



UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016. AN AGENCY FOR PLANNING

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Letter from the President



Ten Challenges 2006–2016: An Agenda for Planning

Dear friends of the University of Puerto Rico :

As the University enters its second hundred years, it faces the challenge of strengthening its role in the education and training of professionals and in the creation of the competitive knowledge on which the future development of Puerto Rico depends. We who are part of it whether as administrator, faculty, staff, students or the society at large must also ensure that its educational offerings and services are responsive to rapid transformations in both academic fields of knowledge and contemporary life.

The University is always the natural setting for change, for the exercise of the imagination. But although renewal and experimentation are fundamental elements in any university, changes to its educational offerings and services should be undertaken only after a rigorous yet flexible process of institutional evaluation and planning. That is the reason behind TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016.

TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016 is at once a contract and a guide for principles and action, a document that identifies desirable parameters of institutional life for the University of Puerto Rico in the years to come and defines the university's commitment to achieving its goals.

TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016 welcomes the energies and motivations that seek ongoing renewal and constant improvement of the university's academic offering, research, and services.

TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016 is an instrument for channeling and directing the system's planning efforts, for defining the areas of the institutional behavior that will be under evaluation over the next ten years, and for moving the university forward along the path toward increased excellence.

TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016 identifies the following ten goals for the university's strategic development:

- *Sustained ties to the student body
- *An academic culture of currency, experimentation, and renewal
- *Competitive research, investigation, and creative work
- *A culture of institutional assessment and evaluation

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- *Technological currency
 - *Leadership in community investment and cultural initiatives
 - *Dedication to the integration of the university into the world at large
 - *Efficiency and beauty in both natural and built spaces
 - *Administrative and managerial optimization
 - *A strengthened institutional identity

TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016 proposes to channel resources and energies toward the academic foundation of the university: its colleges, schools, and centers for research and investigations.

TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016 addresses the University of Puerto Rico's academic, social, and cultural relevance to the island's integrated development and the institution's strategic place in the Puerto Rican educational system.

TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016 is aimed toward defining achieving a more effective role for the University of Puerto Rico on the contemporary world stage.

As an agenda for planning for the University of the twenty-first century, TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016 has an importance far beyond the limits of the university community. It's development goals should be shared, and valued, by the public at large. In that regard, I urge everyone to take a part in the TEN CHALLENGES 2006-2016. To that end, your suggestions and comments are most welcome. Please send them to me at presidente@upr.edu.

Antonio García Padilla
President
University of Puerto Rico



SUSTAINED TIES TO
THE STUDENT BODY

Objectives

Goal

From the time students are recruited until the day of their graduation, the University of Puerto Rico will provide them with the highest quality of services, academic programs, and environments for their development as well-rounded persons. By doing so, the university will inculcate in students a sense of themselves as a central part of the university community, thereby encouraging them to participate in university affairs at all levels and in all spheres, stimulating them to achieve self-fulfillment and well-roundedness through their educational and extracurricular experiences, and inspiring them to maintain their association with the institution as one of the principal factors of institutional growth.

- To design and implement, in each unit, an effective program for recruiting students from Puerto Rico and from among the Latino communities in the United States and other countries, in order to attract the finest talents to the University of Puerto Rico.
- To achieve effective, clear, ongoing communication with candidates for admission and their parents with regard to the university's services, financial aid possibilities, academic offerings, and administrative processes, through the moment at which candidates enter the university in one of its units.
- To optimize pre-registration, registration, and the provision of services, including library services, to the point at which they are fundamentally on-line systems.
- To optimize publication of the university's academic offerings and services through constantly updated, easily accessible, and manageable on-line resources, catalogs, and brochures.
- To guarantee that the sequence and breadth of course offerings, semester by semester, allows regular students to complete their programs of study within the desired and expected time span for each degree.
- To employ efficient means of informing undergraduate and graduate students of all available alternatives for financial aid, university employment, scholarships, fellowships, assistantships, and other financial support, and to ensure that students receive their financial support or payment for employment, etc., in a timely manner.
- To strengthen academic, vocational, professional, and personal counseling services in the departments, schools, and colleges.
- To foster the development of an institutional climate that enhances the quality of life through cultural, extracurricular, intramural, and extramural activities.
- To increase, insofar as institutionally possible, the diversity of educational offerings and services at non-regular hours (nights, weekends, and through distance education) in order to meet the needs of the changing student-body profile.
- To encourage students to take active part in student-representation bodies, in the evaluation of services and academic offerings, and in the formulation of alternative courses of study and other services, as a way of encouraging them to identify with the institution and develop a sense of responsibility to it.
- To support students as they become part of the workforce by establishing a placement service that meets or exceeds the most competitive standards in the field.
- To offer a varied sports program that encourages students to take part in it as an integral part of their university experience; to promote physical fitness programs available to the entire university community.
- To effectively formalize the transition from student to alumnus/alumna as the student receives his or her first degree.
- To foster an ongoing relationship between the alumnus / alumna and his or her program, department, or other unit through a program of academic, cultural, and recreational initiatives.

