

STANDARD I. MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



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Introduction

In 2008, the ALA accreditation process provided the School with the opportunity to conduct a self-study, which reflected our strengths as well as our areas of improvement. It also increased our awareness of our achievements and challenges for the immediate and mid-term future. Our past and present aim is to provide a quality education for tomorrow's information professionals. Since 2008 we have been working towards achieving our goals and objectives and in doing so have been able to develop new areas of work as well as to identify those areas that need attention. The GSIST continues to be vigilant of its quality, that of its students and faculty as well as the performance of our alumni as professional librarians in a variety of information units.

The GSIST intends to continue being the leader of librarianship and information scholarship in Puerto Rico and to contribute to the improvement of these areas in the Caribbean as well. The School exercises that leadership through the participation in professional development activities within Puerto Rico and the Caribbean professional communities, as well as in national and regional professional organizations. Principally, the School is committed to address the needs of Puerto Rico but, at the same time, it is aware of the contributions it can and does make to the professional and academic environment in our region.

This first section focuses on the School's alignment to Standard I of ALA's *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies* (2008) and describes and presents evidence of the School's responsiveness to the needs of its constituencies and of the field. The document is divided into six (6) chapters, each addressing a specific section of the standards.

In 2011, the School declared its revised vision and mission with the updated curriculum as follows:

Figure 1.1: Vision and Mission

Vision
Encourage innovation in the field of Library and Information Science in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and the Americas, exercising Leadership in a Global and Technological world.
Mission
Foster an innovative and collaborative environment of excellence and commitment to teaching, learning, research, creative work, and service to transform the management of information and its access in society.
Prepare professional and leaders in the field with an ethical, multidisciplinary, multicultural, and global perspective.
Contribute to the development of policies and services that promote equitable access to information for the purpose of building a knowledge society.

The stated Vision and Mission guided the enunciation of six (6) goals and the corresponding objectives.

The six (6) goals, and its corresponding objectives established by the GSIST in relation to the Standards, are the point of departure for our reflection and study of our practice. As we comply with these objectives we strive to provide the best possible academic experience for students as well as faculty and staff.

The School's program is developed in accordance with Standard I, objectives are results oriented, and reflect the essential character of the field of library and information science. Our program is the result of continuous strategic planning ([revised in 2011](#), with the updated curriculum) in which students, alumni, practitioners, employers and all those related to our field are involved. In this process, we seek the advice from all constituents, analyze their input and integrate those ideas and elements that are compatible with our mission as a LIS graduate school. Evaluation and assessment have been undertaken in a variety of ways, and involve students, faculty, alumni and other constituencies. Planning and evaluation undertaken from the previous accreditation process to date reflects the School's compliance with all sections of Standard I. The School has gained the experience to successfully identify its challenges, and advance in the process to address them effectively.

Figure 1.2: GSIST Program Goals and Objectives¹

<p>GOAL 1. Facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values of the Library Science and Information Science field</p>
<p>Objective 1. Demonstrate a high level of knowledge and skills in the management of information.</p> <p>Objective 2. Design and implement procedures to select, acquire and organize information resources following the field’s standards.</p> <p>Objective 3. Demonstrate competencies in the analysis and evaluation of information resources related to its reliability as stated by our field’s norms.</p> <p>Objective 4. Design and implement policies and procedures to store, preserve, describe and access information resources effectively.</p> <p>Objective 5. Demonstrate understanding of the knowledge creation process, its dissemination and communication.</p> <p>Objective 6. Apply technological competencies and innovative strategies for knowledge and information management.</p> <p>Objective 7. Perform as information professionals with an understanding of the philosophy, the theoretical and ethics principles of the field of library and information science.</p> <p>Objective 8. Demonstrate the contributions and relevance of the LIS field in a society in which information technologies are ever present.</p> <p>Objective 9. Demonstrate effective communication skills and educational strategies as she strives to provide effective information competencies development in various contexts.</p> <p>Objective 10. Apply theories, professional ethics and the integration of information technologies as well as reflect about the international trends in the LIS profession.</p> <p>Objective 11. Become involved in a broad spectrum of experiences in settings oriented to satisfy information and knowledge needs of various populations.</p>
<p>GOAL 2. Promote the development of students as individuals capable of exerting leadership in an interdisciplinary, multicultural, and global context.</p>

¹ Objectives (as stated in the updated curriculum in 2010, and approved in 2011) are identified by the goals to which they correspond. The first 18 relate to student’s learning outcomes; and objectives 19 to 29 address the School’s activities in our professional and academic fields.

Objective 12. Apply knowledge in the field to provide services and resources to disadvantaged groups in and increasingly diverse society.

Objective 13. Demonstrate comprehension of the knowledge and skills required to cross discipline boundaries to provide services to diverse constituencies.

Objective 14. Collaborate with scholars in academic units outside the field of information science to strengthen the interdisciplinary focus of the LIS field and validate its contribution to other fields.

Objective 15. Establish alliances with professional associations, information units, government agencies and private sector to address information needs and to promote public policies that support the free knowledge and information flow in society.

GOAL 3. Provide opportunities for the development of new knowledge and innovation in the field through effective research efforts.

Objective 16. Conduct research in the field according to the level of expertise developed.

Objective 17. Demonstrate comprehension of the research process as it contributes to increase knowledge in the field.

Objective 18. Integrate with faculty as they identify, strengthen research avenues, knowledge dissemination and the development of new information resource, products and services as contributions to the LIS field and society.

Objective 19. Sponsor and develop research projects that increase knowledge of the LIS field with particular emphases in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and the Americas.

GOAL 4. Contribute to the economic, social, cultural and educational development of Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and the Americas through information services and advising.

Objective 20. Offer a continuing education experiences as well as certificate programs to satisfy needs of the public and private sector. Offer consulting services in the LIS field in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and the Americas.

Objective 21. Exert leadership in the development of information policies for the State Government as it builds an information society based in equitable access to information through an effective and ethical information management system.

Objective 22. Design and offer online courses and programs with the purpose of expanding access and opportunities to those populations interested in library and information science that cannot take advantage of the program on campus.

GOAL 5: Maintain a creative and collaborative climate that will foster excellence in the academic and administrative endeavors.

Objective 23. Integrate students' participation in all aspects of the program including assessment.

Objective 24. Provide an innovative administrative and technological infrastructure which creatively promotes the School's development and an effective performance by its faculty, staff, and students.

Objective 25. Assure sufficient financial resources to support the Program's effective development.

Objective 26. Establish policies and strategies in line with UPR System with the purpose of guaranteeing its contribution to institutional effectiveness including strategic planning and continuous assessment.

Objective 27. Provide appropriate information and technological resources as well as office and physical spaces required to support faculty, staff and students in the fulfillment of their academic and administrative responsibilities.

GOAL 6: Expand the reach and visibility of the Graduate School of Information Sciences and Technologies to significantly influence the field and society.

Objective 28. Generate additional fiscal resources with the development of new information services and products.

Objective 29. Broaden the physical installations, the number of faculty and staff to better serve more students and the general society.

Standard I.1 [Part 1]: *The school's mission and program goals are pursued, and its program objectives achieved through implementation of a broad based planning process that involves the constituency that a program seeks to serve.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this section of the standard

The GSIST has been involved in strategic planning since the mid-1990s. Every year at the beginning of each semester, faculty retreats are held to examine and to update the strategic plan, to identify accomplishments, to review the plan's implementation, and to establish goals and objectives for the year ahead related to specific aspects of the plan. The [Strategic Plan 2008/2009](#) was revised in 2011 and extends to [2016](#). As part of the planning process, the GSIST, in different meetings, sought opinions and points of view from different sectors, including alumni and local professional librarian associations with whom a collaborative relationship exists. In 2009 alumni were requested by the School to participate in organized focus groups in which they were able to contribute their views on different issues related to GSIST's development. Professional librarians, colleagues and practicing librarians from school, public, academic and specialized libraries contributed their knowledge and opinions as to what areas of the field the School needed to address in its curriculum. One area that was common to all sectors was the importance of strengthening the

library science program and the technological competence of our information professionals. This feedback influenced the School's decision to include three special focuses in the curriculum: [Evidence-based practice for Information Professionals](#) ([Booth & Brice, 2004](#)), [Problem-based learning](#) and the Application of technologies in all courses. The two areas of emphases in the program: Library and Information Science and Knowledge management, introduced with the updated curriculum in 2011, started to enrich and strengthen the knowledge acquisition and skills development of all students in the program.

