and UPRA in order to raise additional funds; the granting of licenses for sick leaves, leaves without pay and permission for faculty overload above 22 credits and; financial aid for study leaves of non- teaching personnel; (Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-11-31, Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-11-34, Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-11-40 and Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-11-48).
- Ad -Hoc committees were created to work on changes to the internal regulations of the Board regarding voting and procedures for voting utilizing electronic means, (Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-2011-36 and Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-2011-39); which will include the evaluation of promotions in rank recommended by the Faculty Personnel Committee; (Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-2011- 37 and (Administrative Board Certification No. 2010-11-48).

UPRA's Action Plan also presents a series of actions and activities that the Institution took to sustain compliance with standard 4. First, the orientations offered to other personnel in governance and leadership positions will be restructured so as to ensure that all issues pertaining to their respective functions are covered. In August (2010) an orientation on Parliamentary Procedures was offered to all new Academic Senate and Administrative Board members. Second, the completion of UPRA's Student Manual will serve to clarify the roles, functions, and responsibilities of the General Student Council and promote diverse student participation. Currently, the Committee on Student Affairs is revising the last stages of the Student Manual for submission to the Academic Senate. It is expected to be completed for fall semester 2011-2012.

In summary, it can be affirmed that the advisory bodies, such as the Academic Senate and Administrative Board, and the deans in charge of academic, administrative and student affairs carried out their duties, assigned tasks and responsibilities, thus demonstrating their leadership under stressing circumstances and achieving continuity of operations. Evidence to sustain this assertion, including all certifications and communications issued, will be available to the MSCHE visiting team during its visit in April, 2011.

COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENT NO.

8. Evidence that steps have been taken to improve shared governance, especially in documenting how campus input is solicited and considered in decision making at the system level.

Periodic Forums with Elected Student Leadership

On October 6, 2010, following an initiative of the Student Trustee, the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees invited the student representatives to the University Board (or the President of his campus's General Student Council if they chose so) to receive firsthand knowledge of their concerns about the impact of fiscal limitations on student services and on steps taken by the institution to promote compliance with MSCHE requirements in the framework of the probationary actions on 10 campuses of the system. Their main concerns included: (1) their opposition to the Stabilization Fee, their stance that other funding sources should be identified, and doubts about its implementation; (2) the Open University Culture initiative in terms of its possible impact on campus security; (3) doubts about the implementation of the electronic vote and its impact on discussion and debate in assembly; (4) the increased carrying capacity of courses, reduction of sections and library hours. Both students and Trustees were satisfied by the dialogue and agreed to meet again by the end of the academic year.

The first meeting of the President and staff with student leadership was held on October 22, 2010. Attendance included all student reps to the University Board, all student reps to the Academic Senates and all Presidents and General Student Councils (GSC) of the system. Again, substantive input was gathered regarding security concerns related to Open University Culture initiative, questions about the current fiscal challenges and the implementation of the Stabilization Fee, among other systemic issues. There was also consensus on the need of reviewing both the composition and format of these listening sessions in order to appropriately and effectively channel students concerns.

The second meeting of the President and staff was held on Monday, December 13, 2010, with GSC Presidents only. In addition to the ongoing conversations at the institutional level with the duly elected student leadership of the system, in late December 2010 the Secretary of State held two meetings with some official student leaders to consider their concerns and proposals—exclusively on issues within the roles and responsibilities of the State Government—namely, appropriations to the UPR and the Police presence in the University, among others.

Another meeting is being scheduled to advise them on: (1) the implementation of the new student aids and programs in place to assist students in coping with the Stabilization Fee; (2) their role on the implementation of the electronic vote Law and By Laws throughout the system; (3) Rules and Regulations soon to be approved by the Board of Trustees for the implementation of a special \$30 million student aid fund approved by the Government of Puerto Rico. At UPRA, the Chancellor and Acting Dean of Student Affairs have held eleven (11) meetings during the present academic year to attend to these matters.

As suggested in the Special Team's Report, during the month of February 2011, members of the Board of Trustees conducted campus visits to hold listening sessions with Academic Senates (UPR Action Plan). UPRA was visited by Board of Trustees members Marisara Pont, Marta Bustillo and Felipe Carro on February 7, 2011. The trustees met with the Chancellor, deans, Academic Senate, Department Chairpersons and student representatives to gather information on the climate of the university community.

Periodic Surveys

The Vice President of Academic Affairs, capitalizing on the expertise on institutional research of the Offices of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR) throughout the system, is coordinating the design and administration of studies and periodic electronic surveys about situations and issues that concern and affect the University Community, to relay their results to the appropriate officers for action leading to improve shared governance (UPR Action Plan).

Currently, among other activities, OPIR Directors are developing three pilot surveys around the prongs that guide Section I of the Action Plan for ongoing and sustained compliance with Standard 4, Leadership and Governance: (1) Foster an Enhanced Institutional Climate and Identity; (2) Open University Culture; (3) Strengthening of Governance. OPIR directors have held several meetings with Central Administration and are in constant communication through electronic mail.

Chancellors and other Key Campus Leadership Role in Policy Development and Decision Making

Chancellors and key campus leadership are crucial to support coherence and articulation of the University as a system. Chancellors, Deans, Office Directors and other campus leadership participate actively in policy development and decision making at system level (UPR Action Plan).

- Chancellors are members of the University Board.
- The President meets with Chancellors twice a month, or as frequent as necessary.
- The Vice Presidency of Students Affairs meets monthly with Student Deans, Financial Aid Directors and other student services officers.
- The Vice Presidency of Academic Affairs meets monthly or as frequent as necessary with Academic Deans, Registrars, Professional Accreditations Committees, Institutional Research and Planning Directors, and as frequently as necessary with the institutional accreditation Task Force of the University of Puerto Rico and campus's institutional accreditation coordinators, at least twice a semester with Directors of the Divisions of Continuing Education and Professional Studies, as well as other committees, groups, University Community members and stakeholders.