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AN ACADEMIC CULTURE
OF CURRENCY,
EXPERIMENTATION, AND RENEWAL

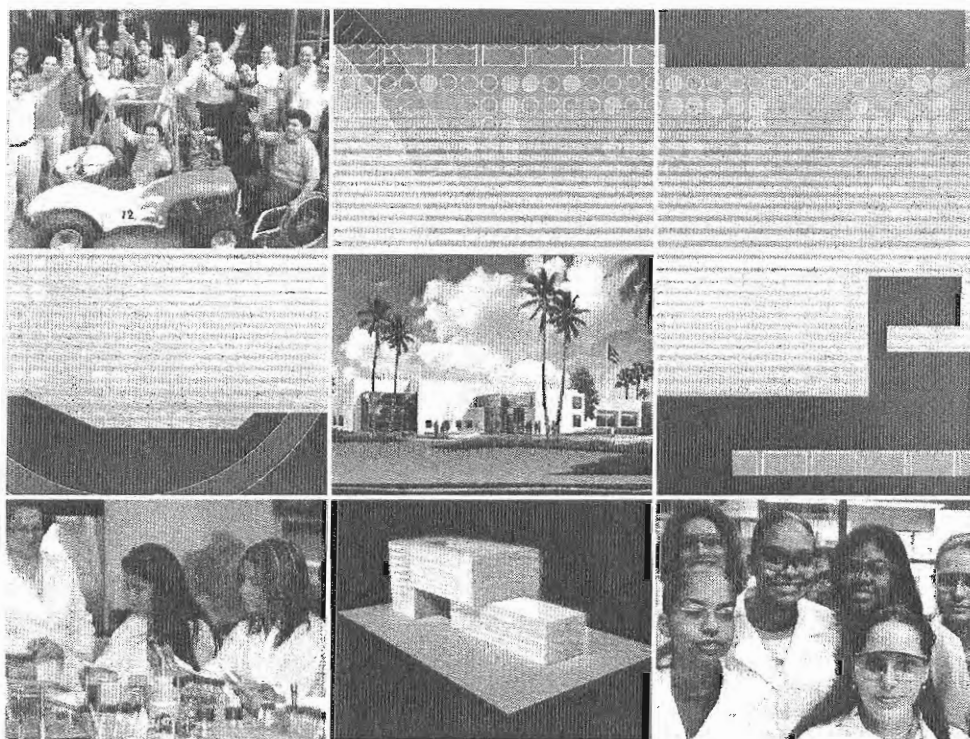
Objectives

Goal

The University of Puerto Rico will foster an academic culture in which programs, departments, schools, and colleges will adapt their curricular offerings, modes of teaching/learning, and research and investigation to the best developments in their respective disciplines or fields of knowledge, and will provide flexible protocols for evaluation, renewal, and academic assessment.