The alumni association ([ASEGRABCI](#)), although inactive for a period of time, collaborated with the School. They use our facilities to hold meetings and members assist the School in planning conferences and other events. This organization was recently reorganized with the effort and assistance of a faculty member and is now becoming more relevant to the School alumni. The Society of Puerto Rican Librarians, the main professional organization in the Island is also a close GSIST collaborator. The School is present at their annual conferences as speakers and workshop conductors. That is also the case with ABESPRI, the school librarians association of Puerto Rico, and the Puerto Rican chapters of REFORMA and ACURIL. All members of these organizations, many of which are School's alumni, respond to the call of the School and contribute with ideas and suggestions for its betterment through organized focus groups and special committees. The School maintains close communication with all professional associations, particularly with the regional one: [ACURIL](#) (Association of Caribbean Universities, Research and Institutional Libraries). This closeness contributes significantly to the School since it facilitates continuous feedback for the School's proactive planning and development of its activities. Some faculty members serve as officers in their boards and are part of their programming activities. Consistently the School's faculty participates as keynote speakers and workshop leaders in the professional organizations activities.

Faculty, both full-time and adjunct, students and staff, all participate and contribute to the planning process of the School gathering opinions and data that allow the School to revise and renew the strategic and annual plans. Their input is sought through special meetings, focus groups as well as direct membership in the work groups that help prepare the Program Presentation.

Information elicited from those meetings and focus groups allowed for major changes such as:

- Eliminating the comprehensive exam.
- Eliminating the thesis and research projects requirement for a Seminar on Knowledge Application (identified as Capstone) aligned to the faculty research lines, which contribute significantly to advance a specific study or project, and is manageable within one semester of studies. Involvement in a thesis or research project preparation could take from one to two years or more.
- Instituting the assignment of 3 credit hours to all courses in the program, rather than 1 or 2 credits, for a total of 36 credit hours, with the exception of the elective Practicum experience, for which 1 credit is assigned.
- Introducing the two areas of emphasis: Library and Information Science, and Knowledge management, providing for different alternatives of expertise although under the same MIS umbrella.

Through a continuous conversation with alumni and other information professionals, the School seeks to include their points of view regarding the future of the profession and its short and long term needs. In 2014, the School's [Advisory Board](#) was reappointed. The Advisory Board constitutes a major contributor of ideas to the Strategic Plan. The Advisory Board includes representatives of all professional organizations, professionals working in school, academic and specialized libraries, as well as in other areas of the field.

Other groups that have provided effective feedback to the state of the LIS field in Puerto Rico are the Communities of Practice initiative at the University of Puerto Rico Library System, developed and coordinated by a faculty member from the School, and the Virtual Health Library of Puerto Rico Community of Practice, also co-coordinated by a faculty member of the School. Both initiatives have created ties with practitioners in Puerto Rico libraries, most of who are also GSIST's alumni. As part of the implementation of this initiative, the School has been able to identify areas of need that have also been infused into the School's curriculum and planning process as well.

Achievements

1. The School successfully submitted a [curriculum update](#), approved by the University in 2011. The updated curriculum has allowed the GSIST to become more focused and competitive within the higher education system of Puerto Rico. As a result of this process, integrating two areas of emphasis (Library and Information Science and Knowledge Management) a restructuring of new-core, required, highly recommended courses and electives were identified and developed, as well as new research lines to address the particular areas.
2. The GSIST responded to its own analysis of steps to be taken that were included in our last Program Presentation. Due to the updated curriculum process, implemented in August 2011, the Faculty was also able to revise the School's [Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives](#) as well as its Strategic plan for 2012-2016.
3. The School's has been consistently successful with the systematic revision of its Strategic plan, as well as in accomplishing its development. The strategic monitoring, planning, and implementation of the program occurs in the context of annual faculty retreats, as well as the continuous evaluation of the certificates programs by the faculty's curriculum committee, with input from students and faculty as a whole. This action has allowed us to identify specialized areas needed in the curriculum aligned to the Puerto Rican scenario. The area of electronic document management is an example of the needs that have been identified and included in the program. Its implementation, with renewed focus and format, has proven to be most successful. The strategic plans cover the periods of [2008-2011](#) and from [2011 up to 2016](#).
4. As part of the curriculum update process that the School undertook, the vision, mission, goals and objectives were examined (2008-2010). The process involved the collaborative efforts of faculty, students, alumni, and others as

they are part of the School's constituency in focus groups and meetings. With their ideas, new statements of [Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives](#) were developed for the School. These were submitted to the offices of the [Dean of Academic Affairs](#), the [Dean of Graduate Studies and Research](#), and the University Vice President for Academic Affairs and were approved in [April 2011](#). Faculty, full time and adjunct as well as students and staff participate in the strategic planning process as well as in the efforts of developing this Program presentation. Each sector is summoned to be a part of the committees that developed our report of these Standards and they participate with equal footing. They bring their personal experiences and ideas and those of the colleagues with whom they interact. In the group that worked Standard I, for example, the members: faculty, adjunct faculty, students, and practicing librarians, studied our 2008 PP, looked at other schools documents, studied research papers, identified trends in the field and brought ideas to the group discussion and decision-making. This process also happens with the faculty and administrative personnel when considering its strategic plan.

5. Annual operational plans, aligned to the annual institutional budget allotment, have been developed to implement the strategic planning. These plans encompass specific activities such as student recruitment, program and faculty and evaluation, as well as research and technical support services. These annual plans are developed by the School's permanent committees, which are then submitted to faculty, to be discussed as to ensure feedback and input and approved at faculty/staff meetings. An example of these plans is the one on the [Students Learning Assessment](#).
6. The School's student learning assessment plan includes a systematic approach to monitoring the quality of the academic experience offered to students at the School. One of the achievements in this process has been the development of [rubrics](#) (Banco de Rúbricas) to assess student learning and document learning outcomes. These rubrics are available for use by faculty in their courses and a standardized approach is being used to apply them. For instance, all argumentative essay assignments across courses apply the same rubric, allowing an assessment of student development and more importantly providing effective and consistent feedback to the student.
7. Considering the expressed need of a large community, from Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, that cannot study onsite, a proposal to offer our MIS degree completely online has already been submitted to the University authorities. We are in the process of adjusting the proposed budget to submit the document both institutionally, to the State Council of Education, and to the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges for their consideration and approval.

Evidence

1. GSIST Strategic Plan ([Online](#))
2. Curriculum update proposal ([Online](#))
3. Curriculum update approval by the UPR Vice President for Academic Affairs ([Online](#))

4. GSIST Operational Plans (On-site)
5. Faculty retreat agendas 2008- 2014 (On-site)
6. Assessment action plans and reports ([Online](#))
7. Rubrics ([Online](#) and On-site)
8. Updated Curriculum Course Syllabi ([Online](#) and on-site)
9. GSIST Online Master's Degree Program Proposal ([Online](#) and On-site)

Challenges

- The GSIST, as part of the University of Puerto Rico System, faces important challenges in maintaining a systematically improved curriculum offer, which responds to the needs of its constituencies. Increasingly, the issues regarding wrongful use of information as well as the need to increase information access and availability to wider sectors of the citizenry are discussed publicly. The GSIST must make itself more visible in these areas and contribute the field's points of view regarding these important social and civic issues.
- The School needs to maintain its revision and monitoring the implementation of its vision, mission, goals, objectives and strategic plan aligned to the University's strategic plans, [Diez para la década](#) and [Visión Universidad 2016](#), and the Strategic Plan of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. A challenge for our School is to devise different ways in which the broader professional community can continue contributing their ideas and advises different areas of action for the betterment of the School's program.
- After the implementation of an updated curriculum, due to a newly stated institutional regulation for graduate education, [Certification No. 38](#), the School must address challenges in various areas. For instance, the new institutional regulation establishes ways to reduce the teaching load of faculty so that they can be more productive in their research endeavors. Although we understand and favor such a decision, we recognize that it also comes with the possibility of affecting financially the management of the graduate units at a time in which an increment in budgets is not likely to occur.
- Preparation for the short-term approval of the completely online MIS degree needs to be addressed. Expectations are to begin the academic offer online by 2016, since we have to obtain the institutional and the State Education Council approvals. We need to receive this approval during academic year 2014-2015 in order initiate marketing strategies, be on schedule to develop promotion and admission of new students.

