

Standard 3

Diversity and Inclusiveness

Part II, Standard 3. Diversity and Inclusiveness

Executive summary:

The unit's service area consists of fifteen municipalities in the central region of Puerto Rico and two island-municipalities off the east coast of the larger island. The combined population of these fifteen municipalities is a little over 272 thousand persons. The demographic characteristics of the serviced area closely mirror those of Puerto Rico in general, with levels of poverty being slightly higher in the service area.

The proportion of females in the unit's student population is slightly smaller than that of the rest of the institution. Levels of poverty in the unit's student population seem to be higher than those of Puerto Rico in general.

The unit's faculty consists of five full-time faculty, three of whom are female. The unit hires an additional four part-time faculty, all of whom are female.

The unit has had an operational definition of diversity and marginalized groups since at least 2015, but its diversity workplan dates from 2016. The majority of tasks identified in this plan were accomplished as per the faculty's assessment carried out as part of the self-study. New challenges and tasks are identified in the 2019-2022 diversity and inclusiveness workplan. Two surveys conducted among graduating classes, one in 2015 and one in 2019 reveal a high-level of satisfaction among students on issues related to diversity and inclusiveness.

The unit has integrated two diversity-related learning objectives in all syllabi:

- Demonstrate a commitment to social diversity
- Demonstrate a commitment to the planet's conservation

In addition, the unit faculty has identified two courses in which diversity and inclusiveness are particularly addressed: COMU 3207, Media Literacy in Traditional and Digital Media; and COMU 4115, Ethic, Law and Communication. The first of these two courses also serves as the principal opportunity to address cultural diversity in a globalizing context.

The unit provides multiple channels for redress of grievances by students, faculty and support staff. In addition, the unit is characterized by an open, accessible and supportive environment that promotes diversity and inclusiveness.

The achievements by the most recently hired tenured track professor indicate the success of measures to support female faculty. However the lower graduation rate by female students has raised concerns by the unit faculty related to lack of successful strategies ensure satisfactory rates of graduation and retention among female students.

1. Complete and attach the following tables:

Table 4, "Area Population" (see tables 4a through 4e)

Table 5, "Student Populations" (see tables 5a through 5c)

Table 6, "Faculty Populations" (see tables 6a and 6b in section 9 below)

Table 7, “Full-time Faculty Recruitment” (the unit has not recruited full-time tenured track faculty in the last three years; therefore table 7 is not used)

Table 8, “Part-time/Adjunct Faculty Recruitment” (the information in tables 6a and 6b provide all the necessary data. Therefore table 8 is not used)

In 2000, the institution defined its service area as composed of 15 municipalities in the central eastern region of the country. With the exception of the two island-municipalities—Culebra and Vieques—each of these municipalities was included in the service area because it provides at least 5% of the institution’s total student population. In 2017-18, 87% of the student population resided in the service area (UPRH OPAI, 2017). Below, we provide four tables (4a, 4b, 4c, 4d) in which comparisons are made between the total population of Puerto Rico and the UPRH service area with relationship to sex, race and national origin. A fifth table (4e) highlights poverty within the service area.

**Table 4a
Population by Sex
Puerto Rico and UPRH Service Area
2012-2017**

	Puerto Rico		UPRH service area	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Total population	3,468,963	100%	518,375	15%
Male	1,653,997	48%	246,223	48%
Female	1,814,966	52%	272,152	52%

Source: American community survey 2012-2017, U.S. Census Bureau

**Table 4b
Population by Race
Puerto Rico and UPRH Service Area**

2012-2017

	Puerto Rico		UPRH service area	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Total population	3,468,963	100%	518,375	15%
White	2,590,718	75%	335,062	58%
Black or African American	530,091	15%	99,038	22%
American Indian and Alaska Native	30,830	1%	2,063	0%
Asian	9,835	0%	2,015	1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	561	0%	44	0%
Some other race	532,079	15%	91,035	20%

Source: American community survey 2012-2017, U.S. Census Bureau

Table 4c
Population by Hispanic or Latino and Race
Puerto Rico and UPRH Service Area
2012-2017

	Puerto Rico		UPRH service area	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Total population	3,468,963	100%	518,375	15%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	3,432,611	99%	513,377	98%
Mexican	11,987	0%	2,171	0%
Puerto Rican	3,324,030	96%	504,494	97%
Cuban	14,187	0%	818	0%
Other Hispanic or Latino	82,407	2%	5,894	1%
Not Hispanic or Latino	36,352	1%	4,998	2%
White alone	26,416	1%	3,833	1%
Black or African American alone	2,720	0%	379	0%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	84	0%	5	0%
Asian alone	2,225	0%	157	0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	55	0%	12	0%
Some other race alone	1,961	0%	367	0%
Two or more races	2,891	0%	245	0%
Two races including Some other race	134	0%	0	0%
Two races excluding Some other race, and Three or more races	2,757	0%	245	0%