- To encourage professors and investigators/researchers to obtain terminal degrees in their respective disciplines and, where indicated, pursue post-doctoral experiences, and to aid them in those endeavors.
- To implement initiatives to incorporate all the functions of the teaching and research staff—teaching, service, research and investigation, creative activity, and academic administration—into the definition of “academic load.”
- To foster and support research and investigation especially in those disciplines and areas of study where it is possible to garner competitive outside funding and where there is the potential for the research to generate contributions to society, culture, industry, and public policy.
- To stimulate and support continuous and systematic revision of academic offerings in order for programs and courses of study to keep abreast of developments within the various disciplines, to adapt to societal and cultural demands and the expectations of the job market, to be responsive to students’ personal educational interests, and to take full advantage of the faculty’s various areas of competency and expertise.
- To implement responsive mechanisms for creating, approving, and evaluating new programs and curricular reforms.
- To encourage, in a sustained way and without undue administrative paperwork and delay, alternative forms of teaching, among them experiential learning (internships, practice, etc.), on-line courses, and team-teaching.
- To encourage and support interactions, exchanges, and the like, both academic and administrative, between the various colleges and campuses as a way of enriching those programs and projects that can benefit by such exchanges.
- To provide the tools needed for professional development, especially with respect to updating the faculty’s teaching-learning methodologies.
- To foster more efficient connections between library systems and academic systems; in order to do this, to develop clear and workable policies on collections development and to formulate more effective protocols for communication, consultation, the utilization and circulation of information resources, acquisitions, and inter-library loans.
- To design and implement an institutional plan for assessing the teaching-learning process.

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COMPETITIVE RESEARCH,
INVESTIGATION, AND
CREATIVE WORK

Objectives

Goal

In order to maintain its place in an increasingly competitive climate in both the natural and human sciences and at both the applied and theoretical levels, the University of Puerto Rico will put resources, technical and administrative support, and equipment at the service of efforts aimed at generating new knowledge and innovative technology, and to do this the Institution will enter into agreements, consortia, etc., both within the systems and with other universities and research centers, with governments, and with industry.

- To promote competitive research, investigation, and creative work in all disciplines at a level which conforms to international standards of excellence.
- To encourage the production of researchers and investigators in theoretical and applied disciplines by providing them with adequate equipment, exposure, working conditions, and administrative support.
- To encourage research and investigation in disciplines and areas of study in which it is possible to garner competitive outside funding and where there is the potential for the research to generate contributions to society, culture, industry, and public policy.
- To establish research consortia with the public, private, community, and non-governmental sectors.
- To enter into alliances with industry in the pursuit of desirable research-and-development projects which attract outside investment in infrastructure and equipment for the individual unit.
- To construct, expand, and/or update facilities needed for basic and applied research.
- To effectively incorporate students into the faculty's research and investigation projects as a way of enriching the students' educational experience.
- To encourage technology transfer, the commercialization of intellectual property, and research and investigation that will impact the social and financial development of Puerto Rico.
- To support the creation of multidisciplinary and multi-campus research centers in and outside Puerto Rico.
- To strengthen the university community's publishing, particularly in juried and peer-reviewed journals.

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A CULTURE OF INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

