



*Senado Académico  
Secretaría*

# Certification No. 38

## Academic Year 2012-2013

I, **VALERIE VÁZQUEZ RIVERA**, Temporary Secretary of the Academic Senate of the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, **HEREBY CERTIFY THAT:**

**D**uring an extraordinary meeting held on October 25, 2012, the Academic Senate considered **Item No. 1: Consideration of the Proposed Revision to Certification No. 72, year 1991-1992, of the Academic Senate: Academic Policy for Graduate Studies at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus**, and resolved:

- To approve the new **Academic Policy for Graduate Studies at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus**, as amended, which is part of this Certification.
- This Certification repeals Certification No. 72, year 1991-1992, of the Academic Senate of the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus.

**IN WITNESS THEREOF**, I issue this Certification with the seal of the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, on the twenty-six day of the month of October, two thousand and twelve.

  
Valerie Vázquez Rivera  
Temporary Secretary

rema

Attachment





UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO  
RÍO PIEDRAS CAMPUS  
**ACADEMIC SENATE**

**Academic Policy for Graduate Studies at the  
University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras Campus**

Evaluated during the following Extraordinary Meetings:

September 29, 2011

October 6, 2011

October 13, 2011

October 25, 2011

November 15, 2011

November 17, 2011

December 19, 2011

October 25, 2012

**Approved on October 25, 2012**  
**Certification No. 38, Academic Year 2012-2013, Academic Senate**

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## **Academic Policy for Graduate Studies at the University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras Campus\***

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Council on Higher Education (CES, after its Spanish acronym), in its role as governing body of the University of Puerto Rico until 1993, approved the creation of the Río Piedras Campus Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research (DEGI, after its Spanish acronym) by Certification No. 199 (1980-81). At the request of the Campus Academic Senate (SA, after its Spanish acronym), implementation of said certification was postponed until academic year 1983-84, when the Academic Senate submitted a special report to the CES regarding the structuring of the new Office of the Dean<sup>1</sup>. This report was later revised by the SA (1987-88), given that four years had passed since its submission and final consideration by the CES. As a result from this revision, the SA issued Certification No. 76 (1988-89) thereby approving the Final Report by the Academic Affairs Committee. Certification 76 includes such matters as: the guiding principles for academic policies of Campus graduate studies, the structure and functions of DEGI, and the duties and responsibilities of the Dean and her/his advisory body, the Graduate Studies and Research Council (CEGI, after its Spanish acronym).

During academic year 1990-91, the CES approved Certification 76 of the SA with five observations, which are stated in Certification 115 (1990-91) of CES. Based on this, the SA revised Certification 55 (1977-78) regarding academic standards that governed graduate programs at the time. This revision resulted from Certification 72 (1991-92) SA: Standards for Graduate Programs at the Río Piedras University Campus. Certification 72 was applied to all graduate schools and programs from academic year 1994-1995<sup>2</sup> onward.

Creation of DEGI was a response to the need for an academic policy to guide the development and strengthening of graduate studies in the campus and for an organizational structure responsible for its implementation. This came in the midst of a period of accelerated growth in terms of graduate programs and the recruitment of faculty with advanced degrees and an interest in research. The Special Report of the SA and the public hearings held in March 1988 listed the existing difficulties for further development of graduate studies at the campus, namely: the bureaucratization of administrative procedures, low salaries, lack of scholarships/grants and other financial aids for graduate students, difficulties with academic counseling, the professors' academic load, and the limitation of funding for research, as well as trips abroad to congresses and seminars.

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\* Every title, position, and the duties included in these Bylaws can refer to and be occupied or carried out by both genders equally.

<sup>1</sup> Certification No. 44a (1983-84) SA.

<sup>2</sup> Certification No. 72 (1991-92) came into force during 1994-95, after some students claimed they were not notified in writing about the new academic standards.

DEGI was established twenty-three (23) years ago, and Certification 72, regarding Rules for Graduate Programs at the Río Piedras University Campus, has been in force for twenty-two (22) years. During that time, new graduate programs have been created, the number of graduate students and the resources invested in intellectual production have increased, more professors do research/creation and publish their findings, and the Office of the Dean has been consolidated as the academic unit that promotes the development of graduate studies and defends its interests.

## II. JUSTIFICATION

The evaluation of graduate programs performed during 2003-2009<sup>3</sup> shows that, despite the achievements, these still face serious problems, such as low graduation rates and long graduation times. The need to diversify academic offerings is evident, not only the content but also the format, in order to attract and retain a larger number of students. While the number of applicants to graduate programs increases, the number of students admitted and their diversity remain relatively constant. The duties and responsibilities of graduate program coordinators are not defined as institutional policy, therefore their compensation, duties, and responsibilities vary substantially from one program to another. The academic load is still one of the main hindrances to the growth of research in the campus. It is necessary to develop a research mentoring model in order to foster academic advancement of graduate students and the completion of their degree in the minimum time allowed.

Since the establishment of Certification 72 there have been claims from graduate programs, especially those of a professional nature, about the negative impact of this certification. Some of the aspects mentioned are: the required dissertation and proposal for students in master's degree program, the time allowed and concession of deferrals to complete the degree, the requirements to comply with student representation, and the existence of academic standards in conflict with institutional guidelines approved at a later date or that do not contribute to the optimal development of the programs.

In an international context, significant changes in graduate education point to the need for profound reflection about the development of graduate studies in the campus. For example, the number of people that choose postgraduate studies is rising, and their profile diversifies in function of their academic backgrounds, interests, and needs. There are many variations in academic offerings, among these: professional certificates and programs, combined degrees, as well as academic offers in emerging and in multi or interdisciplinary fields. Accelerated programs and distance learning are some of the several formats available for graduate education. Recognition of degrees in European countries widens higher education opportunities for the region's student population and promotes academic mobility. Development agendas by Canada, Korea, the European Union and Australia, among others, increase the competition to attract the best students at this level. Strategic alliances are forged to optimize resources, widen and

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<sup>3</sup> DEGI designed and implemented the Graduate Studies Assessment Plan, which consists of three stages: self-study, external peer assessment by prestigious universities recommended by the graduate programs, and the creation of a Development Plan that addresses the findings by external evaluators. The first assessment cycle took place between 2003 and 2009, when for the first time in Campus history, all graduate programs were assessed.

diversify academic offerings, increase mobility of students and professors, and for strategic positioning in frontier research. Countries emphasize universities as promoters of socioeconomic development by virtue of an increased and relevant research agenda. Corporate universities and other knowledge-producing organizations (corporate research) are emerging, showing that traditional universities are no longer the only social entities to generate knowledge and shape human capital.

Also, many higher learning institutions have put aside the university role of answering to social problems and challenges, which has left a void, often identified in the course of higher education. In this situation, the challenge to the Campus is to adopt a paradigm that accounts for social responsibility in the cultural, economic, and social contexts at home and abroad. This challenge is supported by the Campus vision, expressed in its Strategic Plan: University Vision 2016 (Certification 26, 2006-07, SA) of becoming:

*"A university community, with a marked doctoral character and endowed with first-rate resources, dedicated to research, creation, and the dissemination of knowledge; committed to the integral formation of the student and lifelong learning; and recognized for the excellence of its contribution to the development and intellectual enrichment of the Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and world society."*

Due to the demands of institutional and professional accreditation, the prospect of limited financial resources and the graduate education scenario worldwide, it is important to foster a dialog about the development of graduate studies and intellectual production. This dialog should be framed within the result of evaluations of graduate programs and research units, the achievements of graduate education in the last twenty years, its external context, and the ambitions of the campus. The community of graduate programs and the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research expect this academic policy will substantially drive the advancement and growth of graduate studies and intellectual production in the campus.