Source: American community survey 2012-2017, U.S. Census Bureau

Table 4d
Income and Poverty
Puerto Rico and UPRH Service Area
(in 2017 dollars), 2013-2017

	Puerto Rico	UPRH Service Area
Median household income	\$19,775	\$19,766
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2017 dollars)	\$12,081	\$10,931
Persons in poverty	43%	46%

Source: American community survey 2012-2017, U.S. Census Bureau

Table 4e
Income and poverty in four towns in service area
(in 2017 dollars), 2013-2017

	Juncos	Maunabo	Patillas	Yabucoa
Median household income	\$18,533	\$17,636	\$14,512	\$15,586
Per capita income in past 12 months	\$9,017	\$8,830	\$8,679	\$8,672
Persons in poverty, percent	51.00%	52.60%	57.30%	52.40%

Source: American community survey 2012-2017, U.S. Census Bureau

As can be gleaned from the five tables, there are no significant differences between the general population and the service area with regards to sex and nationality. There is however a significant difference in race. The service area, according to these surveys, has a smaller percentage of whites and a larger percentage of “Blacks or African Americans” and people of “some other race” than the general population. The level of poverty is slightly higher in the service area than in Puerto Rico in general, and in four towns within the service area, more than half of the population lives in poverty.

Statistics for student populations are provided in the tables below. The UPRH does not publish data on race of student populations. For this self-study, the unit had to request this statistic. We were informed that 2 % of the institution’s student body is classified as “Black or African American”. Racism in Puerto Rican society is manifested in more subtle ways than in the United States. One particular manifestation of this is Puerto Ricans’ hesitancy to identify themselves by race. This is evidenced in the comparison of tables 4b and 4c. When not given a choice of identification by nationality or ethnic group, such as in table 4b, 15% of respondents island-wide

and 22% in service area identified themselves as “Black or African American”. However, when given the additional choice of nationality or ethnic group as in table 4c, those who identified themselves as “Black or African American” island-wide and in the service area were close to zero percent.

Table 5a
Student Population by Sex
Unit and Institution
2013-2018

	Unit			UPRH			
	Academic year	male	female	% female	male	female	% female
	2013-14	23	36	61	1,233	2,262	66
	2014-15	65	67	51	1,325	2,303	63
	2015-16	94	104	53	1,388	2,457	64
	2016-17	121	130	52	1,445	2,592	64
	2017-18	124	114	48	1,373	2,350	63

Source: UPRH OPAI

Table 5b
Selected Characteristics of Unit Student Population
2013-2019

Academic year	total number of students in program	25+ years of age	%	with disabilities	%	average family income	Median family income
2013-14	50	3	6	5	10	Not available	Not available
2014-15	132	7	5	9	7	\$15,575.60	\$7,495.50
2015-16	198	10	5	17	9	\$18,666.84	\$13,728.50
2016-17	251	11	4	21	8	\$18,144.00	\$12,000.00
2017-18	238	7	3	19	8	\$16,968.49	\$8,275.00
2018-19	221	9	4	23	10	\$15,999.38	\$9,356.00

Source: UPRH OPAI

Table 5c
Unit Graduates by Sex
2015-2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
female	6	5	12	21	15
male	7	7	10	13	26

Source: UPRH OPAI for 2015-2017 data; unit records for 2018-2019 data

The two tables with data on student population in the program serve to illustrate the foci in our diversity and inclusiveness plan. First is the issue of socio-economic level, as defined by personal/family income. Four towns in our service area have more than half of their population living below the poverty rate. Moreover, Table 5b reveals that the reported median family income of our students is considerably lower than the median family income of the population in the service area. Consequently, one of the issues addressed in our diversity and inclusiveness plan is socio-economic level. Second, Table 5a reveals that while females make up two-thirds of the institution's student population, in the unit that number is closer to one-half of the student population. That difference by itself is not grounds for concern for one could reasonably argue that the unit's student population is a closer reflection of the Island's population. However, an analysis of graduating classes from the unit in Table 5C shows that in most years more males graduate than females. This has raised serious concerns among faculty regarding how the unit can counteract the perception in our culture of communication professions as male-centered and how this perception affects our academic practices.

2. Attach to this report a copy of the unit's written plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning. This plan should give the date of adoption/last revision, any designated timelines for reaching goals, the unit's definition of diversity and the under-represented groups identified by the unit. Describe how the unit assesses its progress toward achieving the plan's objectives.

The concept of dialogical communication serves as the foundation for the Department of Communication's plan and action related to human diversity and inclusiveness. This concept has as its premise the idea that communication is effective when participants in the process commit to integrate the perspectives and sense of their interlocutors in the production and interpretation of messages. In brief, in dialogical communication the starting point is the consideration of the other.