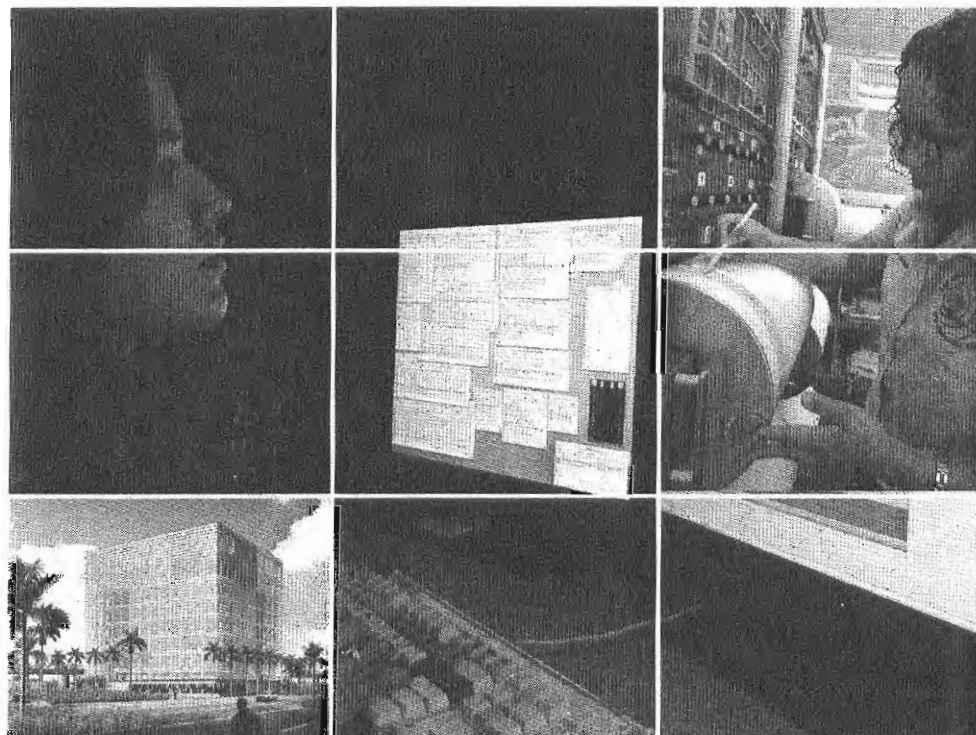
Objectives

Goal

The University of Puerto Rico will encourage a culture of evaluation and assessment within which its organizational structure and its academic, administrative, and managerial operations and activities will be evaluated in an ongoing and continuous manner, in the belief that this evaluation will lead to improved institutional performance, an informed and consensus-generated dynamics of renewal, practices auditable by both internal and external auditors, and measurement of the degree of compliance with institutional goals and objectives as set forth by chancellors in their statements of intent, campus mission statements, and other documents, and by the Agenda for Planning.

- To promote a culture of evaluation of the institution's financial and human resources and programs, the resulting evaluations to serve as a basis for achieving the efficiency and responsiveness that must be the guiding principle of the university's endeavor at all levels.
- To systematically generate and gather information on institutional performance that will allow all units to engage in effective planning and decision-making.
- To provide incentives for research on institutional behavior, this research to be carried out not only by administrative units and individuals but also by faculty and academic researchers; that is, the university itself shall be an object of research.
- To support informed discussion of institutional data within the relevant units on the institution's organizational chart, and to use these data in institutional decision-making.
- To encourage periodic self-study by academic programs and services, and to use the self-study process as a means of generating needed change.
- To foster evaluation by external individuals and bodies such as national accrediting agencies as a means of fully and systematically assessing the quality and effectiveness of institutional performance.
- To obtain and maintain professional accreditation in all programs of study in which such accreditation is granted.
- To establish, within every unit in the university system, a mechanism of internal audits aimed at achieving the highest quality of administrative performance and provision of services.
- To design and implement a plan for the assessment of administrative performance as one of the mechanisms for ensuring that the administrative infrastructure fully supports the goals and objectives of academic programs and enables the highest standards of competitiveness and quality in research, cultural activity, community service, and internationalization.
- To develop a system for evaluating and assessing the Agenda for Planning.