Steps to be taken

- Develop ways in which the knowledge management area of emphasis, within the MIS, can be strengthened, and other areas can be identified to further enrich the academic and professional program.
- Work closely with the GSIST Advisory Committee in order to tap the experience and ideas of information professional practitioners, communities of practice and employers, as well as the alumni and professional associations, in

order to be able to understand the needs of the field and the community as a whole.

- Continue monitoring the alignment of the GSIST strategic plan with the UPR System strategic plan, [Diez para la década](#), and the Río Piedras campus plan [University Vision 2016](#), as well as that of Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

Standard I.1 [Part 2]: *Consistent with the values of the parent institution and the culture and mission of the school program goals and objectives foster quality education.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this section of the standard

The GSIST's vision, mission, goals and objectives were developed in alignment with the UPR System, strategic documents, [Ten for the decade](#) and [University Vision 2016](#). They are also consistent with the *Strategic Plan* of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

As gathered from the goals and objectives of these plans, there is a consistent effort geared to enhance the quality of the educational experience for students offered by the School. A diverse array of experiences and an effective assessment process allows the School to maintain its recognized quality education. Informal assessment data is gathered through our close and continuous relationship with alumni. GSIST alumni value their experience at the School and pinpoint the strengths of the process while studying. Besides their attendance to professional development activities promoted by the School, we also elicit their opinions in order to explore their reflections after leaving the School and gather information in relation to our strengths and areas for improvement. We have included results of a most recent survey conducted ([De camino a la Acreditación EGCTI 2015](#) (Torres-Ramos & Vigo-Cepeda, 2014), in which alumni identified their views about the School and described their experience while attending the GSIST.

The GSIST provides students with opportunities, as part of the curriculum and co-curricular activities, to explore the field and its theoretical applications, as well as to stimulate their participation in different professional activities in which they begin their socialization process into the LIS profession. Being attentive to the attitudes, knowledge and skills required by an information professional in the 21st century, the GSIST assures the quality of the educational experience for all students. This also considers experiences beyond Puerto Rico since our students should be able to exhibit a professional performance within and beyond Puerto Rico and the United States.

With the preparation of the Program Presentation in 2014, the GSIST entered the revision of our present strategic plan that ranges from 2011/2012 to 2015/2016. The revision process made us analyze the state of goal achievement to this time and helped us project new goals and objectives. The process is posing new challenges and opportunities that will yield new areas of academic development for the School to be achieved during the next strategic cycle 2016-2020, to be considered in our August 2016 faculty retreat. New institutional policies and regulations for graduate studies

have been approved, new leadership officers have been designated at the University, Río Piedras Campus and at the School level, which provide an opportunity to maintain and enhance the quality education being provided, as well as to enrich the academic program with new learning environments and experiences for our students, faculty, and administrative staff.

The School is in the process of signing a collaborative agreement with the Puerto Rico National Library and other information and documentation premises that will allow our students to engage in diverse practical experiences within the particular settings. The new elements in the overall University strategic planning will represent an excellent opportunity to advance our views and to develop our goals and objectives for the coming cycle, aligned to the strategic document that will be generated to update or substitute [Diez para la década](#) and [Visión Universidad 2016](#).

Achievements

1. [Diez para la década](#) and [Visión Universidad 2016](#) are becoming strategic guidelines that will need to be updated soon. However, the GSIST’s current program goals and objectives are consistent with them as they are the actual strategic documents and they reflect an institutional commitment to achieving quality education.

[Visión Universidad 2016](#), which expresses the Río Piedras campus strategic purposes, is of particular importance because it constitutes the most immediate context for the School’s development and aspirations. The GSIST’s goals reflect alignment with the *University Vision 2016* goals:

Table 1.1: Alignment between the University Vision 2016 and GSIST Goals 2016.

<i>University Vision 2016 Goals</i>	<i>GSIST Goals</i>
Goal 1: The research, creation, and scholarship, as foundations of the academic endeavor of the Campus, will lead to the production and dissemination of knowledge, will contribute to the development of the disciplines and interdisciplinary work, and will contribute to the sustainable development of Puerto Rican and international society.	Goal 2: Promote the development of students as individuals capable of exerting leadership in an interdisciplinary, multicultural and global context. Goal 4: Contribute to the economic, social, cultural and educational development of Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and the Americas through information services and advising.
Goal 2: The academic and service programs will be characterized for their excellence, leadership, relevance and dynamism, and will respond to the highest standards and developments of knowledge.	Goal 5: Maintain a creative and collaborative climate that will foster excellence in the academic and administrative endeavors. Goal 3: Provide opportunities for the development of new knowledge and innovation in

<i>University Vision 2016 Goals</i>	GSIST Goals
	the field through effective research efforts.
Goal 5: The Campus will be characterized by the Exchange and collaboration with academic and professional institutions on the World scenario, envisioning the development of an international academic perspective.	Goal 4: Contribute to the economic, social, cultural and educational development of Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and the Americas through information services and advising.
Goal 6: The Campus will increase institutional effectiveness through the transformation of its structures, management practices, and processes in which the academic priorities guide the administrative undertakings of the Campus.	Goal 5: Maintain a creative and collaborative climate that will foster excellence in the academic and administrative endeavors.

2. All School's strategic plans and programmatic documents have consistently been aligned with those of the parent institution, as can be observed from the previous examples. These goals and objectives all relate to our aim of providing a quality educational experience. Students have affirmed, in meetings (focal groups) and surveys (electronic course evaluations), their levels of satisfaction with the quality of education they receive at the School.

3. A quality education in the field of LIS provides students with opportunities to apply theories and concepts that have been learned in readings and class discussions. The GSIST strives to provide such opportunities as part of the curriculum and co-curricular activities. Among the courses in which students have the opportunity to apply theories and prove them in this context we can identify Information Needs and User Behavior (CINF 6808), Information, Knowledge and Society (CINF 6705) as well as the Research Methods for Information Professionals (CINF 6706). These three renovated courses are the result of the curriculum update conducted in 2010-2011. Core, required as well as some elective courses (in both areas of emphasis: Library and Information Science, and Knowledge Management) have practical assignments that usually require students to conduct some application of the theories discussed in class. In their exit interviews held as part of the assessment process, students have also recognized the importance of practice experiences (CINF 6800) for their professional preparation.

Evidence

1. Second-Year GSIST Student Survey 2014 ([Online](#) and on-site)
2. Annual Course Evaluations (Online and On-site. See instruments: [Online](#) and on-site)
3. Mission Statement from the Río Piedras campus included in the booklet [Vision 2016](#) and *Ten for the decade [Diez para la Década]*: planning documents from the UPR's Central Administration and the President's Office

4. GSIST's Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives statements ([Online](#) and on-site)
5. Student [Learning Assessment Plan](#) and [Annual Reports](#) (Online and on-site)
6. Alumni Surveys Results ([Online](#) and on-site)
7. [Course Descriptions](#) and Syllabi ([Online](#) and on-site)

Challenges

- Develop the strategic plan for the next 7 years and complete the revision of the School's vision, mission, goals and objectives to be assured that they reflect the future vision of the School while they still are clearly aligned with the Ten for the Decade (*Diez para la década*) and *Vision University 2016*.
- Maintain an active communication with the GSIST's Advisory Board so that we can tap their knowledge and diverse experiences in the field, and involve them as well as the wide range of groups representing the School's constituency, particularly alumni, in the development of the new strategic plan and the revision of the School's vision, mission, goals and objectives for the next 7 years.

Steps to be taken

- Design ways by which the School can maintain a continuous flow of exchange of ideas and collaboration with the Advisory Board.
- The GSIST needs to become more visible and vocal in our areas of expertise and move forward new ideas for delivery and exchange of information.
- Maintain the reflective process of faculty and staff regarding the mid and long term development of the School and extend the present strategic plan towards the next planning cycle.

Standard I.2: *Program objectives are stated in terms of educational learning outcomes.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

The first [eighteen program objectives](#) indicate what students will be able to perform as a result of the academic experience at the GSIST MIS program. These objectives relate directly to the School's vision, mission and goals, and are considered throughout the curriculum. They identify the competencies information professionals in this time and age requires for his or her successful performance in diverse working environments. The courses that are included in the curriculum reflect these program objectives in various ways.

Achievements

1. The first eighteen program objectives identify what students will be able to do once they graduate from the Program. The School developed these objectives to provide guidance for the students' educational expectations and to provide the content and skills required for their professional performance. These objectives stem from the School's vision, mission and goals statements and are in complete alignment with the University of Puerto Rico traditions. They are reflected throughout the curriculum, and relate to the competencies information professionals need to function effectively in a diverse, changing environment. Courses in the curriculum are identified with these program objectives. For example, Objective #4: (Design and implement policies and procedures to store, preserve, describe and access information resources effectively.) relates to the information organization course. Objective #7 (Perform as information professionals with and understanding of the philosophy, the theoretical and ethics principles of the field of library and information science.) relates to the first core course on information, knowledge and society. Course syllabi identify the objectives to which the course relates. In this way, students are aware of the objectives in relation to what they are learning in the course.
2. Core courses (for both areas of emphasis: Library and Information Science, and Knowledge management) have been designed as such to allow all students to be competent in the common knowledge areas determined by the School. Four courses represent the core content that students must acquire. These are, Information, Knowledge and Society, Information and Knowledge Technologies, Research for Information Professionals and Foundations of Information and Knowledge Organization.
3. [Rubrics](#) have been developed to allow faculty to document the students learning achievement regarding course objectives. In this way, specific course objectives are tied to program objectives, and the students in their professional electronic portfolios document learning achievements.

Evidence

1. GSIST Goals and Objectives Statements ([Online](#) and on-site)
2. Course Syllabi (Core and Required) ([Online](#) and on-site)
3. Examples of Student Professional Portfolios ([Online](#))

Challenges

One of the continued challenges the GSIST has identified is to maintain a quality program in which students acquire knowledge and to develop their skills and attitudes leading them to a successful professional performance. In this process, faculty members strive to document the students' learning in various ways.

A challenge in this area is to be able to gather evidence that links student academic

experiences to their professional practice. Although our learning objectives are written to indicate specific aims, the GSIST still needs to work further to document faculty practices and students' learning in such a way so that the evidence can be directly tied to the School's educational practices.

Steps to be taken

1. Develop a follow-up assessment system, with the initiative of [Academic Advising](#), to track students' development from their entry to graduation.
2. Modify the students portfolio's design to facilitate registering their learning achievements and competencies, as they develop an understanding of the field, document and evidence their knowledge acquisition and practice as information professionals in the training process.

Standard I.2.1: *Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the essential character of the field of library and information studies; that is, recordable information and knowledge and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use, encompassing information and knowledge creation, communication, identification, selection, acquisition, organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination, and management.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

The GSIST program objectives guide curriculum development to include all major areas in the field of library and information studies. The program objectives that reflect the character of the field are drawn from the traditional and the best practices of administration to manage information resources and services, diagnosing characteristics and needs of clients, and organizing information to facilitate efficient and prompt retrieval and use.

Other objectives pinpoint evaluating and using information technologies to improve and diversify services and products, as well as mastering knowledge and skills of the field. Additional objectives addressed in courses include the integration of process technologies and innovations for the development of information services and added value products. Another program objective focuses on the value of information in the current world in developing collections, services and products that will facilitate equitable access to information. The alumni profile, which is based on these objectives, reflects these areas of the field.

Achievements

1. The school has been successful in developing and maintaining a curriculum that allows students to develop skills, knowledge and positive attitudes in agreement with the alumni profile. This profile, reflected in the first seventeen program objectives, includes the range of competencies relevant to the essential character of the field today.

2. As the field has developed, the School has been also careful to include traditional aspects of the field, for example the area of preservation and conservation. The School covers this field in a specialized course providing students with theories and practical, hands on experience. Even though this is an elective course at present plans are under way to facilitate this experience to all students.
3. Activities have been held with alumni and other information professionals to discuss developments of the field. Participation in professional organizations' activities as well as of the communities of practice as speakers, organizers and workshop leaders have allowed the School to maintain contact and exchange views on new developments in the field.
4. Digitalization and the use of information technologies, principles of design of digital libraries and other technological applications are studied as ways to allow information resources to be preserved, accessed and used. As part of its collaboration with the [Campus Library System](#), the GSIST continues a productive relationship with the [Puerto Rico Digital Library](#) (PRDL), particularly with student's research. An example of this effort is the research project conducted by [Alana Aymat](#) in 2013, on the digitalization of a sample of exposition catalogs at the UPR Museum. The product of this research has been integrated in the PRDL repository.
5. The attention of this increasingly important area of the LIS field has brought interest of research centers like the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at the State University of New York Hunter College. Two recent alumni from the GSIST have been hired for important digitalization projects by this Center.

An important electronic records management initiative is being conducted at the [Campus Archives](#) in which the School is one of the pilot centers. This particular initiative will provide opportunities for our students to familiarize with the knowledge and tasks related to this field of work.

6. The School has developed and submitted a proposal to the University channels in which requests the authorization and support to develop the [MIS as a completely online degree](#). The School is expecting response from the Dean of Academic Studies to continue with the process. Our initiative is aligned with the institution's goal of internationalization as well as its desire to increase the technological integration and infusion in academic programs.

Evidence

1. Course syllabi ([Online](#) and on-site)
2. Alumni Profile [See [Information Bulletin](#) and on-site)
3. GSIST Master's Program Online proposal ([Online](#) and on-site)
4. GSIST's Program Activities (On-site)

Challenges

- Complete the GSIST online conversion process and initiate the academic offering with the same degree of quality and commitment, from our faculty and staff, by 2016.
- Become more active with the various professional organizations and diverse communities of practice as a way to have students socialize as new professionals in active groups organized by specific professional interests.
- Increase opportunities for students to have field experiences in advanced practices of digitization and digital document preservation and management.

Steps to be taken

- Conduct focus groups with the two communities of practice facilitators, UPR System and Virtual Health Library of PR, and other professionals to explore their views on specific content and issues they feel should be included in our curriculum.
- Take advantage of Advisory Board members who are professionals in the field and can advise on ways to provide student experiences in the field.
- Conduct outreach to other programs on campus which working in similar areas like digital humanities within the Cultural Practices Management Program in the Humanities Faculty.
- Continue to plan, develop, enrich and carry out activities, under the School's Continuing Education and Professional Development Program, such as colloquia and seminars geared to discuss future visions of the field of library and information science.

<p>Standard I.2.2: <i>Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field</i></p>
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Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

The School's program objectives specifically address philosophy, principles and ethics of the field. For example, Objective #7 specifically states that students will demonstrate in their performance an understanding of the philosophy, the theoretical and ethics principles of the field of library and information science. Other objectives state that they will guide their performance the support of an equitable access to information.

Achievements

1. Some of the courses in the curriculum that include analysis and discussion of the philosophy, principles and ethics of the field are, such as Information, Knowledge and Society (CINF 6705), Research Methods in the Information Field (CINF 6706), Selection and Acquisition of Information Resources

(CINF 6809), Information Access Policy Development (CINF 6807), User Studies and Information Needs (CINF 6808) and Development of Information and Technological Competencies (CINF 6815). These and other courses identify, analyze and discuss issues relating to professional philosophy, principles and ethics of the field.

Evidence

1. Vision, Mission and Goals Statements ([Online](#) and on-site)
2. Course Syllabi ([Online](#) and on-site).

Challenges

- The School needs to formally enunciate a values statement. It also needs to address new elements of information ethics that are coming to the fore, based on technological trends and developments. These issues need to be included in the School's reflective process, and incorporated into the curriculum revision.
- The information landscape of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean must be strengthened as a theme of discussion in our core courses. Students need to be aware of the way information is conceptualized, constructed, shared and converted in our daily lives in professional and everyday contexts.

Steps to be taken

- Strengthen the discussion of ethics in all courses, particularly Information, Knowledge and Society (CINF 6705), Research Methods in the Information Field (CINF 6706), Selection and Acquisition of Information Resources (CINF 6809) a Information Access Policy Development (CINF 6807), User Studies and Information Needs (CINF 6808), and Development of Information and Technological Competencies (CINF 6815).
- Participate in activities offered by professional organizations and communities of practice in which ethics of information are discussed by experienced practitioners.

<p>Standard I.2.3: <i>Program objectives are stated in terms of educational learning outcomes and reflect appropriate principles of specialization identified in applicable policy statements and documents of relevant professional organizations.</i></p>
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Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

The GSIST has addressed the needs of information professionals for Puerto Rico's educational institutions at different levels. The program has provided the necessary knowledge and skills to prepare information professionals specializing in school, academic and special librarianship. Besides the specialized courses taught at the School, specialized certificates have been developed aimed at school librarians, administrators of academic, special and public librarians, and archivists (with an

emphasis on electronic document management). Employability data reflects the way that employers demonstrate their preference for our graduates.

As part of the curriculum update process, the school has engaged in broad and deep discussions about the need to strengthen the library and information science specialization broadening the academic offerings, and also to include specialized professional academic offerings specifically in knowledge management.

Achievements

1. The School has provided specialized preparation in the field offering certificates in the following areas: archives and document management, academic and public library administration, school library media, legal information. The most successful offerings have been the Teacher-Librarian and the Archive and Document Management certificate programs. The latter one has an emphasis in electronic document management and complies with the standards and requisites to be an effective and competent document manager in Puerto Rico.
2. The School and its faculty have cultivated a close relationship and communication with professional associations in the information field such as: ASEGRABCI (the School's alumni association), SBPR (the Puerto Rico Librarian's Society), ABESPRI (The Puerto Rican School Librarians Association), ACURIL, Puerto Rico Chapter (Association of Caribbean University Research and Institutional Libraries), REFORMA, Puerto Rico chapter (The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking), ACURIL regional organization, ALISE (Association for Library and Information Sciences Education), ALA (American Library Association) and EDIBCIC (Caribbean and Iberoamerican association in the field). Faculty members are involved in annual meetings, either as speakers or in leading workshops on new areas of the field. Topics have included technology integration in the school library, marketing strategies for public library services, development of social networks for the library, research trends among others. Some faculty members serve as officers in their boards.
3. Knowledge management (KM) was included in our curriculum update proposal as an area of emphasis. It was approved and is being implemented. Different issues have prevented this area to grow within the MIS curriculum. The School is developing another strategy to promote the area through a continuing education professional certificate.
4. In 2012, the newly appointed School director contributed a chapter in a book regarding the right to information as a human right. He also participated in an international event in Mexico presenting his research in this area in 2014.

Evidence

1. Certificate Program Descriptions, Brochures ([Online](#) and On-site)

2. Chapter of Book on Human Rights Contributed by the GSIST Current Director (On-site)
3. Description of Certificates Curriculum Offering (On-site)
4. GSIST Director Presentation in Mexico on the Issue of Information Access as a Human Right. [On-site].
5. Knowledge Management Emphasis Area (See [courses sequence](#))

Challenges

1. There needs to be a continuing discussion on the future of the field, and how the School should respond to it. The challenge is to determine the ways in which areas of new specialization should be reflected in the revised curriculum.
2. The need for specialization and the areas in which there are possibilities within the School's curriculum needs to be addressed during the consideration of the current planning cycle. Other areas of emphasis need to be identified to address society's needs and those of the profession.

Steps to be taken

- Hold open discussions on the future of the field and the School's response, using forums like the student sponsored "Hora Universal" (Universal Hour), monthly space of the Student Council in which a specific theme is discussed, sometimes with guest speakers.
- Maintain an open discussion in faculty meetings and in classes on issues relating to specialization and the field; promoting reflective thinking on the part of students and faculty.
- Develop an open forum within the School's web portal in which students, alumni and other information professionals can participate and share knowledge and ideas.
- Initiate a social network public discussion on the future of the field.

Standard I.2.4: *Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the value of teaching and service to the advancement of the field.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

Activities related to faculty development indicate the commitment the School have of providing good teaching and service to the field. These functions are highly valued and represent a continuous relationship of information professionals with their peers and the broader community. The leadership role faculty has taken in work with professional organizations, associations and government agencies as well as within the University, illustrates such commitment.

Achievements

1. The School has consistently emphasized and valued teaching and service. There is a clear understanding of the School regarding its potential contributions to society and the broader international community. Teaching is evaluated every semester making clear our commitment with effective teaching strategies. This is reflected in the evaluation and assessment instruments, which focus on teaching excellence. Also the GSIST's vision calls for the innovation in the field in "Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and the Americas" illustrating the service component and our interest in it.
2. Service is also one of the School's traditions. Faculty members are called upon by government agencies and community groups to consult and offer technical advice and assistance; to contribute their knowledge and expertise in various areas of the field. For example, a faculty member participated in an interdisciplinary team to study and make recommendations for a comprehensive government reform. Results of this effort are a wide ranging proposal published as a book in 2014 which includes a chapter on digital government written by the member of our faculty. Others have worked with schools and community groups. Another effort has been working closely with the Civil Rights Commission evaluating the library services provided to juveniles in the custody of the State. Advising professional services have also been provided to public and school libraries and the National Library. The School's faculty members have played leadership roles in national and international regional professional associations. More recently the School provided support and actively participate in the development and presentation of a digital module to assist faculty and students in the prevention of plagiarism in higher education. Also, the GSIST Director took the initiative to call for a national conference of librarians to discuss ways in which librarianship must be included in the cultural public policy that is being developed by the government. Over 100 librarians of all levels and areas met and discuss the subject, resulting in a strong proposal of inclusion at the policy level.
3. Continuing education activities have been organized and offered to the information professional community. Although the School has provided a variety of activities and contributed with international experiences in congresses held on the Island, geared to advance the professionals knowledge and competencies, and to help them be aware of new trends and issues in the field, it had not instituted a formal Program. In 2013 a Continuing Education and Professional Development Program was instituted.
4. The School maintains a community informatics project, of a voluntary-service nature, in which students and faculty provide support for people living in the urban center of Río Piedras. Project ENLACE has been providing information and technological literacy to residents of the urban area which surrounds the campus for over 8 years. The Project has proven to be successful in providing technological literacy to immigrants, single mothers, small community merchants, and middle and high school students that lack technological resources at home or at school. Evidence of this fact was presented in a thesis,

[Informatica Comunitaria](#), presented by Jeannette Lebrón-Ramos in 2012. These actions reflect the commitment of faculty and students to provide service to the field, as well as to the larger community.

5. The School offered a three-week seminar with a visiting professor, [Dr. Antonio Hernández-Perez, from Universidad Carlos III](#) de Madrid on technology and visual approaches in documentation education. Over 16 professionals and students participated in the activities. On November 2014 the University of Puerto Rico signed a [collaborative alliance](#) with the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.

Evidence

1. Vision, Mission and Goal Statements ([Online](#) and on-site)
2. Flyers and Promotional Continuing Education Materials (See [Portal EGCTI-UPR in Smore](#), [Egctiana UPR al Dia on Paper.li](#) and On-site)
3. ENLACE Materials (On-site)

Challenges

- There was a need to exert more affirmative actions to validate the School's commitment to continuing education. Experiences provided although important in terms of its content did not follow the strategic plan that is required and expected to effectively address this kind of service to the field and the community. As part of this effort, a Continuing Education Program was instituted in 2013. As a result, development of more effective alliances or collaborative efforts with community groups and continuing education providers needs to be undertaken.
- The School must broaden its assessment activities to include the three focuses or approaches, which the faculty included as part of the curriculum update and that must be present in the core courses: Evidence-based practice of the Information Professional, Problem-based learning, and Information technology application competence.

Steps to be taken

- Conduct a wider continuing education and professional development training needs assessment among specific sectors of librarians and other information professionals to identify and differentiate needs in order to allow the GSIST to address more effectively the identified needs in the activities and events.
- Increase the relationships with colleagues from United States LIS programs as well as from the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid to broaden the professional education opportunities and the doctorate education possibilities for alumni and practicing information professionals.

- Strengthen our alliances with the professional associations in Puerto Rico and ACURIL at the Caribbean regional level, for collaboration in continuing education and research.
- Contribute with efforts at the campus level to develop a database of community projects to facilitate the flow of information on needs and field experience possibilities in our field and beyond.

Standard I.2.5 *Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the importance of research to the advancement of the field's knowledge base.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

Faculty research has been a priority for the School. Provisions have been included in the new faculty recruitment so that they have the resources to effectively advance their research interests. As the result of the curriculum update and after careful and thorough consideration the GSIST faculty decided to eliminate the thesis as a graduation requirement. This decision in no way represented a setback to our commitment to research. On the contrary, the inclusion of the Seminar on Knowledge Application (Capstone experience) has provided students, as well as faculty, the opportunity to advance the particular research lines while providing mentoring for students at the conclusion of their studies at the School.

The [Observatorio de Estudios Relacionados a la Información](#) (Observatory of Studies Related to Information -OERI), our research unit, has been reorganized to broaden its scope and, while maintaining its work, to provide faculty with the appropriate environment for knowledge creation and to conduct collaborative research. Faculty members have conducted research that has been published in books and journals, expanding their experience, as well as stimulating scholarly exchange. A steady advance can be evidenced from the last accreditation process to this date.

Achievements

1. The School curriculum update states that the GSIST designed the new offering as a way to “revitalize our curriculum to pursue educational excellence in teaching and learning, research and creativity”. In this sense, research constitutes an essential element in the GSIST practice. Research conducted will contribute to solve problems faced by professionals in the field and inform their practice in more profound ways. It allows the development of deep questions to arise and provides answers to those significant issues we face. This is reinforced in the Mission statement as it states that: the GSIST will foster an innovative and collaborative environment oriented to promote “research and creativity”.
2. To stimulate research efforts and assist faculty, in 2001 the School established a research unit (*Observatorio de Estudios Relacionados con la Información*, OERI). The OERI provides advice, support and a research base for faculty and students. Under the influence of this research center, specific faculty research

lines were identified to strengthen and focus the School's research activity. The OERI maintains an electronic journal *Simbiosis*. With the reorganization of the OERI the faculty decided that *Simbiosis* be dedicated as an outlet for students' publications giving not only the opportunity to publish their works but become engaged in the process of designing and publishing a journal.

3. In the GSIST curriculum update the theses and research projects and comprehensive exams requirements were eliminated. This action was decided by faculty after analysis and discussion on how could we better assist our students in the acquisition of knowledge and development of skills as a researcher in formation. The School kept the Research Methods applied to Information field course and introduced the Evidence-Based practice for the information professional focus as well as the Problem-based learning focus across the curriculum to provide students with research knowledge and skills. The [Seminar on Knowledge Application](#) was designed as a Capstone experience in which students work closely with a faculty in one of his or her research activities, so as to apply the learned knowledge and skills through the program. The mentoring process ensures a closing experience to develop the research competence.
4. The GSIST has explored international relations with other LIS schools both in the United States and Europe. A formal [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) was established with the School of Information, at University of Tennessee-Knoxville in 2008 and renewed in 2012. The [newly collaborative alliance signed by the University with Universidad Carlos III de Madrid](#) on November 2014 has opened a wider avenue to share learning and teaching activities and exchange research.
5. During the past seven years, research activity of faculty has steadily increased, along with the number of publications. The School's faculty has presented results of their research or work in progress nationally and internationally. For example members of the faculty have presented their work at the Oral History Conference in El Salvador; a paper was accepted to be presented at the Community Informatics Research Network Annual Conference in Prato, Italy; and other faculty members will be presenting in Argentina, Mexico and Suriname. Some faculty members are contributing book chapters as well as journal articles during this period.
6. The School hired two new faculty members in which research has been given high priority in the evaluation of their credentials. Provision has been made on their contracts so that they can continue to pursue their research interests.
7. Since 2008, the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research through a special program provides the [assignment of graduate students](#) to work closely with faculty, as research assistants, on their projects.
8. The School is an active participant in an interdisciplinary interfaculty seminar, [Seminario Permanente de Métodos de Investigación](#) (Permanent Seminar on Research Methods) aimed at developing a database of peer reviewed research

articles focusing on research methods as well as holding seminars with invited speakers on research issues.

Evidence

1. [OERI's segment](#) on the EGCTI Portal and printed brochures [[Online](#) and on-site]
2. Faculty Publications and Research Reports (Samples of this work will be available on-site)
3. Faculty and students presentations conducted nationally and internationally (Samples available on-site)
4. [Website](#) of the Seminario Permanente de Métodos de Investigación
5. Course Syllabi (Core and Required course syllabi available [online](#))

Challenges

- To strengthen the research culture at the School, in which both students and faculty participate.
- Explore opportunities to develop joint research projects with the School's partners in Puerto Rico, the United States, Europe, the Caribbean and Latin America.
- To better the School projection as a source of knowledge based on its research reports and visibility.

Steps to be taken

- Update agreements with international partners to actively pursue joint research projects.
- Work closely with the external resources and Sponsored Programs Office, part of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, to submit research proposals to receive external funding support.
- Develop a program of short talks and research reports by faculty and guests sharing their respective work as a way to foster a research-cultured environment.
- Coordinate with the GSIST's Students Council to collaborate in activities related to research.
- Work with the GSIST Student Council to become integrated to the design, development and publishing of *Simbiosis*.
- Encourage and support students to attend research conferences where they present their work.

- Develop campus activities to allow our student research to become more visible.

Standard I.2.6: *Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the importance of contributions of library and information studies to other fields of knowledge.*

Standard I.2.7: *Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the importance of other fields of knowledge to library and information studies.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

Due to the interdisciplinary of the field, the School's curriculum has integrated other areas of knowledge in our program. The School has benefited from knowledge areas like Planning, Communication, Psychology, Education, Business, Law, Medical Sciences, Architecture, complementing and enriching our curriculum.

The GSIST faculty, seven (7) in number, is diverse in itself. Five (5) come from the library and information science field and higher education, and two (2) members with academic preparation in educational technology and communication. The School's Director has a background in educational technology, communications and higher education. The faculty also reflects different academic backgrounds. For example, one faculty member earned his doctorate in Europe, thus providing a different perspective within the field. The School recruits adjunct faculty from different fields to address specific issues important in the field, that require consideration from different theoretical and disciplinary standpoints.

Achievements

1. The School has maintained its recognition of the importance of an interdisciplinary focus in library and information studies. This focus is present in the curriculum update. Courses include contributions from a diverse array of fields related to library and information science, including cognitive science, education, communication, and computer science. Courses on developing information competencies (CINF6815) as well as that related to information needs and users (CINF 6808) include readings and study of elements of cognitive science, as well as educational methods and strategies, including various media attributes. Communication is an area of study infused in various courses, particularly the information technologies that is a core course (CINF6707). With the curriculum update we included a new area of emphasis focusing in knowledge management. Courses on the particular area include a significant interdisciplinary content that focuses on business, communications and organizational development.
2. As the School began the curriculum update process, faculty became increasingly aware of the need for an interdisciplinary focus. The inclusion of knowledge from related fields in coursework and research has made the content base more inclusive. Collaboration with people from other disciplines

like Communications, Architecture, Health Sciences, Law and Psychology allows the School to benefit from their insight on the LIS practices, the similarities and differences from these fields. The Interdisciplinary Research Methods seminar provides a good context for this to happen.

3. Research undertaken by GSIST faculty reflects an interest in interdisciplinary areas. For example, faculty members have conducted research on digital government, the impact of mobile technologies in undergraduate students, school libraries and others.

Evidence

1. Course Syllabi (Core and Required course syllabi available [online](#), all course syllabi available on-site)
2. Regular Faculty Curriculum Vitae ([online](#); and on-site)
3. Faculty Research Project Proposals (samples available [on-site](#))
4. Faculty Research Reports (On-site)

Challenges

- An in-depth discussion of the convergence of fields that might be defined as part of information sciences needs to be undertaken first with the School and later in an open forum with colleagues from other disciplines.
- A continued dialogue with colleagues from the School of Communications needs to be reinstated to explore areas of possible convergence in research and practice.
- New and more collaborative research and service projects with other schools and faculties, particularly Business, Communication, Counseling and Rehabilitation, Education, Planning, and Public Administration, need to be explored.

Steps to be taken

- Identify collaborative opportunities for research and projects with faculty from other disciplines.
- Sponsor colloquia and seminars to discuss changes and developments in the field.

<p>Standard I.2.8: <i>Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the role of the library and information services in a diverse global society including the role of the serving the needs of underserved groups.</i></p>
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Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

Several of the School's objectives reflect a commitment to service. Faculty and students are involved with providing services to culturally diverse communities in Río Piedras. For over 8 years ENLACE, a university-community project has provided information and technology literacy to people from diverse backgrounds and

socioeconomic level. Students and faculty volunteer to maintain these efforts in more than one community. Daily classes and technology literacy assistance is provided to all participants. The activities go beyond the GSIST community since students from other fields and departments also participate in the project. Recent conversations with the municipal government began in an effort to formalize a more close relationship and support.

While most of the works of our faculty and students in this regard have its focus in Puerto Rico, there are also efforts made to increase our research activity in the Puerto Rican communities in the United States. Through a collaboration of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies housed in Hunter College in New York, a faculty member has initiated research in the information practices of Puerto Ricans in the US. The first effort is a research being conducted on the practices of Puerto Ricans living in the US as they use social networks to develop connections within their communities in the mainland US by building virtual communities. Efforts are under way to expand collaboration to other areas, including oral history and electronic document management.

Achievements

1. The School provides services to the nearby multicultural and immigrant community of Río Piedras where students are exposed to information needs of members of this community. Río Piedras is a complex urban center with a growing Dominican community, as well as people with Arab backgrounds. It is also a preferred shopping area for people from the US Virgin Islands of Afro- Antillean descent. In this multicultural context the School established Project ENLACE over eight years ago. Through this project students have provided technological literacy training for youth and adults that study, live or work in the Río Piedras area. The GSIST, through ENLACE is involved in an outreach effort which provides an outlet for students to share information skills and provide community service. GSIST students have also participated in a Summer Camp organized through community groups with which the School collaborates.
2. Efforts to increase contact with Puerto Rican communities in the United States are being developed. Initial collaborations include research actions and the provision of space at the GSIST for a digitization project involving historic documents.

Evidence

1. ENLACE Project work in Río Piedras (Photos and brochures-On-site)
2. Course Syllabi (Core and Require course syllabi available [online](#); all course syllabi available on-site)
3. Faculty CVs ([Online](#) and on-site)

Challenges

- There is a need to identify new ways in which the school can become more involved in serving underserved and multicultural communities in Puerto Rico.

- Considering the migration challenges posed to Puerto Rico as we have now more people from Puerto Rican ascendance living in the continental United States than in the Island there is a need to include this themes in our studies and practices.

Steps to be taken

- Broaden the voluntary service program in ENLACE that will provide new opportunities for faculty and students to participate in this project. For example, these programs could include a renewal of the summer camp for children, in which GSIST faculty and students can provide experiences for the development of the information skills of this population. Another example is the sponsoring of a series of open conferences by the School through ENLACE to encourage participants from the community to learn how to access specific information on women’s health, environmental concerns, small business needs, among others.
- Develop a program related to the Puerto Ricans living in the United States information practices and behavior as well as the ways in which they relate to technology in its various forms. Research initiated as well as the traditional exchange maintained by these communities with the Island can become a context to our faculty and students services and research.

Standard I.2.9: *Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the role of library and information services in a rapidly changing technological society.*

Summary of the School’s compliance with this standard

The GSIST have always been at the forefront of academic programs at the University of Puerto Rico. Our School offers the only online program of the UPR. The Certificate of Teacher Librarian is the only program offered in this modality. The school has consistently led the discussion within and outside the classroom of the information and knowledge society, it’s meaning for academics, the information professions and its impact on all citizenry. Courses have been developed that deal specifically with virtual communities, communities of practice, information technologies, digital libraries and knowledge management. These courses reflect an understanding and commitment to the role of library and information services in a rapidly changing technological and global society. We have the commitment to technology infusion in our curriculum and we have already submitted to institutional authorities the first draft of our Masters’ degree to be offered completely on line.

The School’s infrastructure has been strengthened, including the Library and Information Sciences Library (BCBI). Social software and open source tools to develop portals and explore services are available to students and faculty. The faculty has conducted research on the development of mobile technologies in education as well as the infusion of knowledge management initiatives to approach global issues of technologies and productivity. In a collaborative venture, the Schools’ faculty contributed a book chapter on digital government and proposed a networked governance approach to governmental reform in the country (Ríos González at al. 2014) The GSIST Faculty, competent in various areas of library and information

science, have conducted research and developed service projects geared to the Puerto Rican society, in government, NGO's and private industry.

Achievements

1. With the curriculum update, the GSIST introduced the Information technologies course as one of the four core courses. Another core reviewed foundation course is Information, Knowledge and Society (CINF 6705), in which issues of the development of information and global societies are discussed. New courses have been developed which focus on the interaction of humans and technologies. They include designing and developing virtual communities, communities of practice and knowledge development, and social software in higher education. This last course explores the way newly developed social software is being applied in academic libraries. These are important issues that interest faculty and students. Information technologies in general include topics integrated throughout the curriculum. Courses dealing with digital libraries have also been added to the updated curriculum.
2. The impact of technology and globalization on library and information services forms the basis of the curriculum, and is an area of interest for an increasingly larger number of students.
3. The participation of a faculty member from the School as coordinator of communities of practice initiative, within the University of Puerto Rico System, was instrumental in developing various communities. One specifically is the Emerging Technologies Community, which explores ways in which new technologies; social software and the like might be applied to information services. These communities represent an innovative way to conduct professional development as well as the building of a collaborative environment to manage knowledge among librarians from 11 campuses.
4. Another faculty member is partly responsible for the development of the Virtual Health Library of Puerto Rico (within BIREME), and its Community of Practice with the participation of all health information units and related government agencies in Puerto Rico, and coordinates its Continuing Education component. Special research projects are being developed.
5. The School has provided support for the development of the website of the Library Science and Informatics Library (Biblioteca de Ciencias Bibliotecarias e Informática –BCBI), demonstrating a commitment to use technology effectively. Through its [website](#), the BCBI is able to provide services to remote students, applying the application of technology to enhance library and information services in an academic library context.
6. In 2010, under the leadership of a faculty member, the School initiated a project using the LibGuides platform in courses to develop thematic reference guides. An example of this venture is evidenced with the presentation of [Journals at the Library Science and Informatics Library](#). This year students in the Products and Reference Services course (CINF 6807) are creating various guides and their products will be presented in December 2014.

7. Since 2002, the School has developed and offered over 85% of its coursework in a hybrid or completely online modality. A [proposal to offer the MIS degree completely online](#) has been submitted to the Dean for Academic Affairs and to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research as well as to Chancellor 'Office. Positive response is expected in order to continue seeking approval with other Institutional and State authorization channels.
8. On September 2013, two members of the GSIST faculty were appointed by the Acting Chancellor to participate in the development of the institutional policy on distance education, thus making evident the leadership the School has on campus on these issues.

Evidence

1. Course Syllabi ([online](#)); all course syllabi available on-site)
2. GSIST Portal [[Online](#)]
3. Library Science and Informatics Library (BCBI) at the [Library System website](#)
4. Access to Online Courses
<http://online.uprrp.edu/course/index.php?categoryid=7>
5. Distance Education Institutional Policy (2007) [Online](#)
6. Letter of Appointment of Faculty Members for the Development of Institutional Policy on Distance Education. (On-site)

Standard I.2.10: *Program objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reflect the needs of the constituencies that a program seeks to serve.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

The curriculum update proposal was the result of a process in which many sectors from the LIS community participated. Focus groups, surveys, consultations and reflective discussions were informed by a sound literature review and theoretical and institutional exchanges. Alumni, students and professional librarians contributed their input and knowledge of the field, its theoretical base and professional standards and were all taken into account. Also, the UPR institutional project of Communities of Practice was called upon to reflect with our faculty on the future of the profession and the ways in which our School should advance. The result reflects the needs and aspirations of students; faculty and alumni, but also of employers and colleagues who helped us make sense of what was needed to renovate our academic program. The curriculum changes included allowed a slight reduction in credit hours from 39 to 36 but the more significant changes resulted in the elimination of the Theses requirement and the organization of the curriculum in such a way that students are able to begin participation in research activities almost immediately after they finish their first semester of studies. Course sequence has been modified to allow an earlier preparation in research skills. The four core courses are designed so that students can begin their academic journey to develop as information professionals able to provide effective professional information services and conduct research as well.

Through continuing education activities, as well as active participation in events and conferences sponsored by professional associations, the School addresses the needs,

concerns, and interests of the field. The GSIST has played and continues to play a leadership role in impacting and advancing Puerto Rican librarianship. The newly created Continuing Education and Professional Development Program will be geared to focus and provide a formal approach to satisfy identified needs of the library and information community inland and other interested parties.

In a positive working environment, staff and administrative personnel actively support the School's efforts to address the needs of its constituencies. Excellent relationships exist with alumni and with information product suppliers, who provide important support for the School's projects and other activities.

Achievements

1. The School has delivered the professional certificates to students who already hold a MIS or a MLS degree. These certificates address the needs of working professionals in the field in specific areas, such as archives, law librarianship and administration of special, academic and public libraries.
2. Continuing education activities have been a part of the School's focus during the past years. Although with some absence of consistency we have maintained collaboration with the professional organizations that also assisted in the definition of the updated curriculum. Recently reorganized, ASEGRABCI, the organization of alumni, has always had a strong relationship with the School, and assists in identifying needs of the field and planning activities to address them. The newly created Continuing Education and Professional Development Program will be geared to focus and provide a formal approach and alliances with other organizations to satisfy the alumni and other information professionals needs.
3. The [Advisory Board](#) for the GSIST, recently reorganized, is composed of members from the professional associations as well as individuals from industry, technologies and research community.

Evidence

1. Continuing education activities and events programs and announcements. (Online and on-site)
2. Copies of the activities brochures showing faculty and students' participation in conferences sponsored by professional organizations. (Online and samples available on-site)
3. ASEGRABCI board of directors ([Online](#) and on-site)
4. Post-masters certificate program information (Online and on-site)

Challenges

- There is a need to expand, improve and effectively demonstrate the School's commitment to continuing education. The newly created program is to explore options for providing continuing education activities, and working more closely with professional associations in identifying and responding to the needs of the field.

- There is a need to provide professional development activities using various technological modalities.
- The School must continue to find ways by which to effectively respond to the needs of its constituency.

Steps to be taken

- Explore ways to offer continuing education activities with the support of the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies at the University.
- Develop a series of online activities and webinars to offer diverse opportunities to working professionals to enrich and maintain their expertise in the field in times of rapid change.
- As part of the curriculum update, the certificate programs will be reexamined and assessed to determine which certificates should be maintained, revised, eliminated. Also it is important to consider if there are other areas that need to be included in the certificate program.
- Exploration will be made to offer a Knowledge Management Certificate through the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies of the University.

Standard I.3: *Within the context of these Standards each program is judged on the degree to which it attains its objectives. In accord with the mission of the school clearly defined publicly stated and regularly reviewed program goals and objectives form the essential frame of reference for meaningful external and internal evaluation. This evaluation involves those served: students, faculty, employers, alumni, and other constituents.*

Summary of the School's compliance with this standard

Evaluation of all areas of the School's performance is systematic at the GSIST. An assessment plan developed annually but aligned with our strategic plan and institutional guidelines is the guiding document for these efforts. A student learning assessment plan is being implemented to allow us to evaluate how well we are promoting student learning.

Faculty is evaluated each semester and the results are analyzed by the assessment committee and later shared and discussed with the faculty evaluated. Results of student and faculty activities are evaluated and measured against program goals and objectives. The School has been involved in systematic assessment of all aspects of the Program. A faculty is assigned release time to organize and lead a team of two graduate students that implement assessment support at the School. Annual plans are developed and a constant communication exists between faculty and the assessment committee. The assessment coordinator regularly reports on faculty meetings the state of the assessment process and any significant finding relevant to faculty and their work. With the assistance of this team, banks of rubrics have been developed and are regularly applied across the curriculum.

Achievements

1. Interest in both internal and external evaluation has been a priority at the School. Since its inception, the GSIST has been involved in evaluation by outside agencies, such as the Middle States Association and the Puerto Rico's Council of Higher Education (now Puerto Rico Council on Education)
2. A culture of evaluation and assessment is an integral part of the functioning of the Program. The GSIST has developed a [Student Learning Assessment component](#) that covers all aspects of the Program. It has designed a [Learning Assessment plan with a guide](#) that makes use of a variety of methods and strategies, both quantitative and qualitative. This includes different perspectives and types of data that identify perceptions of current students, alumni, faculty and staff. Courses, faculty research, teaching performance and services provided to UPR and the external community are all part of the assessment process.
3. Two graduate assistants are part of the Student Learning Assessment team within the School. The Office of the Dean Of Graduate Studies and Research finances these assistants.
4. The [Student Assessment Plan](#) is revised and updated by the administration and faculty. This plan includes the participation of alumni and employers, as well as student and faculty. Student participation in assessment activities has increased.
5. The School has been invited to present its assessment plan in activities organized by the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, acknowledging the effort the School has made to institutionalize its assessment processes. The School is recognized as one of the models of assessment implementation on campus.
6. Within the Personnel Committee, a tradition of peer evaluation has been maintained. Instruments for [faculty performance in online courses](#) have been developed to ensure the quality of this educational experience for students.

Evidences

1. GSIST Student Learning Assessment and Evaluation Plan ([Online](#) and on-site)
2. GSIST Strategic Plans ([Online](#) and on-site)
3. GSIST Program Presentation 2015 (Online and on-site)