Some examples that evidence how input from Chancellors and other key campus leaders are used for policy development and decision making are:

- Chancellors and Deans for Academic Affairs collaborated in the development of a set of short term criteria for academic planning to guide decision making towards guaranteeing institutional effectiveness in the face of projected reductions for academic year 2011-2012.
- Together with Budget and Finance Directors at system and unit levels, the President and Chancellors are developing a long term financial plan, also at system and unit levels, and examining structures and processes to integrate more efficient and effective practices
- Together with the President, Chancellors have developed and implemented the Continuity and Security Plan that allowed all campus to remain open and operational in spite of the unrest experienced during the past semester, for the first time after a long history of labor and student stoppages. To attend this issue, UPRA appointed the Communication and Access Committee.

The University Board and the Board of Trustees

Advisory and governing bodies at all levels, each with its own formal structure, rules, regulations, roles and responsibilities, include faculty and student participation: Academic Senates and Administrative Boards at campus level, and the University Board and Board of Trustees at system level. University structure provides formal means to channel ideas from faculty and students through Faculty meetings, representatives to Academic Senates, Administrative Boards, the University Board and the Board of Trustees. Administrative Boards and Academic Senates of each campus meet periodically; the University Board and its several committees meet monthly; the Board of Trustees and its several committees also meet monthly. At UPRA, the Academic Senate is usually convoked on the third Tuesday or Thursday of each month, while the Administrative Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month.

COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENT NO:

9. Evidence that communication between the Central administration and the institution and within the institution is clear, timely, and accurate, and the sources of such communications are clearly defined and made available to all constituents.

The Office of Communications of the Central Administration reengineered the Institutional Communication Plan to better support UPR's mission through different programming strategies and dissemination of relevant information. The primary objectives of the plan include: (1) optimizing the positioning of the UPR as the leading institution of higher education in Puerto Rico; (2) enhancing the international positioning of the UPR; (3) maximizing the use of UPR website and increasing and diversifying information resources (social networks, *Cartero AC* and *UPR Informa*) to communicate relevant information to internal and external and address main issues.

At the system level the creation of 7 Committees of 7 was proposed. The committee on Internal and External Communication is in charge of assessing the effectiveness of internal and external communications during the past events and making recommendations for improvement. As conceived in the original Action Plan, this Committee was meant to be composed exclusively of experts in the field of Communication. However, following suggestions received from discussions in the University Board, the Committee will not only include experts in Communication but also *consumers* of information from the internal and external community, as key elements to assist in the accomplishment of the Committee's charge.

In order to broaden and strengthen the opportunities for effective communication between the administration and the University Community about the concerns and situations that affect them, as well as to share developments and accomplishments at system and campus levels, several forums and focus groups have been held with elected student leadership. At UPRA, all communications were sent to the

university community through the *Cartero El Lobo* and disseminated through the webpage, blogs and social networking sites, such as *Facebook* and *Twitter*. To strengthen all official and internal channels of communication, the Administrative Board approved the procedures to disseminate the official communications through *Cartero El Lobo* (Certification No. 2010-2011-53); workshops have been scheduled on UPRA's Electronic Communication Systems -- on February, 1, 2011 the first workshop was offered to the deans and a representative from each deanship; a committee is elaborating a proposal to improve the programming of UPRA Radio; and the Institution is redesigning the webpage and many of its contents.

Conclusion

The Monitoring Report presents a series of actions and activities that the Institution undertook to sustain compliance with standards 3 and 4. As regards Standard 4, to strengthen governance and leadership, the guidelines for evaluating the chancellor, deans and department chairs were completed; the orientations offered to personnel in governance and leadership positions were restructured so as to ensure that all issues pertaining to their respective functions are covered; and, assessment instruments were developed and implemented to evaluate the effectiveness of key personnel exercising leadership and governance roles. The Institution also worked towards developing a policy to deal effectively with changes in leadership and establishing a plan to achieve a seamless transition. Finally, it dealt with the issue of clarifying the roles, functions, and responsibilities of the General Student Council and promoting diverse student participation. It is expected that the completion of the UPRA's Student Manual will serve this purpose.

In addressing Standard 3, UPRA reiterates its commitment to securing economic stability for the continuity and effective accomplishment of institutional mission and goals, including maintaining excellence in all academic activities. UPRA has made great strides in maximizing the available resources, while at the same time meeting the goals and objectives of the strategic plan for the benefit of our institution and the community it serves. It has made extraordinary efforts to achieve reductions in areas not affecting academia, specifically by analyzing and redistributing existing funds in alignment with institutional and academic planning. All measures and policies proposed will undergo strict scrutiny and continuous assessment. They will be subject to modifications as their efficacy is evaluated during the implementation stages. Furthermore, the external resources and fundraising infrastructure will continue to be monitored to better articulate and generate revenue production in addition to diversifying and broadening funding. Concerted efforts will be made by the institution to diversify and broaden sources of additional funding.

The Institution is dedicated to maintaining its academic offerings, sustaining its current enrollment rates and increasing its graduation rates. The actions proposed in the Monitoring Report are sustainable because demand and enrollment in most of the institution's academic program offerings are growing. The institution's excellence is widely recognized as evidenced by the increasing number of high school graduates that apply to study on our campus. To further strengthen the institution, ongoing assessment initiatives to address and evidence student learning outcomes will continue as planned.

Evidence to sustain assertions contained in this Monitoring Report, including all certifications / communications issued, documents prepared and meetings held, will be available to the MSCHE visiting team during its visit in April.