5



TECHNOLOGICAL
CURRENCY

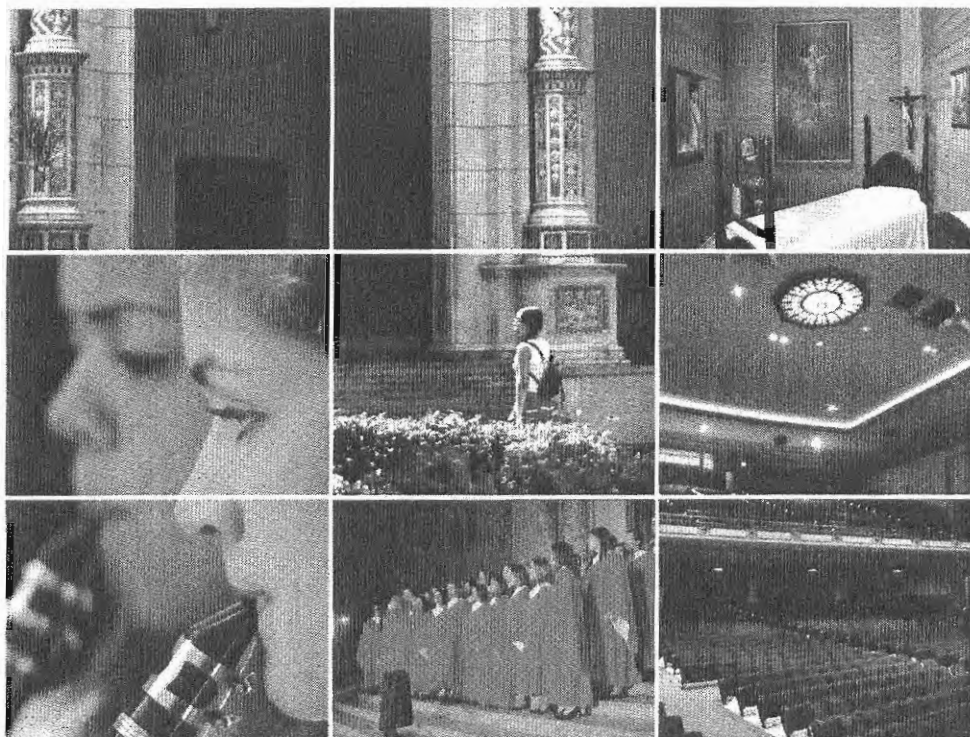
Objectives

Goal

In order that its teaching-learning operations, its research and investigation, its service-provision, its creative work, and its administration may be carried out in optimal conditions and with optimal results, the University of Puerto Rico will establish and maintain a technologically up-to-date institution. To achieve this goal, it will promote productive collaborations, alliances, and partnerships; insist upon administrative flexibility and responsiveness; ensure that access to sources of academic and institutional information is readily available; and encourage and support communication with the world at large, with the people of Puerto Rico, and within and among the various units of the university system.

- To computerize the university system's administrative procedures and transactions in order to provide better services, ensure more satisfactory administrative practices, and maximize the administrative personnel's talents and energies.
- To provide students, alumni/ae, and faculty with effective access to the internet and to technologies and equipment, and to provide training to strengthen their information competencies.
- To enable all frequent transactions, from admission and registration through acquisitions and purchases of all kinds to the procedures for retirement, to be carried out on-line.
- To expand the spaces equipped for wireless communications throughout the university.
- To professionalize the design and maintenance of the University of Puerto Rico's official websites.
- To expand and update the technology and equipment in research centers, group study areas, meeting rooms, amphitheaters, theaters, classrooms, libraries, and laboratories.
- To provide the equipment needed for making calendars, course lists, schedules, syllabuses, reading lists and other academic contents, files, counseling services, library services, etc., available on-line.
- To support on-line education and distance-education initiatives.
- To expand the Internet2 service to all units in the university system.
- To implement a uniform information system for the entire University of Puerto Rico system.

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LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY INVESTMENT AND CULTURAL INITIATIVES

Objectives

Goal

The University of Puerto Rico and the campuses and units of the system will establish and maintain effective links with the communities around them and with the Puerto Rican community in the United States and other countries, and to do this it will incorporate community-related subjects and social-interest research projects into its curricula, provide assistance in the formulation of public policy, become active in service to these communities, and foster cultural initiatives, all within a framework of clearly stated democratic principles, ethical behavior, and an appreciation for the diversity and value of Puerto Rican culture.

- To participate in the definition of, and search for solutions to, problems of social urgency.
- To foster public service and social responsibility among students, faculty, researchers/ investigators, and support personnel by sponsoring service projects, encouraging curricular initiatives, and integrating social-interest objectives into course syllabuses, etc.
- To support community, civic, and university projects, especially those aimed at the rescue and rehabilitation of urban centers and marginalized and vulnerable communities.
- To provide spaces within university curricula for practicums and internships in the community.
- To provide training for community groups through continuing education classes and workshops.
- To strengthen the university's ties to pre-university educational systems, thereby opening the door to greater opportunities for the students and faculty of those systems to take part in activities within the university.
- To sponsor activities open to the community in general and to establish a program of cultural activities that encourages creativity within the university while at the same time providing spaces for creators who are not part of the university community.
- To reaffirm the university's identity as an institution open and responsive to the community by providing spaces for theatrical and musical performances and for art.
- To foster initiatives aimed at bolstering cooperation and exchange between the university and Puerto Rican communities in the United States and other countries.
- To show appreciation for the dynamic, plural, and convergent nature of the Puerto Rican culture through research and investigation, teaching-learning, and creative work.