### **III. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This Policy is based on the following certifications of the University of Puerto Rico governing bodies and the General Bylaws of the institution:

- Certification No. 19 (1973-1974) Council on Higher Education (CES): Río Piedras Campus Student Bylaws, as amended
- Certification No. 76 (1988-1989) of the Academic Senate (SA): Development of an Academic Policy for Graduate Studies and the Structure of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Programs at the Río Piedras Campus
- Certification No. 64 (1989-90) SA: Guidelines for the Evaluation of Programs or Units that Submit Reports to the Río Piedras Campus Academic Senate

- Certification No. 67 (1989-90) SA: Mission of the University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras Campus
- Certification No. 115 (1990-1991) CES: Approval of a Proposal for Development of an Academic Policy for Graduate Studies and the Structure of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Programs at the Río Piedras Campus (Cert. No. 76, 1988-89, SA)
- Certification No. 72 (1991-1992) SA: Rules for Graduate Programs at the Río Piedras Campus
- Certification No. 24 (1996-1997) of the Board of Trustees (JS): Creation of an Appointment Category of Associate Professor in the University of Puerto Rico
- Certification No. 16 (1997-1998) JS: University of Puerto Rico Bylaws for Compliance with the Responsibilities set forth by the "Integral Educational Services for Persons with Disabilities Act" (Law No. 51 of June 7, 1996)
- Certification No. 50 (1997-1998) SA: Río Piedras Campus Admission and Transfer Rules
- Certification No. 130 (1999-2000) JS: Instruction and Procedure Guide for Uniformly Registering and Coding Courses at the University of Puerto Rico
- Certification No. 90 (2001-2002) JS: University of Puerto Rico General Bylaws, as amended
- Certification No. 88 (2003-2004) SA: Amendments to Section B of the Rules for Admissions and Transfers (Cert. No. 50, 1997-98, SA), regarding award of university credit for courses approved by alternate means
- Certification No. 80 (2005-2006) JS: Bylaws for Creating Academic Programs at the University of Puerto Rico and Guidelines for Writing Proposals to Establish New Academic Programs
- Certification No. 123 (2005-2006) JS: *Ten for the Decade* Strategic Plan for the University of Puerto Rico System
- Certification No. 40 (2005-2006) SA: Amendment to Certification No. 88 (2003-04) SA, regarding award of university credit for courses approved by alternate means
- Certification No. 68 (2005-2006) SA: Río Piedras Campus Student Learning Assessment Plan

- Certification No. 43 (2006-2007) JS: Bylaws for the Periodic Evaluation of the University of Puerto Rico Academic Programs
- Certification No. 44 (2006-2007) JS: Registry of Academic Offerings at the University of Puerto Rico
- Certification No. 26 (2006-2007) SA: *University Vision 2016* Strategic Plan for the University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras Campus
- Certification No. 13 (2009-2010) JS: General Student Bylaws, as amended

#### **IV. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES**

Graduate programs shall be guided by the Río Piedras Campus mission, stated in Certification 67 (1989-90) of the Academic Senate, and shall be characterized by the academic and professional excellence of graduate students, by their contribution to the development and updating of the fields of study/knowledge, by the dissemination of intellectual work, and by their contribution to Puerto Rican society and its geographic surroundings.

The Campus mission states that the Campus, as well as all units of the University of Puerto Rico System, are charged by law to fulfill the general mission set forth in Article 2 (B) of the University of Puerto Rico Act, Law Number 1 of January 20, 1966, as amended. In addition to sharing this general mission, the Río Piedras Campus has a particular mission based on its history and cultural heritage, which sets it apart from other campuses and System units. In specific regard to graduate studies, subsection 2, page 2, of the Campus mission states:

*"To provide graduate education of the highest quality, the key elements of which are research and creative activity, and helps strengthen undergraduate education. Furthermore, to provide post-baccalaureate programs in order to educate and train professionals of the highest caliber, committed to the ideals and values of Puerto Rican society."*

Graduate studies shall be guided by the following principles:

1. They shall maintain the highest standards of academic excellence, they shall be continually updated to guarantee their relevance, and they shall be aimed at generating knowledge through research, learning, creation, professional productivity, and dissemination.
2. They shall maintain a balance between depth and breadth in the study of the disciplines and the diversity of content and specializations.
3. They shall transcend disciplinary boundaries without losing focus of specific problems in an area of study.

4. They shall strengthen the exchange with undergraduate programs for their mutual benefit.
5. They shall create institutional spaces for exchanges with universities, with cultural and scientific organizations, both national and international, that may contribute to the enrichment of their academic activity, the advancement of knowledge, and cultural heritage.
6. They shall hire the most ideal professors, who are committed to teaching, intellectual productivity, and continued academic-professional development in terms of theory, methodology, and technology.
7. They shall promote the development of students' critical analysis, systematic, strategic, and inter and transdisciplinary skills and the development of an inquisitive, enterprising, creative, and innovative attitude.
8. They shall prepare graduates with an education that is broad and diverse, self-educating, and capable of using knowledge and leadership skills to transform their immediate environment, with the ability to perform successfully in the job market, and committed to ethical behavior.
9. They shall promote understanding, respect, and tolerance for diversity and its different individual and collective manifestations.
10. They shall be governed by the principles and codes of ethical conduct of their specific discipline and those valued by the institution.
11. They shall foster the development of participatory learning communities, committed to the success of their mission, vision, goals, and objectives, in keeping with the Campus Strategic Plan, and with a culture of evaluation that recognizes and rewards outstanding performances and the effective and efficient use of resources.
12. They shall contribute to the development and quality of life of Puerto Rican society, and promote a sense of commitment toward it in view of its problems and needs. They shall also foster a strong sense of community service in building a just and democratic society that favors education as a means of empowering individuals to continue learning throughout their lives until they have reached their highest potential.
13. They shall strengthen students' knowledge and analysis of Puerto Rican historical and social reality, framed within our Caribbean and Latin American region, while reaching out to the international community.

## V. POSTULATES OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY FOR GRADUATE STUDIES

### A. Academic Programs

#### 1. Academic Degrees

Graduate programs will recommend granting of doctorate degrees, master's degrees, J.D., and graduate certificates as authorized by the Board of Trustees and the Council on Higher Education.

#### 2. General Characteristics

Graduate academic programs will have the following characteristics:

- a. All academic programs, regardless of their level, will have a mission, goals, and objectives, in addition to a profile of the skills that students will possess upon graduation. Program curriculum will be designed around these core elements.
- b. Academic programs will show that their students acquire the skills identified in the profile during the course of their studies. Research/Creation skills will be part of the profile and will be integrated throughout all the curricular sequence of the program.
- c. Academic programs will be characterized by their academic-research and professional approaches. The academic-research approach will engage in problems and questions for study from a theoretical perspective that challenges paradigms and established methods, offering an innovative and original proposal. The professional approach will balance theory and practice of the discipline to endow students with professional knowledge and skills that allow them to be productive and inventive in applying them.
- d. Master's Degree Programs:
  - 1) Will provide a research experience for their students with the objective of showing that students know the fundamentals and principles of their discipline and can apply them to propose or demonstrate a viable solution to a problem. Research experience and publication of results may be designed in different ways to accommodate differences between fields of study or professional demands.
  - 2) Will define the research skills that students will acquire through the research/creation experience, set evaluation criteria

and standards, and the maximum amount of time to complete it.

- 3) Will have up to a maximum of 30 total credits toward the degree including research/creation experience, except for those programs with professional accreditation requirements that justify a larger number.
- 4) Will show that full time students can complete their degree in a three year term with a graduation rate of 50% or more while maintaining academic standards of excellence, except for those programs with professional accreditation requirements that justify a larger number of credits. If this is not accomplished, they should be revised to achieve compliance with these minimal execution requirements.

e. Doctorate Degree Programs:

- 1) Will have a marked emphasis on research/creation. The curricular scheme of these programs will consist of a core component achievable in a term no longer than three years, in order for students to show mastery of theoretical and methodological foundations of the discipline and is prepared to begin research.
- 2) Will require a proposal and original research/creation work from their students leading to a dissertation and dissemination of the results. The objective of this experience will be for students to demonstrate their full knowledge of theoretical and methodological approaches of their field, that they can critically evaluate and question these, and can use or modify them for application to different situations or problems searching for their solution or understanding. Students should also demonstrate that they possess the analytical, technical, and communication skills that qualify them for independent intellectual work.
- 3) Will define the research skills that students will acquire through doctoral research, set evaluation criteria and standards, and the maximum amount of time to complete it.
- 4) Will show that their students can graduate within a six year term with a graduation rate of 60% or more, while maintaining academic standards of excellence. If this is not accomplished,

they should be revised to achieve compliance with these minimal execution requirements.