In this context, the faculty of the Department of Communication promotes a conception of diversity as the differences—physical, social, economic, political, cultural and sexual identity—that enrich humanity. From this perspective, diversity is not just tolerated; it is cultivated. This, however, does not mean an acceptance of the inequalities and inequities common throughout the world nor the particularities of social marginalization in Puerto Rican society. On the contrary, the faculty understands the cultivation of diversity as an on-going commitment to equality and equity in society, as a repudiation of exclusion of others, particularly of marginalized groups. In its conversations, the faculty has recognized that frequently acts of exclusion or marginalization are not carried out consciously. Therefore, the faculty promotes an open, honest, supportive and on-going dialogue related to how our communication may serve to make conscious any speech or action that may result in the devaluation of diversity or marginalization of groups/individuals.

In its ongoing discussions on diversity and inclusiveness, the faculty has recognized the particularities of prejudice in Puerto Rican culture. Two notable particularities are racism and gender discrimination. Racism—prejudice based on racial characteristics—is not as blatant here as in other countries. It must definitely exist but in versions far less strident and blatant than in the United States or in the other Spanish speaking countries of the Caribbean—Dominican Republic and Cuba. Prejudice of people with different nationalities is a particular form of discrimination in Puerto Rican culture. Dominicans are currently the most visible minority in Puerto Rico and are frequently the object of discrimination. Public derogatory remarks about Dominicans are still heard, although with less frequency than ten years ago. A study by the United States Department of Justice, published in 2011, found repeated instances of police brutality against Dominicans. Consequently, the faculty has expressed that our diversity workplan must address the particularities (subtleties) of racism in our culture.

Male chauvinism and homophobia, on the other hand, tend to be more severe than in the culture of the United States. Frequently, men still feel secure enough to make public jokes that are derogative of women and/or the LGBTQ+ community. The incidence of gender

violence is alarming and has recently caused much public concern with repeated requests for the local government to declare a national emergency. Regarding discrimination based on religious beliefs, students have raised concerns over prejudice related to religious beliefs. Although not expressed frequently, the complaint has been that students with religious beliefs have felt inhibited from participating in class discussions on faith and communication. The faculty has thus agreed to increase its sensitivity to this issue so as to ensure that class discussions on religion allow for the presentation of diverse perspectives.

Moreover, in its discussions on communication, social relations and the moral imperative to promote diversity, the faculty has come to understand that it is necessary to broaden its commitment to diversity so as to include the relationship between humans and the physical environment. Our conceptions of how we communicate with each other should be faithfully reflected in our relationships to nature.

The original version of the above text was approved by the faculty in September of 2016. Subsequent modifications and elaborations were made during the fall 2019 semester. However, the roots of this text can be traced back to 2012 when the faculty approved the final draft of the proposal for the establishment of B.A program. In that document, the faculty affirmed that: “Individuals give coherence to their environment through their own culture, traditions and perspectives. This means that each individual has a high degree of responsibility toward his/her culture, traditions and perspectives. In turn, this converts dialogue and collective reflection into necessary spaces for the identification of goodness or malice in human actions.” In that same document, the faculty decided to include the following learning objectives in all of its syllabi:

- Demonstrate a commitment with social diversity
- Demonstrate a commitment to the planet’s conservation

During the Spring 2015 semester, the faculty discussed its conceptions of diversity and inclusiveness. A questionnaire on discrimination, diversity and inclusiveness was the result of these discussions. That questionnaire was administered to the graduating class of 2015.

Below is an English translation of the questionnaire along with the responses from the 2015 survey.

(Questionnaire administered to graduating students on May 2015; ten responses out of a total of 13 students)

I. Knowledge of the Department of Communication's diversity plan
Instructions: indicate your answers in the box according to the options for each question.

1. Are you familiar with Department of Communication's guide for response to cases of discrimination?

Yes. 0 No. 10

2. Do you consider the Department of Communication's diversity plan widely known to students?

Yes 3 No 7

In the Department of Communication we have adopted the following definition of diversity: physical, social, economic, political, national, cultural and sexual preference differences that enrich humanity. Take this definition into account to answer questions 3 to 5.

3. Do you consider that the non-teaching staff of the Department reflects the diversity of Puerto Rican society?

No response 0 Somewhat 3 A great
deal 7

4. Do you think that the teaching staff of the Department reflects the diversity of Puerto Rican society?

No response 0 Somewhat 3 A great deal
7

5. Do you consider that as a whole the students of the Department of Communication reflect the diversity of Puerto Rican society?

No response 0 Somewhat 0 A great
deal 10

II. Perception of discrimination in the Department of Communication

Instructions: indicate your answers in the box according to the options for each question.

1. In the courses you took in the Department of Communication, did you feel that any professor discriminated against you or other students for any of the following reasons? If you did not experience discrimination against yourself or against other students, select the none option.