DEDICATION TO THE INTEGRATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY INTO
THE WORLD AT LARGE

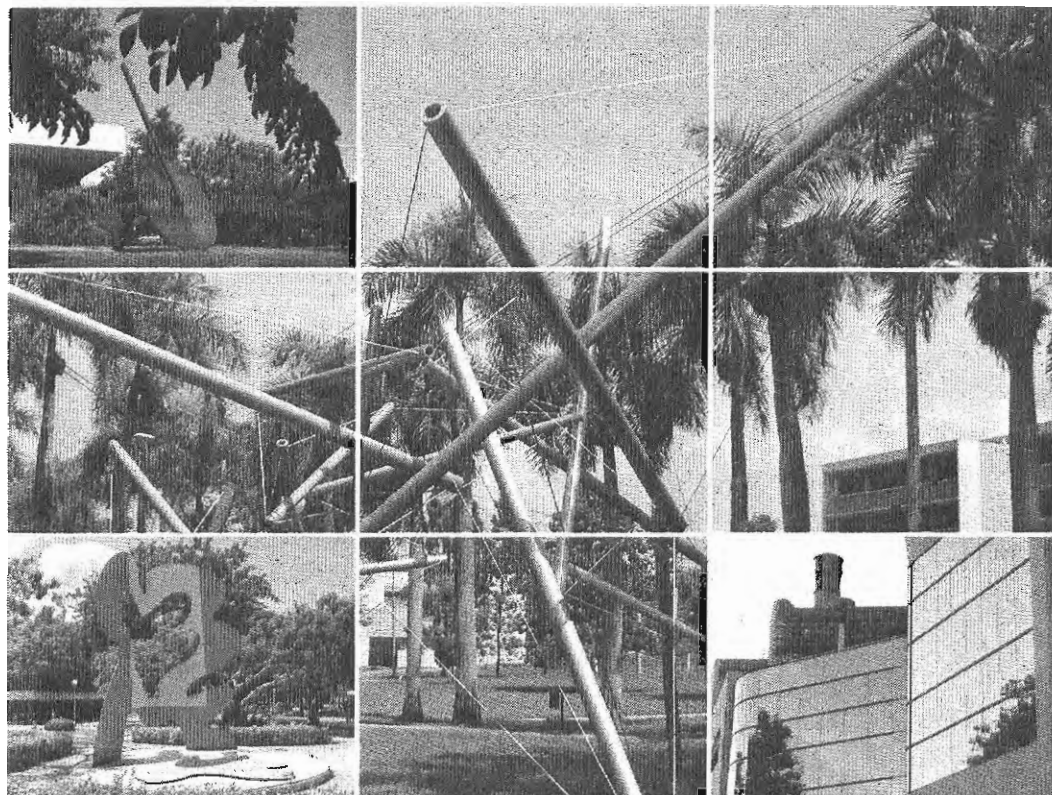
Objectives

Goal

The University of Puerto Rico will take part in the worldwide dissemination of knowledge, encourage cooperative programs and exchanges, and support publications and presentations by its faculty and researchers; it will foster life and study experiences for its students in international educational institutions and research centers.