- f. Master's and doctorate academic programs may exist as independent or interdependent offerings. When academic offerings are available at both levels with the same specialization, the curriculum will be articulated to facilitate transition between both levels.

### **3. Joint Academic Programs, Multi/Interdisciplinary and Multi Departmental/School/Campus/Institutional**

- a. Alliances between departments, schools, campuses, and other institutions of higher education will be encouraged to offer innovative and relevant academic programs, which broaden student's study opportunities. These alliances should help maximize the use of institutional resources and the update and diversification of academic offerings.
- b. Schools or graduate programs that make these programs available to students will coordinate admissions, registration, academic counseling, supervision of dissertations (if applicable) and other processes so that students can graduate within the established time limit.

### **4. Curriculum Updates, Course/Requisite Modification and Creation of Academic Programs**

- a. Each school or graduate program will be responsible for the evaluation and update of their curriculum and degree requirements in light of developments in the discipline, the requirements of professional accreditation, results of assessment of student learning, demand for the program and opportunities for new academic developments. This process will be an important component in the periodical assessment of the academic program.
- b. All curriculum updates, course and requisite modification or proposal for the creation of a new academic program will comply with institutional policies regarding these processes and in effect at that time.

### **5. Mode and Schedules of Academic Programs**

Academic programs can offer their academic offerings in different modes and schedules, such as: distance, combination of distance and in-person, semesters and trimesters, night classes and Saturday classes, study groups or others appropriate to the field of study. The mode(s) selected should maximize

student access to the academic offerings available in the campus and enable them to complete their degree within the established time limit. Academic offerings will retain the same rigorous academic standards regardless of their mode, and students will have access to all the services available in the campus.

## **6. Evaluation of Graduate Level Academic Programs**

Academic programs will be evaluated periodically as stated in the Evaluation Plan of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. They will prepare a Development Plan following the guidelines set by DEGI to manage areas identified in the self-study and the external evaluation that need improvement or strengthening. Programs with professional accreditation will articulate their professional accreditation process with the evaluation process of the Office of the Dean.

### **B. Research, Learning, Creation, and Professional Productivity**

1. Intellectual work resulting from research, learning, creative work, and professional productivity will be the fundamental difference between academic programs and the main difference between these and baccalaureate studies. These academic activities will take place within the frame of academic freedom, ethical conduct and professional practices accepted by each field.
2. Professors, graduate students, and others who participate in research will be responsible of knowing and acting according to institutional guidelines and laws applicable to research, including laws that protect human subjects, animals, biological, chemical and radiological materials, and responsible conduct in research. The Director/Coordinator of the graduate school or program, dissertation committee and the student's Supervisor/Mentor will be responsible of advising the student about this.
3. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will provide continuous training regarding guidelines and laws that regulate academic research and will see to its compliance.

### **C. Professors**

#### **1. Professors Appointed to Graduate Programs**

- a. The faculty of the graduate schools or programs is the body made up of professors qualified to teach at the graduate level.

- b. The minimum requirements to qualify a professor for a graduate program are:
- 1) Doctorate degree or the highest degree in the discipline as provided by Articles 42 and 44 of UPR General Bylaws.
  - 2) Mastery of their discipline or field of study and proven capacity to:
    - a) continuously produce, communicate, and transfer new knowledge;
    - b) develop areas of expertise through lines of research, learning, creative work, and professional productivity;
    - c) actively publish their work's results in recognized, prestigious, peer-reviewed journals and publishing houses, and other established media legitimized by their discipline; and
    - d) integrate graduate students in the production, communication and transfer of new knowledge.
- c. Recruitment and hiring of new professors to teach at the graduate level will be done in keeping with the General Guidelines, institutional policies of the University of Puerto Rico and the Campus, the minimum requirements (which will be part of their contract agreement), and types of appointment stated in this Certification, and additional criteria set by the colleges and schools, the graduate programs and the standards of accreditation incorporated in the documents related to personnel decisions.

The Office of the Dean of Academic Affairs will carry out its regulatory duties in hiring and evaluating professors, and together with the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, and the School Dean, will be responsible for compliance with the minimum requirements. For this, they will receive advice from the Department and School Personnel Committee

- d. For current professors, the department or school director with the Personnel Committee will be responsible for qualifying and recommending a professor for graduate level according to the minimum requirements and types of appointment stated in this Certification. The director will notify the dean of the college the faculty that will be part of the graduate school or program.

- e. To evidence compliance with the minimum requirements to continue teaching at the graduate level, the professor's intellectual production will be checked every three years. The department or school director with the Personnel Committee will be responsible for certifying this. The dean of each college will submit a yearly report to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and the Administrative Board to evidence the certification of qualified professors.
- f. To evidence compliance with the minimum requirements to continue teaching at the graduate level, the professor's teaching quality will be checked every three years. The department or school director with the Personnel Committee, taking the student's evaluation of the professors into consideration, will be responsible for certifying this. The dean of each college will submit a yearly report to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and the Administrative Board to evidence the certification of qualified professors.
- g. Professors will evidence their achievements by yearly updating the information about their research, learning, creative work, and professional productivity by using the institutional means set fourth for this purpose.
- h. A graduate school or program professor will fulfill all the minimum requirements to teach at the graduate level. This will be evidenced by proper due process. Evaluations or qualifications—regarding compliance with all minimum requirements established hereby—to be carried out in accordance with subsection e shall be performed and introduced in accordance with the law and without detriment to the rights and guarantees granted by the General Bylaws to the professors of the University of Puerto Rico.

A graduate school or program professor who does not agree with the decision issued regarding his qualifications, according to subsection e, shall not cease to perform his duties until exhausting and concluding all procedures established by law and in the General Bylaws of the University of Puerto Rico.

## **2. Professor Duties and Responsibilities**

- a. Graduate school or program professors will show a continued commitment with the academic excellence of their unit and with academic-professional development of graduate students. This commitment will be shown through their participation and collaboration in:

- 1) creation and teaching of graduate courses and seminars;
  - 2) research/creation, publishing and intellectual contribution;
  - 3) curriculum evaluation, renovation, and design
  - 4) creation and use of new teaching strategies, educational materials and methods to assess student's learning
  - 5) periodic evaluation of students and timely notification of results;
  - 6) participation, organization and, extracurricular activities;
  - 7) academic advice and mentoring of students;
  - 8) preparation and correction of qualifying examinations;
  - 9) supervision of dissertations and participation in dissertation committees;
  - 10) program management and attendance to meetings and committees; and
  - 11) implementation and compliance with program and campus academic and administrative guidelines
- b. Professors will comply with the criteria, duties, and responsibilities required for professional accreditation of graduate programs.
- c. Professors with a private professional practice or other obligations contracted outside of the institutional frame are obliged to give priority to their teaching and research/creative institutional obligations.

### **3. Appointment Types<sup>4</sup>**

- a. Regular professors of graduate schools and programs are those with a minimum rank of assistant professor hired to work full time with regular appointments and qualified to teach at the graduate and undergraduate level.

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<sup>4</sup> See *Glossary of Terms* for a complete list of *Appointment Classifications* that appear in UPR General Bylaws.

- b. Professors with joint appointments are those appointed to more than one unit in the campus or that share an appointment with other campuses of the University of Puerto Rico System. These professors are subject to the same minimum criteria as regular professors of the graduate program.
- c. Collaborating professors are those appointed to academic units of the campus, of the University of Puerto Rico System and other recognized universities or institutions who are invited to teach courses, conduct research, engage in creative work, or direct dissertations in the graduate programs. The minimum criteria that rule qualified. Regular graduate program professors will be taken into account when selecting these professors.
- d. Professors with special appointment are retired or visiting professors and lecturers from other universities, institutions, or organizations, from the country or from abroad, who receive special appointments to teach courses, conduct research, engage in creative work, or direct dissertations in graduate programs for a set period of time. These professors or professionals are subject to the same requisites of professional rank or equivalent, previous experience (if any) and outstanding performance.

#### **4. Academic Load of Faculty Appointed to Graduate Schools or Programs**

- a. The academic load of professors qualified to teach full time in graduate schools or programs will be twenty-four (24) credits per academic year: twelve credits dedicated to intellectual work and supervision of dissertations. The remaining twelve credits will be destined to teach courses and other academic endeavors typical of graduate programs.
- b. In cases where a professor shows evidence of high intellectual production, the academic load may be redistributed to allot a larger number of credits to it.
- c. Professors who obtain grants may use them to increase the amount of time dedicated to intellectual work to a maximum of eighteen credits per academic year.

#### **5. Direction of Doctoral Dissertation**

- a. Professors who direct a student's dissertation must comply with all the minimum criteria stated in this certification and with the additional criteria adopted by the colleges and the graduate schools or programs.

They should also be specialists, have expertise or thorough knowledge in the subject of the supervised student's dissertation.

- b. The Graduate Affairs Committee (or its equivalent) will decide which professors are eligible to act as members in dissertation committees.

## **6. Student Evaluation of Professors**

- a. Graduate-level professors will be evaluated by students enrolled in the courses they teach.
- b. Student evaluations will be considered by the Personnel Committee in order to, in conjunction with the professor being evaluated, develop tools to improve the quality of teaching and the professors' performance.
- c. The Director of the department, office or section which includes the graduate program shall be responsible for compliance with the evaluation of graduate-level professors for every course.
- d. Evaluation by students shall be carried out in keeping with existing parameters for the Colleges and the requirements of this Certification. Students shall participate in preparing appropriate evaluation tools.
- e. Student evaluations of professors carried out according to this subsection will be part of the evaluations provided in subsections V. C. 1. e, f, and g.

## **D. Students**

### **1. Admission to Graduate Programs<sup>5</sup>**

- a. Admission Types: Students interested in graduate studies at the campus will have the following admissions alternatives: regular, conditional, deferred, re-admission, transitory studies, and study permit.
- b. Admission Levels: In graduate schools or programs offering independent master's or doctoral degrees, students will be admitted according to the admission requirements of each program.

Graduate schools or programs may admit outstanding students with a bachelor's degree (or its equivalent), or those who have begun their

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<sup>5</sup> See *Glossary of Terms* for the definitions of *Types of Admissions*.

master's directly to the doctoral program. They will set the applicable requirements for each specific program and announce them to the students through the appropriate media. Students will be admitted to the master's program and reclassified to the doctorate program when they fulfill the requirements for the degree candidacy. The Director or Coordinator of the graduate school or program will be responsible of notifying to the Office of the Registrar of the student's reclassification.

c. Minimum Admission Requirements:

- 1) A bachelor's degree (or its equivalent) from an accredited or recognized university or university college will be required for admission to a master's academic program.
- 2) A bachelor's or master's degree will be required for admission to a doctoral academic program, according to the specific requirements of the program applied to.
- 3) A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 on a 4.00 point scale.
- 4) Ability to communicate orally and in writing in two languages, one of which shall be Spanish or English.
- 5) The Campus shall name the academic authority which shall determine and notify the programs the knowledge of the second or third language (if the program requires a third language). This academic authority shall develop a policy in coordination with the programs to deal with language deficiencies.

d. Specific Admission Requirements: Graduate programs may set additional admission requirements to those specified in this policy and assign them a desired relative value. Each graduate school or program will notify the academic community and applicants of their admission requirements. These will be part of their promotional materials, the program's by-laws, and the student manual (as the case may be). Additional requirements include:

- 1) Grade point average in areas or courses of the program of study.
- 2) Score in the admission test(s) – Each program may require test(s) as requirement for admission. These may be oral or written, or both.

- 3) Recommendation letters.
  - 4) Interviews.
  - 5) A statement of purpose explaining the interest for the discipline or any other subject set by the program.
  - 6) Ability to read in other languages.
  - 7) Other requirements appropriate and necessary to the discipline.
- e. Language Requirement: The graduate program will determine if a third language is required and the minimum level of proficiency.
- f. Admission Term: Students admitted for a specific academic year that are not able to attend may request the graduate school or program to postpone their admission until the beginning of the next academic year. The graduate school or program will determine whether or not they will defer the admission. Admission will be valid for one academic year.
- g. Admission Management: The Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will be the academic unit responsible for the administration of graduate admissions and sending the student official written communication regarding the admission decision, as recommended by the graduate schools or programs.

The Graduate Affairs Committee (or its equivalent) of each graduate program or school will be in charge of evaluation, selection, and recommendation of the candidates for admission, readmission, or permit. The Director/Coordinator of the graduate school or program will notify DEGI of their decision.

The Director/Coordinator of the graduate school or program along with the Graduate Affairs Committee will set the enrollment quota of the graduate school or program for each academic session.

DEGI will prepare an Admissions Manual and a Yearly Report regarding graduate admissions to be presented to the graduate schools and programs, CEGI, the Academic Senate, the Administrative Board, the Office of the Chancellor, and the Central Administration.

- h. Requirement for students with disabilities: Duly qualified students with disabilities or special needs are responsible for notifying the

Office of Affairs for Persons with Disabilities (OAPI), from the moment they are admitted, about their condition(s) for processing and discussion of the reasonable accommodations necessary for their academic performance.

## **2. Degree Requirements**

- a. Requirements to obtain each degree (graduate courses, exams, seminars, proposals, dissertations and others) make up the curriculum of each academic program as approved by university authorities and the Council on Higher Education.
- b. Graduate schools or programs will determine the minimum curricular requirements which must be approved in order to award the master's degree to those students admitted to the doctoral program without a master's degree.
- c. The Director/Coordinator of the graduate school or program will make recommendations to the Office of the Registrar regarding concession of the academic degree when students have fulfilled all its requirements.
- d. The minimum grade point average for graduation will be of 3.00 on a 4.3 point scale.

## **3. Graduate Courses**

- a. Course Level
  - 1) Graduate level course codes will be 6000 or 8000, as stated in Certification 130 (2000-2001) JS.
  - 2) Courses from level 5000 will not be accepted at the graduate level unless the graduate school or program justifies it by means of a validation process that shows that the course syllabus is aligned with the goals, objectives, and graduate profile of each specialization.
  - 3) Ph.D. candidate students shall take at least 50% of their course/credits at the 8000 level.
- b. Free Electives: Graduate schools or programs will maintain a minimum of six free elective credits.

c. Grades

- 1) Student academic performance will be recorded by means of the quantifiable and non-quantifiable grading system acknowledged by the institution.
- 2) The quantifiable system will be based on this system's grades: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, and F. It will be used to measure progress in academic experiences (courses, workshops, etc.) that require at least one test or work that can be graded in quantitative terms.
- 3) The grade scale will be as follows:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Points</b>
A+	98-100	4.3
A	93-97	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	88-89	3.3
B	83-87	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	78-79	2.3
C	73-77	2.0
C-	69-72	1.7
D	65-68	1.3
F	64-0	1.0

- 4) Core and elective graduate courses require a minimum of 2.7 (80%), equivalent to B-, to be approved.
  - 5) The non-quantifiable grade system will be based on Approved (P) or Not Approved (NP) grades. This system will be used to measure progress in certain courses and academic activities where progress cannot be measured in quantitative terms. These grades will not be translated into figures when calculating the student's grade point average.
- d. Repetition of Core Courses: Graduate students shall approve core courses as stated by the programs, with a minimum grade of B-. When this is not accomplished, students may repeat the course two times only. In the case of course repetitions, graded by means of the quantifiable system, only the highest grade will be considered for retention and graduation grade point average.

e. Validation of Courses from Other Institutions

- 1) Graduate programs will credit all courses taken in other institutions as long as these are previously authorized to students active in the program and the grade is B- (or its equivalent).
- 2) For admitted students who have pursued graduate studies at other institutions, graduate programs will credit up to a third of the courses required for the degree, subject to the criteria set by the Graduate Affairs Committee (or its equivalent). Credited courses should have been approved with a grade of B- (or its equivalent) within a period of no more than five years previous to admission and cannot have been credited toward other degrees. Practice or internships required by the programs will not be credited.
- 3) Unless otherwise stated, accreditation of courses by alternative means will be ruled by Certification 88, (2003-2004) SA, as amended, and the procedures stated by DEGI

f. Other Provisions Related to Courses

- 1) Graduate schools and programs shall promote and assist students in taking courses in other fields of study, departments, graduate schools or programs, and colleges related to their academic projects and particular interests. DEGI, along with the programs, shall foster the development of rules and procedures for this interdisciplinary exchange.
- 2) Credit validation, joint courses, and the creation/modification/cancellation/moratorium of graduate courses shall be based on institutional academic policies related to this process.
- 3) Professors shall be responsible for communicating grades or academic standing to students in their classes during the course of the semester, so that students may maximize learning. To guarantee students are aware of their academic standing in the classes they are enrolled in, professors will give preliminary evaluations of their academic performance mid-term and one week before the drop period.

#### **4. Qualifying Examinations**

Qualifying examination shall be compulsory for doctoral programs. This examination will determine the student's candidacy for the doctoral degree, as established by each graduate program.

Qualifying examinations shall be governed by the following rules:

- a. Each graduate school or program shall establish the nature, content, extent, and when students take the qualifying examination.
- b. It shall be offered at least twice a year. The date of the qualifying examination shall be announced during the first month of each term.
- c. A student may repeat the examination, or the part which they failed, as determined by the program, only once. Students who fail the examination twice shall be expelled from the graduate school or program.
- d. Each graduate school or program shall establish specific criteria to guide students when preparing for the qualifying examination and professors during their evaluation. These criteria shall be notified to students when they apply for the examination.
- e. Professors shall submit corrected examinations and their results to the Director or Coordinator of the graduate school or program, who shall inform students in writing about their examination results.
- f. Graduate schools or programs shall establish a period no greater than two months to inform students about their examination results.
- g. Each program shall establish clear procedures to discuss the results of qualifying examinations with students and address their concerns.
- h. Qualifying examination shall be evaluated as: Approved (with outstanding, noteworthy, or good) or Not Approved. Graduate schools or programs shall determine the grade they shall assign the qualifying examination.

- i. Each program shall determine if it requires additional examinations and how to meet these requirements.

## **5. Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree**

Students enrolled in doctoral programs shall be recognized as doctoral candidates when they have taken and passed the qualifying examination.

## **6. Research Project**

### **a. The Dissertation Committee**

- 1) The dissertation committee will be composed of the dissertation director and two to four professors, as provided in the following two sections.
- 2) In a five member committee, one or two of the members may be professors from other departments or colleges in the University of Puerto Rico or other recognized institutions, invited due to the nature of subject or by virtue of their recognized abilities.
- 3) In a three member committee, one of the members may be a professor from another department or college in the University of Puerto Rico or another recognized institution.

### **b. Research Proposal**

- 1) Doctoral degrees require the development, presentation, and defense of a research proposal.
- 2) Students shall choose the dissertation director and members of the Committee, who shall be endorsed by the Graduate Committee or its equivalent.
- 3) Students shall prepare their research proposal with their dissertation director and shall be in direct communication with the dissertation committee. This Committee shall approve the dissertation proposal.
- 4) In the proposal, students must show that the chosen subject is within the scope of the field of study or fields of study related to the doctoral program, knowledge of the bibliography and primary sources necessary to the project, and a command of techniques and methodology relevant to the investigation.

- 5) Students shall present a dissertation work plan to the director to be revised and approved.
- 6) Students shall submit digital and printed copies of their proposal to the dissertation committee before the dissertation presentation and defense.
- 7) The dissertation presentation and defense shall be public.

c. Doctoral Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation is a written document where students shall:

- 1) establish and define the problem or question under review;
- 2) show thorough knowledge of the bibliography and primary and secondary sources;
- 3) employ and justifies the most suitable research theories and methodology;
- 4) analyze and discuss the results of their research with depth and breadth;
- 5) employ or suggest new questions for future studies;
- 6) show independent judgment;
- 7) present their findings or result in a logic and coherent manner; and
- 8) make an original and significant contribution to the field of study.

d. Doctoral Dissertation Presentation and Defense

- 1) The development and culmination of a doctoral dissertation is an interactive process between a student and the dissertation committee. Therefore, the document shall be ready to be defended when the student's mentor, with the consent of the

committee, has determined that it contains the established elements of a dissertation.

- 2) A month before the defense, doctoral students shall submit copies of the final draft of the dissertation in digital and print format (not hard bound) to the Director/Coordinator of the Graduate Program or School and to the members of the Committee.
- 3) The date of the dissertation presentation and oral defense shall be assigned only after the committee has determined that the dissertation is ready. The presentation and defense shall be public.
- 4) Graduate schools or programs shall require, foster and facilitate the submission or publication of research/creation work by doctoral students in media typical of their field of study before completing the degree.

e. Submission and Publication of the Doctoral Dissertation

- 1) Once the dissertation has been defended and approved by the dissertation committee, students shall submit at least three hard bound and three digital copies within a month of the defense, in its final version, to the Director/Coordinator of the graduate school or program, who will place them in the library or seminar room of their unit and in the Puerto Rican Collection of the José M. Lázaro Library.
- 2) The dissertation shall be published in University Microfilms International. Therefore, students must meet the format standards established by DEGI and pay the required fees. Students shall not receive their degree until they meet this requirement. The Director/Coordinator of the graduate school or program shall be responsible for compliance with this rule.

## 7. Academic Rules

The following academic rules shall apply to all graduate students:

- a. Full-time academic course load: The academic load for full-time graduate students shall be a minimum of eighteen credits per academic year.

Graduate students who are enrolled in courses classified as qualifying examination, internship, or doctoral dissertation research or drafting shall be considered full-time students.

- b. Part-time academic course load: The academic load for part-time graduate students shall be a minimum of twelve credits per academic year.

Programs shall establish the appropriate curriculum sequence for full and part time students, according to the selected program mode.

- c. Good Academic Standing and Retention

- 1) The minimum retention and graduation GPA shall be 3.00 on a 4.3 scale. Each graduate school or program may establish additional retention requirements.
- 2) Good academic standing shall be defined by the curriculum sequence and degree requirements of the program students are enrolled in. In order to be on good academic standing, graduate students must maintain the minimum required GPA and must be on track with the curriculum sequence and degree requirements of the graduate school or program.
- 3) Each graduate school or program shall establish an Individualized Study Plan with the students to guarantee they can meet every degree requirement in the minimum amount of time stipulated by this Certification.
- 4) Each graduate school or program shall establish a system to measure the annual good academic standing of students, alert them to detected deficiencies, and provide advice on how to overcome them.

- d. Probation

- 1) Students who do not meet good academic standing and retention requirements shall be on probation for a maximum of two consecutive academic semesters. If they do not meet the retention requirements by the time this period is over, they shall be expelled from the graduate school or program.

- 2) Students who have been expelled from a graduate school or program cannot apply for readmission or admission to said graduate school or program for one year.
- 3) Graduate schools or programs may place conditions on the readmission or admission of these students, as may be the case, with the aim of guaranteeing that students shall meet the good academic standing and retention requirements of the program.

e. Term for Completing the Degree

- 1) Master's degree programs shall set a term no greater than four years from the date of admission for students to complete the degree requirements. This term shall apply to full-time and part-time students. To comply with this term, graduate schools and programs shall offer academic programs with different methods and itineraries so that students may progress toward the degree as expected.
- 2) Doctoral programs that admit students from the bachelor's degree shall set a maximum term of nine years from the date of admission for students to complete every degree requirement. Date of admission is understood as the first academic semester a student was enrolled in the corresponding school or program.
- 3) Doctoral programs that require a master's degree as an admission requirement shall set a maximum term of seven years from the date of admission for the student to complete every degree requirement. Date of admission is understood as the first academic semester a student was enrolled in the corresponding school or program.

f. Extension of Term for Completing the Degree

Graduate schools or programs shall have two mechanisms at their disposal to extend the minimum term for completing an academic degree. These mechanisms are the study permit and deferment. By means of a study permit, graduate students may interrupt their studies for a period no greater than one academic year, this period which shall not count toward time required to complete the degree. Deferment shall only be granted in exceptional cases, and only one time, to active graduate students who cannot complete their curriculum or research/creation project. In both cases, students must be in good academic standing, as defined by this Certification.

1) Study Permit

- a) Students who need to interrupt their studies due to pressing personal matters such as family, legal, economic, or health situations may request a study permit for a period that shall not exceed one academic year. In extraordinary cases, a second year may be requested.

Leaves for military service will be handled according to applicable laws and regulations

- b) This permit must be evaluated and authorized by the Graduate Affairs Committee of the graduate school or program. If authorized, the graduate school or program shall save a spot for the student for the duration of the permit, which shall not exceed one academic year.
- c) The time of the study permit shall not count toward the time remaining to finish the degree.
- d) Once the study permit has expired, students shall be required to notify the graduate school or program about their intent to return. If they do not, the school or graduate program may use their spot.
- e) Graduate students who abandon a graduate school or program without a study permit must apply for admission if they desire to return. The remaining time to finish the degree shall be determined by the date of their admission into the program. Courses previously passed in the program may be accepted if they were taken within a period no greater than 5 years. The admission of students shall depend on the program quota.

2) Deferment

- a) Deferment is only granted in exceptional cases and, as such, students must submit an application with a detailed work plan signed by the student and his/her mentor and a justification before the Graduate Committee of Graduate Affairs of the

graduate school or program (or its equivalent). The Coordinator or Director of the graduate school or program shall notify the applicant about the Committee's decision.

- b) This term may be extended in both levels (master's and doctoral) for a period no greater than one year, if the student shows good academic standing in their studies and their research/creation project (if applicable).
  - c) Students who fail to obtain the degree after the deferment term shall have to reapply for admission to the program. New admission shall be subject to the student's previous academic accomplishments and the program quota. Graduate programs shall decide if they admit or deny the new admission application.
  - d) Each school and graduate program shall keep records of the study permits and deferrals granted and submit an Annual Report to DEGI and to the dean of the school.
- g. Residency Requirement: Each program may establish its own residency requirements (when applicable) according to its mission, goals and objectives.

## **E. Graduate Program Management**

### **1. Minimum Requirements for Deans/Directors**

The Deans of colleges with graduate programs, the Executive Deans who supervise graduate program academic content, the Directors of graduate schools or programs not affiliated with colleges, the Directors of the many graduate affairs committees, and professors who are members of graduate affairs committees shall, at the least, fulfill the requirements to be a graduate program professor.

### **2. Graduate School or Program Management**

#### **a. Graduate schools or programs not affiliated with Colleges**

- 1) Graduate schools not affiliated with Colleges shall have a director who shall be responsible for the development of the

School. The selection of the Director shall be governed by the provisions of the General Bylaws of UPR and the Campus Academic Senate. As part of the search, a formal announcement shall be published to form a body of candidates according to eligibility requirements and there shall be discussions about possible professors, students, support staff, and other members of the School. The committee appointed to direct the process shall submit their recommendations to the Dean regarding the most ideal candidate for the direction after evaluating the information gathered about the candidates, the presented plans, and the recommendation of the community of the School or Program. The Dean shall also submit his/her recommendation to the Chancellor regarding the ideal candidate to direct it.

- 2) The Director shall serve for a period of four years, subject to a satisfactory evaluation after two years. The Dean, after consulting with the Chancellor, shall establish the hiring conditions and the evaluation criteria at the time of the appointment. The person in charge of direction who has served for four years, along with other candidates, may be considered for the position.
- 3) The person in charge of direction or coordination shall act as a link between the School and DEGI.
- 4) The person in charge of direction or coordination shall:
  - a) Implement and guarantee compliance with the academic rules for graduate studies in the Campus and the School.
  - b) Be an ex-officio member of the Permanent Committees of the school/program.
  - c) Constitute committees at the beginning of the academic year and provide the necessary support to ensure they function effectively.
  - d) Foster and coordinate the effective participation of faculty members and students in making decisions and management for the development and functioning of the program.

- e) Coordinate and supervise quota, admission, and enrollment processes.
- f) Coordinate and supervise academic counseling, good standing evaluation, promotion and student recruitment, presentation and defense of proposals and dissertations, degree certificates, study permits, and deferrals.
- g) Coordinate and supervise conflict resolution processes between students and professors, deal with grade disagreements and related matters.
- h) Constitute dissertation committees according to the provisions of this Certification and the graduate school or program.
- i) Formulate a Development Plan for the School or Graduate Program and a Promotion and Recruitment Plan for graduate students.
- j) Direct bi-monthly evaluations of the School or Graduate Program according to the Evaluation Plan established by DEGI.
- k) Effectively implement the Student Learning Assessment Plan and act on the results of the evaluation by submitting proposals to the graduate community regarding curriculum changes or those of another nature necessary for students to acquire the desired abilities of the graduate profile.
- l) Direct the process to obtain and maintain professional accreditation of the School or Graduate Program (if applicable).
- m) Constitute the Academic Affairs Committee and convene it at least twice a year.
- n) Convene the community of the School or Graduate Program three times a year to develop the Annual Work Plan according to the priorities in the Development Plan.
- o) Convene, along with Student Council of the unit, an assembly of graduate students at the beginning of each

academic year to select student representatives and alternates who shall represent students in each of the different graduate bodies.

- p) Effectively implement the Development Plan for the School or Graduate Program, evaluate its results, and submit progress reports to the Dean and DEGI (if applicable).
- q) Effectively manage the resources of the school or graduate program including the procurement of additional financial resources necessary to the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the School or Program.
- r) Supervise the support staff assigned to the School or Program.

5) Graduate Affairs Committee

- a) The Graduate Affairs Committee shall have representation in the different areas or fields of study of the School or Program (if applicable). Each area shall select a representative to the Committee. Members of the Committee shall remain in it for two years and may be renewed, subject to the approval of the area. The Director of the School or Graduate Program shall be an *ex officio* member of the Committee.
- b) The Graduate Affairs Committee shall act as an advisory committee for the direction/coordination of the School or Program and shall collaborate with the Director/Coordinator in fulfilling his/her responsibilities.
- c) Graduate schools and programs shall establish the methods of participation for faculty members in the processes and decisions related to recruitment, tenure, and promotion of teaching personnel and faculty.
- d) Graduate schools and programs shall establish the methods of participation for faculty members and students in the management and development of the program in different areas such as: budget formulation, academic affairs, admissions, libraries, laboratories, grounds, if applicable.

**b. Schools/Graduate Programs Affiliated with Colleges**

1) Colleges with Several Schools or Graduate Programs

- a) Deans of Colleges with several schools/programs shall name an Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies who shall answer directly to him/her. The Assistant Dean shall work on issues inherent to his/her responsibilities with a Graduate Board comprised of directors/coordinators of schools/graduate programs.
- b) The Assistant Dean shall serve for a term of four years, subject to a satisfactory evaluation after two years and his/her appointment may be renewed for an additional term of four years. After six years, he/she may be considered for this position once more.
- c) The Assistant Dean shall be the link between schools or graduate programs and DEGI.
- d) The Assistant Dean shall:
  - (1) Implement and be responsible for compliance with academic rules for graduate studies in the Campus and in the College.
  - (2) Along with the Graduate Board, he/she shall formulate a macro level Development Plan for the schools/graduate programs of the College and a Promotion and Recruitment Plan for graduate students.
  - (3) Effectively implement the Development Plan, evaluate its results, and submit progress reports to the Dean and the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research (if applicable).
  - (4) Articulate, coordinate, and supervise the processes of quota, admission, enrollment, academic counseling, good standing evaluation, promotion and recruitment of students, presentation and defense of proposals and dissertations, degree certificates, study permits

and deferrals, resolution of conflicts between students and professors, and others.

- (5) Constitute dissertation Committees according to the rules in this Certification and the College.
  - (6) Direct bi-monthly evaluations of the School or Graduate Program according to the Evaluation Plan established by DEGI.
  - (7) Constitute the Graduate Board three times a year. Together with the Board, it shall develop the Annual Work Plan according to the priorities established in the Development Plan for the schools/graduate programs.
  - (8) Support and collaborate in obtaining and maintaining professional accreditation of schools or graduate programs.
  - (9) Convene, along with the Student Council of the corresponding unit, an assembly of graduate students at the beginning of each academic year to select student representatives and alternates who shall represent students in each of the different graduate bodies.
  - (10) Collaborate with the Dean in the effective administration of resources assigned to graduate programs and in the procurement of financial aid for graduate students and grants for the development of graduate schools/programs.
  - (11) Supervise the support staff of their work area.
  - (12) Coordinate the creation of new academic offerings and programs
- e) The Director/Coordinator shall be appointed with the prior consent of the Dean or Assistant Dean, if applicable, professors, students, and personnel of the graduate program.