None ___9___ blank 1

If you did experience discrimination against yourself or against other students, select all that apply:

- gender
- age
- physical condition
- religion
- social class
- place of your home
- sexual preference
- national origin
- Culture
- other (describe: _____)

2. In the services (tuition, academic counseling, equipment loan, use of classrooms or laboratories) that you received in the Department of Communication, did you feel that someone from the non-teaching or teaching staff discriminated against you or against other students for any of the following reasons? If you did not experience discrimination against yourself or against other students, select the none option.

None ___9___ blank ___1

If you did feel discrimination against yourself or against other students, select all that apply:

- gender
- age
- physical condition
- religion
- social class
- place of your home
- sexual preference
- national origin
- Culture
- other (describe: _____)

Comments (if you wish to elaborate on your response): None

3. During your studies at the UPRH, did you feel that any student of the Department discriminated against you or against other students for any of the following reasons? If you did not experience discrimination against yourself or against other students, select the option

of none.
None _____ 9__

If you did feel discrimination against yourself or against other students, select all that apply:

- gender
- age
- physical condition
- religion
- social class
- place of your home
- sexual preference 1
- national origin 1
- Culture
- other (describe: _____)

Comments (if you wish to elaborate on your response): None

III. Perception of how instances of discrimination are dealt with in the Department of Communication:

Instructions: Select the option that in your opinion best answers the following questions:

	never	sometimes	frequently	always	Not applicable
1. The professors of the Department respond to complaints of discrimination related to the courses.			2	4	3
2. The Department Chair handles complaints of discrimination related to services, the use of equipment and laboratories			1	5	3
3. The non-teaching staff of the Department responds to complaints of discrimination related to services, use of equipment and laboratories.			1	5	3
4. The Department Chair addresses complaints of discrimination related to services, the use of equipment and laboratories.			1	5	3

1 blank

IV. Perception of diversity in the Department of Communication:

In the Department of Communication we have adopted the following definition of diversity: physical, social, economic, political, national, cultural and sexual preference differences that enrich humanity. Take this definition into account in order to answer questions 1 to 6. Select the option that in your opinion best answers the following questions:

	Never	sometimes	frequently	always	Not applicable
1. Issues related to diversity are addressed in the Department's courses		1	2	7	
2. In the Department's courses, you felt comfortable to comment or ask about diversity issues.		2	1	7	
3. Activities to celebrate diversity are carried out in the Department.	1	4		4	1
4. In the Department, students participate in the planning of activities that celebrate diversity.		7	1	2	
5. In the Department, students from different social, economic and cultural sectors tend to fraternize.			2	8	
6. In general, the environment in the Communication Department is respectful and kind.				10	

The results of the survey confirmed what faculty perceived as a departmental environment supportive of diversity and committed to inclusiveness. Based on its analysis of this survey and prior discussions, the faculty approved its diversity and inclusiveness workplan in the fall of 2016. Below, we present the sections corresponding to tasks and timeline of this plan.

**Summary of unit's diversity and inclusiveness plan
2016**

Task	Due date
1. Confirm definition of minority groups: disabled; gender; creed or religious affiliation	Fall semester 2016
2. Survey students and Department staff on diversity and inclusiveness	
3. Survey Analysis	
4. Confirm definition of marginalized groups from analysis of surveys: socio-economic level; gender; race	
5. Analyze Institutional Statistics (OPAI) and correlate with analysis of surveys	
6. Revise departmental policy on diversity and inclusion, aligned with the institutional policy.	
7. Identify the integration of the diversity and inclusion policy in syllabi	
8. Identify if diversity is applied in the recruitment process of faculty and non-teaching staff	
9. Identify if diversity is applied in the student enrollment process	
10. Determine the frequency of development of workshops or activities related to diversity and inclusion at least twice a year.	
11. Determine the degree of student satisfaction with the departmental policy of diversity and inclusion.	
12. Determine the degree of satisfaction of non-teaching staff with the departmental policy of diversity and inclusion.	

When this workplan was approved, the faculty made a preliminary distinction between minorities within the institution's student population and groups the faculty perceived as being marginalized within the unit. The distinction was recognized as preliminary since the institutional-wide data had yet to be analyzed and unit data had yet to be produced in a systematic form. Besides individual faculty perceptions, these distinctions were based on the results of the May 2015 survey. At that time, students with disabilities, LGBTQ+ students

and students with evident religious beliefs were identified as minority groups based on the perception of faculty members.

Marginalized groups were defined, with the aid of the responses to the May 2015 survey, as students living below the poverty level, women and LGBTQ+ students and—in the category of race— Afro-Puerto Rican and Dominican students. The distinction served to address the issue that while some categories of students were not a minority, they were certainly objects of cultural marginalization. The faculty expressed its desire to seek ways to identify the ways in which their actions and/or the curriculum were unwittingly supporting this marginalization. Regarding women, the faculty expressed concerns over the absence or limited presence of female students in leadership positions in the unit's student organizations. In addition, the faculty also expressed concern over the limited participation of female students in tasks often identified with men, such as handling of video cameras or audio consoles. Regarding students living in poverty, faculty questioned whether course assignments, educational trips and class conversations (such as the common reference to home internet access) were not unwittingly marginalizing students with limited incomes. At that time, although not mentioned in the workplan, the faculty also expressed concerns related to unwitting marginalization of students older than 25 years, single mothers and pregnant students.

In May 2019, the survey was administered once again to a graduating class of 41 students. Twenty-four students responded and the results were very similar to the 2015 survey. In the last question on the questionnaire, (“In general, the environment in the Communication Department is respectful and kind”), nineteen students responded “always” and 5, “frequently”. On question II. 1. (“feeling discrimination in a course in the Department”), two students identified feeling discriminated against based on gender, one based on age, one based on socioeconomic class, and one on appearance.

In its discussions of its diversity and inclusiveness workplan, the faculty has recognized that the unit has a solid conceptual foundation and a corresponding practice as evidenced by students' perceptions in the surveys and frequent remarks on the supportive and

compassionate environment in the Department. In that sense the faculty recognizes that tasks 1 through 4 and 11 of its 2016 plan were consistently addressed. It also recognizes that diversity and inclusiveness practices in the unit have gone well beyond institutional policies (based on U.S. federal laws) related to non-discrimination related to race, social class, gender, sexual preference, religion, political affiliations or ethnic identity (task 6 in the diversity workplan). Regarding task 7 in its diversity workplan, the faculty has consistently (even before the approval of the plan) identified two courses as the main ones for addressing issues of diversity and inclusion: Media literacy in traditional and digital media, COMU 3207; and Ethics, law and communication, COMU 4115. (More on how these two courses have addressed diversity, as well as task 10—extracurricular activities in sections 3, 4 and 12).

Regarding task number 8—application of diversity criteria in hiring of faculty—the faculty recognized that it has had a consistent policy in the integration of these criteria in its decisions on selection of new faculty (more on this task in section 9). In discussions on application of diversity criteria to student admissions (task number 9), the faculty recognized that criteria for enrollment are established by the university, and, therefore this task is not applicable to its workplan. Even instances when students seek to transfer into the unit from other programs, other campuses of the UPR or from private universities, the two institutional criteria—amount of credits and grade point average—are the only ones used. In these cases, the final decision is made by the Department Chair and there is a well-established tradition of supporting—through counseling—students who do not meet the transfer credits. The result is that the overwhelming majority of students who wish to transfer into the unit are accepted. Currently, of the total unit student population of 211, thirty-seven students were admitted through transfer. Only two of the 12 tasks identified in the 2016 workplan have not been addressed (number 10 unsatisfactorily and number 12, not at all), and they have been highlighted in the 2019-2022 diversity workplan. A summary of the faculty’s assessment of its implementation of its 2016 diversity and inclusiveness workplan is presented in the following table.

Summary of Assessment of implementation of unit's

diversity and inclusiveness plan

2019

Task	date
1. Confirm definition of minority groups: disabled; gender; creed or religious affiliation	Fall semester 2016 and 2019
2. Survey students and Department staff on diversity and inclusiveness	May 2015 and May 2019
3. Survey Analysis	August 2015, fall 2019 and on-going
4. Confirm definition of marginalized groups from analysis of surveys: socio-economic level; gender; race	Fall semester 2016 and Fall 2019
5. Analyze Institutional Statistics (OPAI) and correlate with analysis of surveys	Fall 2019
6. Revise departmental policy on diversity and inclusion, aligned with the institutional policy.	2016-2019
7. Identify the integration of the diversity and inclusion policy in syllabi	Spring 2015 semester; Spring 2019 semester
8. Identify if diversity is applied in the recruitment process of faculty and non-teaching staff	Spring 2016
9. Identify if diversity is applied in the student enrollment process	Identified as not applicable
10. Determine the frequency of development of workshops or activities related to diversity and inclusion at least twice a year.	Although several activities were carried (for example two photographic exhibitions—"Si Haití fuera blanco" and "la fuerza laboral de la tercera edad"— this task needs a more concerted effort.
11. Determine the degree of student satisfaction with the departmental policy of diversity and inclusion.	May 2015, May 2019
12. Determine the degree of satisfaction of non-teaching staff with the departmental policy of diversity and inclusion.	Unfinished; programmed for Spring 2020

Logically, this assessment creates new tasks and areas of focus. The unit's diversity and inclusiveness plan for the 2019-2022 period is presented in the following table.

Unit's diversity and inclusiveness plan

2019-2022

Task	date
1. Evaluate definition of marginalized groups: disabled; gender; creed or religious affiliation, race (Afro-Puerto Ricans) and ethnicity (Dominicans).	Spring 2020 and end of semester thereafter
2. Promote institution to collect data on race and ethnicity of student population.	Spring 2020
2. Define ways to strengthen strategies for inclusion of marginalized groups within the unit, particularly regarding graduation rates of women.	Spring 2020 and end of each semester thereafter
2. Survey students on diversity and inclusiveness	Yearly at end of spring semester

3. Survey Department staff	Spring 2020 and every 2 years thereafter
4. Analysis of student survey	Beginning of Fall semester
5. evaluate definition of marginalized groups from analysis of surveys: socio-economic level; gender; race	Fall semester 2020 and on-going
6. Analyze Institutional Statistics (OPAI) and correlate with analysis of surveys	Fall 2019 and yearly
7. Revise departmental policy on diversity and inclusion, aligned with the institutional policy.	Beginning of Fall semester
8. Identify the integration of the diversity and inclusion policy in syllabi	Spring 2020 semester and every other year
9. Identify if diversity is applied in the recruitment process of faculty and non-teaching staff	Every other year
10. Plan at least two guest speakers per semester on issues related to diversity and inclusiveness.	Every semester
11. Plan at least one extracurricular activity per semester related to diversity and inclusion.	Every semester
12. Evaluate graduation rate for female students so as to identify strategies to improve this rate.	Strategies defined and implementation initiated by end of spring 2020.
13. Assess how diversity, inclusiveness and internationalization are being addressed in the curriculum both in the two key courses and in the remainder of courses	Each year at beginning of fall semester

3. Describe the unit’s curricular efforts to foster understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

As indicated above, all course syllabi include the following learning objectives:

- Demonstrate a commitment to social diversity
- Demonstrate a commitment to the planet’s conservation

The faculty has yet to assess how these objectives are being addressed in the different courses, but we are aware of the multiple assignments and student projects that have addressed these issues. Samples of these student projects will be available during the site team visit. In addition, two of the courses have more specific learning objectives related to diversity and inclusiveness:

- COMU 3009, Fundamentals of writing for media: “Evaluate prejudiced language (sexist, racist, among others) present in our culture and perpetuated through the media”.

- COMU 3010, “Introduction to graphic design: Plan a graphic communication related to diversity and social equity”.

Moreover, the faculty has identified two of the program’s courses as key in addressing issues related to diversity and inclusion:

- COMU 3207, Media literacy in traditional and digital media
 - COMU 4115, Ethics, law and communication.

The first of these courses includes the following learning objectives in its syllabus:

- Distinguish the social roles of the media and the Internet, throughout history, including their relationship with ideologies, hegemony and cultural diversity.
- Evaluate the relationship between social power and message production and distribution structures through the media and the Internet.
- Judge values of equity and diversity in social relations of gender, race, ethnicity, social class and nationality (among others).

Regarding the first of these learning objectives, students discuss, read and develop projects on the historical relationships between media and internet on the one hand and ideology, hegemony and cultural diversity on the other. Regarding the second of these learning objectives, students are asked to evaluate media representations of how power is communicated in relationships of gender, sexual identity, race, nationality, age, social class and religious beliefs. They are also asked to evaluate manifestations of power in interpersonal and intrapersonal communication. In both instances, students integrate conceptions of equity in their evaluations of relationships of gender, race, ethnicity, social class and nationality (thus responding to the third learning objective).

The course on ethics and law, COMU 4115, has one objective specifically related to diversity issues:

- Formulate moral reasoning according to different theories of ethics.

In activities related to this learning objectives, students apply moral reasoning to different situations, some of which involve issues of discrimination, stereotypes, prejudices and generalizations as related to gender, race, age, nationality, social class, sexual identity, political perspective and religious beliefs.

As indicated above in the assessment of our diversity and inclusiveness workplan, the one area of weakness we have identified in the curriculum’s relationship to issues of diversity is the

lack of a systematic implementation of extracurricular activities. Consequently, this will be one of the priorities of the 2019-2022 workplan.

4. Describe the unit's curricular instruction in issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.

Similar to the issues of diversity in local society, the faculty has designated COMU 3207 as the main course through which to address diversity of cultures in global society. In this course, globalization is particularly addressed in a unit on cultural imperialism. This theory is used to explore cultural diversity and media/internet content in global settings. One of the questions frequently addressed in this context is whether content, in local and foreign media, reflects the affirmations or hypotheses of cultural imperialism theory.

In response to repeated requests from students, in 2016 the faculty created a new elective, COPU 4995, Travel in communication. Since that date, the course has been offered on three occasions, and in each instance, students have travelled to Cuba. Plans have been initiated so that the next time this course is offered, fall 2020, students will travel to México.

The institution has a strong study-abroad program with universities in the United States, Spain and Argentina. Unit students are encouraged to take advantage of this program and since 2016, six students have participated (two in U.S. based institutions and four in Spain).

In the course on Introduction to the study of Communication, COMU 3008, students have the opportunity to compare the history of the development of media/internet in Puerto Rico with experiences in other countries.

5. Describe efforts to establish and maintain a climate that is free of harassment and discrimination, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.

Upon being hired, faculty and staff are apprised of governmental and institutional legal norms that prohibit discrimination and harassment (see UPR Regulations in *Appendix 1.a*) due to gender,

religious beliefs, age, sexual identity, race, social class or disabilities. Students receive a similar orientation when they are admitted to the institution. Course syllabi are required to include references to governmental and institutional prohibitions on discrimination and harassment. Employees are mandated to complete 20 hours of training every two years on issues related to ethics. Faculty and staff who advise students are required to keep abreast of any changes to existing legal norms related to prohibitions of discrimination, harassment as well as modification of requirements to accommodate populations with special needs.

Faculty and support staff have access to the deanships and or chancellor's office in those cases in which they understand that the department chair has not responded adequately to their request or need. Support staff are represented by a very active union in any work-related grievance. Faculty may also seek support from the UPRH Faculty Association (ADUPRH), a proto-union of faculty members, in any work-related grievance. Students usually contact the unit's academic counselor when they have a grievance or need additional support. Often, students also reach out to their student representatives in order to raise concerns. They also channel their questions or dissatisfactions through the leadership of the two student organizations in the unit (AECOM and NEP). In addition, students have access to the General Student Council and the Students Ombudsman's Office for any grievance in which the student perceives he/she has not been adequately responded to at the departmental level.

Faculty and the academic counselor work closely with staff from OSEI (the office that coordinates services to students with disabilities) in order to ensure that special needs are attended to efficiently. This office has standardized procedures that guarantee that needs of disabled students are efficiently met.

Faculty meet at least once a month to deliberate on issues related to the effective functioning of the department. Students elect representatives to these meetings, and their representatives have the right to vote on all issues considered at these meetings, although most issues are decided upon through consensus. The agenda is open to considerations raised by individual faculty members as well as student representatives. Almost every semester, all students are invited to meet at least once with the Department chair and faculty in order to discuss relevant issues. In addition, students

individually may request and are provided the opportunity to meet with the department chair. In general, whenever the Department faces a critical situation, a meeting is held of all personnel and all students.

As is evidenced by the responses to questionnaires quoted in item 2 above, the unit enjoys a safe and supportive environment. Students, faculty, support staff and alumni usually refer to it as a family. The integration of the diversity and inclusiveness workplan into the daily functioning of the unit has served to strengthen this sense of an environment that promotes diversity and inclusiveness.

6. Describe the unit's efforts to recruit and retain a student population reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.

In our response to item 2 above, we explained that unit faculty have no participation in the selection of the student population from the universe of high school applicants. The selection is based on a formula that combines the grade point average a student has obtained from 9th to 12th grades and his/her score on a standard admissions test (College Board). A quota is established each academic year, usually 35 students, and this quota is filled with the students who have obtained the highest scores established by the formula. The criteria for transfer into the unit's program from another major at the institution or another college are also defined institutionally: a student must have completed a minimum number of credits and a grade point average (the numbers vary if a student is transferring from within the institution, another campus of the UPR or a private university).

The unit's program has only existed since August of 2013, students have graduated each year since then because the first admissions were from among students who had completed the unit's associate degree (placed in moratorium in 2013). Data on retention and graduation rates is still too limited to support steadfast conclusions. Nevertheless, the unit shows strong retention rates when compared to other programs at the institution. As part of the preparation of the self-study, unit faculty became aware of data that indicates that females are graduating at rates lower than their male counterparts. This issue is the main focus of the diversity workplan for the 2019-2022 period.

Although all faculty engage in academic counselling, the unit has three staff members who assist students in course selection each semester: the student counselor, who keeps individual records on student progress and handles the bulk of course selection; the department chair and the faculty academic counselor who provide backup support on course selection. The chair and faculty academic counselor are also active in advising in instances beyond course selection, such as requests to transfer into or from the unit, graduate studies and personal problems affecting academic performance.

7. Units in which admission is selective or varies from general university admission requirements should describe considerations given to the effects of selective requirements on minority enrollment.

Not applicable.

8. Assess the unit’s effectiveness in retaining minority students from first enrollment through graduation. Describe any special program developed by and/or used by the unit in the retention of minority students. Note the role of advising in this process.