- To foster greater academic richness and diversity by incorporating more international students, faculty, and researchers into the university's programs.
- To provide international students, faculty, and researchers with conditions that will enable them to live and work as full members of the university community and make their experience as fruitful and fulfilling as possible.
- To establish collaborative agreements between units within the UPR system and institutions abroad in order to create joint programs and degrees.
- To encourage collaborative agreements with universities, foundations, transnational organizations, research centers, and governments for projects that address issues of regional and global interest.
- To foster conditions that will enable our students to study, take part in exchange programs, volunteer activities, internships, etc., and have other educational experiences at academic institutions and centers outside Puerto Rico.
- To encourage academic programs to include within their degree requirements and curricula such knowledge and skills as foreign languages and other cultural and academic experiences, so that our students may take a more active role in the university's internationalization efforts.
- To encourage our faculty and researchers to take part in professional exchange programs with universities and research centers outside Puerto Rico.
- To support the international publication and presentation of the results of our faculty's and students' research and to sponsor academic and professional conferences and symposia to which to the international community is invited and in which our own faculty and students, as well as international guests, take part.
- To encourage each unit to organize and sponsor conferences, debates, and other activities of international scope in which UPR faculty and students take an active part.

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EFFICIENCY AND BEAUTY IN BOTH
NATURAL
AND BUILT SPACES

Objectives

Goals

Within the regulatory framework of institutional policy on natural and built spaces, the University of Puerto Rico will create and preserve the best possible surroundings for teaching, research and investigation, service, and cultural activity, and will foster substantive improvement in the university community's quality of life by utilizing optimal environmental practices and integrating art into its spaces.

- To ensure that there is rigorous and ongoing coordination between policies for the design, construction, and conservation of spaces, on the one hand, and the units' course offerings and the demand for courses and services, on the other.
- To ensure, by means of detailed scheduling and the assignment of necessary resources, that the university's physical structures and facilities and its natural surroundings are provided maintenance, preventive care, conservation, and improvement.
- To intervene quickly and effectively in those structures whose condition may present a danger to health or safety or whose obsolescence or unsoundness presents obstacles to the work carried out in them or to the achievement of the institution's objectives, and to revitalize those buildings emblematic of the university.
- To assume a role of leadership in the formulation and implementation of conservation policies and programs such as recycling, energy conservation and savings, and reuse of water.
- To provide quality spaces for teaching-learning, research and investigation, technological equipment, creative endeavors, recreation, and sports, and, in particular, to ensure that faculty and researchers/investigators have satisfactory individual office space.
- To provide spaces for artistic expression.
- To support the development of a larger number of pedestrian spaces within the campuses in order to encourage greater interaction between the members of the university community and to provide pleasanter and more comfortable on-campus pedestrian and vehicle traffic.
- To promote tours of the university's architecture, parks and gardens, and network of museums and art galleries.
- To implement integrated plans for landscaping and forestation.

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ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL OPTIMIZATION