The responsibilities of the school Director shall be similar to those of Directors of schools or graduate programs not affiliated with Colleges (see subsection E.2.a of this Certification).

The responsibilities of the Coordinator of the graduate program shall be matters of a curricular nature and the academic counseling. Curricular matters include the revision and evaluation of the academic offerings of the program and its professional accreditation (if applicable), acts related to graduate courses, the Graduate Catalog, and the creation of new academic offerings. Effectively implement the Student Learning Assessment Plan and act on the results of the assessment through the submission of proposals to the graduate community regarding curriculum changes or those of another nature that are necessary for students acquire the desired abilities of the graduate profile.

- f) The Directors and Coordinators of the schools or graduate programs shall be part of the Graduate Board of the College. As members of the Board, they shall collaborate with the Assistant Dean in the fulfillment of her duties.
- g) The Directors and Coordinators of the schools or graduate programs shall remain the position for at least four years. Renewal of their appointment shall depend on the evaluation of their performance by the Assistant Dean by consulting the professors and students of the graduate program.

## 2) Graduate Board

- a) The Directors/Coordinators of the Colleges with several graduate schools or programs shall makeup the Graduate Board. The Assistant Dean of the schools or graduate programs shall be an ex officio Board member who shall preside it. There shall be two student representatives elected by the student representatives from the programs.
- b) The members of the Graduate Board shall elect from among its permanent docent members a

representative and an alternate to Graduate Studies and Research Council (CEGI).

- c) The duties and responsibilities of the Graduate Board shall be the following:
- (1) Collaborate with the Assistant Dean on issues inherent to the administration and development of graduate schools or programs, including preparing a Development Plan for schools or graduate programs.
  - (2) Suggest initiatives to improve schools or graduate programs and the services offered to professors and students.
  - (3) Suggest internal academic rules for graduate schools and programs. These rules shall be in keeping with the institutional academic rules and the Academic Policy for graduate studies in the Campus in this Certification.
  - (4) Evaluate and recommend new academic proposals, curricular revisions, and graduate courses for approval.
  - (5) Advise the Assistant Dean during the decision-making process about academic-administrative matters, situations of conflict, or approaches that affect academic activities, administrative operations, and the development of schools or graduate programs.

**c. Graduate Programs Affiliated with Deanships**

The Dean of those Deanships which have one or two graduate programs shall determine, along with faculty members of said programs, the most suitable organizational structure for their development, while guaranteeing student participation and representation.

**3. Academic-Administrative Affairs**

- a. Each graduate school or program shall keep Bylaws or a body of academic rules that shall govern graduate studies. These bylaws shall

address matters related to admission, good standing, learning assessment, curriculum, candidacy, qualifying examinations, proposal defense, and the approval of any dissertation, study permits, or any other matters related to the school/college/program. These bylaws shall be in keeping with the academic institutional rules and the Academic Policy for graduate studies in the Campus as stipulated in this Certification.

- b. Each graduate school or program shall divulge to the applicants and enrolled students the rules of the school/college/program and the Academic Policy for graduate studies in the Campus.
- c. Each graduate school or program shall carry out promotional and recruitment activities for potential candidates and collaborate with the Promotion and Recruitment Plan for the graduate level established by DEGI and approved by CEGI.
- d. Each graduate school or program shall establish an Academic Assessment, Mentoring, and Retention Plan to guide students during the different phases of their studies from the moment they enroll until they graduate. A copy of this plan must be sent to DEGI.
- e. Every five years, each graduate school or program shall carry out a comprehensive self-evaluation according to the Evaluation Plan for Graduate Programs of DEGI. As a result of this process, schools/college/programs shall prepare a Development Plan that responds to the findings of the self-study, external evaluation, and futures aspirations of the schools or graduate programs.
- f. Every school/college/program shall have a Student Learning Assessment Plan and shall be responsible for acting on the results of the student learning assessment.

#### **4. Student Representatives**

- a. Graduate students from each graduate school or program shall elect two student representatives, one permanent and one alternate. These representatives shall be elected at the beginning of each academic year.
- b. Student representatives shall participate in meeting, committees, and other academic activities of the graduate school or program, as stipulated by the General Bylaws of UPR, the General Student Bylaws, and the particular bylaws of the schools or graduate programs.

## **VI. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH**

The Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research (DEGI) is the academic unit that, along with the professional schools, graduate programs, research units, and schools fosters, articulates, and leads the development of graduate education in the Campus. DEGI provides services for professors and students of schools and graduate programs, proposes academic and administrative policies to position graduate education and bring about intellectual production, respond to social needs and community service, defines standards of academic quality at the graduate level, and defends the interests of the graduate community.

### **A. Responsibilities of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research**

1. Promote a culture of investigation in the Río Piedras Campus.
  - a. Promote and articulate an academic policy that integrates intellectual production as inherent and modular elements of teaching, at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.
  - b. Create and support initiatives and programs to strengthen the research/creation competencies of professors and researchers, graduate and undergraduate students, and encourage their participation in international alliances and networks that promote frontier research and creation.
  - c. Encourage and aid graduate and undergraduate programs, professional schools, and research units in initiating innovative academic and research projects in response to current knowledge, opportunities, and academic and social needs.
2. Promote teaching quality in the educational experience of graduate programs.
  - a. Safeguard the interests of graduate students and promote initiatives, projects, and alliances that contribute to their academic and professional enrichment.
  - b. Discuss and establish standards of quality and excellence for graduate-level education, research, and creation on campus with graduate programs and research units.
  - c. Keep graduate programs informed and generate discussion on the best practices, tendencies, and latest advancements in graduate-level education, both locally and internationally.

3. Manage graduate education and research/creation in the Campus to advance their strategic development.
  - a. Promote, support, and implement diverse strategies to detect potential sources of funding to subsidize initiatives and programs run by the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, as well as graduate and undergraduate programs, professional schools, and research units, and financial aid and scholarships for students, as well as managing grants from the Campus.
  - b. Examine, propose, and head policies and changes to produce agile, flexible, and efficient academic and administrative procedures that facilitate the advancement of graduate education.
  - c. Support the updating and effectiveness of academic-administrative tasks of graduate programs, professional schools, and research units to reach their goals and objectives.
  - d. Create and systematize effective channels of communication, discussion, and decision-making between Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and graduate programs, professional schools, and research units to strengthen and achieve the optimum development of graduate education.
  - e. Disseminate the results of graduate education and intellectual creation to both the university and outside communities, and provide the necessary forms of support to encourage such activities.

#### **B. Responsibilities of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research**

1. Prepare, implement, and evaluate the Strategic Action Plan of the Deanship for the development of schools or graduate programs and the intellectual production of the Campus.
2. Prepare and implement the Institutional Effectiveness Plan of the Deanship and the Annual Achievements Report of the Deanship.
3. Preside, ex officio, the Council on Graduate Studies and Research.
4. Design, implement, and evaluate an Assessment Plan for Graduate Programs and Research Units.
5. Design, implement, and evaluate a Promotion and Recruitment Plan for students of schools or graduate programs.

6. Implement a database for data collection to evaluate the development of schools or graduate programs.
7. Guarantee that schools or graduate programs and research units comply with the policies and rules established by the different institutional bodies.
8. Implement programs and projects that promote the intellectual and professional development of the teaching staff of schools or graduate programs and research units.
9. Develop programs that promote research/creation and increase the abilities of professors and students in this academic activity.
10. Provide the Dean of Academic Affairs with advice about recommendations made by colleges for hiring visiting professors, lecturers, and researchers for schools, graduate programs, and research centers.
11. Develop, implement, and evaluate initiatives that promote academic exchanges between professors and students of schools or graduate programs of the campus with other universities in Puerto Rico and abroad.
12. Support professors and schools or graduate programs in planning and carrying out academic activities such as: congresses, symposiums, and conferences.
13. Create, publish, and keep up to date a Graduate Catalog and a Directory of Research Projects, Researchers, and Research/Creation Resources.
14. Develop a research publication program for research and creative work conducted in the campus.
15. Collaborate with the Management Dean in designing means to unify and simplify the paperwork and administrative procedures related to graduate studies and research and creative work.
16. Guide the academic planning and development of strategies to receive grants.
17. Collaborate with the Dean of Academic Affairs to maintain academic ties among the graduate programs, research centers, the Library System, and undergraduate programs.
18. Manage programs sponsored by the Institutional Research Fund (FIPI).
19. Manage institutional programs and grants (if applicable) for academic assistantships and scholarships for graduate programs.

20. Coordinate with the Dean of Students the management and evaluation of services and support programs for graduate students.
21. Represent DEGI in the appropriate forums, among these, the Academic Senate and Administrative Board.

## **VII. GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH COUNCIL**

The Graduate Studies and Research Council (CEGI) is an academic organization that serves as an advisory body to DEGI Dean. This body deliberates over and proposes academic and administrative policies related to graduate programs and research units. It also considers problems that affect academic units and seeks out and proposes pertinent and viable solutions. Proposals developed and approved by CEGI shall be channeled by the Dean and the corresponding university authorities.

### **A. Graduate Studies and Research Council Composition**

1. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, (*ex-Officio* President)
2. The Dean of Academic Affairs (*ex officio*)
3. The Library System Director or her representative (*ex officio*)
4. The Executive Director of the Academic and Administrative Technologies or his representative (*ex officio*)
5. One elected faculty member and one alternate for each college and school with graduate programs, graduate schools not affiliated with Colleges, and the College of General Studies. His term shall be of two years and he/she may be reelected for an additional consecutive term.
6. Three students enrolled in graduate studies, and three alternates, from different colleges or schools. They shall be elected for a term of one academic year, according to current student bylaws. The representatives to CEGI shall be elected among students who have been elected as representatives of their specific schools or graduate programs.
7. A faculty senator and an alternate elected by the Academic Senate from among the members of the Academic Affairs Committee and one elected alternate representative from said committee.
8. A student senator and an alternate representative elected by the student representatives to the Academic Senate.

## **B. Responsibilities of the Graduate Studies and Research Council**

CEGI shall advise and assist the DEGI Dean in:

1. evaluating academic and administrative policies that have a bearing on graduate studies and the formulation of proposals for change or new policies about graduate studies and research or creation;
2. formulating a Strategic Action Plan for the Deanship that is in keeping with the Strategic Plan of the Campus and UPR system, and an Institutional Effectiveness Plan;
3. formulating the following plans: Evaluating Graduate Programs and Research Units; for Development of Graduate Programs and Research Units; and a Student Learning Assessment Plan. The Dean shall submit the results to the Academic Senate and the Administrative Board;
4. evaluating and recommending proposals for new graduate programs and research centers or units to the Academic Senate, as well as fundamental revisions;
5. revising rules and processes for graduate admission and formulating a Promotion and Recruitment Plan for Graduate Students that responds to trends that are in demand for graduate studies, recruitment opportunity niches, and an Annual Report on Graduate Admissions in the Campus;
6. revising rules and criteria that shall govern the distribution of institutional funding for academic assistantships, scholarships, and other financial aid for graduate students; and
7. formulating policies, projects, and initiatives to foster and support intellectual production, receiving grants, and the development of graduate studies.

## **VIII. POLICY EVALUATION**

This policy shall be evaluated ten years after it is implemented. The Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research shall be the academic unit responsible for submitting the results of the evaluation to the Academic Senate of the Río Piedras Campus. DEGI and the Academic Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate shall establish the criteria for their evaluation no later than a year after it is implemented.

## **IX. TERM AND IMPLEMENTATION**

This policy shall take effect one semester after it is approved by the Academic Senate of the Río Piedras Campus; an Implementation Plan is drafted, and the schools or graduate programs, students, and professors are notified in writing.

This policy shall be prospective. If an active student is interested in availing himself of this policy, he may voice his desire and agree in writing, and with the agreement of the graduate school or program, to the conditions.

This Certification shall not apply to Graduate schools or programs subject to accreditation if it is incompatible with accreditation standards and the practices and regulations implemented in compliance with such standards.

**October 25, 2012**

# **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

## **APPOINTMENT CLASSIFICATION**

### **University of Puerto Rico General Bylaws (Amended 2006)** **Chapter V – Personnel Rules: Provisions applicable to all personnel** **Article 30 – Appointment Classification**

#### ***Section 30.1.1 – Permanent appointment***

An appointment for a regular position or job included in the budget after the incumbent has carried out the probationary period in a satisfactory manner. The incumbent shall enjoy all rights and protection established in these Bylaws.

#### ***Section 30.1.2 – Probationary appointment***

An appointment to fill a regular position or job included in the budget, which shall have a fixed term, according to the provisions in these Bylaws. During the appointment period, the incumbent shall be on probation, subject to an evaluation to determine if, at the end of said probationary period, he/she shall receive a permanent appointment.

#### ***Section 30.1.3 – Substitute appointment***

University personnel appointment for a period no greater than twelve (12) months to fill a regular position or job included in the budget, while the incumbent is on leave. This appointment should not be a precursor to a probationary or permanent appointment, unless said appointment follows the regular procedure established in these Bylaws.

#### ***Section 30.1.4 – Special appointment***

An appointment to fill a position or job paid for by external funds (its recurrence is not guaranteed). University authorities can consider the experience acquired by employees with this type of appointment if they go on to a regular position.

#### ***Section 30.1.5 – Temporary appointment***

An appointment to fill a position or job that is not a regular appointment approved for a fixed period no greater than twelve (12) months to meet special service needs, such as unforeseen and occasional increases in the volume of work. This appointment should not be a precursor to a probationary or permanent appointment, unless said appointment follows the regular procedure established in these Bylaws.

#### ***Section 30.1.6 – Ad honorem appointment***

An appointment for people who are not university employees, but provide ad honorem services to the university. The academic senate of each unit shall approve the rules for these teaching position appointments in their unit, which shall clearly establish the special nature of the relationship of said persons to the University and the scope of the institution's responsibility regarding different social welfare measures for paid employees.

#### ***Section 30.1.7 – Part-time appointment***

A fixed term appointment, depending on his/her classification as faculty or non-faculty, to fill a position or job that is not a regular appointment, which provides part-time services. University of

Puerto Rico employees that provide part-time services of a permanent nature are guaranteed tenure when these Bylaws are approved.

***Section 30.1.8 - Trust appointments***

An appointment for university personnel deemed "trust employees" in Chapter VIII, Article 71 of these Bylaws. Personnel in positions can be selected and removed from their positions or jobs classified as "trust appointments"; but shall enjoy all rights acquired by virtue of a regular appointment in the System.

***Section 30.1.9 – Joint appointment***

Permanent, probationary, special, temporary, or ad honorem appointments in the previous sections can be appointed jointly between different schools of the same institutional unit or different institutional units.

## GRADUATE ADMISSION TYPES

### **Admission to degree granting programs:**

- **Regular admission** – Applicants who, after earning a bachelor’s degree or master’s degree, are applying for regular admission for the first time to a graduate program. International students can only be granted regular admission according to federal immigration laws.
- **Conditional admission** – Applicants who do not meet all academic requirements. Students must be informed in writing of the requirements, time frame, and consequences of not meeting said requirements. Graduate programs and schools are responsible counseling these students and must record if said conditions were met during the stipulated time frame. Otherwise, the program must expel said student.
- **Deferred admission** – Deferred admission is a privilege that graduate schools and programs can grant to talented candidates who wish to postpone admission for one semester or one year.
- **Readmission** - Students who wish to continue their graduate studies in the same academic program after a period of absence of one semester or more.

### **Admission to non-degree granting programs:**

- **Transitory Studies** – This applies to applicants who need additional courses to fulfill an admission requirement for advanced studies in a graduate program on campus. Each graduate school or program shall establish the maximum amount of credits that a person can take through transitory studies. Transitory study permits shall be granted for **one academic year and can be extended for an additional academic semester.**
- **Study Permit** – For applicants who are not interested in admission to a graduate program, but would like to take a graduate course for the purposes of professional development, or for those who come from another institution (in Puerto Rico or abroad) and would like to complete a graduate course and then return to their primary institution. Students can apply for study permits until the first day of classes. The graduate program or school shall grant admission for one academic semester only.

**NOTE: Reclassification** is not an admission process. It is an internal process whereby a graduate program classifies a student at the doctoral level after passing the qualifying examination.