Data for retention and graduation are available from the year the program began, August 2013, to present. Given that the unit has only graduated six cohorts and that most of these cohorts entered the unit’s program in their 3rd year of study (since they were admitted to the B.A. program from the Associate Program), conclusions from this data are provisional, particularly for graduation rates. Retention rates are strong when compared to other units in the institution:

Year	Retention rate %
2014	96
2015	91
2016	87
2017	72
2018	96
2019	80

Source: UPRH OPAI

This data corroborates the faculty’s sense of the strength of its advising process. However, as suggested in the assessment of the diversity workplan, the unit needs to fine-tune its advising process so as to better support (retain and graduate) students living at or below the poverty level and female students.

9. Describe the unit’s efforts to recruit women and minority faculty and professional staff (as enumerated in Table 7, “Full-time Faculty Recruitment”).

NOTE: Table 7 is not included since the unit has not recruited any full-time tenured track faculty in the last three years. Tables 6a details the populations of full-time faculty by race, sex and nationality. The total number of full-time faculty is five. In table 6a they are identified first by nationality and then by race. Table 6a thus reflects the prevalent tendency among Puerto Ricans to identify themselves preferably by nationality and then by race.

Table 6a
Full-time Faculty Populations by Race, Sex and Nationality
2019

	Female	% of f.t. faculty	Male	% of f.t. faculty
Puerto Rican	3	60%	1	20%
Colombian	0	0%	1	20%
Black/African American	0	0%	0	0%
Other race	3	60%	2	40%

Table 6b presents part-time faculty populations by race, sex and nationality. All of the recent recruitments of faculty have been of females. In part this responds to a conscious decision by faculty to strengthen the presence of women in the unit. As indicated above in item number 2, graduation rates for female students are lower than those of male students. The faculty has also noted a marked absence (about three years ago) of female students in positions of leadership in student organizations and in activities usually dominated by males, such as sports journalism in student media. Due to concerted efforts (such as increasing the presence of women in faculty),

today there is a greater presence of female students in the leadership of organizations and in activities such as sports journalism.

Table 6b
Part-time Faculty by Race, Sex and Nationality
2019

Group	Female	% of p.t. faculty	Male	% of p.t. faculty
Puerto Rican	4	100%	0	0%
Black/African American	0	0%	0	0%
Other race	4	100%	0	0%

10. Describe the unit’s efforts to provide an environment that supports the retention, progress and success of women and minority faculty and professional staff.

The last opportunity the unit had to recruit for a tenured-track position was in 2014. At that moment the unit’s personnel committee selected Professor Marcia Pacheco García. She had the best qualifications from a pool of women (total of 3). Upon her recruitment, unit faculty ensured that she would complete all of the requirements stipulated in her contract, principally the completion of her doctoral dissertation by 2019. With the support of her colleagues (and students who volunteered to do data entry of her dissertation’s content analysis), she defended her dissertation in December 2018, one semester before the deadline for completion. Besides the department chair’s efforts, senior faculty have provided Dr. Pacheco García with mentoring support so as to ensure her retention and success. Part-time faculty (all women) receive similar mentoring support aimed at their professional success.

11. If the unit hires adjunct or part-time faculty members, describe the unit’s effort to hire minority and female professionals into these positions (as enumerated in Table 8, “Part-time/Adjunct Faculty Recruitment”) and list those who are minority and female professionals.

See the information provided in item number 9 above.

12. Provide examples of professionals, visiting professors, and other guest speakers invited or sponsored by the unit during the past three years whose background or expertise served

to introduce students to diverse perspectives. (Five examples a year are sufficient, and those examples should include the name, title, subject area/expertise, race, gender of speakers to provide context. The unit has the option of providing a complete list in a separate digital file.)

Year and date of activity	Name of expert (race and gender) or entity	Subject area/expertise/description	Additional information
2016-2017			
2017-2018			
	Radio Cimarrona, internet radio station from Dominican Republic	Established a permanent link with this station for exchange of programming.	“Community radio, social responsibility with a female countenance” is the station’s slogan
2018-2019			
April 2019	Sonia Fritz, Female Mexican film maker living in Puerto Rico	Conference: “Gender: one of my motivations for making films in Puerto Rico”	
April 2019	Rangely García, female, creator of the popular online cartoon “De la nada”	Conference: “Computer animation and political satire”	The content of her work frequently touches on gender.
April 2019	Kristeen García, Puerto Rican female professional photographer	Family photography	Commercial photography of experiences of birthing
April 2019	Rosa Plá	Conference: “Memory and images. Ethnography of the imaginary of an Afro-Cuban-Haitian community in Santiago de Cuba”	
August 2019	Eighth Festival of Caribbean Films	Three-day presentation of films from Suriname, Martinique, Cuba, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico	Students were assigned to view those films that highlighted issues of race and gender

In our assessment of the implementation of our 2016 diversity workplan, the faculty noted the dearth of guest speakers on the themes related to inclusiveness as one areas of weakness of this plan. The task has been identified as one area that needs special attention in the 2019-2022 diversity workplan. Speakers.