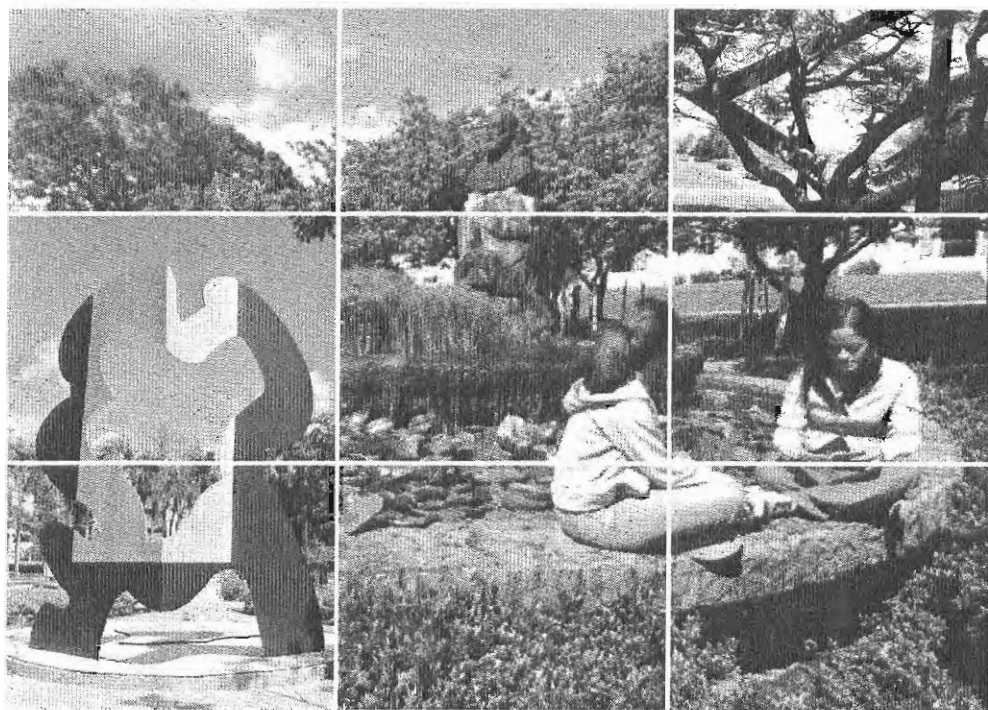
Objectives

Goal

The University of Puerto Rico will provide conditions under which the departments, schools, and colleges will have greater authority and responsibility. To do this, university regulations and administrative procedures will be revised and simplified, the career administrative staff will be increasingly professionalized, and every effort will be made to broaden the foundations and increase the solidity of university finances.

- To redirect resources and responsibilities to the institution's base: the departments, schools, and colleges.
- To produce a set of general regulations that will set forth rules and procedures that are adequate, responsive, and flexible.
- To simplify and decentralize the university's administrative processes and provision of services, and to make those processes and service-provisions more flexible, in harmony with a revision of the general regulations.
- To maintain a responsible correlation between available resources and institutional goals and objectives.
- To formulate a system-wide plan—by fund-raising or funds-generating unit—to broaden and diversify sources of funding while at the same time strengthening the university's ties to alumni/ae, friends, and other elements of the private sector.
- To integrate philanthropy into the institution's operational structure.
- To identify coefficients of resource-distribution in order to ensure that the university's primary functions are adequately funded.
- To promote a culture of evaluation of financial operations, expenditure profiles, and budget-usage trends. the resulting studies to be used to identify any corrective measures that need to be taken.
- To achieve maximum use of technology in facilitating administrative processes and thereby, so far as prudent, reducing printed documentation and physical files.
- To encourage retraining of administrative personnel in order to bring administrative functions into line with the profile of a twenty-first century institution of higher education.

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STRENGTHENED
INSTITUTIONAL
IDENTITY

Objectives

Goal

Both "within the walls" and in its self-presentation to the world outside, the University of Puerto Rico will act to strengthen its institutional identity and prestige by publicizing its many achievements within and outside Puerto Rico, establishing and maintaining close ties to its alumni and alumnae, and encouraging a culture of philanthropy, as a means of securing its place as a university of excellence.

- To create appropriate access to information on the research and investigation taking place in the university and to make this information available to all units within the system, to government offices and agencies, to industry, to professional individuals and organizations in and outside Puerto Rico, and to other institutions of higher education throughout the world.
- To inform the media of the university's achievements by bolstering each unit's communications mechanisms.
- To provide the University of Puerto Rico with the appropriate human and technological resources for updating the institution's and units' webpages and thereby optimizing the university's presence on the Web.
- To strengthen the University of Puerto Rico Press as an international forum for presentation, on a competitive basis, of the knowledge generated within the university.
- To establish stronger ties between the units within the system and the university's communications media in order to publicize the units' educational offerings, services, cultural activities, and community-service initiatives.
- To support periodic updating of the technology and programming used by university media such as the newspaper *Diálogo* and *Radio Universidad*, to enable them to carry out their institutional mission more effectively.
- To ensure that the units' databases contain up-to-date information on alumni/ae and to maintain direct, regular communication with alumni/ae through publications, newsletters, university and unit webpages, and other resources.
- To sponsor special activities and events, both academic and cultural, to increase the ties between the institution and its graduates.
- To design and implement a plan for fund-raising from corporations and private individuals that will include annual campaigns, campaigns for endowment funding, special events, etc.
- To promote courses in professional development among the alumni/ae community and to create incentives that will encourage graduates to take part in such programs.

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO

