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This report reflects Sagrado's institutional perspective of self-analyses of the level to which standards are met, recommendations for future actions, and plans to support and guide the institution's strategic priorities.

September 8, 2018

UNIVERSIDAD DEL SAGRADO CORAZÓN SELF STUDY REPORT

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)

SELF-STUDY REPORT

This report reflects, from an institutional perspective, Sagrado's self-analyses, the level to which standards are met, recommendations for future actions, and plans to support and guide the institution's strategic priorities or goals. The Self-Study consists of four sections: *Executive Summary*, *Introduction*, *Individual Standard Analyses and Recommendations*, and the *Conclusion*.

In the first place, the *Executive Summary* provides a summary of the major findings and recommendations of the Self-Study. The *Introduction* is an overview of the institution and description of the Self-Study process. Third in line are the *Individual Standard Analyses and Recommendations* (7 in all) that include the analytical discussion of the data reviewed with cross references to the evidences and the appropriate criteria. Finally, in the fifth and last section the conclusions to the self-study are presented.

TABLE OF CONTENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	8
Sagrado: Tradition and Change.....	8
After the Storm: Strengthening our mission and impact in Puerto Rico	10
Looking ahead: Bicentennial of Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne’s pioneering work in America and Rebecca.....	12
THE STANDARDS: Analysis and Recommendations	13
Standard I: Mission and Goals	13
Standard II: Ethics and Integrity.....	28
Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	43
Standard IV: Support for the Student Experience	63
Standard V: Education Effectiveness Assessment	81
Standard VI: Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement.....	93
Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration	114

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

About Sagrado

The Universidad del Sagrado Corazón (Sagrado) is a private, non-profit, Catholic, liberal arts institution of higher education in the area of Santurce of the city of San Juan, in Puerto Rico. The student population is about 4,500, mostly Hispanic.

After a group from Sagrado attended the November 2015 Self-study Institute, the Steering Committee was assembled (September 2016) and the selection of representatives from all stakeholders of Sagrado's community began in order to form the Working Groups. The first draft of the Self-study design was prepared during the period between September and January 2017 and was sent to Dr. Tito Guerrero III on February 2017. Dr. Guerrero conducted a site visit and made recommendations to the work in March, and by April, Sagrado received approval from MSCHE. The Self-Study design (as approved) is the basis of this report.

Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study

The primary intended outcome of the Self-Study is to demonstrate compliance with the standards:

1. Demonstrate how Sagrado meets the seven MSCHE accreditation standards and requirements.
2. Review outcomes-based institutional assessment practices and make recommendations to expand or refine institutional assessment practices to guide planning, resource allocation, and institutional improvement.
3. Identify overlapping issues between the Plan Estratégico 2017-2020 and the Self-Study to enhance Sagrado's capacity to implement strategic priorities and recommend measures to achieve institutional mission and goals, particularly when the period under analysis includes a change in leadership.

The research and analysis that the Working Groups have produced clearly confirm that Sagrado has, indeed, met with all standards' criteria, requirements of affiliation and the goals of the planning process for re-accreditation. The evidence presented in this document will attest that our assessment practices are in place, and that they are used to guide our decision-making processes in all the Institution's units.

Standard I: Mission and Goals

For over 29 years, the mission has driven Sagrado's academic project and guided the decision-making process, as related to curriculum changes, provision of resources, and strategic planning. The transversal competencies were designed in alignment with the mission: a sense of ethics, critical thinking, teamwork, oral and written communication, and research. These competencies are the basis for assessment of the learning process; thus, when they are assessed, it is verified if the mission is, or is not, being followed in the academic scenarios and consequently ratified.

Evidence that demonstrates that Sagrado meets Standard I can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap and is analyzed in the corresponding section.

Recommendation:

- a. The reinstatement of a mission assessment tool similar to the Mission Benchmark and Tracking Study as a regular practice and should include all stakeholders including alumni and the Board of Trustees.

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

The documents examined illustrate that Sagrado acts ethically in institutional tasks and that it provides mechanisms that foster and update institutional practices. The Institution values integrity and ethics as aspects of rigor in the regulations, procedures and institutional policies.

Recommendations:

- a. Establish a system that would require policy/procedure review cycle in a timely fashion.
- b. Develop an integrity-based assessment strategy.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Sagrado meets the eight criteria of Standard III. The Self-Study inquiry also targeted a specific suggestion that emerged in the 2013 Periodic Review Report: demonstrate a clear system and culture of assessment. The analysis indicates that Sagrado has made great strides in gathering and analyzing data (to be addressed explicitly in this section and in Standard V) and utilizing the results to improve its programs, thus, providing students with rigorous, pertinent, and coherent academic programs and the corresponding qualified infrastructure to guaranty a unique experience.

Recommendations:

- a. The University must ensure faculty members (full or part time) are periodically evaluated by their peers, supervisors and students.
- b. Continue and increase faculty development and resource allocations for research and active learning teaching methodologies.

Standard IV: Support for the Student Experience

Sagrado maintains its efforts to promote and consolidate an assessment culture, but challenges remain. The evidence found describes a process of assessment at all levels including learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate students that result in curricula and syllabi modifications, and ample dissemination among stakeholders. The documents examined also evidence moments where the cycles were closed, but there was information lacking. Some of the strategies used to close the cycle were faculty surveys and interviews. Moreover, the information collected was used to ascertain that curriculum changes and the Strategic Plan were in alignment. Still, the academic and support units continued the assessment at their respective areas. Support units have assessed their services, including utilization, satisfaction and evaluation of workshops offered.

Recommendations:

- a. Implementation of the Jenzabar module for early alert.
- b. Redesign the process of validation of credits in order to make it more efficient.
- c. Conduct further analyses of retention and graduation rates for transfer students.
- d. Deployment of a more formal assessment process for all third-party providers.
- e. Conduct the NSSE and FSSE surveys.

Standard V: Education Effectiveness Assessment

The evidence found describes the assessment process for learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate levels, changes to curricula and syllabi, and institutional learning outcomes. Likewise, there is proof that the support units assessed their services, including utilization and satisfaction, whether they were in alignment with the institutional goals and mission, and dissemination among stakeholders. Yet, for the academic year 2016-2017, institutional learning outcome assessment was not completed as planned but other methods were used to close the cycle.

Recommendations:

- a. Enhance the culture of assessment in all programs of the University.
- b. Standardize assessment across all programs.
- c. Formalize assessment as part of the evidence-based budget planning process.
- d. Improve dissemination of assessment findings and outcomes to stakeholders.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement

Evidence for this Standard demonstrates that Sagrado has a very formal, standardized and participatory budget planning process. However, there are opportunities to improve the assessment practice and make it more consistent in order to guarantee a rational and systematic decision making and distribution of resources to the different operational areas. The lack of uniformity in the assessment process, mentioned before, together with the multiple changes of the Planning and Assessment unit have contributed to certain level of instability in the process of resource allocation as tied to assessment data. Therefore, a uniform assessment practice coupled with a Planning and Assessment unit that is fortified will enable more precision in the data collection and analysis, and thus enhance transparency and accountability to the process. In the auxiliary sources of revenue, two areas can be strengthened: the Endowment Fund and the Residency occupancy. Finally, the Disaster Recovery Plan (DPR) must be tested and updated.

Recommendations:

- a. Establish a uniform assessment practice that may deliver more precision in the data collection and analysis in order to guarantee a rational and systematic decision-making process.
- b. Reinforce the Planning and Assessment unit in order to enhance transparency and accountability of the processes.
- c. Develop fundraising strategies to increase the Endowment Fund.
- d. Increase and stabilize the occupancy rate of the University residencies for additional revenues.
- e. Updating and further improvement to the DRP, including testing.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The Board of Trustees, the President, the Executive Leadership Team, and the different instances of shared governance, continue its professionalization, making sure that every

year they are in a better position to serve the institutional mission and goals, and to provide students with a richer educational experience.

Recommendation:

- a. Consider a shared governance model similar to the ad hoc committee that designed the Plan Estratégico 2017-2020.

Requirements of Affiliation

The fifteen requirements put forward for all institutions that wish to be accredited or re-accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education are also aligned with the standards that have briefly been presented. The alignment Sagrado follows is taken from the document Self-Study: Creating a Useful Process and Report produced by the MSCHE (2016).

TABLE 3: SAMPLE ALIGNMENT OF REQUIREMENTS OF AFFILIATION WITH STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

<u>Requirement of Affiliation</u>	<u>Demonstrate compliance in.....</u>
Requirement 1 Authorization to operate	Compliance review process
Requirement 2 Institution is operational	Compliance review process
Requirement 3 Graduating one class before accreditation	Compliance review process
Requirement 4 Communicating with Commission in English	Compliance review process
Requirement 5 Compliance with government policies, regulations and requirements	Compliance review process
Requirement 6 Complying with Commission policies	Compliance review process
Requirement 7 Mission and goals	Standard I
Requirement 8 Systematic evaluation of all programs	Standards III, IV, V, VI
Requirement 9 Student learning programs	Standards III, V
Requirement 10 Institutional planning	Standards I, III, IV, V, VI
Requirement 11 Financial resources	Standards VI
Requirement 12 Governance structure	Standard VII
Requirement 13 Governing board conflicts of interest	Standard VII
Requirement 14 Governing board providing information	Compliance review process
Requirement 15 Faculty	Standard III

Self-Study: Creating a Useful Process and Report (pg. 3; 2016)

INTRODUCTION

Sagrado: Tradition and Change

Sagrado's tradition is rooted in the teachings of the Society of the Sacred Heart, which promotes an ecumenical spirit from within a Catholic institution devoted to pluralistic dialogue. Thus, the mission is to *educate intellectually free and morally responsible individuals, willing to participate in the development of a more authentically Christian Puerto Rican society, a community united in justice and peace.*

In 2014, as the 135th anniversary of Sagrado approached, the former president Dr. José Jaime Rivera retired after 22 years of leadership and passed the baton on to Gilberto J. Marxuach-Torrós, Esq. These two events, the preparation for the celebration of 135 years academic excellence and a transition in governance, presented Sagrado with unprecedented challenges in the midst of great economic and social uncertainty in Puerto Rico. These challenges are suspended between tradition and change.

This tradition is built upon principles of engagement within and without, responsiveness to the needs of society, and student-centeredness. In that sense, Sagrado's vision propels it to *offer a unique academic project, an innovative educational experience in which the classroom is the world, in an environment characterized by community life. It is based on the principle that human beings and Christian values are at the center of our project.* That is, a profound commitment to provide students with the means and experiences that will enable them to become involved citizens that contribute to a constantly changing society (be it local or global) through inventive curricular and co-curricular offerings, a knowledgeable faculty dedicated to the development of pedagogies appropriate to our times, and a willing and resourceful staff.

The transition in leadership and the consequent changes in the executive team along with a drop in enrollment¹ due to a shrinking pool of potential students², have put Sagrado to the test. In particular, the economic crisis that began in 2006 has resulted in our economy shrinking a loss of 16.4% of its production capacity (PR Planning Board, 2018), a rise in the

¹ One-fourth of headcount loss in two years and $\frac{1}{10}$ th less degrees awarded between 2015 and 2017 (USC IPEDS, 2015, 2016, 2017).

² Massive migration, mainly to the US mainland, of more than 55 thousand residents/year over the course of seven years or an annual decrease of 1.6% on the island's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018)

unemployment rate (9.9% in April 2018)³ and a shrinkage of its labor force⁴. These conditions challenge all members of the Puerto Rican society in general and Higher Education in particular.

Like other historic transformations, such as the 1970 ownership and governance handover from the religious order to the Board of Trustees (BoT; composed of some religious and a majority of lay members), the shift to a co-ed institution in 1972, and the foundation of the first graduate programs in 1985, this transition is embraced as an opportunity. It is understood and faced as a chance to revisit its institutional and academic goals and the overall student experience, while reaffirming the University's mission ([PRR, 2013](#); [Self-Study Design, 2017](#)).

Currently, Sagrado has an enrollment of approximately 4,500 students and offers an array of academic programs. It is the only university in Puerto Rico to receive the Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2015-2025).

The strategic planning is geared to three inter-related priorities derived from Sagrado's mission:

1. Optimization and continuous improvement through systemic assessment;
2. *Glocalization*⁵: search for commonality and diversity in times of globe-wide connectivity and consciousness in a confined context (country, city, or neighborhood);
3. Social, pedagogical, and curricular innovation, which result in committed, personalized, participatory, and pertinent teaching spaces and practices for the collective construction of adaptive knowledge for an increasingly uncertain future.

³ 2.5 times the U.S. national unemployment rate and one over one tenths higher than the highest jurisdiction in the U.S. (BLS, 2018)

⁴ 24 thousand workers just in the last year, with a participation rate of 40.4% (in April 2018) (Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources, 2018).

⁵ "The local can alter the final outcome, [...] it is possible to map power relations and therefore to analyze the local-global relationship in terms of power differentials. Power relations are not conceived as one-sided, [...] (from the global to the local) but, rather, as involving the ability to project or resist waves of globalization. In other words, power emanates and potentially can reside in all actors participating in global-local interactions. The theoretical a priori is that power does not necessarily rest in a single container." Roudometof, V. (2016: 402). Theorizing globalization: Three interpretations. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 19(3), 391-408.

These innovations build upon competency based liberal arts education through active learning.

These priorities were the basis for the institutional goals as presented in [Plan Estratégico Visión 2014-2017](#) and [Plan Estratégico 2017-2020](#) with two different approaches. The following are our goals as revised and included in Plan Estratégico 2017-2020:

1. Educate citizens with the knowledge and skills needed for a productive immersion into society.
2. Redesign the interaction between the surroundings and academic projects.
3. Promote an experience that integrates emotional and cognitive intelligence with high-tech to support students in their academic pursuit.
4. Strengthen the organizational structure, procedures, and processes to increase efficiency and productivity.
5. Develop and implement strategies for increasing funding and revenues to allow the financial stability and sustainability of the University.

This Self-Study afforded Sagrado a unique opportunity, not only to assess the inner workings of the institution, but also to provide a moment to reflect on the past and build upon it to guarantee a successful transition and future academic offerings while enriching its tradition.

After the Storm: Strengthening our mission and impact in Puerto Rico



On September 20, 2017, exactly two weeks after Hurricane Irma hit, the strongest storm in Puerto Rico's recorded history came ashore as a category 5 cyclone under the name of María. All over the island, people and institutions prepared as best as they could. The toll was immense: total

power system failure and consequently water shortages, limited fuel and provisions, little or no communication, and limited and unsafe transportation.

In spite of all this, within hours, a number of staff and campus residents were on the ground inspecting the level of damage and initiating the cleanup and reconstruction. The following week the group of people working included employees, students, contractors, suppliers, and

volunteers that were able to make the campus livable after cleaning debris and repairing fixtures in buildings. Faculty reported to work on October 2nd and administrative personnel on the 5th. Sagrado devised an accelerated emergency action and a recovery plan that demonstrated resilience and commitment to its students and mission.

The academic leadership worked with faculty to develop a compressed semester schedule that reassigned all courses to usable classrooms and alternate learning spaces during daylight hours: Monday through Sunday, sunrise to sunset. Specific documentation procedures were enforced in order to achieve the following: student attendance, contact hours for courses, and alternative teaching strategies. In the case of students who were, not attending class it was imperative to know their current situation: Were they safe? Were they in need of additional support? Were they able to reincorporate, or would they be dropping the course load?

On the topics of contact hours and teaching strategies it was important to safeguard Sagrado's obligation to students and guarantee the quality of these encounters. Taking these issues into account, Sagrado developed a series of non-traditional teaching strategies. Following precedent, the faculty designed 25% of the contact hours in the aforementioned, non-traditional teaching strategies that ranged from synchronous and asynchronous videoconferencing, interventions and projects directly related to the class topic, and the use of diverse digital platforms as repositories or communication strategies.

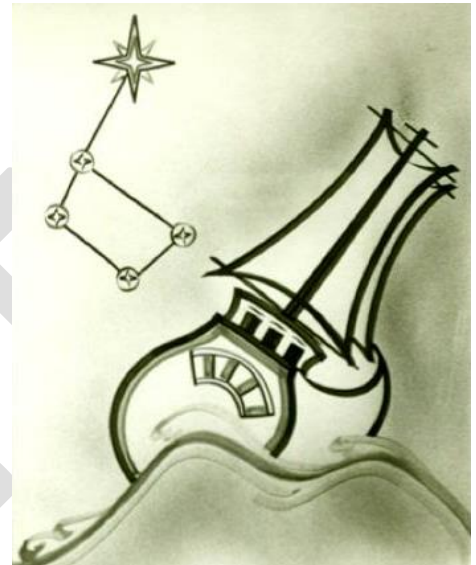
As a result of these efforts, 75% of the student population was able to return to campus and their courses in a consistent schedule. However, a portion of our students were living dire situations. By the end of the fall semester, some (5%) were still unaccounted for. A portion of our student population (20%) expressed their willingness to continue studying in Sagrado but were unable to attend on a regular basis to their classes. Their circumstances were varied; of the 20% mentioned, 8% moved out of Puerto Rico; 9% lived in isolated communities where road access was still perilous; 3% indicated that their responsibilities had changed (family and/or job related).

Hurricane María and its aftermath were galvanizing experiences. So much so, that the leadership team, guided by President Marxuach, engaged in deep reconsideration and revisited how Sagrado was engaging with its mission. To look ahead under the post-

hurricane conditions was to realize that Sagrado had to become a protagonist in Puerto Rican Society and promote changes not as a result of alumni performance, but by furnishing students the opportunity to impact society while they were enrolled in the University.

Looking ahead: Bicentennial of Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne's pioneering work in America and Rebecca

Sagrado has its roots in an academic project moved by two forces: solidarity and social renovation by means of an integral education. The University celebrates these roots by honoring a pioneer missionary of the Society of the Sacred Heart, who came to the Americas with her sisters from France in 1818: Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne. Two hundred years ago, a ship named Rebecca took them across the Atlantic to America. Rebecca has become a symbol of audacity, bravery, and innovation, and Sagrado has selected this name to identify its new academic project.



<https://rscjinternational.org/sites/defa 1>

The original project is no longer limited to women. It is now grounded in solidarity, a project that touches all humans as children who have a God-given right to an integral education. As the Society of Sacred Heart proposes, to educate is, in itself, an act of justice. We live in trying times that require the same audacity, innovation, and bravery that Saint Magdalene Sophia (founder of the Order) and Saint Rose Philippine, and their sisters demonstrated. Sagrado must move and refocus its academic project in the way our youth and our context demand: an undertaking anchored in socially relevant issues imbued with solidarity and hope. Sagrado's mission is fulfilled when its students become leaders with strong humanistic understanding and demonstrated solidarity capable of building a more authentically Christian world with cohesive communities in justice, peace and respect for our common house.

In this same manner, Sagrado's community has co-created and developed an educational project that is being piloted and will fully engage by 2019. In this new endeavor, Sagrado contributes to Puerto Rico's development by taking a more active role and impacting three areas: Entrepreneurial Development, Health and Welfare, and Creative Industries.

THE STANDARDS: ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Standard I: Mission and Goals

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Compliance with the Standard and Criteria

Sagrado meets the four criteria and all sub-criteria of Standard I and is in compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation 7 and 10. Evidence that demonstrates that Sagrado meets this standard can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap and are analyzed in this section.

Criterion Number	Standard I Criterion	Meet Criterion
C1	Clearly defined mission and goals that:	✓
C1a	Are developed through appropriate collaborative participation	✓
C1b	Address external and internal contexts and constituencies	✓
C1c	Are approved and supported by the governing body	✓
C1d	Guide faculty, administration, staff, and governing structures in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program and curriculum development, and institutional and educational outcomes	✓
C1e	Support scholarly inquiry and creative activity	✓
C1f	Are publicized and widely known by internal stakeholders	✓
C1g	Are periodically evaluated	✓
C2	Institutional goals are realistic, appropriate to higher education, and consistent with mission	✓
C3	Goals that focus on student learning and related outcomes and on institutional improvement	✓
C4	Periodic assessment of mission and goals to ensure they are relevant and achievable	✓

The mission, first adopted in 1988 as part of Plan Estratégico Visión 1993, is still vibrant, current, and embraces the foundational character. (C1c) In 2012, the academic project was presented in the document titled [Marco Educativo de la Universidad del Sagrado Corazón](#) (Marco Educativo; Universidad del Sagrado Corazón's Educational Framework, 2012). In it, Sagrado reaffirmed its mission to *educate intellectually free and morally responsible*

individuals, willing to participate in the development of a more authentically Christian Puerto Rican society, a community united in justice and peace. In the introduction of the Marco Educativo, it is stated that:

Este documento recoge el compromiso filosófico del proyecto educativo de la Universidad del Sagrado Corazón como una institución de artes liberales enmarcado en el contexto socioeconómico de Puerto Rico en su segunda década del Siglo XXI. [...]

El propósito primordial es asegurar la articulación entre la filosofía, valores, visión, misión y metas de la Universidad, sus entendidos y lineamientos académicos generales y el perfil de sus gestores principales: estudiantes, docentes y personal de apoyo. (p. 1)⁶

In other words, it is a student-centered project that guides the community in its decision-making process as it relates to its strategic planning, resource allocation, curriculum development and compliance, and the definition and actualization of institutional goals. The Junta de Síndicos (BoT; Board of Trustees) also endorsed the mission in 2012⁷.

The mission was again reaffirmed for the Plan Estratégico Visión 2014-2017 ([PE 2014-17](#); Strategic Plan 2014-2017) under Dr. José Jaime Rivera's presidency. Later in 2014, when President Marxuach-Torrós took office it was confirmed in its permanent and vital form (C1g, C4) as presented in both strategic plans: PE 2014-17 and Plan Estratégico 2017-2020 ([PE 2017-20](#)); (Strategic Plan 2017-2020). The mission evidently served as the guiding force in the drafting of institutional priorities and reaffirmed by a community at large (students, faculty, staff [non-faculty employees] and trustees) that participated in the process.

For the latest plan, PE 2017-20, a Steering Committee with representation of all stakeholders was charged with the task of designing the plan, developing a consultation process, and guiding the implementation of said plan. (C1a, b, f; C4) This was accomplished with the support of the consulting firm Quality for Business Success ([QBS](#)). Moreover, members of the Steering Committee for PE 2017-20 were selected, keeping in mind to include people who were new to Sagrado as well as those with a long-standing relationship to the Institution. The rationale for this was to ensure that the traditional charisma of

⁶ "This document presents the philosophical commitment of the University of Sacred Heart's educational project as a Liberal Arts institution in the context of Puerto Rico's socioeconomic circumstances in the second decade of the 21st Century. [...] Its purpose is to ensure the articulation between the University's philosophy, values, vision, mission, and goals, its convictions and general academic guidelines, and its principal agents' profile: students, faculty and staff". (pg. 1)

⁷ BoT Act dated February 13, 2013 is available for review upon request.

Sagrado was preserved while daring to venture into innovative strategies under the leadership of a new administration.

In the following figure (Figure 1), the institutional goals of both strategic plans PE 2014-17 and PE 2017-20 are compared in order to confirm how, as time passes, Sagrado has been able to be true to its educational project as student centered and relevant to the context where it flourishes, while incorporating new perspectives and strategies that help the Institution [respond](#) to contemporary challenges.

Figure 1: Comparison of strategic plans PE 2014-17 and PE 2017-20.

PLAN ESTRATÉGICO VISIÓN 2014-2017		PLAN ESTRATÉGICO 2017-2020		GOALS IN BRIEF
Strategic Projects/ Dimensions	Goals	Strategic Projects	Goals	
Nature of the Educational Project: 1. Educational experience will be: humanistic, integral, Christian, participatory, personalized, and relevant in order to promote learning and to prepare for graduate school and global interaction. 2. Students are the center and reason for being of the University. 3. Faculty is the prime sponsor and leader of the Vision.	Center the educational project on the student through an integral humanistic, multi and interdisciplinary education by providing more opportunities for students and faculty to engage in diverse cultural and learning practices.	Academic project	Educate citizens with the competencies, knowledge and skills needed for a productive insertion in society by way of an academic offer that is interdisciplinary, flexible, innovative, different, and pertinent to the challenges of the 21 st Century	Educate citizens with the knowledge and skills needed for a productive immersion into society.
Environment / Context 4. A responsive community to the challenges of the 21 st Century. 5. An administrative and academic organization that promotes creativity, initiative, proper interpersonal relations; solidarity and commitment to the Mission, Vision and Values; and an effective internal communication system. 6. A physical and technological infrastructure supportive of the intended academic and community-based Educational Experience.	Support students to achieve their academic goals through services designed for them as center and reason to exist by means of a teaching and non-teaching staff committed to the institutional values and prepared to meet 21 st Century challenges.	Community Engagement, social innovation, and entrepreneurship	Redesign the interaction model between the surroundings and the academic project based on innovation, social responsibility, and entrepreneurship in order to impact the immediate context: business of all levels and sizes, non-profit sector, community based initiatives, and government, among others.	Redesign the interaction between the surroundings and academic projects.
Feasibility 7. Increase enrollment levels consistent with curricular diversity and fiscal requirements properly focused on emerging needs and opportunities 8. Growth of the Endowment and other resources 9. Effective communication of the Educational Plan and its contributions to society; with institutional and learning assessment as the basis for planning and resource allocations	Develop strategies and possible actions to increase funding and revenues, and reach efficiency levels that will allow financial stability for the University.	Economic feasibility, sustainability, and additional resources	Develop innovative strategies and possible actions to increase funding and revenues and reach efficiency levels that will allow financial stability for the University.	Develop and implement strategies for increasing funding and revenues to allow the financial stability and sustainability of the University.
		University life, curricular and co-curricular experience	Promote an experience that integrates coaching, human touch and high-tech to support students in their academic life by means of spaces, (co)curricular and extracurricular activities that allow for integral	Promote an experience that integrates emotional and cognitive intelligence with high-tech to support students

Source: Table prepared by the Writing and Editing Committee (Committee IX).

The mission is clearly stated in the [web site](#), [publications](#), and other official documents such as the Faculty Handbooks⁸, Employee Handbooks⁹, [Reglamento de Estudiantes](#) (Student Handbook). The governing structures, as will be discussed in Standard VII, validate the mission every time any of the handbooks (Faculty, Employee, or Student) are reviewed and approved by the respective boards: Academic Board ([Certificación 2017-09](#) de la Junta Académica), Administrative Board ([Act march 17, 2017](#)), and finally by the BoT¹⁰. (C1f)

The University's mission is well-known to stakeholders by making it public (displayed in offices and public areas) and publicizing it through diverse analogue ¹¹ and [digital venues](#). In addition, Sagrado's employees make reference to the mission and are quoted in [local media](#). Finally, it is part of the induction process ¹² for new employees by the Vice-Presidencia de Desarrollo Organizacional y Recursos Humanos (ODHR; Office of Organizational Development and Human Resources).

The institutional priorities or goals are aligned with the mission in both Strategic Plans that apply to this period. In the following sub-sections each goal is presented along with specific actions in a brief manner, since these topics will be further discussed in the appropriate standard section.

Goal 1: Educate citizens with the knowledge and skills needed for a productive immersion into society.

- *Center the educational project on the student through an integral humanistic, multi and interdisciplinary education by providing more opportunities for students and faculty to engage in diverse cultural and learning practices. (PE 2014-17)*
- *Educate citizens with the competencies, knowledge and skills needed for a productive insertion in society by way of an academic offer that is interdisciplinary, flexible, innovative, different, and pertinent to the challenges of the 21st Century. (PE 2017-20)*

As mentioned before, for over 29 years, the mission has driven academic activities, as is evidenced in the following documents: [Informe del Análisis de Proceso de Evaluación del Aprendizaje Estudiantil, 2013](#) and [Proyecto del aprendizaje de los estudiantes, 2014](#). The transversal competencies were designed in alignment with the mission, and these are the

⁸ [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#)

⁹ [Manual del Empleado](#), [Manual del Empleado 2017](#)

¹⁰ BoT Act of March 30, 2017 approving the Faculty Handbook and the Employee Handbook is available for review upon request.

¹¹ [Catálogo 2012-2014](#), [Catálogo 2014-2016](#)

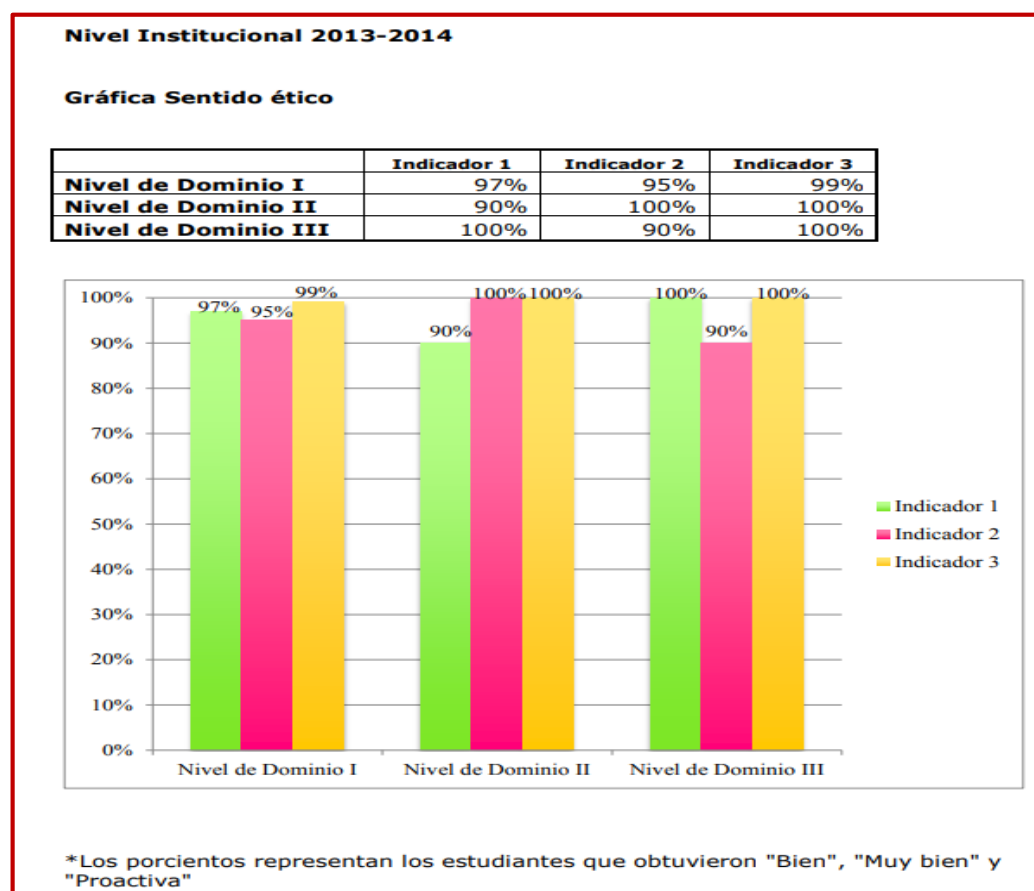
¹² [Orientación de empleados de nuevo ingreso](#), [Política de Mejoramiento Profesional para Profesores Nuevos y Parciales](#)

basis for assessment of the learning process. (C1d) This process is continuous and, when the competencies are assessed, it verifies whether the mission is or not being followed in the academic scenarios. In 2007 and later in 2012, Sagrado conducted the study titled [Estudio de Misión, Ambiente y Comunicacion Institucional: Informe de Resultados 2007 -2012](#), detailed in Standard II. The compared results were published in 2013 showing that the community knew the mission, felt the institutional environment was positive and that communication was adequate. These results were consistent in both surveys, although there was a slight positive increase when administered in 2012. (C4) [Informe de avalúo del aprendizaje de los estudiantes 2013-14 \(2015\)](#); p.5). (C3)

Throughout the period under examination, and as a result of the above-mentioned assessments and analyses, the mission has been reaffirmed and the competencies have changed (as will be presented in Standard III and V). The current competencies that connect to the mission are: ethics, critical thinking, team work, oral and written communication, and research. The mission states that we *educate intellectually free and morally responsible individuals*, that education also involves a process of teaching subject matters that require the development of logical thinking. In addition, the different subject matters taught by the academic units have an ethical component which is aligned to the component of *moral conscience and participation in the construction of a better society* as stated in the mission.

The competencies related to ethics and critical thinking are fundamental for the accomplishment of Sagrado's mission. This is achieved, for example, in the 2013-2014 academic year's assessment plan that involved measuring the transversal competences of Ethics and Critical Thinking. Assessment results based on direct measures on ethics showed that around 97% of the students mastered the three levels of that competency. Figure 2 summarizes the results. These percentages represent students' responses "Good", "Very Good" and "Proactive".

Figure 2: Results of the institutional assessment from ethics competency for the 2013-2014.



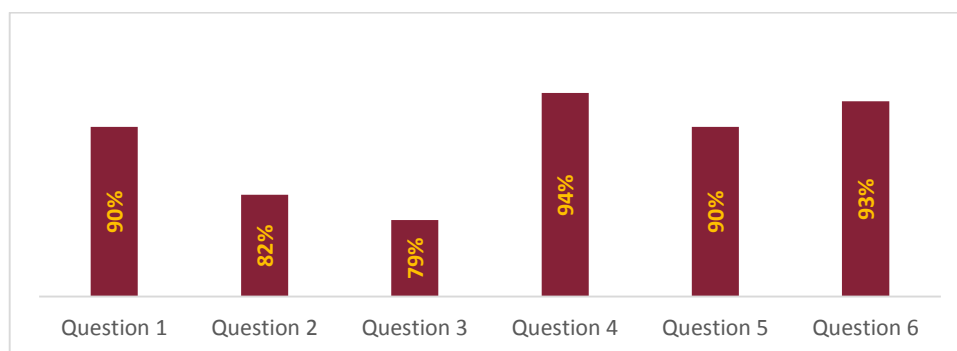
Source:

[Informe de avalúo del aprendizaje de los estudiantes 2013-14, 2015](#)

The above data is supported by student's opinion (indirect measure) which also concur with the results of the evaluation of the students' work (direct measurement). Therefore, it can be concluded that the competence of Ethics is developing adequately in the Institution. It is also evidence of how the community is committed to the principles presented in the mission.

Figure 3: Indirect results of ethics competence.

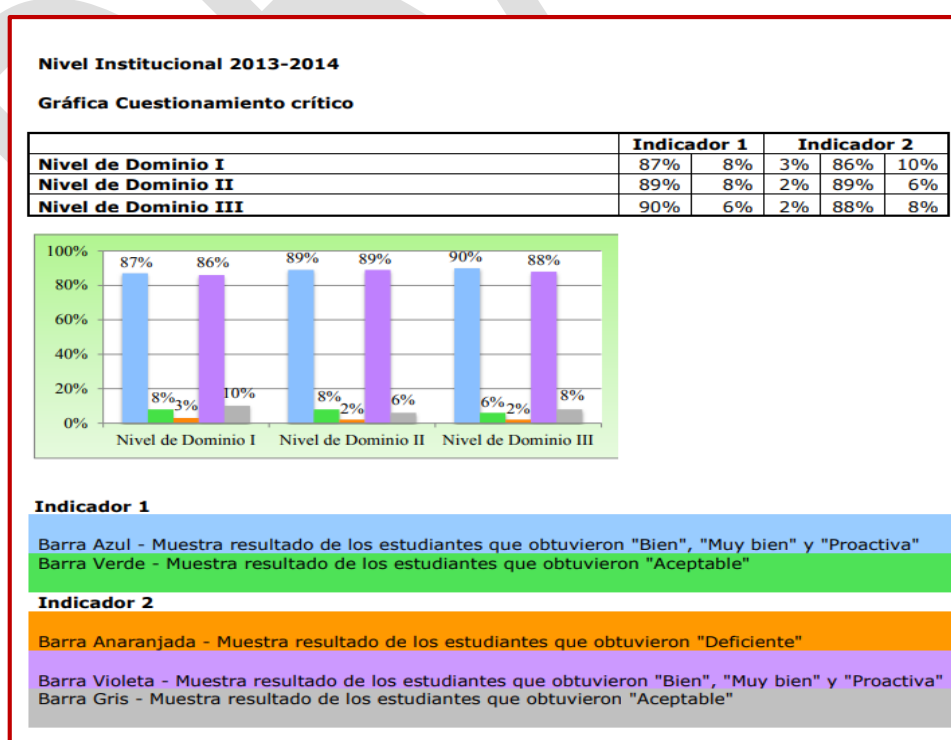
Questions	%
1. The institution helped internalize the importance of justice in its acts and professional life.	90%
2. The institution helped develop in its person the value of equity.	82%
3. The institution provided educational experiences to develop respect for the environment.	79%
4. The institution helped to develop the concept of integrity through its study program.	94%
5. The institution helped to create conscience about the importance of liberty in your professional life.	90%
6. The institution helped to develop ethical concepts that will be present in your professional life.	93%



Source: [Informe de avalúo del aprendizaje de los estudiantes 2013-14](#), p. 14.

Assessment results based on direct measures on Critical Thinking showed that around 87% of the students mastered the three levels of that competency. These results are shown in the following figure. This assessment information is validated by the "Exit Interview" where 87% of the students agree and totally agree that the institution helped them develop the capacity for analysis and reflection on the opinion of others. Students' opinion survey (indirect measure) coincides with the results of the evaluation of the students' work (direct measurement). Therefore, the competence of Critical Thinking is developing adequately in the Institution. As evidenced, these competencies are related to the educational, freethinking and moral conscience aspect of the mission.

Figure 4: Results of the institutional assessment from ethics competency for the 2013-2014.



Source: [Informe de avalúo del aprendizaje de los estudiantes 2013-14](#) p. 16.

Goal 2: Redesign the interaction between the surroundings and academic projects.

- *Support students to achieve their academic goals through services designed for them as center and reason to exist by means of a teaching and non-teaching staff committed to the institutional values and prepared to meet 21st Century challenges. (PE 2014-17)*
- *Redesign the interaction model between the surroundings and the academic project based on innovation, social responsibility, and entrepreneurship in order to impact the immediate context: business of all levels and sizes, non-profit sector, community-based initiatives, and government, among others. (PE 2017-20)*

Sagrado's institutional goal, as mentioned before, are part of the Strategic Plans that cover the period under analysis, which in turn are student centered. (C2) Thus, the institutional goals are designed to support the student experience as related to learning and life on campus. Sagrado promotes active learning in an environment of social and pedagogical innovation based on classroom experiences that are committed, personalized, participatory, and pertinent.

Among these instructional practices, one of the most significant is Service Learning. Specifically, service learning is organized through the [Centro de Vinculación Comunitaria](#) (CVC; Center for Community Engagement) established in 1998 (C1e) whose goal is to provide students with opportunities to develop civic engagement leading to a positive impact in the community through a manifold of courses. The CVC has supported faculty and students in the development and implementation of projects using the service learning methodology, [Informe de CVC 2008-2012](#). As shown in the table below, students have performed 91,082 service hours between 2008 and 2017.

Table 1: Average of the performance (2008-2017) Centro de Vinculación Comunitaria

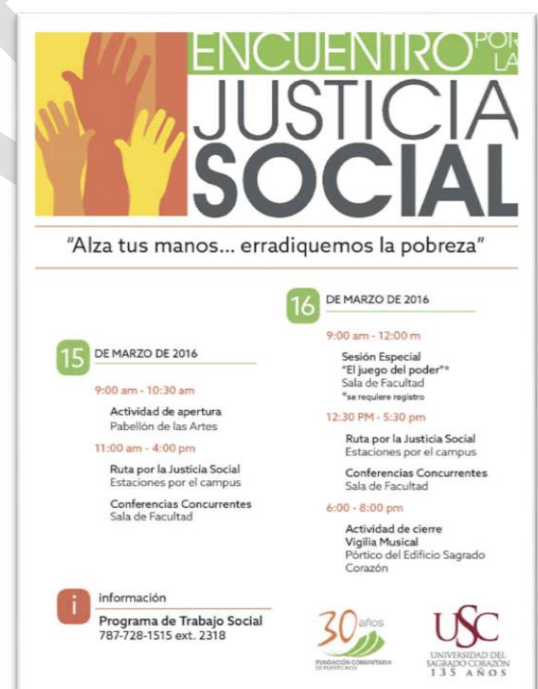
Centro de Vinculación Comunitaria 2008 al 2017					
Courses	Students	Faculty	Projects	Organizations	Hours of services
19	543	21	762	63	91,082

Sagrado also promotes co-curricular activities that sponsor community-based learning experiences for students. Centro de Pastoral Universitaria ([Pastoral](#); University Pastoral

Center) has led several projects in this category. [Comesa](#), a soup kitchen for students in need, is set up as a traditional relief effort through food service and it includes workshops and other activities geared to promote co-responsibility and entrepreneurship through recycling campaigns and *giving-back* or *passing-on* exercises. It is operated with students working as volunteers and donations from the administration, alumni, and other community members. Another initiative is [Conéctate](#), which started in January 2016 and promotes transformative leadership. A different activity was [Simposios de Teología y Pastoral](#) which was organized with faculty as a forum where the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, as it relates to environment, was discussed.

Faculty and students also participated in the development and deployment of academic conferences: el [Encuentro por la Justicia Social](#), [las Jornadas de los Derechos Humanos](#), [las Jornadas de Género](#), among others. In these interdisciplinary events, organized in order to promote social justice and respect for diversity as stipulated in the mission, arises the perfect opportunity to analyze the current state of things, exchange information, update knowledge, and discuss possible actions. In this fashion, the institution promotes “the search for knowledge in an environment of intellectual freedom through an integral education that is participatory, personalized and pertinent to our times” [Catálogo \(2014-2016](#), p. 4). (C1e)

In accord with its institutional goals and objectives, Sagrado establishes different relationships with a variety of institutions and organizations. These foster the development of committed citizens that contribute to a constantly changing society through innovative curricular and co-curricular experiences.



Goal 3: Promote an experience that integrates emotional and cognitive intelligence with high-tech to support students in their academic pursuit.

- *Promote an experience that integrates coaching, human touch and high-tech to support students in their academic life by means of spaces, (co)curricular and extracurricular activities that allow for integral growth, commitment and result in a sense of pride and belonging. (PE 2017-20)*

As previously stated, the CVC is one of Sagrado's longest running and most significant project. It is aligned with the mission and has a significant role in the process of achieving institutional goals. A particular course that has become a flagship for CVC is the [Caño Martín Peña Research Project](#) where every semester, since it initiated in fall of 2000, students enrolled in the General Microbiology—Bio 206 course have done bacteriological analysis of the water from the Martín Peña Channel in order to detect and quantify coliforms. The community service-learning component allows the students to create strategies to promote environmental justice through awareness campaigns with social impact in the community. Thus, they learn the science and share the knowledge while living the second part of Sagrado's mission: *"participate in the development of a more authentically Christian Puerto Rican society, a community united in justice and peace"*.



Students are the center of the academic project; therefore, there are varieties of programs to support students' learning experience. For example, since 2001 Sagrado has offered diverse first year experiences to students, in order to ease their transition to

university life ([Self-Study Report 2008](#), p. 63; SSR). The current project started in 2011 is a course developed through a proposal titled "[Retaining and Graduating through Technologically-Based Empowerment](#)" funded by Title V-HSI. [The Freshmore Experience Project](#) (FEP) course is a first year experience geared to empower students by strengthening social skills and academic competencies required to succeed in the University.

Goal 4: Strengthen the organizational structure, procedures, and processes to increase efficiency and productivity.

- *Strengthen the organizational structure and routines through continuous improvement of processes that will increase efficiency and productivity. (PE 2017-20)*

The Centro para el Enriquecimiento de la Docencia y Tecnología Educativa (CEDTEC; Educational Technology and Faculty Enrichment Center) has been instrumental in supporting both the goal of technologies and pedagogical strategies that support students' experience and the strengthening of the University's organizational structure. It does so by providing faculty with ways of developing better practices inside and outside the classroom. CEDTEC's objectives are to assist faculty in the integration of educational trends, enhance the teaching and learning process, and support the online education project. It also offers workshops that range from use of new technologies, through the creation of contents and instructional design for courses, to the development of teaching methodologies (C1e).

As discussed in the Periodic Review Report 2013 ([PRR](#)), CEDTEC classifies the workshops in three categories that are derived from the institutional goals: 1-classroom experience as the locus of life-long learning strategies for global interaction; 2- student as center and reason to exist of the educational project; 3- faculty as agent of the institutional vision. CEDTEC convened 281 workshops with 2,759 participants [Informe de Actividades Desarrollo Profesional 2012-2017](#); CEDTEC: [Resumen de actividades y asistencia años académicos 2012-2017](#).

The Vice-presidencia de Asuntos Académicos (VPAA; Vice-presidency of Academic Affairs) charged CEDTEC in 2016 to conduct a need assessment among faculty members in order to establish a baseline and develop priorities for faculty development [Análisis de las Respuestas del Estudio de Necesidades](#). This project, detailed in Standard III, was titled Reconocimiento, Redescubrimiento y Revolución Educativa R3.



Photo: Staff

The VPAA also encourages faculty members to participate in the various opportunities the [Faculty Resource Network](#) [Faculty Resource Network at New York University Participation Report for the University of Sacred Heart dated

June 2018] offer. Since the inception of the partnership in 1998, 93 faculty members have participated in a total of 140 programs, seminars, and workshops.

Sagrado, as a community shares the main responsibility of teaching, as presented in the mission. However, this commitment is not limited to faculty and includes staff. Thus, diverse experiences are designed to support the optimization and continuous improvement of their performance through the ODHR. For example, from 2009 to 2015 the University engaged in a project called [Transfórmate](#) with the assistance of the consulting firm QBS, Inc. (discussed in Standards II and VI) ([PRR](#), pp. 29-30). This project was designed to facilitate institutional culture change to enable modifications in routines and practices in order to increase productivity there were significant results:

- the elaboration of transitional approaches to cross training;
- the reformulation of intermediate managerial levels;
- the offering of continuing education to supervisors;
- the designing of a succession plan; and
- a prioritization plan to improve student services and institutional operations.

More recent projects include a series of technologically based support systems that make Sagrado's routines more effective. As will be discussed in Standard VI, some of these are:

- [Attendance Management System](#)] for administrative personnel;
- Performance Management System ¹³ for staff and administrative personnel; and
- The investment in [Jenzabar](#), a software that allows the University to enhance its efficiency by unifying all administration and academic aspects of higher education in a single platform. (C2)

These strategies to optimize the organization are discussed in detail in Standards II and VI.

Goal 5: Develop and implement strategies for increasing funding and revenues to allow the financial stability and sustainability of the University.

- *Develop strategies and possible actions to increase funding and revenues and reach efficiency levels that will allow financial stability for the University. (PE 2014-2017)*

¹³ Sistema Gerencial de Desempeño [Taller I - Redacción de Objetivos SMART](#), [Taller II - Evaluación de Desempeño ADP Workforce Now](#), [Taller III – Destrezas Gerenciales para el manejo efectivo de Sistema de Gerencia de Desempeño](#)

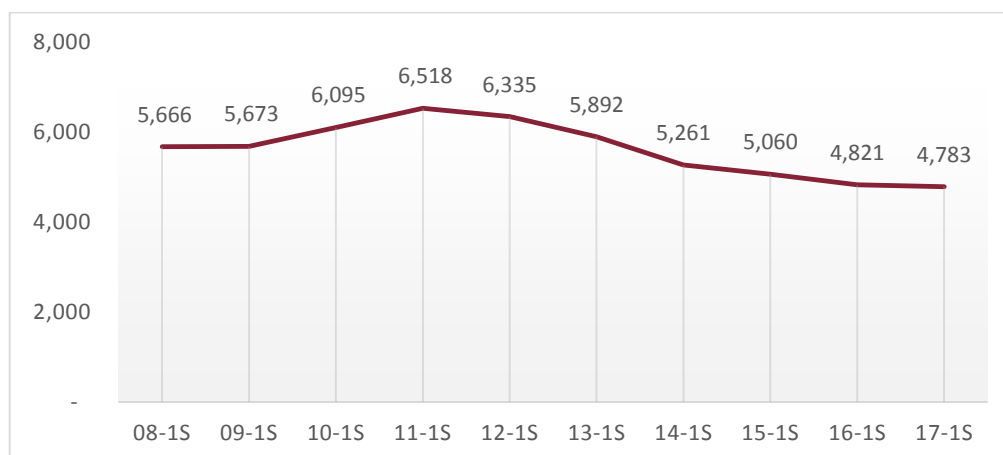
- *Develop innovative strategies and possible actions to increase funding and revenues and reach efficiency levels that will allow financial stability for the University. (PE 2017-2020)*

Sagrado's economic model is mainly that of a tuition driven institution and as such dependent on student enrollment. However, different approaches have been examined in order to increase efficiencies and attain financial stability while honoring its commitment to the mission, as will be discussed in Standard VI. There are three primary strategies: internal efficiencies, alternative revenue sources, and external funding.

Internal efficiencies

Internal efficiencies have been designed and put in place in all areas of the University. (Standard VI). Academic programs have been examined and prioritized taking into account three variables: 1-economic profile, 2-impact on mission, and 3-opportunities for the program. This Priorization Project has had three phases. The first two phases took place between 2004 and 2013: [Proyecto de Priorización de Programas Académicos, 2008](#) and [Proyecto de Priorización de Programas Académicos basados en el Modelo Dickenson, 2012](#) (rev. March 2013). Both phases were developed with assistance from the consulting firm Estudios Técnicos, Inc. The third phase used a different model and was carried out with by the consulting firm [QBS](#) between 2016 and 2017.

Figure 5: Total of enrollment (undergraduate and graduate) 2007-2017.



As a result, Sagrado has gradually examined each academic program and has established a moratorium and closing timeline or an active revitalization effort. As presented in [Academic Programs Report](#), the number of academic programs has decreased accordingly, guided by the criteria established in the three phases of the Priorization Project. This reduction allows

for a more efficient operation, but above all, makes viable opportunities for the University to explore new academic areas of potential development.

As mentioned before, Sagrado has engaged in several instances of institutional culture change to increase productivity such as cross training, the reformulation of intermediate managerial levels, the offering of continuing education to supervisors (2010-2014) such as the [Academia de Desarrollo de Talentos](#). In addition, a [Voluntary Transition Program](#) for employees was organized in 2015.

Alternative revenue sources

The alternative revenue sources are mostly rental of Sagrado's facilities and technological centers such as the theater, Teatro Emilio S. Belaval, classroom, and meeting places, Communication Center's studios, among others, that will be discussed in Standard VI. In addition, units such as Continuing Education provide additional sources of revenue.

External funding

Development initiatives, aligned to the strategic plan, enrich revenue sources and the University's overall finances. During the past years, the University Relations and Advancement Office has strengthened the Capital Fund, Endowment Fund and Scholarship Fund through fundraising campaigns. Sagrado has procured approximately \$15.4M through the fundraising strategies developed between 2008 and 2017 which will be further discussed in Standard VI.

As presented in this section, Sagrado's mission defines its reason to exist: students. The mission has two areas that are underlined and are the basis for the strategic plans and institutional goals. The first one is to "***educate intellectually free and morally responsible individuals***" [Emphasis added]. This is achieved and evidenced through curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities organized by faculty and non-faculty alike. The second area is that the result of this education enables individuals to "***participate in the development of a more authentically Christian Puerto Rican society, a community united in justice and peace***" [Emphasis added]. Once again, data presented is evidence that the mission is fulfilled. However, there is room for improvement and recommendations are presented bellow.

Recommendations:

In the analysis of this Standard, the following areas were identified as areas for improvement and further development:

- a. The reinstatement of a mission assessment tool similar to the Mission Benchmark and Tracking Study as of a regular practice and should include all stakeholders including alumni and BoT.

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Ethics and Integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Compliance with the Standard and Criteria

Sagrado meets the nine criteria and all sub-criteria of Standard II and is in compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation 1, 5, and 6. Evidence that demonstrates this can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap and is analyzed in the following section.

Criterion Number	Standard II Criterion	Meet Criterion
C1	Commitment to academic and intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights	✓
C2	Climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives	✓
C3	A fair and impartial grievance policy that is documented and disseminated	✓
C4	Avoidance of conflict of interest	✓
C5	Fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of employees	✓
C6	Honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admissions materials and practices, and in internal communications	✓
C7	As appropriate to mission, services, or programs in place:	✓
C7a	To promote affordability and accessibility	✓
C7b	To enable students to understand funding sources, options, value received for cost, and methods to make informed decisions about incurring debt	✓
C8	Compliance with all applicable federal, state, and Commission reporting policies, regulations, and requirements regarding:	✓
C8a	Full disclosure of information on institution-wide assessments, graduation, retention, certification, and licensing board pass rates	✓
C8b	The institution's compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation	✓
C8c	Substantive changes affecting mission, goals, programs, operations, sites are disclosed in a timely and accurate fashion	✓
C8d	The institution's compliance with the Commission's policies	✓
C9	Periodic assessment of ethics and integrity in institutional policies, processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented	✓

Sagrado is a higher education institution organized in compliance with the laws and regulations that govern licensed higher education organizations in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Consejo de Educación de Puerto Rico ([CEPR](#)) [Certification No. 2016-530 dated

October 2016] and the United States federal laws required by the [Middle States accrediting agency](#). Sagrado's academic and administrative activities are also governed by institutional norms, such as policies and procedures that promote the principles of justice, equity and other ethical values as expressed in the mission and vision. Sagrado's commitment is made explicit in many documents as will be presented throughout this section; however, as a Catholic institution the University holds dearly the sanctity of human life. Therefore, ethical conduct of all members of the community is expected and the belief that human dignity is the foundation of all the principles of the social teachings of the Church which guides institutional and personal actions.

Mission, Christian values, and goals

The University is steadfast to the principle of treating each member of our community with respect and dignity. As expressed publicly on the institutional website, the University prohibits discrimination and harassment and provides equal opportunity for all members of the community and applicants regardless of race, color, nationality, religion, civil status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship or status as a covered veteran Faculty Handbooks¹⁴, Employee Handbooks¹⁵, [Reglamento de Estudiantes](#), [Política de Igualdad de Oportunidades en el Empleo](#).

For Sagrado, "the human person and [Christian values](#) are the center of the educational project" For this reason, the Institution "is guided by an ecumenical spirit and an openness to pluralistic dialogue" promoting "respect for the dignified life of every human being" [Estatutos \(2018](#), p.1). Thus, the University professes a commitment to essential human equality. The mission and vision of the University provide the framework and foundation of Sagrado's pledge to offer an excellent academic experience and policies and procedures outlined in the context of ethical principles and integrity.

Sagrado is recognized as a humanistic, integral, Christian, and innovative institution that promotes active learning. Sagrado's strategic plan is centered on solidarity, creativity, entrepreneurship and sustainability. Our students are expected to:

- (Co) design an educational experience about their strengths and passions. Learn collaboratively from its context, generating impact in its environment.

¹⁴ [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#)

¹⁵ [Manual del Empleado](#); [Manual del Empleado 2017](#)

- (Co) create an interdisciplinary and culturally vibrant environment that fosters the scalability of its innovations, research and ventures.
- Cultivate their character, their civic leadership and their integral formation as part of a community committed to coexistence in solidarity ([PE 2017-20](#), p.17).

As presented in the section corresponding to Standard I, Sagrado's institutional goals within the period covered in this Self Study have evolved from one strategic plan to another.

However, the goals are organized from a strategic perspective and kept in line with the mission and vision. The current goals, as presented in the [PE 2017-20](#), are:

Figure 6: Strategic Plan 2017-2020 goals.

Educate citizens with the competencies, knowledge and skills needed for a productive insertion in society by way of an academic offer that is interdisciplinary, flexible, innovative, different, and pertinent to the challenges of the 21 st Century.
Redesign the interaction model between the surroundings and the academic project based on innovation, social responsibility, and entrepreneurship in order to impact the immediate context: business of all levels and sizes, non-profit sector, community based initiatives, and government, among others.
Promote an experience that integrates coaching, human touch and high-tech to support students in their academic life by means of spaces, (co)curricular and extracurricular activities that allow for integral growth, commitment and result in a sense of pride and belonging.
Strengthen the organizational structure and routines through continuous improvement of processes that will increase efficiency and productivity.
Develop innovative strategies and possible actions to increase funding and revenues and reach efficiency levels that will allow financial stability for the University.

In order to achieve these goals, we must foster an environment where the community feels free to explore, create and share their experiences in the knowledge that their work will be respected and protected. Acknowledgement and respect for the rights of authorship and invention is fundamental and nonnegotiable for Sagrado. (C1) All policies and contracts¹⁶ (employment, service, and third party) honor intellectual property rights, such as copyrights, patents and trademarks, and each has procedures¹⁷ in place to investigate and address violations.

¹⁶ Samples of executed contracts are available for review upon request.

¹⁷ [Política de Honestidad Académica](#), [Política para la Protección de los Derechos de Autor y el uso de Fotocopias o Reproducción de Obras 2010](#); [Política Institucional sobre Derechos de Autor para la Educación a Distancia 2001](#).

Intellectual freedom

Sagrado represents its commitment to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights, through its policies and handbooks such as Código de Conducta Ética ([CCE](#)), Faculty Handbooks¹⁸, [Reglamento de Estudiantes](#), and Employee Handbooks¹⁹; [Política para la Protección de Derechos de Autor y el Uso de Fotocopias y Reproducciones de Obras](#); [Política Institucional sobre Derechos de Autor para la Educación a Distancia](#). The CCE makes explicit reference to the concept of intellectual property, whereas academic freedom is found in the Faculty Handbooks.

Respect for intellectual freedom and intellectual property can only be guaranteed in an atmosphere that is considered by the community as safe, as stated earlier. Therefore, Sagrado encourages a climate of respect for all members of the community on-campus (students, faculty and staff) and off-campus as well. Respect for human diversity is a guiding principle for the Institution and as such, it is implemented through institutional policies²⁰.

(C2). These policies and regulations show compliance of Sagrado's ethical commitment to promote anti-discriminatory practices and to enforce the rights of every person as specified in the CCE:

The University is committed to the principle of treating each member of our community with respect and dignity. The University prohibits discrimination and harassment and provides equal opportunity for all members of the community and applicants regardless of race, color, nationality, religion, civil status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship or status as a covered veteran (CCE, p. 3) [Translation by authors].

In addition, since 2015 Sagrado has held an agreement with Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico (UIPR) [Memorandum of Understanding](#) to establish the Human Subject Protocol framework in order to assure that Sagrado's research protocols are reviewed by IUPR Internal Review Board (IRB) and comply with applicable rules and regulations. Sagrado's interest is to promote research among faculty, students and administration that is based on ethical values and, as such, protects the rights of any and all human subjects.

¹⁸ [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#)

¹⁹ [Manual del Empleado](#); [Manual del Empleado 2017](#)

²⁰ [Política para Prohibir y Prevenir el Hostigamiento Sexual dated May 1998](#); [Política de Hostigamiento Sexual en el Empleo 2017](#); [Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#); [Reglamento para ventilar Querellas bajo el Plan de Acción Afirmitiva](#); [Política Institucional de Estudiantes con Impedimentos 2000](#); [Proceso de Acomodo Razonable 2016](#); [Código de Conducta Ética](#); [Policy of Sexual Misconduct0-Title IX](#); [Procedure of Sexual Misconducto-Title IX](#).

Participation

The University's governance structure, as will be discussed in Standard VII, uses a representative model to foster stakeholders' participation, through boards and committees, in the formulation and evaluation of policies, regulations, contracts, commitments, services and programs. However, participation in decision making processes has, on occasions, been inconsistent; thus it is recommended that this area be revisited and improved.

Sagrado, true to its mission of seeking justice in all its endeavors, has policies and procedures that are equally applied ²¹ in order to fairly and unbiasedly address complaints when any situation arises where any member of the community feels uneasy or treated unfairly. Complaints are investigated by impartial officers and, often, by a committee of peers in a reasonable time or following protocols already in place²² (C3).

Table 2: Type of compliance for years

Type of complaint	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Admission and Enrollment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Counseling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial Aid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Athletics	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual Harassment	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	4
Hostile Environment	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
Sexual assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Pregnancy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marital or family status	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Job	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recruitment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reprisal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stalking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Totals	0	2	0	0	2	0	7	7

Sagrado has mechanisms that show its ethical commitment to promote fair and impartial investigation of grievances, while guaranteeing discretion and confidentiality.

²¹ [Manual del Empleado](#), [Manual del Empleado 2017](#) (Employee Handbooks); [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#) (Faculty Handbooks); [Reglamento de Estudiantes](#); [Policy on Sexual Misconduct/Title IX and Procedures](#); [Reglamento para Ventilar Querellas Bajo el Plan de Acción Afirmativa](#); [Política Institucional para el Manejo del Acoso Escolar](#) y [Protocolo Institucional para el Manejo del Acoso Escolar](#); [Política \(procedimiento\) para la Reclamación de Notas](#); [Normas Financieras](#).

²² Employee disciplinary files are available for review at HR; student disciplinary files are available at the Office of Student Affairs; Title IX files are available with the Title IX Coordinator.

Grievances claim processes²³ are explained in several documents available at the University's portal.

Controls and enforcement

Sagrado is also committed to preventing the use of controlled substances (drugs) within its community. In compliance with federal and state regulations, University policies reference the applicable laws. For example, the [Política sobre el uso de alcohol y otras drogas](#) (Policy on the Use and Abuse of Alcoholic Beverages and other Drugs); [Política para empleados sobre abuso de alcohol y uso de sustancias controladas, narcóticos y otras drogas](#) (Policy for Employees on the Abuse of Alcohol and the Use of Controlled Substances and other Drugs); [Política sobre el Uso y Posesión de Marihuana \(cannabis medicinal\) en la Universidad](#).

Compliant with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1990, Sagrado has procedures to investigate and adjudicate any violation to these policies that closely follow the procedure explained and detailed in the Student Handbook and the University Residences Handbooks. Statistical evidence²⁴ of these processes is available in compliance reports.

It is vital that all members of our community know and understand these policies. Therefore, throughout the Institution's campus and electronic platforms, at different times of the year and for different stakeholders, a variety of prevention and awareness actions are carried out using a wide-range of strategies: activities by *La Red*, trainings to faculty and staff, FEP, mi.sagrado.edu, and sagrado.edu. Counseling to the University community is offered or referred by the Centro de Desarrollo Personal (CDP, Office of Personal Development), Pastoral, ODHR, and the Employee Assistance Program.



²³ [Reglamento de Estudiantes](#); [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#) (Faculty Handbooks); [Manual Residencias Universitarias 2016](#), (University Residences Handbook); [Manual del Empleado](#), [Manual del Empleado 2017](#) (Employee Handbooks); [Procedimiento de alegaciones, querellas o solicitud de ayuda](#); [Normas Financieras](#); [Apelación a la Suspensión de Asistencia Financiera](#); [Procedure for the Resolution of Complaints of Inappropriate Sexual Conduct/Title IX Against Students](#);

²⁴ Informe Anual de Seguridad y Reporte de Incendios, [2013](#), [2014](#), [2015](#), [2016](#) [Annual Report on Security and Fire]; Informe Biannual "Drugs-free Schools and Campuses Regulations, [2011-2013](#), [2013-2015](#), [2015-2017](#); Title IX, .

All personnel and constituencies at Sagrado are expected to model the Christian values relayed in the mission: solidarity, justice and peace. In pursuit of this, the CCE was revised in order to "comply with the highest standards of honesty, integrity and impartiality" ([CCE](#), 2017, p.1). The CCE includes conflict of interest, compliance with laws, regulations and institutional policies, respect for the rights and dignity of others, interest in health and respect for the environment, academic integrity, and ethics in research, honesty and integrity in business practices, among others.

In order to ensure that the above mentioned policies and procedures can be enforced, all constituents of the University have the duty to act free of personal or external pressures that will prevent them from performing their duties on behalf of and in the best interest of Sagrado. In so doing, they must make decisions seeking to do what is right, both from a legal and ethical perspective.

University employees, regardless of their position, are guided by the principle that there must not be an actual or apparent conflict of interest between its personal interests and those of the University and, if there were, they must disclose such conflict and avoid it [Código de Ética \(1995\)](#) [Code of Ethics]; [Política Evitar Conflicto de Intereses en la Contratación con el Gobierno Federal \(1995\)](#) [Policy on the Contracting with the Federal Government]²⁵. Once a conflict of interest is disclosed or otherwise known, the appropriate office manages the situation ensuring the impartiality and autonomy of the process²⁶. (C4)

Best practices

As mentioned before, Sagrado is committed to apply the best practices in the hiring, evaluation, development, promotion, disciplining, and separation of employees. So, for example, the hiring practices for faculty are imbedded in the Faculty Manuals²⁷ and the ones applicable to staff are included in the Employee Manuals²⁸. Recently, the Institution opted to issue a separate recruitment policy for staff ([Política de Reclutamiento Personal Administrativo](#) dated July 2017)²⁹ (C5)

²⁵ The Code of Ethics and the Policy on the Contracting with the Federal Government were updated in 2018.

²⁶ Examples of conflict of interest forms signed by the trustees are available upon request.

²⁷ [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#)

²⁸ [Manual del Empleado](#), [Manual del Empleado 2017](#)

²⁹ Examples of job postings are available upon request.

To achieve its mission, Sagrado needs to have a workforce that has the competencies in alignment with their job requirements and abilities to perform with integrity their responsibilities. Supervisors are not only expected to be highly skilled and competent in their area of expertise; but also to exercise their responsibilities with leadership, following the values, as described in the mission. High-ranking staff and academic units were required to develop work plans³⁰ aligned to the University's goals.

In order to follow best practices, as of 2016, the ADP³¹ tool was phased in and staff is currently evaluated, using the Performance Management System, every year. The information gathered in the evaluation process is the basis for the design of workshops, training sessions, and cross training. It brings about recommendations for more tailored experiences for specific employees and it is similarly the basis for promotions, filling of vacancies, and new positions.

As will be discussed in Standard III, prior to 2014, semester student evaluation of faculty was done on paper. The University moved the evaluation process to an electronic platform that was unsuccessful because student participation dropped dramatically. In lieu of this, a [new process](#) was put in place and regular evaluations were resumed in 2016.

Likewise, faculty is evaluated for rank assessment by their peers and the corresponding Academic Director. This procedure is duly established in the [Manual de Evaluación de Facultad para Ascenso en Rango 2003](#); and the [Manual de Evaluación y Ascenso en Rango de la Facultad 2017](#) (Rank Assessment Handbooks) which, briefly mentioned, includes a dossier that faculty put together with student evaluations, peer evaluations, director's recommendation, and evidence of scholarly work (publications, research, artistic productions), community involvement, professional association membership, and any other pertinent information. The dossier is then evaluated by two committees (departmental and institutional) and recommendations presented finally to the Provost and President. Nevertheless, should any faculty member feel that he or she has been wronged, there are procedures in place to address this.

³⁰ Examples: Escuela de Comunicaciones Ferré Rangé [2011-12](#); Decanato de Asuntos Académicos [2012-13](#); Departamento de Empresas [2013-14](#); Departamento de Naturales [2014-15](#); Decanato de Asuntos Académicos [2015-16](#); FIEHS [2016-17](#).

³¹ Sistema Gerencial de Desempeño [Taller I - Redacción de Objetivos SMART](#), [Taller II - Evaluación de Desempeño ADP Workforce Now](#), [Taller III - Destrezas Gerenciales para el manejo efectivo de Sistema de Gerencia de Desempeño](#)

Evaluations for faculty that is not eligible for rank assessment, although required and established in the Faculty Handbooks³², are not conducted on a regular basis. However, faculty members present a yearly report to their Academic Directors where they establish major accomplishments in six areas: student engagement, scholarship, teaching, research/creation, community engagement, and institutional/departmental participation. In order to address this situation, a new evaluation process is being implemented.

In accordance with previously mentioned procedures and handbooks, Sagrado conducts disciplinary actions in a fair and impartial manner. The level of the sanction is determined based on impartial investigations, taking into consideration the nature and severity of the offense, the circumstances, the atmosphere in the community and, at times, the message that the Institution intends to convey to the community. Disciplinary actions and separation of employees is the result of careful consideration and advise, including supervisors, the Office of ODHR, the Office of the General Counsel and, if appropriate, the President. These instances are regular procedures, but there have been no particular behavioral patterns identified³³.

Every year up until 2017, the University community was invited to celebrate the commitment and loyalty of employees and recognized their years of service (in five year increments). In lieu of current changes in performance assessment, the Office of ODHR is designing a proposal for an Employee Recognition System based on merit.

Communication

All these policies, procedures, regulations, commitments, services and programs are made public for the benefit of the community through different means, taking into account its diverse audiences. The strategies for dissemination are varied: the distribution of handbooks and policies, orientations and workshops, broad and narrow casts through digital and mass media: websites, institutional portal, email, social networks. These efforts reaffirm our commitment to be open, with ethical principles and integrity.

³² [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#)

³³ Employee disciplinary files are available upon request.

Sagrado communicates the academic offer and services clearly and precisely through the distribution of promotional materials during high school visits, orientation events, fairs, its annual Open House and campus visits. Likewise, Sagrado carries [out advertising](#) and public relations efforts in traditional and digital media to [communicate promotional](#) content.

Any communication distributed to stakeholders through other critical tools, like the institutional website and portal, is reviewed and deemed accurate for publication by qualified staff. The website explicitly states the mission, vision, academic programs, admissions processes, accreditations, services, and information concerning alumni. The website is reviewed regularly; it includes faculty bios to showcase professors' experience and academic credentials. The institutional portal (mi.sagrado.edu) is an internal tool to communicate with enrolled students, faculty, and administrative personnel. Policies, regulations, student support services, financial aid, campus life, campus security, human resources, Moodle/eLearning tutorials are available for each segment (C6).

For example, during the development of the [PE 2017-20](#), in addition to town hall meetings tailored to each group of constituents, a portal was created with information, and documents to give the community the opportunity to submit comments as part of a participatory process.

The Office for Integrated Assistance (ASI) is an administrative structure that facilitates, disseminates, directs, and channels the policies procedures pertaining to all student related funds. Regarding Title IV funds, Sagrado communicates information that allows students and their parents to assess the costs as well as the opportunities available so that they can make knowledgeable decisions. Information about financial aid on tuition costs, fees, University living costs, government grants and loans, [private grants](#), and work-study is available online, in printed material, and in direct face to face communication with ASI officials ([Financial Norms](#)) (C7a, b).

Table 3: Financial aid per year

Período	Área	2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017	
		Estudiantes	Cantidad	Estudiantes	Cantidad	Estudiantes	Cantidad	Estudiantes	Cantidad	Estudiantes	Cantidad
Gobierno Federal	Beca Pell	3,890	17,203,772	3,674	16,401,928	3,367	15,267,569	3,125	14,485,011	3,334	14,297,565
	SEOG	532	281,782	515	279,083	520	287,505	507	279,000	577	279,000
	Préstamos Subsidado	2,290	7,913,681	2,170	7,737,026	2,047	7,339,116	2,051	7,382,697	2,106	7,103,257
	Préstamos No-subsidiado	1,223	6,838,163	1,157	6,567,522	1,000	5,548,823	957	5,191,557	1,084	5,551,382
	Préstamos Plus					3	6,416	7	34,948	12	75,433
	Préstamos Perkins	176	224,860	207	283,233	226	314,000				
	Work Study	682	723,098	468	459,988	488	627,271	610	643,909	659	591,050
Gobierno Puerto Rico	Veteranos	7	22,505	5	32,258	5	32,837	4	22,175		
	Suplementaria CES	1,287	640,981	1,053	540,163	705	390,367	249	125,852	335	132,000
	Suplementaria CES - Graduada					328	121,840	84	32,080		
	Otras Becas CES	203	143,912	164	142,288	155	237,369	70	170,272	10	133,183
Becas Institucionales	Rehabilitación Vocacional	94	652,502	220	869,789	266	885,160	285	369,640		
	Beca Atlética	133	469,224	126	415,014	129	406,007	93	346,185	95	346,185
	Work Study - USC	65	50,948	53	40,090	65	81,512	94	97,828	67	55,048
	Becas PAE	240	148,626	242	149,976	321	173,102	221	138,800	232	138,800
	Otras Becas (Institucionales)	1,632	1,629,790	1,536	1,545,252	1,446	1,550,797	1,422	1,377,447	268	959,186
	Otras Becas (Privadas)					47	67,497	35	54,913	118	410,515
Total		12,454	36,943,844	11,590	35,463,610	11,118	33,337,188	9,814	30,752,314	8,897	30,072,604

Between 2013 and 2015, the number of students having difficulties filling out their applications increased, resulting in a decrease number of forms submitted and completed. Consequently, in response to that challenge and as a current practice, Sagrado informs all stakeholders through the following documents on the web page and portal: [Consumer Veteran Information](#), [Consumer Student Information](#), [Access to a Cost Estimating Calculator](#) and [Financial Norms](#). In addition, a committee was set to help and assist students and their families in completing [FAFSA](#).



On a regular and recurring basis, the students must show consistency in the fulfillment of academic progress³⁴ in order to maintain the eligibility of the financial aids that have been granted. Other financial information is communicated in a simple and transparent manner so that students and parents can understand. Staff at the ASI, the Office of Admissions, the Vice-presidency of Student Affairs, and the Office of Student Success are also available to clarify students and parents' doubts (C7a, b).

ASI is an active member of the Association of Administrators of Economic Assistance Programs of Puerto Rico (PRASFAA), the National Association of

³⁴ [Normas y Procedimientos de Progreso Académico Aplicable a Estudiantes que Reciben Asistencia Económica pre-2018 pendiente; Política Progreso Académico; Refund policies; página electrónica asistencia económica](#) – Financial Aid web page.

Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA), and the Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (EASFAA), thus allowing personnel to be up to date in policies and best practices in the field.

These communication efforts underscore Sagrado's determination to comply with regulations and with its commitment to have students fully understand and make informed decisions (C 7b, 8).

Zealous of our reputation and guided by the mission, Sagrado has been able to comply with licensing and accreditation standards, and with federal and local laws that legitimize its function as an institution of higher learning. In addition, Sagrado is in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. One of the most important and also a requirement for affiliation with the MSCHE is state licensing (C8d). In 2016, the Consejo de Educación de Puerto Rico ([CEPR](#)) validated Sagrado's state license, certifying that we satisfy and comply with all accreditation requirements on the state level. This was an opportunity to verify and bring up to date some of the routine institutional documents (C8b, d).

Another important dimension of compliance is consumer information: graduation and retention rates for cohorts 2012-2016, loan disclosures, textbook information, Bi-annual Report on Drug-free Schools and Campuses Regulations (2015-2017); Informe Annual de Seguridad y Reporte de Incendios 2016 (Jeanne Clery Act); Equity in Athletics 2016, FERPA (Privacy of Student Records), Sexual Misconduct/Title IX, Information for Veterans. In compliance with the [Jeanne Clery Act](#) the website also contains the Crime Log and warnings to the community (C8a).

Sagrado makes timely notices to the CEPR³⁵ and the MSCHE on substantive changes to its academic programs, and material issues such as the strategic plan. (C8c).

Statistical data about Sagrado's graduation and retention rates is available at the [Student Consumer Information](#). Information regarding professional certifications is available in the [Catálogo Subgraduado 2014-2016](#) and, the [Assessment on Social Work Student](#). Outcomes as of May 2017 is also available in the webpage (C8a).

Finally, all applicable federal information related to IPEDS³⁶ is submitted as required (C8a).

³⁵ [Bachillerato en Música](#); [Bachillerato en Animación](#), [Visualización e Interactividad 3D](#); [Bachillerato en Danza](#).

³⁶ IPEDS Data Feedback Reports: [2012](#), [2013](#), [2014](#), [2015](#), [2016](#), [2017](#).

Assessment

Before 2015, Sagrado's review process of policies and procedures was organic and responded to particular situations as they arose. Since 2015, Sagrado has reviewed approximately 60 policies and procedures including the Faculty Manual 2017 and the Employee Manual 2017, among others. However, there is not a procedure in place that would require policy/procedure review cycle. It is recommended that Sagrado establishes said procedure.

In spite of this situation, as mentioned, these policies and procedures are reviewed by the governing boards, depending on the nature of the documents. For instance, the Employee Manual and employment-related policies, and the Code of Ethical Conduct were reviewed by the Administrative Board³⁷ that is composed of representatives of the staff, faculty and students. Other documents such as the [Estatutos de Junta Académica](#) (Bylaws) and [Reglamento Interno de Junta Académica](#) (Regulations) were reviewed by the Academic Board that is also composed by faculty and student representatives. In some cases, the BoT approves the documents, such is the case of the Employee Manual and the Faculty Manual³⁸. Once again, Sagrado has procedures in place to assess ethics and institutional integrity; nevertheless, these endeavors are not systematic (C9).

As mention in Standard I, Sagrado carried out a survey among its members called [Estudio de Misión, Ambiente y Comunicación Institucional: Informe de Resultados 2007-2012](#) (Mission Benchmark and Tracking Study). The findings of the 2013 survey demonstrate that most participants showed agreement with the following statements (p.25-44):

- Sagrado's mission was known to the community.
- Sagrado's staff members were committed to its mission.
- The mission was evident in the work carried out by the University community.
- Sagrado's mission expressed a social commitment to help its surrounding community and society at large.
- The relationships among university employees were healthy, showed solidarity and generosity.
- An atmosphere of openness, inclusion and respect for diversity was promoted in Sagrado.

³⁷ [Acta Junta Administrativa del 17 de marzo de 2017](#).

³⁸ Act dated BoT dated Marh 30, 2017, available upon request.

- Effective and timely information on University affairs was received by the community.

The results of these surveys prompted Sagrado to develop two initiatives designed specifically to address the ethics and integrity. The first project started in 2007, The Institute for the Research and the Promotion of Human Rights ([INIPRODEH](#)) is now linked to the academic program of Justice Systems. The second project was the [Ethics Institute](#) which from 2011 through 2014 pursued two goals: 1-engage selected courses from all the disciplines with the ethical component and 2-to promote that all actions and decision making processes are based on ethical principles, in accordance with the mission.

During the academic year 2013-2014, Sagrado collected data for the assessment of students' ethical sense as a transversal competency across the curriculum. Assessment results showed the following ([Informe del avalúo del aprendizaje estudiantil, 2013-2014](#), p. 11-14):

- 95% of the participating students expressed respect for the ethical principles of the university and its profession.
- 99% of the students identified examples of ethical principles in the educational experience.
- 100% of the students knew how to coexist with a plural and heterogeneous groupings with diverse perspectives.
- 100% of the students systematically showed coherence between their ethical principles and their actions.

As a reaffirmation of compliance with this Standard, it is noteworthy that the aforementioned report also showed that the vast majority of the participating students said that Sagrado helped them to internalize and recognize the importance of justice in their actions, the value of equality, the concept of integrity, and the value of freedom for their professional development (p. 13).

The documents examined illustrate that Sagrado acts ethically in institutional tasks and that it provides mechanisms that foster and update institutional practices. The Institution values integrity and ethics as aspects of rigor in the institutional policies and procedures. This has

been fundamentally guided by the mission and a compliance strategy which is driven towards regulatory and legal compliance.

Recommendations

In the analysis of this Standard, the following areas were identified as areas for improvement and further development:

- a. Establish a procedure that would require policy/procedure review cycle in a timely fashion.
- b. Develop an integrity-based assessment strategy.
- c. Strengthen the evaluation process of faculty (full and part time –already in progress).
- d. Improve participation in decision making processes to avoid inconsistencies.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

Compliance with the Standard and Criteria

The University meets the eight criteria of Standard III and is in compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation 8, 9 and 10. Evidence that demonstrates this can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap.

Criterion Number	Standard III Criterion	Meet Criterion
C1	Programs leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential, designed to foster a coherent student learning experience and to promote synthesis of learning	✓
C2	Student learning experiences that are designed, delivered, and assessed by appropriate professionals who are:	✓
C2a	Rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry, and service	✓
C2b	Qualified for their position and the work they perform	✓
C2c	Sufficient in number	✓
C2d	Provided with and use sufficient opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation	✓
C2e	Reviewed regularly and equitably based on clearly written, disseminated, and fair criteria, expectations, policies, procedures	✓
C3	Academic programs of study are clearly and accurately described so that students are able to understand and follow degree and program requirements and expected time to completion	✓
C4	Sufficient learning opportunities and resources to support both Sagrado's programs of study and students' academic progress	✓
C5	Institution offers a general education program that has:	✓
C5a	Sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience	✓
C5b	A curriculum designed to acquire and demonstrate essential skills	✓
C5c	A program in non-US institutions without general education	N/A
C6	In institutions that offer graduate and professional education, there are opportunities for students to develop research, scholarship, and independent thinking provided by qualified faculty	✓
C7	Adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval on any student learning opportunities designed, delivered, or assessed by third party providers	✓
C8	Periodic assessment of the programs providing student learning opportunities	✓

Aligned with its mission, the University evidences the evolution of an institution in constant flux, carefully tending to a student-centered academic vision with community involvement. Sagrado has a longstanding tradition of providing adequate and state of the art facilities to support its academic and community activities and has systematically gone to great lengths to maintain such commitment. It has effectively been able to merge historic buildings with contemporary spaces in order to support the academic and administrative work. Sagrado also has student housing, sports facilities, chapel, security installations, building and grounds management, food service, transportation to and from the Sagrado Corazón train station, radio stations, TV production facilities, campus-wide LAN network, the theater, art gallery and digital cinema screening room, all within a tree-lined campus. This beautiful location is surrounded by the Santurce community that is a hub of culture in Puerto Rico.

Figure 5: Campus map



Within Sagrado's tradition is a tension between keeping deep rooted conventions that has allowed a community to be held together resolute and anchored in them while taking risks that may be ominous at some point but show audacity and bravery. As stated elsewhere, Sagrado seeks to resolve this tension by means of an integral education based in solidarity and social innovation.

Curriculum

In the [SSR](#), the similarity of Sagrado's academic offering with the rest of the local market was identified as a weakness, which limited its possible differentiation. At that point, the Curriculum Committee of the Academic Board was charged with the task of researching and establishing benchmarks for a curriculum that would make Sagrado appealing to students and more competitive in the higher education field ([Informe Final de 2015-2016 del Comité de Currículo de Junta Académica](#)). The research and benchmarking period between 2008 and 2016 included particular circumstances: 1-the research for the curricular review included the historic archives to establish curricular trends within the University; 2-research also included benchmarking innovation in other liberal arts universities throughout the world; and 3-a new administration took office and had to validate the line of research.

In 2016, the Committee presented a series of recommendations in order to reduce the total number of credits for a Bachelor's degree and create a flexible course offering. As a result of this, on May 11, 2017 the Academic Board approved the creation of a new curricular structure for the Bachelors in Sagrado ([Certification 2017-09 of the Academic Board](#)). The reduction to 120 credits, as well as the new curricular design, transformed the curricular structure and organized it in three areas: 48 credits in General Education, 45 in Major and Departmental requirements, and 27 in Electives courses. This breakdown is consistent with the competences and knowledge that permeate the professional and personal development of the student.

The first group of courses, General Education, corresponds to the model of a liberal arts institution and the institutional four main competencies ([Propuesta para la estructura curricular del Bachillerato de la USC](#)):

- Communication (oral and written in Spanish and English, visual and digital),
- Critical questioning (reasoning and analysis, scientific reasoning, quantitative analysis and problem solving),

- Research / exploration (search and discernment of information and the appropriate use of technology),
- Ethics (teamwork, ethical sense and human diversity).

This curriculum structure and the addition of new language courses, such as Mandarin (2009-10), Japanese and German (2012-13), turned the academic offering mentioned in the [SSR](#), p. 87, into a clearly differentiated, innovative and versatile learning experience.

The second group of courses includes the Departmental and Major requirements that meet the disciplines' needs. Finally, the third group comprises electives which provide the opportunity for the student to explore other areas of interest, combine disciplines or explore their passions through Minors. Because of this restructuring, a broader curricular flexibility is provided. (C 1) This new structure began in fall 2017.

Dissemination

The dissemination of our curriculum offerings is done through strategies such as advertising in newspapers, social networks, television, alumni database, and through the official [web page](#) of the University and the catalogs both graduate and undergraduate, which facilitate the corresponding delivery of study plans and course syllabi (C3).

Before the new curriculum structure started, a series of town hall meetings³⁹ were held with faculty, staff, and students in order to familiarize them with this innovation. In addition, a transition process was established for those students that had 60 or less credits approved that allow them to make informed decisions on whether to change to the new curriculum. Trainings on this topic were devised for professional counselors and recruiters⁴⁰.

Academic programs

At the end of the second semester of 2016-2017, Sagrado maintained diverse academic programs for approximately 4,007 students, which was comprised of 3,728 undergraduate students (including those pursuing associate and bachelor degrees) and 282 graduate students (including postgraduate certificates and master degrees) organized in five academic units: Ferré Rangel School of Communication, Business Administration,

³⁹ Presentations: [students](#), [faculty](#).

⁴⁰ Presentation: [staff](#).

Education⁴¹, Natural Sciences, Interdisciplinary Faculty of Humanistic and Social Studies. Additionally, the University manages a Continuing Education Program (3,093 participants). Any changes in the academic offering, including creation, *moratorium* or program closures, must have the approval of the Academic Board and the BoT, and regulatory and accrediting agencies must be informed in a timely fashion.

As related in Standard I, Sagrado's academic project is a reflection of the mission and vision, and Alumni Profile, as well as of the institutional goals and objectives ([Catalogue](#); [Marco Educativo](#), pp. 24-25). Having a relevant academic offering is undoubtedly an institutional priority that is fed back through periodic processes such as assessment of student learning, curriculum reviews and other academic indicators, such as global trends [Modelo de Avalúo de la Efectividad Institucional y del Aprendizaje 2011](#) (Assessment Model of Institutional Effectiveness and Learning); [Modelo institucional de revisión de programas académicos](#) (Curriculum Revision Plan, 2010) (C5a, b) The opinion of experts, alumni, active students and employers for the periodic reviews of the study plans has also been considered in the review process (C5a, b, 7).

Other elements that have been considered in the periodic review of undergraduate and graduate academic programs are the trends in the Higher Education sector. Among these are the reduction in scholarships and the consequent decrease in enrollment, the technological advances in the teaching-learning process, and the global mobility of students. These trends frame Sagrado's [PE 2017-20](#), as well as the value proposition for the transformation of the academic project, which is based on solidarity, creativity, entrepreneurship, sustainability and transdisciplinarity. By incorporating these trends to the curriculum, the Institution fulfills its own recommendation stated in the [SSR](#).

Yet another procedure established to ensure the quality of teaching-learning practices is the [syllabi review](#) and certification protocol that keeps the documentation up-to-date and encourages professors to explore and innovate in their field and in the educational process. (C2e)

⁴¹ In 2018, the Education Department was eliminated, and its programs are now managed by the Interdisciplinary Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FIEHS).

Faculty

It is through its faculty that Sagrado's mission to *educate intellectually free and morally responsible individuals, willing to participate in the development of a more authentically Christian Puerto Rican society, a community united in justice and peace* is achieved. The Faculty represents the heart of the University because of their passion about teaching and motivation for students to grow intellectually.

The University has an adequate number of faculty members to fulfill its mission, goals and objectives. (C2c) Table 4 shows the proportion of full time faculty as opposed to adjuncts from 2008 to 2017.

Table 4: Faculty profile by type of contract during the period 2012-2018

Academic Year	Total	Full Time		Adjuncts	
		#	%	#	%
2008-09	367	122	33%	245	67%
2009-10	354	126	36%	228	64%
2010-11	384	124	32%	260	68%
2011-12	422	126	30%	296	70%
2012-13	424	130	31%	294	69%
2013-14	476	132	28%	344	72%
2014-15	401	131	33%	270	67%
2015-16	451	102	23%	349	77%
2016-17	317	99	31%	218	69%
2017-18	460	98	21%	362	79%

Source: ODHR.

The total faculty of Sagrado in 2008 was comprised of 367 individuals of whom 122 (33%) were full time and 245 (67%) were adjuncts as compared to 2017, where faculty comprised of 460 individuals, of whom 98 (21%) were full time and 362 (79%) were adjuncts. This evidences a change in composition since last MSCHE visit. The reduction in full time faculty is mostly due to retirement.

The University has an experienced and qualified faculty, responsible for its educational programs, recognizing that a high-quality education is strongly tied to a well-prepared faculty committed with the teaching-learning process. (C2b) Faculty qualifications are assessed in terms of the expertise needed to address Sagrado's diverse academic programs. The University's faculty has conducted graduate studies in recognized institutions of higher learning in Puerto Rico, United States, Latin America, and Europe. Table 6 shows the number

of faculty with terminal degrees. The number of faculty holding doctoral and terminal degrees has been stable around a 27%. Currently, there are faculty holding Ph.D. degrees or equivalent in all departments.

Table 5: Faculty profile by academic degree during the period 2012-2018.

Academic Year	Total	Ph.D. or Equivalent	%	Master's	%	Bachelor's	%	Other's*	%
2008-09	367	99	27%	236	64%	16	4%	16	4%
2009-10	354	95	27%	223	63%	18	5%	18	5%
2010-11	384	120	31%	230	60%	17	4%	17	4%
2011-12	422	117	28%	260	62%	30	7%	15	4%
2012-13	424	110	26%	267	63%	32	8%	15	4%
2013-14	476	132	28%	296	62%	33	7%	15	3%
2014-15	401	115	29%	246	61%	31	8%	9	2%
2015-16	451	124	28%	277	61%	33	7%	17	4%
2016-17	317	92	29%	187	59%	25	8%	13	4%
2017-18	460	123	27%	296	64%	17	4%	24	5%

*First level professional

Source ODHR.

Currently, the professorial ranks for Sagrado faculty are distributed in the following way:

51% Professors, 16% Associate Professors, 13% Assistant Professors, and 19% Instructors.

Once again, this compares with data from 2008: 67% Professors, 10% Associate Professors, 11% Assistant Professors, and 11% Instructors. As shown in Table 7, the highest professorial ranks, Professor, Associate and Assistant, constitute 80% of Sagrado faculty. Promotions occur regularly which demonstrates an increase in the number of associate professors.

Table 6: Faculty profile by academic ranks during the period 2012-2018.

Academic Year	Total	Professor		Associate Professors		Assistant Professor		Instructor	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2008-09	122	82	67%	12	10%	14	11%	14	11%
2009-10	126	85	67%	14	11%	15	12%	12	10%
2010-11	124	86	69%	11	9%	15	12%	12	10%
2011-12	126	83	66%	15	12%	15	12%	13	10%
2012-13	130	85	65%	13	10%	16	12%	16	12%
2013-14	132	83	63%	15	11%	20	15%	14	11%
2014-15	131	82	62%	14	11%	19	15%	16	12%
2015-16	102	55	54%	10	10%	16	16%	21	19%
2016-17	99	53	54%	12	12%	17	17%	17	17%
2017-18	98	50	51%	16	16%	13	13%	19	19%

Source ODHR.

Regarding the faculty profile by gender, as of 2017 more than half of the professors or 58% are female and 42% male. This compares with 2008 where the faculty profile by gender was 51% female and 49% are male. The representation of women Sagrado faculty has remained

stable over the last 10 years as shown in Table 7. The gender gap present in most universities around the world is not a reality in Sagrado.

Table 7: Full time and adjunct faculty profile by gender during the 2012-2018 period.

Academic Year	Total	Female		Male	
		#	%	#	%
2008-09	367	188	51%	179	49%
2009-10	354	182	51%	172	49%
2010-11	384	200	52%	184	48%
2011-12	422	228	54%	194	46%
2012-13	424	231	54%	193	46%
2013-14	476	261	55%	215	45%
2014-15	401	224	56%	177	44%
2015-16	451	245	54%	206	46%
2016-17	317	179	56%	138	44%
2017-18	460	269	58%	191	42%

Source ODHR.

Student:professor ratio

Currently, the [student-faculty ratio](#) at Sagrado is 20:1, which is considered above ratio when compared to the national average for college student-to-faculty ratios (18:1), according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Credit Load

At Sagrado, full time faculty is expected to teach a minimum of 15 credits per semester. They may opt to teach additional courses, if available, although it is not required or recommended. The maximum faculty teaching load is 24 credits per semester Faculty Handbooks⁴². At the graduate level, faculty is required a terminal degree (mostly doctoral level). There is a limited group of faculty members fully dedicated to the graduate programs; however, their teaching load can be completed with undergraduate courses.

Development

All faculty members are expected to keep up-to-date in their fields, engage in academic research and other scholarly activities, and community service. Faculty must submit yearly reports to evidence the fulfillment of their academic and administrative responsibilities.

Professional development for the faculty was designed through transformative workshops. In addition, CEDTEC provided training and support in the use of educational technologies,

⁴² [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#)

assessment and innovative teaching methods. Between 2008 and 2013 an average of 300 faculty members participated in approximately 27 sessions per year ([PRR](#)).

With the establishment of the [Programa de Desarrollo Profesional de la Facultad](#) in 2013 (C2d), full-time professors are required to complete 12 hours of continuing education every year. From 2013 to the end of this review period, an average of 690 faculty members participated in approximately 70 [sessions per year](#). This represents a doubling of the number of participants and sessions as compared to the last PRR.

All new faculty (whether full or part time) must complete an [induction process](#). In this workshop, professors are familiarized with the institutional mission, objectives, rules, policies, and procedures: [Política de Mejoramiento Profesional para Profesores Nuevos y Parciales](#).

Similarly, since 2008 every professor hired to offer online courses must be certified in the [Proceso de certificación de la facultad para ofrecer curso a distancia](#). The purpose of this workshop is to present faculty with the online instructional design strategies and best practices for virtual learning experiences and the relevance of connectivity in the achievement of the virtual community. In all, 180 [professors](#) (22 full-time, 158 part-time) from all the academic units were certified through 35 workshop sessions aimed at developing the faculty skills to offer both face-to-face and virtual courses to undergraduate and graduate students. (C2a)

In order to better meet the professional development requirements of the faculty, needs assessments were carried out in years [2015](#) and [2016](#). This information is also used in the preparation of the biannual professional development activities calendar, which is submitted to the VPAA for evaluation and alignment with the institutional goals. As explained in Standard I, these [activities](#) are organized and promoted through CEDTEC and their documentation shows that between 2012 and 2017, 360 activities were carried out, such as workshops, conferences, webinars and informal talks and 3,526 participants were recorded. Additional faculty training is also provided through other academic projects, such as [CVC](#), [Neeuko](#), STEMmED, and LAD.

Faculty interested in doing research (C2d) submit proposals to Centro de Investigación Académica (CEINAC; Center for Academic Research) and is granted compensation or academic [release time](#) to carry out projects. [CEINAC](#) has approved 37 proposals with the highest number of proposals during the academic year 2012 with 12 proposals. In addition to the efforts made through CEINAC, the faculty is encouraged to participate in the [Faculty Resource Network's](#) different programs as mentioned in Standard I.

Evaluations

The above-mentioned support initiatives are in place to enhance faculty's teaching skills. Since Sagrado is primarily a teaching institution, the principal activity and responsibility for faculty members is to educate. Therefore, a vital portion of the evaluation process dwells on this. Faculty are evaluated in different manners: peer-to-peer, student evaluations, and rank assessment.

1-Peer-to-peer

The professors of each academic unit, which also include the department chairs, perform peer evaluations in the classroom based on mastery of the subject matter, teaching ability and interaction with students Faculty Handbooks⁴³.

2-Student evaluations

Each semester students evaluate faculty members through a questionnaire that was administered for several years by the Oficina Institucional de Investigación y Avalúo (OIRA; Office of Institutional Research and Assessment). However, there is a gap in data in the years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.

The gap in data is a result of the University moving to *Livertext*, an electronic platform designed to gather and analyze assessment related data. This transition to a virtual process of faculty evaluation by students was not well received. The student participation dropped significantly to the point of invalidating the data and the process. Consequently, the VPAA through the unit of Assessment and Institutional Intelligence reinstated the practice using new strategies to evaluate faculty that are currently in place.

3-Rank assessment

⁴³ [Manual de la Facultad 2003](#), [Manual de Facultad 2017](#). Individual evaluations are available upon request.

Likewise, faculty is evaluated by their peers and supervisors [Manual de Evaluación y Ascenso en Rango](#). In the rank assessment process, each faculty member prepares a portfolio, or dossier, as explained in Standard II. The portfolio contains five topics for which the faculty member provides evidence: student evaluations, peer evaluations, director's recommendation, and evidence of scholarly work (publications, research, artistic productions), community involvement, professional association membership, and any other pertinent information. The dossier is then evaluated by two committees (departmental and institutional) and recommendations presented finally to the Provost and President. Clearly, a rigorous procedure.

Graduate Education

Students in the graduate program are required to present an "end of career project" that may take the form of a thesis (traditional or creative), a project designed and executed for a real client, or an international experience project ([Manual de Tesis](#); Thesis Handbook). For this final test of knowledge and competencies the student selects or is assigned (depending on the modality chosen) a Thesis Director who is charged with the responsibility of guiding the research and supervising the execution of the project with rigor and accuracy, as related to the field of inquiry. (C6) The Thesis Director should be a faculty member with expertise in research and/or the topic chosen by the student. He or she should have a terminal degree preferably in the discipline.

As presented in this section, Sagrado has a faculty that is highly professional, committed to active and creative learning methodologies, are up to date in their respective fields of knowledge. Those who conduct research engage their students to participate as part of their learning experience.

Student Learning Through Institutional Projects

Sagrado also promotes student learning experiences and the development of competencies through institutional projects. These curricular and co-curricular initiatives enhance multicultural awareness, social responsibility, interdisciplinary education and oral and written communication skills. It correspondingly promotes the commitment to education as a lifelong learning process and the integration of theory and practice. Some of these initiatives are described in this section.

Centro de Vinculación Comunitaria (CVC; Community Engagement Center)

This project offers students the opportunity to learn by doing, while providing support to key community projects and volunteer work. Through this experience, students develop the necessary skills for the labor market such as teamwork, research, problem solving, decision making and social responsibility, among others ([Guía Informativa para la Facultad con Cursos Vinculados](#)). The [CVC](#), aligned to Sagrado's mission and vision, seeks to develop and strengthen the academic skills of the student through the service-learning model, promoting practical experiences with a focus on social responsibility to collaborate in the empowerment and social justice of groups and communities, generally marginalized in society, CVC's [assessment data](#) for the 2012-2017 period shows that 187 sections of second and third level courses were engaged in direct services to the community through the development of 488 projects. For these efforts, Sagrado received the Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2015-2025).

**STEMmED II Project**

During its tenure (2011-2016), [STEMmED II Project](#) II Project built upon its predecessor's work (STEM, 2009-2010 as described in [PRR](#)), strengthening Sagrado's science culture while developing a substantial research infrastructure. State-of-the-art labs were remodeled and have been in continuous use during the project's life and beyond. A student centered pedagogical model was designed and developed. STEMmED's major impact: 1-strong tutoring and mentoring program; 2-research infrastructure; 3-pertinent and relevant faculty professional development, and 4-course redesign with strong faculty participation. The Project organized 45 workshops for science faculty. This project was funded by Title V-HSI and accordingly supervised and assessed. (C4; C7)

Centro de Lenguas y Culturas a través de las Disciplinas (LAD; Center for Language and Culture Across the Disciplines)

The [LAD](#) was designed for the development of oral and written communication skills in both Spanish and English and was Sagrado's strategy to strengthen students linguistic and communication (oral and written) competencies ([Catálogo Subgraduado 2014-16](#), p. 65). The assessment during the years 2015 and 2017 show that 1171 students in 66 course sections were impacted by the LAD [LAD for Middle States Steering Committee, p.6](#).

Sagrado Global (SG; Center for Global Education and Professional Development)

Student mobility or exchange program has been part of Sagrado's co-curricular programs. [Sagrado Global](#) is in charge of student mobility (incoming and outgoing), as shown in the following tables.

Table 8: Students in outgoing Internships

OUTGOING (STUDENTS OF SAGRADO)			
Years	# Students	Academic Unit	Country
2008-09	42	19 ECFR; 9 ADM; 13 FIEHS; 1 NAT	15 United States; 10 Latin America; 17 Europe
2009-10	44	29 ECFR; 6 ADM; 7 FIEHS; 2 NAT	10 United States; 14 Latin America; 20 Europe
2010-11	27	13 ECFR; 8 ADM; 5 FIEHS; 1 NAT	6 United States; 7 Latin America; 14 Europe
2011-12	31	13 ECFR; 7 ADM; 7 FIEHS; 4 NAT	10 United States; 6 Latin America; 15 Europe
2012-13	38	19 ECFR; 6 ADM; 10 FIEHS; 3 NAT	22 United States; 4 Latin America; 12 Europe
2013-14	39	20 ECFR; 10 ADM; 9 FIEHS; 0 NAT	16 United States; 8 Latin America; 15 Europe
2014-15	39	14 ECFR; 9 ADM; 12 FIEHS; 4 NAT	17 United States; 2 Latin America; 20 Europe
2015-16	39	18 ECFR; 9 ADM; 10 FIEHS; 2 NAT	16 United States; 9 Latin America; 14 Europe
2016-17	38	14 ECFR; 6 ADM; 14 FIEHS; 4 NAT	7 United States; 5 Latin America; 24 Europe; 1 Canada; 1 Asia
Totals	337	159 ECFR; 70 ADM; 87 FIEHS; 21 NAT	119 United States; 65 Latin America; 151 Europe; 1 Canada; 1 Asia

Table 9: Students in incoming Internships

INCOMING (STUDENTS VISITORS OF EXCHANGE)		
Years	# Students	Country
2008-09	13	7 United States; 5 Latin America, 1 Europe
2009-10	15	11 United States; 2 Latin America, 2 Europe
2010-11	12	9 United States; 2 Latin America, 1 Europe
2011-12	16	11 United States; 4 Latin America, 1 Europe
2012-13	13	8 United States; 4 Latin America, 1 Europe
2013-14	30	14 United States; 7 Latin America, 9 Europe
2014-15	29	6 United States; 8 Latin America, 13 Europe; 2 Canada
2015-16	46	4 United States; 7 Latin America, 34 Europe; 1 Canada
2016-17	62	9 United States; 2 Latin America; 45 Europe; 3 Canada; 3 Asia
Totals	236	79 United States; 41 Latin America; 107 Europe; 6 Canada; 3 Asia

In addition, SG dealt with foreign language certifications (Goethe Institute) and faculty led study abroad courses. Recently, in 2017, it was renamed Centro para Educación Global y Desarrollo Profesional (Center for Global Education and Professional Development) when it incorporated the Centro de Formación Laboral (Center for Workforce Development). The creation of this new unit has allowed further employability opportunities for the students through work, co-curricular and international experiences, transforming into a strength what was previously considered a weakness in the SSR.

SG facilitates opportunities for student exchange and mobility experiences through partnerships with [foreign universities](#). The new initiative is [Sagrado Jobs](#) which expands students' work and exchange experiences with other universities. Sagrado Jobs has a 24 hours digital platform with free didactic resources such as webinars, templates and [career](#) advice in order to strengthen the employability skills of students and graduates.

Centro de Pastoral Universitaria (Pastoral; University Pastoral Center)

As a Catholic institution, the Pastoral provides spiritual guidance, workshops to prepare missionaries, leadership programs and other social and cultural events. Pastoral is the university's ground zero for spiritual growth and community involvement. It houses a fully equipped kitchen, a terrace, entertainment rooms and a conference lounge with laptop and video projector with capacity for 30 students. The Comesa project (described in Standard I) provides nourishment for students in need as part of Center's mission.



FEP (Freshmore Experience Project)

Previously mentioned in Standard I, since 2001, Sagrado offers an introductory course that facilitates the student's development of basic skills for the university life. It is also the opportunity to introduce students with institutional projects and centers that will empower them and increase their retention. This course also allows for an easier transition to the University ([SSR](#)). The current project, which started in 2011, includes a course developed through a proposal titled "[Retaining and Graduating through Technologically-Based Empowerment](#)" funded by Title V-HSI. Details of students served are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Students enroll in GEN and FEP courses

Students enroll					
Semester	GEN 100	FEP 101	FEP 102	FEP 201	FEP 100
08-1S	131				
09-1S	102				
09-2S	3				
10-1S	12				
11-1S	21	93			
11-2s			75		
12-1s		151		51	
12-2s		16	127		
13-1s		398		103	
13-2s		15	312		
14-1s		572		247	
14-2s		47	415		
15-1s		556	64	278	
15-2s		31	457	51	
16-1s		607	59	288	
16-2s		33	461	68	
17-1s			70	279	753
17-2s			22	72	86
Total	269	2519	2062	1437	839

Among the extracurricular activities organized through this proposal, the most successful one is the Student Welcome Day (SWD).

The SWD is held on the week before classes begin every semester. It is organized to provide orientation to all students regarding Sagrado's mission, vision, and history; academic programs and units; tutoring and other student support programs; student governance and organizations; financial aid; policies and procedures; among others. Every SWD culminates with the flame lighting ceremony. This particular event has various levels of significance: Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, founder of the Society, is known as the daughter of fire; a torch lighting the flame is seen as a symbol of peace; and the passing of the torch from sophomores to freshmen shows renewal and continuity. As a result of assessment, the manner in which the SWD is deployed has changed, and every year it becomes more agile, informative, and fun.

Table 11: Student Welcome Day participation and survey

Areas	Éxito 2017		Éxito 2018		Éxito 2019	
	Students	Parents	Students	Parents	Students	Parents
Visits	488	206	390	68	405	124
Surveys completed	58	136	294	40	168	64
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Registration	98		84		99	
Dynamics	100		94		95	
Found your place	98		83		90	
Religious act (parents and students)	97	39	85	84	84	90
Activity: Encendido de la Llama (parents and students)	98		75	100	93	100
Dynamic transition and financial aspects (parents)		74		95		94
Relevant aspects of the university life (parents)		72		100		94

Practice Courses and Internships

Shown in Table 12, every academic program offers one or both experiences to students. It is a practical experience in real work scenarios with the supervision of an expert in their field of study.

Table 12: Practice courses

Academic Units	Practicum and Seminar
FIEHS	EDU 401- Preschool Education Practicum And Seminar EDU 403- Elementary Education Practicum and Seminar EDU 405- Primary Education (K-3) Practicum and Seminar EDU 407- Secondary Education Practicum and Seminar EDU 470- Seminar and Montessori Teaching Practicum Internship I EDU 471 - Seminar and Montessori Teaching Practicum Internship II EIN 408- Practicum in International Studies SJU 414- Professional Internship in The Justice System PSI 440- Practicum in Psychology TSO 403- Social Work Practicum I TSO 422- Social Work Practicum II
Departamento de Empresas	Hasta 2017 ADM 498 - Management GME 499 - Marketing TUR 498 - Tourism CON 499 - Accounting PME 499 - Practicum in Production and Marketing
Escuela de Comunicación Ferré Rangel	CMU-490 Professional Practicum CMU-300 Communication Internship
Departamento Ciencias Naturales	ENL 101 - Fundamentals of Nursing - Clinical ENF 108 - Medical Surgical Care Adult ENF 201 - Mother and Neonate Care ENF 204 - Pediatric Nursing ENF 205 - Psychiatric Nursing

Communications Center

The [Centro de Comunicación](#) (Communication Center) is part of the Escuela de Comunicación Ferré Rangel (ECFR; School of Communication Ferré Rangel) and offers students practical experiences, necessary to break into the world of media. Its facilities include television production studios with master control, lighting and draping systems, digital cameras, sound production studios, digital audio workstations and editing stations, as well as photo-studio spaces and photography lab. The Centro de Comunicación is not only a laboratory for students, it also services all other units in Sagrado. During this period, it has managed over 30,000 requests for audiovisual equipment which have been distributed amongst students and institutional projects.

Also, part of the ECFR is the Unidad Tele-radial which, in turn, includes two digital radio stations: [Radioactiva](#) and [Radiorama](#). These two-streaming visual-radio stations have been modernized and their libraries extended by the licensing and production of educational programming and musical entertainment. It also has a web platform [SagradoTV](#) and [TeleSagrado](#). The radio stations and WebTV are fully managed by students as part of doing by learning educational ethos. Table 13 shows that, during 2012-2017, 349 students have benefited from these opportunities and 36 radio programs were produced.

Table 13: Quantity of programs produced and students' participation

Year	Number of programs produced	Students who have benefited from these opportunities
2012	17	153
2013	4	69
2014	6	50
2015	3	26
2016	1	8
2017	5	43
Total	36	349

Moreover, a former classroom near the ECFR was refurbished as a 40-seat digital cinema (Sala de Cine) screening room for courses in digital cinema and production with a state of the art sound system and projection equipment.

Biblioteca Madre María Teresa Guevara (Library; Mother María Teresa Guevara Library) [Sagrado's Library](#) has also been modernized and converted into a next-generation center for information literacy and research. In 2013, it established a Digital/Virtual Reference service:

“Ask the librarian” that is a 24/7 on line service via chat or email. Since 2014, the Library includes a Learning Commons with 12 group study rooms, a service desk to handle equipment loans such as laptops, tablets, and scientific calculators. An average of 1,036 students each semester used the information skills resources through the Proyecto de Investigación y Competencias de Información al Currículo ([PICIC](#)) and other projects, an average of 2,228 technological equipment loans were performed, and an approximately 9,300 requests for use of the library’s study rooms were attended to. In addition, a digital repository (ReDis) and a data base program (Campus Café) have been installed for remote access to the library repositories.

Estudio de Tecnologías Creativas (StudioLab; Creative Technologies Studio)

Inaugurated in August 2015, it supports academic programs, collaborations, and continuing education courses in 3D animation, visualization, and interactive techniques. [StudioLab](#) is equipped with a network of graphics workstations, specialized software, and state of the art equipment that have served students through academic courses, as well as high school students, enthusiasts and professionals through boot camps, workshops and seminars⁴⁴.



Centro de Innovación Colaborativa (Neeuko; Center for Collaborative Innovation)

Neeuko, established in 2016, [Neeuko](#) seeks to empower entrepreneurial ventures, cultivate



a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship with social impact in the University community and its urban environment. Neeuko was conceived as a space to serve students, faculty and the community. It includes co-working stations, meeting rooms, a

⁴⁴ Studio LAB [Presentation](#)

modern fabrication lab and specialized equipment to develop entrepreneurial or socio-cultural projects for students and organizations. Neeuko has collaborations with three of the four academic departments, and eight student projects. Approximately 423 students are enrolled in related courses. Neeuko has developed 15 socio-economic and educational alliances. Over 108 high school students have participated in innovation programs, and approximately 600 people have participated in workshops, seminars and entrepreneurship talks [Informe Anual Neeuko 2016-17](#).

Instituto de Artes Musicales (IAM; Institute of Musical Arts)

Also established in 2016, the [IAM](#) is another cutting-edge initiative for students interested in studying music as part of a multidisciplinary training that will expand their academic and professional skills. The IAM has specialized rooms and musical instruments that have benefited 110 students in 2015-2016 through 2016-2017. In addition, the IAM hosts the University choir that has grown from approximately 20 students to over 40.



Some of these experiences that foster the core competencies and professional development of students are included in the [Extracurricular Transcript](#) issued by the Registrar's Office. However, all this infrastructure would be irrelevant to the mission if Sagrado did not offer excellent academic programs grounded in the principles of active learning and teaching-learning practices that ensure a participatory, personalized, and pertinent experience for our students in local and global environments.

Throughout this section multiple instances have evidenced how Sagrado embraces ways in which students can have excellent learning experiences. These instances include proper spaces, equipment and other infrastructure that enable students to enrich their time in Sagrado. But, mainly, Sagrado has put in place all the resources so that the academic programs are of the highest quality due to a highly motivated and very accomplished faculty.

Recommendations:

In the analysis of this Standard, the following areas were identified as areas for improvement and further development:

- a. The University must ensure every faculty member (full or part time) is periodically evaluated by their peers, supervisors and students.
- b. Continue and increase faculty development and resource allocations for research and active learning teaching methodologies.

Standard IV: Support for the Student Experience

THIS STANDARD IS STILL BEING WORKED ON:

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system, sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

Compliance with the Standard and Criteria

Sagrado meets the six criteria and all sub-criteria of Standard IV and the Requirements of Affiliation #s 8 and 10. Evidence that demonstrates that SAGRADO meets Standard IV can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap.

Criterion Number	Standard IV Criterion	Meet Criterion
C1	Clearly stated ethical policies and processes to admit, retain, and facilitate student success:	✓
C1a	Including accurate and comprehensive information about expenses, financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans repayment, and refunds	✓
C1b	With a process by which students who are not adequately prepared for the study at the level where they have been admitted are identified, placed, and supported in attaining appropriate educational goals	✓
C1c	Including orientation, advisement, and counseling programs to enhance retention and guide students throughout their educational experience	✓
C1d	With processes designed to enhance students' success in achieving their educational goals	✓
C2	Policies and procedures regarding evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits earned in various ways	✓
C3	Policies and procedures for the safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information and records	✓
C4	Student life and other extracurricular activities are regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles and policies that govern all programs	✓
C5	Adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of student support services, designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers	✓
C6	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of program supporting the student experience	✓

Sagrado is recognized for its vibrant student life and, particularly, its undergraduate student body's engagement in a wide-range of activities. Students' voices and leadership are valuable for the University's development. As discussed in this Standard, both students' needs and opinions are constantly assessed through multiple strategies: student assemblies, particular studies, and intelligence provided by dozens of student organizations.

Retention

Following the [PRR](#) recommendations and aligned with the mission and strategic goals, Sagrado embarked in significant transformations from 2012 to 2017. Among them, the student retention programs were strengthened through three programs: 1-FEP, 2-ASI, and 3-@Ser.

1-FEP

FEP courses provide first year students an immersive and guided segue into university life (as discussed in Standards I and III). Between 2000 and 2011, the first-year experience course classified as GEN 101 (SSR, p. 63) was designed specifically for students with less than 500 points in any part of the College Board Test. The first Title V sponsored first year experience courses were designed during 2010-2011 and started in 2011-2012. They were three-one credit courses per semester.

A new three-course sequence was designed and identified as FEP 101, 102 and 201, to accompany students as they move from freshman to sophomore year, stressing competencies such as self-awareness and conflict resolution, and moving on to teamwork, global awareness and ethics. Student overall satisfaction with the revised first seminar (FEP 101) increased from 87% in 2011 to 94% in 2012 ([PRR](#), p. 46).

2-ASI

ASI is a central facility that integrates multiple services in one place including self-service technology for students. The main goal of this project is to move all administrative services to a web-based environment.

As stated in the PRR and presented in the following table, ASI periodically assesses student satisfaction and as a result additional services and initiatives are put in practice. For example, since June 2013, a new system (Turnos.pr) was implemented to integrate mobile reminders of turns and provide students with a more agile service. ASI also offers Direct

Deposit of financial aids and loans surplus amounts. A new module was implemented for a faster notification of students' loan approvals. In the tradition of student satisfaction, Turnos.pr and Direct Deposit improves students' experience by decreasing waiting time and implementing new methods to request appointments. (C1a)

Figure 6: Number of students attended by year in ASI.

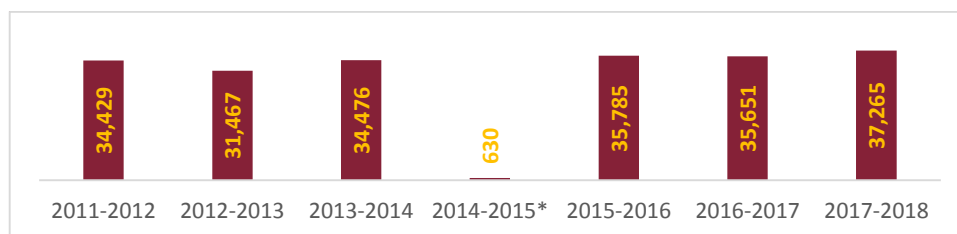
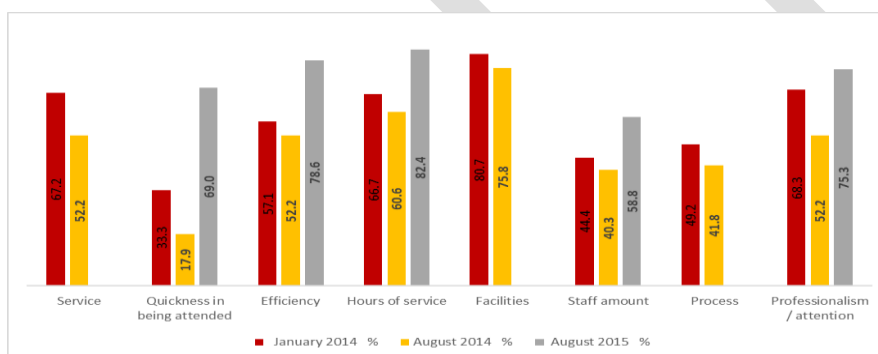


Figure 7: Students satisfaction with ASI services



3-@SER

The Centro de Servicios al Estudiante y Retención (@SER; Center for Student Services and Retention) was established in 2012 as a one-stop center that consolidates services such as tutoring, professional counseling, early alert system, and other retention strategies in order to better support student services (PRR, p. 24). In addition, staff was trained to provide academic and student support services in an articulated and integrated way.

Tabla 14: @SER tutoring

Period	Area	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017*	
		Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services
1st. Semester	Spanish	25	34	14	19	32	69	23	50
	English	47	68	16	63	14	30	16	43
	Math	90	159	110	184	68	145	53	220
	Accounting	56	115	59	120	57	150	17	30
	Science							5	6

Period	Area	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017*	
		Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services
	Others	38	64	27	54	17	33	2	2
2nd. Semester	Spanish	25	36	7	12	9	18	43	105
	English	66	89	38	73	20	43	14	48
	Math	123	188	100	172	100	191	93	300
	Accounting	76	119	48	92	59	173	18	32
	Science							62	332
	Others	23	26	13	23	12	25	1	
Summer I	English								
	Science							7	10
	Math			1				19	35
Total		569	898	433	812	388	877	373	1,213

Table 15: Early alert system request

Request for intervention	Year 2011-2012		Year 2012-2013		Year 2013-2014		Year 2014-2015		Totals
	August / December	January / May	August / December	January / May	August / December	January / May	August / December	January / May	
RFI attended through the Early IQ system		28	43	67	77	117	679	243	1,254
RFI attended outside the Early IQ system		2	1	1	8	0	324	100	436
Totals	0	30	44	68	85	117	1003	343	1,690
Action Plans									
AP developed through the Early IQ system		25	50	67	82	129	600		953
AP developed outside the Early IQ system		2	1	1	7	0	50		61
Totals	0	27	51	68	89	129	650	0	1,014

During the period covered by this study, Sagrado was granted two Title V proposals that enhanced these retention initiatives. The first Title V Program [Retaining and Graduating Through Technology](#) (2012-2015) was founded in the restructuring of the services originally offered by the Institution. The University's retention initiatives were nurtured by the Title V Program in the development of its early alert system, financial coaching services, online courses, tutoring services, among others.

An example of this is the early alert system that initiated with funding from the Title V proposal. The University then implemented the "Early Alert by Educational Dynamics" software that was in place for two years. However, the software phased-out and the tool was no longer available. Nevertheless, Sagrado continued with the early alert through an in-house analog process. Sagrado identified a new software, Starfish, and implemented it in 2014-2015. In September 2015, the first Title V proposal came to an end and the University identified a new systemic platform to support student information known as Jenzabar

(described in Standard I). This new platform has a student retention model that includes the early alert system which is currently being implanted.

The second Title V Program [Active Learning to Empower Students and Increase Retention and Graduation](#) (2016) is still operating and allows for the continuation of the student support services and the retention initiatives.

STEMmED

As discussed in Standard III, STEMmED project was funded by Title V-HIS. State-of-the-art labs were remodeled, and a student centered pedagogical model was designed and developed. STEMmED's major impact was as follows: 1-excellent tutoring and mentoring program; 2-research infrastructure; 3-pertinent and relevant faculty professional development and 4-course redesign with active faculty participation. As seen in the following table, the student retention rates for the Natural Sciences Department (except Nursing) increased by 16.8%. Project closed with 87 STEM freshmen and a five-year average of 87.6, well above the initial baseline 5-year average of 71 freshmen. ([STEMmED: Excecutive Summary 2011-2016, p.2](#))

Table 16: Comparison of retention rates between regular students and students who participated in federal programs

All PG

Cohort	# Est	Retention					
		2nd Sem.	1 year	4th Sem.	2 year	6th Sem.	3 year
2011	1005	88.6%	73.1%	67.0%	60.2%	57.3%	53.0%
2012	847	89.5%	75.7%	69.4%	59.1%		
2013	700	91.9%	75.3%				

TITLE V

Cohort	# Est	Retention					
		2nd Sem.	1 year	4th Sem.	2 year	6th Sem.	3 year
2011	93	91.4%	73.1%	68.8%	62.4%	62.4%	57.0%
2012	176	89.8%	76.1%	73.9%	63.6%		
2013	395	93.4%	81.5%				

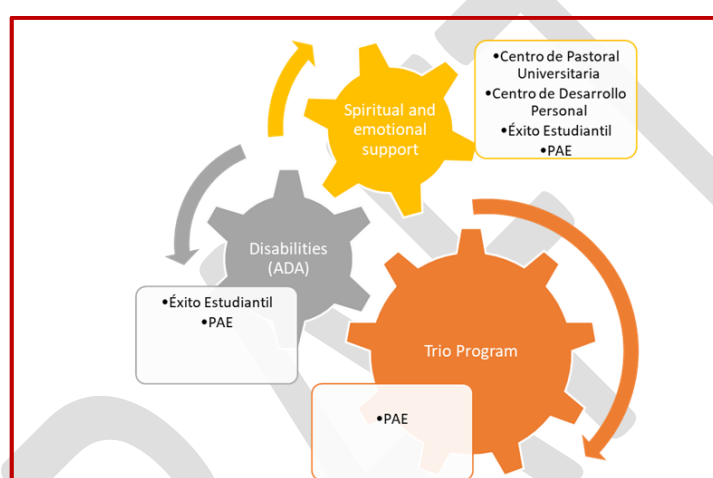
PG WITH OUT TITULO V

Cohort	# Est	Retention					
		2nd Sem.	1 year	4th Sem.	2 year	6th Sem.	3 year
2011	912	88.3%	73.1%	66.8%	60.0%	56.8%	52.6%
2012	671	89.4%	75.6%	68.3%	58.0%		
2013	305	89.8%	67.2%				

PAE

When students are found to be inadequately prepared for the academic standards or are vulnerable, Sagrado has three distinctive integrated initiatives to support them: 1- Programa de Apoyo al Estudiante ([PAE](#); Student Support Program) a Federal Trio program targeting first generation prospect students with academic or economical needs; 2-providing accommodation to students with disabilities and; 3-providing students with spiritual and emotional support. (C1b)

Figure 8: Sagrado three distinctive integrated initiatives



As stated in the [SSR](#), Sagrado hosts the largest Trio program in Puerto Rico and third in the United States. For the past 42 years, it has provided first generation students with disabilities, academic or economical needs, a set of services to help them succeed in their academic endeavors. PAE has served an average of 600 students yearly.

Table 17: Tutoring services offered PAE.

Period	Area	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017	
		Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services	Students	Number of Services
1st. Semester	Spanish	129	1,138	112	1,015	132	1,132	121	896
	English	101	1,080	91	665	87	760	73	582
	Math	83	820	92	614	69	706	74	649
	Workshops	88	178	44	88	87	174	37	74
2nd. Semester	Spanish	59	338	61	372	52	395	46	326
	English	97	750	92	656	72	516	56	369
	Math	75	474	59	471	72	448	69	622
	Workshops	21	42	23	46	25	50	15	30
Summer I	Spanish	2	8	2	18	0	0	0	0
	English	1	10	1	9	0	0	0	0
	Math	4	20	6	30	0	0	0	0
Total		660	4,856	583	3,984	596	4,181	491	3,546

Admissions Policies and Procedures

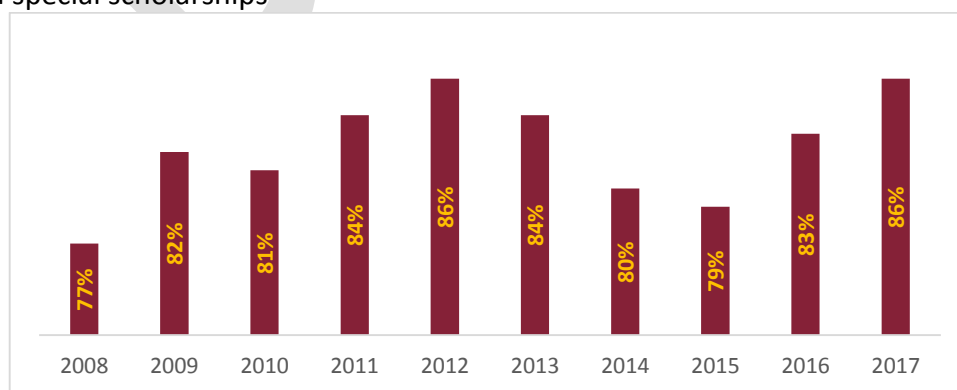
All policies and procedures regarding admissions for undergraduate, graduate, transfers, international or special students are set forth in the Institution's [catalogs](#) and is also available in Sagrado's webpage and portal. From recruitment activities to graduation date, all support services are aligned with the institutional mission to ensure student success. In this manner according to IPEDS⁴⁵, Sagrado has consistently been among the top three Universities in awarding Bachelors degrees.

Figure 9: HS GPA for new students' admission type



Sagrado has a clear set of [policies and regulations](#) for tuition fees and room and board. Well-defined policies, [details](#) of federal scholarships and protocols for requesting refunds, loans, work-study, and forms for requesting appeals for additional aid are available in the web page and students' web portal. Further [information](#) on tuition fees and reimbursement policies are in the admissions manual given to prospective students ([Manual del Estudiante de Nuevo Ingreso](#); Freshman Handbook).

Figure 10: Percentage of students who receiving any type of financial aid - includes federal, local and special scholarships



⁴⁵ IPEDS Data Feedback Reports: [2012](#), [2013](#), [2014](#), [2015](#), [2016](#), [2017](#).

Table 18: Students who participated in the Work Study Program

2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
682	468	488	610	659

Transfer Students

The Transfer of Credit Definitions, Policies and Procedures establish the requirements for admissions of a transfer student and the guidelines to accept credits for former college work. This Policy is available in the University [catalogs](#) and [webpage](#).

Table 19: Transfer student information years of study

	08-1S	09-1S	10-1S	11-1S	12-1S	13-1S	14-1S	15-1S	16-1S	17-1S	18-1S
Total	366	395	538	535	505	430	381	406	348	559	501

Because of the increased number of students accepted in the on-line Nursing Program, the rate of transcript analysis significantly slowed down, and it is recommended that the process of validation of credits be redesigned in order to make it more efficient. In addition, further analyses should be conducted in order to establish retention and graduation rates for transfer students.

Table 20: Nursing Online transfers students

	08-1S	09-1S	10-1S	11-1S	12-1S	13-1S	14-1S	15-1S	16-1S	17-1S	18-1S
Nursing Online	155	217	269	247	271	237	237	258	196	259	264

Experiential learning, prior non-academic learning

Sagrado recognizes and accredits, as it was described in detail in PRR, [non-traditional learning experiences](#) (Program for Credit Validation of Non-Traditional Learning

Experiences) for undergraduate and graduate students using either a challenge exam or submitting experience and visual arts portfolios. The University allows undergraduate students no more than 36 credits (nine credits for graduate students) to be approved and accredited using a combination of the three modalities. The Program for Credit Validation of Non-Traditional Learning Experiences includes the minimum passing grade to approve the exams or portfolios (experience and visual arts). The data regarding this modality has not been quantified, so at this time there is no information to establish whether or not this is a

useful practice for students. It is recommended that a process of data gathering be instituted.

At the graduate level, Sagrado has been innovating and modifying the thesis model. As presented in Standard III, graduate students may choose from a variety of options ranging from a traditional dissertation, to the design and production of a project for a real client, to an international experience or publishable research paper. (C2)

Student Information

Sagrado is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of students' information and academic records, as required under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, (FERPA). Students and their families are provided orientation, once the prospect is about to be enrolled, about the applicability of these laws in higher learning institutions. This information is also available in the [Catalogs](#), the web page, and the internal portal (mi.sagrado.edu).

The student's identification verification and network credentials and authentication processes, as reported in the [PRR](#), was administered through the Student Information System in the POISE platform. However, this platform became obsolete and was discontinued. Consequently, the University explored several options, and finally the ITI team recommended that the Institution pivot to Jenzabar.

The new system was implemented in record time and became operational in March 2017. With Jenzabar, Sagrado moves to a data driven decision-making model within the institutional intelligence unit by consolidating the following in to one system: safe and secure student information and academic work, early alerts, student complaints, student disciplinary determinations, identification verification, network credentials, authentication, student life, advising, retention, and record keeping. In addition, Jenzabar produces a number of reports that enables staff to better analyze, make timely recommendations and decisions according to different needs. It also provides faculty with data that will enhance the student learning experience, as discussed in Standard III.

In PRR, the Institution indicated that there had been no security breach and the same holds true for the current period. C3

Extracurricular Activities

One of the most important responsibilities of the Vice-presidency of Student Affairs (VPSA) is to align student life to the mission. Through the students' councils, [associations](#), the volunteering program, and athletic activities, among others, students develop leadership, self-esteem, creativity, and an entrepreneurial attitude in a teamwork environment; skills and competencies necessary to succeed.

Part of Sagrado's governance structure includes two leading student bodies: the [Consejo de Estudiantes](#) (Consejo; Student Council) and the [Concilio de Residentes](#) (Concilio; Residents' Council). Their primary responsibility is to organize and coordinate student representation in the academic and administrative structures in order to guarantee that student voices and interests are present. Each semester, the Consejo holds student assemblies and the Concilio carries-out the residents' meetings. Both activities serve as tools for the administrative and support personnel to better identify and address students' needs', as well as to improve the services they receive. The results of both activities⁴⁶ are evaluated by the President's staff and students receive feedback on their concerns or recommendations.

As petitioned by students, Sagrado has coordinated two main creative enterprises: the [Espacio Universal](#) (Universal Space) and [Sagrado Verde](#).

[Espacio Universal](#) is the equivalent of a class period granted to the Consejo three times per semester. During this time, there are no scheduled classes on campus and faculty and staff participate in the activities organized by students that enhance [student life](#). In these activities, students develop competencies such as teamwork, entrepreneurship, ethical leadership, and solidarity, among others. It is recommended that these activities be considered cocurricular.



⁴⁶ Students Assemblies: [Report and actions taken 11/18/2014](#); [Act](#) and [Actions taken 11/23/2015](#); [Minute](#) and [Actions taken 10/18/2016](#); [Minute](#) and [Actions taken 3/28/2017](#); [Report and actions taken 11/11/2017](#).



Sagrado Verde is an ecological initiative aligned with the University's mission and tied to several of its units. It is connected to the academic learning experience through the [Asociación de Estudios Internacionales](#) that is in-charge of running the program together with ICS, which is their main partner. It is associated to Conéctate, an initiative led by Pastoral that has an ecological dimension. By April of 2017, the project had collected over 25,000 pounds of recyclable material (11,500 paper, 6,500 textiles, 7,260 pounds of cardboard and aluminum) and had reduced plastic bottle water consumption to the equivalent of 17,200 bottles.

The ideal education of the future professional is not limited to the classroom, it is based on the power of being educated with the commitment for social responsibility. In Sagrado, this is seen on a daily basis and Sagrado Verde is a living example. ([José Carlos Sánchez](#), former President of the Student Council, 2017.

Translated by Committee VIII).

Student Council (Consejo)

The Consejo is elected yearly through the direct vote of students. It represents their peers in different bodies of governance throughout the University including the Academic Board, the Administrative Board, and the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. For the past three academic years (2014-2017), the Student Council elections have been organized by students and supervised by the VPSA. Student candidates use a variety of media venues including social media to increase voter participation. This strategy has been successful in getting the University community to know the Student Council resulting in an increase in students' participation in the election.



Table 21: Student participation in student council votes

Election Year (march)	Students Participation	Second Semester Enrollment	Percent of participation	Student Council
2014	838	4,981	17	2014-2015
2015	803	4,548	18	2015-2016
2016	1,258	4,234	30	2016-2017
2017	828	3,970	21	2017-2018



Starting in 2013-2014, the VPSA, the Centro para Desarrollo Personal (CDP; Personal Development Center) and Pastoral joined forces to strengthen leadership and team work in students participating in governance structures. This was

organized through workshops convened by experts of each unit on the following topics: leadership in solidarity, conflict management and group dynamics, and spiritual growth. The [workshops](#) were [assessed](#) using the institutional rubrics for student learning.

Finally, the CDP organizes [La Red](#), which is a group of volunteer students that through music and dance, present a message on alcohol and drug prevention to high school and university students.

Student Life

Student Associations

When it comes to student activities on campus, the main challenge is how Sagrado engages the student population in extracurricular activities. Given that 90% of students live off campus, a major accomplishment has been the increase in the number of student associations from 34 in 2013-2014 to 52 during the academic year 2016-2017.

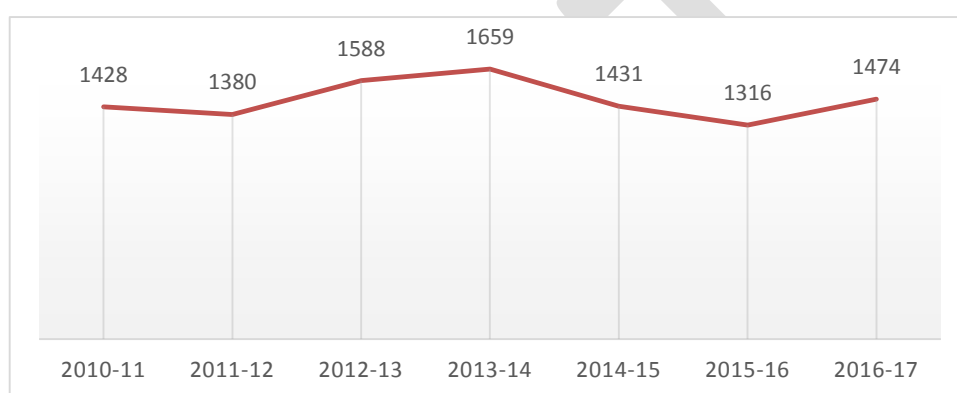
Table 22: Student Associations

Student Associations	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018
Department of Business Administration	3	3	4	6	4
School of Communication Ferré Rangel	6	7	10	8	6
FIEHS	7	11	14	14	7
Natural Sciences Department	7	10	11	10	10
VP of Student Affairs	11	9	13	14	11
Total	34	40	52	52	38

University Residences

There are separate residence halls for men and women. Approximately 10% of Sagrado's student population live in University Residencies. Residents are organized through the Concilio and are active in the social life of the dorms. Regular meetings of residents are organized by the Council, as mentioned earlier, and in these meetings residents have always had the opportunity to voice their complaints and present suggestions. From these meetings it was recognized that more specific data was required and by 2010 occupancy rates and distribution began to be collected.

Figure 11: Occupancy of the residencies per year



The main issues presented by the residents are divided in two general topics: infrastructure and behavior. These topics are addressed in distinct fashions. The infrastructure complaints and suggestions are channeled through the Instalaciones Conservación y Servicios (ICS) unit, budgeted and dealt with accordingly. The social and behavioral issues are tackled through the VPSA and changes were made to the Manual de las [Residencias Universitarias](#) (University Residents Handbook).

The VPSA held a series of surveys in 2016 because students in the Concilio meetings demanded changes in housing and social activities. Three hundred and fifty seven residents participated in the survey (a response rate of approximately 54%) and the results were discussed with the residents during various encounters throughout the academic year.

Table 23: Requests of the students in the March 2016 residents' survey

Requests	Yes(%)	No(%)
Visits in the rooms	61.1	37.3
Activities with drinks	52.1	46.8
Share the residences	52.7	45.9

By this time, the community reached a consensus, and as a result, the subsequent changes are in place:

- Overnight visitors are allowed with previous consent of the roommate and of the Residences Director;
- Opposite sex visitors in the common areas of each floor of the halls.

Athletics

Since 1979, Sagrado is a member of the Liga Atlética Interuniversitaria – LAI (Interuniversity Athletic League) where students (both male and female) participate in a diverse range of sports: volleyball, basketball, soccer, tennis, athletics, track and field, swimming, weightlifting and judo. The University has won 62 medals from 2013 to 2017. Sagrado has invested an average of \$397,000 each year in scholarships that have benefited an average of 115 athletes per year during the period evaluated in this Self-Study.



Table 24: Athletic students per year who received scholarships

2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Average
133	126	129	93	95	115
\$469,224.00	\$415,014.00	\$406,007.00	\$346,185.00	\$346,185.00	\$396,523.00

During academic year 2015-2016, a new Director of the Athletic Department was hired and a series of improvements were implemented. Among them was a new system of awarding athletic scholarships tied to the [assessment](#) of three performance indicators: sport execution, physical condition, and academic progress.

Spiritual Growth and Solidarity

Sagrado is a Catholic institution; accordingly the Pastoral is one of the most important units that serves students. As stated in Standards I and III, it supervises two major initiatives to enhance student life: Conéctate and Comesa.

[Conéctate](#) started in 2016 and offers opportunities for personal growth through group experiences that provide a better understanding of the psycho-emotional, social, spiritual and ecological dimensions of human life. [Comesa](#) started in 2014 with the participation of

trustees, faculty, staff, students and alumni. It operates with volunteer students working in teams to prepare meals that are then shared during lunch break.

Since its beginning, approximately 100 meals are served daily from Monday through Thursday. A survey on service satisfaction conducted in 2015 shows that 100% agreed with this initiative in solidarity, 60% of the participants indicated that without Comesa they would have no food. In addition, 57.5% specified that sometimes there was no food in their homes.

Volunteer Services

The Centro para el [Desarrollo del Voluntariado](#) (Center for the Development of Volunteers) has been under the auspice of Sagrado since 2009. Students who participate in this volunteering program are trained for the particular service that they will be performing, and their experiences are documented and registered as part of their co-curricular and extracurricular transcript. Examples of volunteer service in partnership with other organizations are coastal cleanup with Scuba Dogs, housing rehab with Habitat for Humanity, and Casa Manuel Fernández Juncos with Starbucks Re Do It Day.

Table 25: Voluntary hours

Years	Sagrado students	Voluntary hours
2013-2014	89	8,752
2014-2015	236	5,585
2015-2016	667	15,407
2016-2017	1,288	31,792
Average	570	15,384

Student Recognition

Students' success at Sagrado is recognized in four separate activities:

- [Premios Socorro Juliá](#) is organized by the Student Council and recognizes the student organizations' success in several categories including innovation, commitment, voluntarism and use of social media.
- [Día de Logros del Programa de Apoyo al Estudiante](#) is organized by PAE and recognizes civic engagement, effort and personal growth, leadership and academic progress for students participating of this program.
- Letra Insignia is organized by the Athletic Department and recognizes the student-athletes' sportsmanship and academic progress.

- Noche de Logros is organized by the VPSA and recognizes effort and personal growth, leadership, civic engagement, and academic progress.



Third-party Providers

Security

Sagrado provides a safe and secure campus for its students, faculty, staff and visitors. Since the [PRR](#), the University made the following improvements: electronic and phone emergency system (blue lights posts), timely warning alerts, security cameras, and a commanding center. In 2015, the Office of Campus Security evolved into the Oficina de Seguridad Integrada y Manejo de Riesgos (OSIMR; Integrated Security and Risk Management) unit to consolidate health-related emergency services, previously under the Athletics Department. Now, such services are provided by paramedics with technical expertise contracted by a third-party provider. The University is compliant with all regulatory reporting requirements and OSIMR makes sure to have them in a timely fashion.

As presented in the table below, an assessment measure for security services is the graduating student exit survey for the period under analysis. This survey shows an improvement from 67% (excellent/satisfactory) in 2012 to 76% in the same category in 2017. Health related emergency services were rated in the exit survey for the period under review, and the results show a slight improvement from 50% (excellent/satisfactory) in 2012 to 54.2% in the same category in 2017.

Cafeteria and campus store

The cafeteria and campus store are operated by two different third parties and are assessed in the same exit surveys, mentioned earlier, given to graduating students. For the period

under analysis, an average of 62% of the students have consistently indicated that the service and foods at the cafeteria are good or excellent. However, service satisfaction dropped from 67% (excellent/satisfactory) in 2012 to 61% in the same category in 2017. For the campus store, an average of 74.5% of the students said the services and merchandise at the campus store were good or satisfactory.

Table 26: Exit surveys results

	2012 (n=269)			2016 (n=309)			2017 (n=511)		
	Excellent / satisfactory	Regular / deficient	Does not apply	Excellent / satisfactory	Regular / deficient	Does not apply	Excellent / satisfactory	Regular / deficient	Does not apply
Cafetería	67%	32%	1%	58%	29%	13%	61%	36%	3%
La Tiendita @Sagrado				68%	19%	13%	81%	14%	6%
Seguridad	67%	29%	4%	63%	24%	13%	76%	19%	5%

Dolphy (transportation)



Horarios Dolphy

		Primer viaje	Último viaje
Lunes a jueves	Tren Urbano a Sagrado	7:00 am	10:00 pm
Viernes	Tren Urbano a Sagrado	7:00 am	8:00 pm
Lunes a jueves	Sagrado a Tren Urbano	7:15 am	9:45 pm
Viernes	Sagrado a Tren Urbano	7:15 am	7:45 pm

¡Les exhortamos a hacer los arreglos pertinentes!



are available during peak periods. For academic year 2016-2017, a monthly average of 8,000 on-board passengers used the Dolphy.

The transportation services to and from the University to the Sagrado Corazón train station is operated by a third-party provider and assessed by visual inspections performed regularly. There are four round trips per hour from Monday through Friday. The service hours are varied and tied to the class schedules. Increased number of shuttle buses

Cleaning Services

Cleaning services is operated by a third-party and the provider evaluates the services and receives feedback from staff, faculty and students.

Although reviewed and supervised by Sagrado, third-party providers are not part of the comprehensive institutional assessment process. Hence, it is recommended that a more formal assessment process be implemented by Sagrado for all third-party providers. (C5)

Support of Student Experience

As it will be presented in detail in Standard V, Sagrado has a culture of assessing information from students, and other related stakeholders, to guarantee that the services they receive are what they need to accomplish their goals, as well as the mission. All through this section, changes, adjustments and improvements have been presented that are the result of the periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience.

Furthermore, Sagrado has participated of the NSSE survey for the years 2010, 2012 as presented in the PRR 2013 and more recently in [2014](#). Sagrado did not participate in the 2016 survey for the reason previously explained in Standard III.

In the [PRR](#), the recommendation was that the University should engage in the FSSE (Faculty Survey of Student Engagement) and, although some effort was dedicated to this endeavor, there has been no participation in such survey. As a result of the analysis of this section, it is recommended that the NSSE an FSSE be conducted.

Sagrado is a student-centered institution, therefore its main objective is always to ensure that there is congruence between what any person interested in becoming a student understands are his or her goals and what is required in order to successfully complete a degree. There is a system of structures, programs, and personnel in place that support the students' experience. This system is continually being improved.

Recommendations

In the analysis of this Standard, the following areas were identified as areas for improvement and further development:

- a. Implementation of the Jenzabar module for early alert;
- b. Redesign the credit validation process in order to make it more efficient;
- c. Conduct further analyses of retention and graduation rates for transfer students;
- d. Implementation of a more formal assessment process for all third-party providers;
- e. Conduct the NSSE and FSSE surveys.

Standard V: Education Effectiveness Assessment

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their programs of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

Compliance with the Standard and Criteria

The current analysis and the evidences presented in the Documentation Roadmap, establish that Sagrado fully meets all criteria and sub-criteria of Standard V, as well as Requirements 8, 9 and 10.

Criterion Number	Standard V Criterion	Meet Criterion
C1	Clearly stated educational goal at the institution and degree/program levels which are interrelated with one another and with the institution's mission	✓
C2	Organized and systematic assessments conducted by appropriate personnel in order to:	✓
C2a	Define meaningful curricular goals with defensible standards for evaluation	✓
C2b	Articulate the preparation of students for successful careers, meaningful lives	✓
C2c	Support and sustain assessment of student achievement and communicate results to stakeholders	✓
C3	Consideration and use of assessment results for the improvement of educational effectiveness by some combination of:	✓
C3a	Assisting students in improving their learning	✓
C3b	Improving pedagogy and curriculum	✓
C3c	Reviewing and revising of academic programs and support services	✓
C3d	Offering a range of professional development	✓
C3e	Planning and budgeting for academic programs and services	✓
C3f	Informing appropriate constituents about the institution and its programs	✓
C3g	Improving key indicators of student success	✓
C3h	Implementing other processes and procedures to improve educational programs and services	✓
C4 ⁴⁷	Adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of assessment of services delivered by third-party providers	✓
C5	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment processes for improvement of educational effectiveness	✓

⁴⁷ Addressed in tandem with Standard IV

The mission, vision, and institutional goals are clearly stated in Sagrado's [PE 2014-17](#) (p. 2), the [Modelo de Avalúo de Efectividad Institucional y de Aprendizaje](#) (2011; p. 5, 6 & 7) (Institutional Effectiveness and Learning Assessment Model), and reaffirmed in the [PE 2017-20](#) (pp. 5, 11-12). The mission and vision have been consistently endorsed, in order to enable data driven decision-making process for continuous institutional improvement. The University continues to evolve its assessment systems, processes, and reporting tools. These changes in the collecting systems and procedures impact the way data is analyzed and compared. However, since most of these changes have been gradual, the team in charge of Institutional Assessment and Intelligence has been able to track and produce coherent interpretations.

Sagrado also periodically reconsiders and redefines its [institutional/strategic goals](#) (Table 27) and student competencies⁴⁸. These processes are highly inclusive and guarantee participation⁴⁹ of all stakeholders. With the transformation of these principal guidelines, the academic programs' objectives⁵⁰ also triggered consequent reviews and changes in the curriculum of each academic unit.

The University's mission, as presented previously, is in alignment with relevant educational experiences⁵¹ and are interrelated to the institutional goals⁵², the academic programs, the library⁵³, [academic projects](#), student services⁵⁴, the Freshmore Experience Project ([FEP](#))⁵⁵, and course redesign efforts⁵⁶. (C1)

⁴⁸ [Assessment Plan 2012-2013](#); Institutional Assessment Reports [2013-2014](#) and [2014-2015](#).

⁴⁹ Faculty Assembly Acts: [2/8/2013](#); [9/6/2013](#).

⁵⁰ Including the academic programs under accreditation and external reviewers, such as Counsel on Social Work Program (CSWE); Nursing School (Self-study Report Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), 2015) and Department of Business Administration (NIBS Accreditation Visit Network of International Business Schools (NIBS), 2013). Their respective accreditation process prompted the articulation of educational goals and learning outcomes.

⁵¹ Faculty Assembly Acts: [2/8/2013](#); [9/6/2013](#); Title V - Annual Performance Reports (APR) [2011](#), [2012](#), [2013](#), [2014](#), [2015](#); Informes Anuales - Centro de Vinculación Comunitaria (CVC) [2011-2012](#), [2012-2013](#), [2013-2014](#), [2014-2015](#), [2015-2016](#); [Análisis de Calificaciones del estudiantado en cursos participantes 2015](#); Language Across the Disciplines (LAD) [2014-2015](#), [2015-2016](#); [NIBS Accreditation Visit Report 2013](#); [Plan de Revisión de Programas 2010-2015](#), [Proyección a cinco años 2015-2020](#).

⁵² Institutional Assessment Reports [2013-2014](#) and [2014-2015](#).

⁵³ Informe de Biblioteca [2015-2016](#), [2012-2017](#).

⁵⁴ Informe Anual Institucional Programa Apoyo al Estudiante (PAE) [2012-2013](#), [2013-2014](#), [2014-2015](#), [2015-2016](#), [2016-2017](#).

⁵⁵ [Propuesta para la Institucionalización del Proyecto Retaining and Graduating Through Technologically-Based Empowerment 2014](#).

⁵⁶ Informes CEDTEC DEDOS [2012](#), [2013](#), [2014](#), [2010-2015](#); [Executive Summary STEMmED 2011-2016](#).

Table 27: Changes in Institutional Goals

Institutional Goals	Marco Educativo 2012	Vision 2017	Vision 2020
Goal 1	To promote the search for knowledge in an environment of intellectual liberty through an integrated, participatory, and personalized education that is relevant to the world around us.	Center the educational project on the student through an integral humanistic, multi and interdisciplinary education by providing more opportunities for students and faculty to engage in diverse cultural and learning practices.	Educate citizens with the competencies, knowledge and skills needed for a productive insertion in society by way of an academic offer that is interdisciplinary, flexible, innovative, different, and pertinent to the challenges of the 21st century.
Goal 2	To propitiate the development of a moral conscience based on Christian values, fostering social commitment based on justice, brotherhood, sisterhood, and peace.	Support students to achieve their academic goals through services designed for them as center and reason to exist by means of a teaching and non-teaching staff committed to the institutional values and prepared to meet 21st century challenges.	Redesign the interaction model between the surroundings and the academic project based on innovation, social responsibility, and entrepreneurship in order to impact the immediate context: business of all levels and sizes, non-profit sector, community-based initiatives, and government, among others.
Goal 3		Develop strategies, possible actions to increase funding, and revenues and reach efficiency levels that will allow financial stability for the University.	Promote an experience that integrates coaching, human touch and high-tech to support students in their academic life by means of spaces, (co)curricular and extracurricular activities that allow for integral growth, commitment and result in a sense of pride and belonging.
Goal 4			Strengthen the organizational structure and routines through continuous improvement of processes that will increase efficiency and productivity.
Goal 5			Develop innovative strategies, possible actions to increase funding, and revenues and reach efficiency levels that will allow financial stability for the University.

Source: USC's Educational Framework; *Marco Educativo de la Universidad del Sagrado Corazón*, 2012; Strategic Plan Vision 2014-2017; and Strategic Plan Vision 2017-2020.

The Office of Institutional Assessment (IAO) is under the VPAA and is in charge of setting and periodically reviewing the institutional learning assessment plan in an organized and systematic manner. Through this planning process, the institutional goals are assessed in order to evidence compliance with Sagrado's mission and goals, and Strategic Plans. The IAO outlines a plan/ calendar, and designs a sampling method every semester to which each academic program and their faculty members act upon⁵⁷. Each year the planning process is revisited and presented to the faculty in a [workshop](#) convened by CEDTEC. The workshops serve both faculty as training sessions and provide an overview that permits clarification of the assessment reporting structure and process. (C2) According the CEDTEC's annual [reports](#) from 2012 thru 2016, the total number of faculty professional development activities was

⁵⁷ [Current Activities for Assessing Academic Effectiveness](#), 2011; [Procesos de Avalúo 2012-2015](#); [Informe del Análisis del Proceso de Evaluación del Aprendizaje Estudiantil, 2013](#); Institutional Assessment Reports [2013-2014](#); Institutional Assessment Reports [2014-2015](#).

360, where at least 15% were assessment workshops designed to support faculty's work with rubrics and the assessment process.

Some specific programs that require accreditation have articulated how they incorporate professional standards in their curriculum in order to enhance students' educational experience and further the mission of a better path to successful careers. For example, the Nursing program has incorporated the Essential of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice and the Professional Nursing Standards of Practice of the Puerto Rico College of Professional Nursing. The Education program incorporated NCATE-CAEP Standards and requirement of [Education Certification Regulation](#). Finally, [Social Work Program](#) [Council on Social Work Education, 2008] and the [ECFR](#)⁵⁸ follow their profession's ethical principles, respectively. (C2a, b)

The goals, skills and competences were [designed](#) in conjunction with the curricular goals between 2010 and 2011, and in 2011 the University approved an assessment institutional policy and plan, to start in academic year 2013-2014 (Table 27.) and received feedback from the MSCHE (PRR, 2013).

An Institutional Assessment Plan was developed for the academic years 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 (C2c). The assessment plan had the following schedule:

Table 28. Assessment Plan of Student Learning Outcomes 2013-2017

Goals/Competences/Skills	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Professionalism	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ethics	✓	✓		
Critical thinking	✓	✓		
Leadership	✓	✓	✓	
Written communication in Spanish and English		✓	✓	
Innovation		✓	✓	
Conflict resolution			✓	
Social and cultural awareness			✓	
Information literacy and technology skills			✓	✓
Oral communication in Spanish and English			✓	✓
Research			✓	✓

Source: Adapted from Student Learning Assessment Plan Presentation (*Presentación Proyecto de avalúo del aprendizaje de los estudiantes*), 2014.

According to the Institutional Assessment Report [2013-2014](#), all academic units presented student learning assessment reports. However, in the [2014-2015](#) report, only three departments presented their reports, as of the date of the document. The reason for this

⁵⁸ [Ley número 204 de 8 de agosto de 2008.](#)

was a change in the competencies to be assessed. In the ordinary meetings with different academic units it was noted that the competencies assigned for that year (innovation and value driven leadership) had a better fit as professional competencies. The general or transversal competency selected was group work. The Informe del Avalúo del Aprendizaje de los Estudiantes 2014-2015(p. 26) supports this process.

These two academic years were reported as two consecutive assessment closing cycles. During 2015, the University had used the program *Livertext* in order to manage, organize and visualize assessment results using rubrics. Nonetheless, according to the Informe del Avalúo del Aprendizaje de los Estudiantes 2014-2015, *Livertext* had a limited performance for the purposes of the assessment, mainly because the data entry process became increasingly time-consuming, and, therefore, not all academic units involved were using it. In addition, the cost of data entry per student and of upgrading the program became unfeasible.

The [PRR](#) shows that although there had been improvements in the assessment model it was still was weak. The first years after the PRR, as evidenced in this Standard, reflect variable results that created gaps, so for the following years the Office of Institutional Assessment did not present closing reports for assessment cycles in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017. Nevertheless, the University continued doing assessment of the academic departments and programs, as evidenced in the following tables.

Table 29: Actions taken of Assessment of Students Learning Outcome in Academic Departments

YEAR	DEPARTMENT			
	Business Administration (DAE)	Communication (ECFR)	Interdisciplinary Faculty for Humanities and Social Sciences (FIEHS)	Graduate Program
2013-2014	Conducted undergraduate learning outcome assessment for ethics and critical thinking competences through direct and indirect methodologies, and the dissemination of results.	Modified study plans and course prerequisites. Revised the graduate profile. Created internal committee for assessment and curricular revisions.	Initiated the process of assessment with the Dance program.	
2014-2015				Developed Decision making rubric in Spanish & English, and a calendar for graduate assessment plan.
2015-2016		Created rubrics for public relations exit course (RPU 480).		

Despite these inconsistencies, the programs that have professional accreditation processes provided continuity and enough information for the decision-making process.

Table 30: Actions taken of Assessment of Students Learning Outcome in Accredited Programs

YEAR	PROGRAM		
	Education	Nursing	Social Work
2013-14	Conducted undergraduate learning outcome assessment for ethics and critical thinking competences through direct and indirect methodologies, and the dissemination of results and syllabi reviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified students at risk in task completion and outlined an action plan (Ad Hoc committee) Created the Callista Roy and nursing process rubric, to meet the SLO, and integration of social network. Researched evidence papers for cultural diversity. Integrated cultural activities to different courses. Supported the Nursing Students Association. New strategy and rubric (<i>Analytic Memo</i>) was created and implemented (ENF 332) to assess cultural diversity. Reviewed the course test (Unit Three). Modified clinical performance rubric, adding criteria for quality and safety. Initiated evidence base skills during the Cornerstone Course (ENF 101) through a library workshop. 	Modified social work curricula, included new rubrics.
2014-15	Conducted undergraduate learning outcome assessment for ethics and critical thinking competences through direct and indirect methodologies, and the dissemination of results and syllabi revisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performed a checklist (guide) that include the steps for using technology during administration of medication. a workshop of administration and dosage of medication Integrated using critical thinking questions for the discussion of medication administration safety and use of technological equipment (January 2015). The teaching strategy for this SLO: changes in health-care policies (January 2015), learning for SLO public policy and health services impacting the uninsured population. Adapted a movie to integrate aspects of public mental health policy, facilitating access to appropriate care, use of less restrictive environments, mental health client's rights, restrictions, alternatives and the recovery model, and standards of practice. Used a study guide with critical thinking questions that direct the student to the discussion of public policy and health system issues. Used a study guide rubric to assess SLO. 	Added a self-evaluation for students in SW Practicum (TSO 403, TSO 422), in addition to external collaborators. Collaborators were consulted for the development of a pilot study (TSO 217) to improve practicum behavior.
2015-16		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasized the importance of being guided by the rubric to meet all criteria. Developed a research criticism guide for the EBP task. Used research papers for evaluation. Papers submitted were returned to 90% (18/20) of the students, specifying that they should follow the instructions and use nursing research journals. Corrections to the works delivered to follow the rubrics as published on the Moodle platform. Reinforced the use of nursing journals. The evaluation strategy will be changed to a study guide with questions aimed at required skill. Continued to integrate health policies and financing of services in the tasks. 	Analyzed (using SPSS) results from pilot study (TSO 217) to improve practicum behavior.
2016-17	New courses in Sign language, Secondary history, Practicum, update clinical experiences and rubrics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce responsibility and importance of turning in assignments on due dates. Evaluation results: 1st semester average: 95% compliance; 2nd semester: 89% compliance. A workshop was offered to faculty about nursing process, Callista Roy, and NANDA, through case study discussion (2nd semester). Reinforcement of data categorization, NANDA, NOC & NIC. 	Modified rubrics and the creation of rubrics Excel with CEDTEC.

Source developed by the Committee for Standard V

During the same period, the University administered the assessment for the academic support units. Each unit undertook their assessment in an orderly fashion. A sample of the assessment carried out by these units is presented in the following Table.

Table 31. Academic Support Units Assessment

YEAR	UNIT			
	Library: Information literacy and Technology	LAD: Written and oral communication	STEMmED: Research	CVC: Ethics/Social Awareness
2013-2014	<p>Integrated the competence into the courses through the Curriculum Information Literacy Integration Project, (PICIC).</p> <p>Developed the information literacy rubric used by faculty. Discussed and revised workshops with librarians and faculty. Changed methodologies and activities in order to strengthen the design. Executed workshops with an attendance of 1,069 students.</p>	<p>Used pre-post rubrics for 39 sections for Spanish oral communication, where 89.7% demonstrated a higher outcome in post rubrics. For Spanish written communication, 39 sections participated, and 51.3% of those sections demonstrated improvement in the post rubric. Preparation of resume and letter of presentation were used in 3 sections of exit courses (CMU 480 & TEL 480).</p>	<p>8 redesigned courses (BIO 309, CCO 330, QUI 401, MAT 200, MAT 415, INF 252, CCO 340, INF 201) and 1 new course was designed (QUI 312), as a result of the 3rd year in grant. Research was conducted by faculty members (3) and students (6), some of them with collaboration of other post-secondary institutions. 6 students were engaging in research. TEDx USagradoCorazón was conducted for the first time and faculty designed rubrics for assessment.</p>	<p>Assessment was conducted through mentorship rubrics. 18 courses (at undergraduate and graduate level) and 53 sections participated in this program, with an impact of 677 students, 27 faculty members, 51 entities, 114 projects organized by students and 14,200 hours of service. Revised rubrics for level I courses participating in CVC, and designed guidelines for level II & III courses.</p>
2014-2015	<p>Activities were identified for information literacy, including ethics in the use of information. Executed workshops with an attendance of 1,187 students.</p>	<p>Used pre-post rubrics for 39 sections for Spanish oral communication and 33 sections for Spanish written communication. In average, the differences were higher in post rubric for both competences. Preparation of resume and presentation letter were used in 6 sections of CMU 480, HUM 480 & TEL 480.</p>	<p>10 courses were identified for review and a new course of Scientific Journalism was developed (CAN 340). 5 students participated for the first time in research activities with faculty. The 3rd TEDx USagradoCorazón was held in 2015 with 10 faculty members.</p>	<p>19 courses (at undergraduate and graduate level) and 37 sections participated in this program: Impact: 601 students, 22 faculty members, 63 entities, 105 projects organized by students and 12,020 hours of service.</p>
2015-2016	<p>Developed exercises and simulations in library workshops (with the attendance of 1,067 students), instructional module, and informational material.</p>	<p>Recommended changes in course syllabi and level of competence in the School of Communication (CMU 101).</p>	<p>Faculty members continued their research engaging with 7 students (including 2 first time doing research).</p>	<p>19 courses (undergraduate and graduate level) and 36 sections participated in this program. Impact: 540 students, 21 faculty members, 54 entities, 89 projects organized by students and 10,800 hours of service.</p>
2016-2017	<p>Revised informational material and continued with information literacy library workshops (with the attendance of 719 students).</p>	<p>24 sections participated in oral and written communication, with a total of 439 students. During this term, changes were performed and informed to students and faculty. These changes were done in schedules and area utilization.</p>	<p>45 faculty workshops, 16% re: assessment; 41 science courses redesigned (Math, Chemistry, Biology, Physics & Computer Science) or newly designed, 76% approved by institution 33 students (headcount) participated in research with faculty members; 3 TEDx USagradoCorazón</p>	<p>16 courses (at undergraduate and graduate level) and 35 sections participated in this program. Impact: 533 students, 18 faculty members, 48 entities, 74 projects organized by students and 10,620 hours of service.</p>

Assessment Results and Changes

The results of assessment were used for syllabi modification (in FEP, General Education, Natural Sciences, and Business Administration courses), academic programs reviews and academic projects (C3). In [DEDOS](#) several assessment instruments were developed for online courses (e.g. ECO 235, ECO 236): pre and post-test, rubric, opinion polls, among others. In one of the [documents](#) presented as evidence in this section there is a recommendation from the OIA "to disclose the processes, instruments and results of the assessment, among others, through forums, web page, newsletter, meetings, etc." (p. 38). Therefore, in 2013, a new professional [development program](#) for the faculty fostered "consistent, sustained and articulated efforts to achieve the strengthening of teaching and the effectiveness of the learning process" p. 2 (C3d). In 2016, CEDTEC conducted a needs assessment of the with faculty. The [results](#) of this survey was used to establish the priorities in professional development, as discussed in Standard III. (C3h).

In terms of communicating the learning outcome assessment results to stakeholders, evidence was found that the main forum was faculty assemblies⁵⁹. In these meetings the assessment process, institutional and student learning outcomes, and situation of academic programs were discussed (e.g. Library, STEMmED, CVC). Other mechanisms were used to disseminate results in different academic units: [videos](#) on YouTube to capture faculty members' experiences on the assessment process (Department of Business Administration), via email, and through unit digital bulletins. However, these strategies are not systematic nor uniformly or consistently used.

In sum, 75% of assessment results were used for internal purpose in the assessment process, curricula reviews, annual program reports and selection of activities and professional development workshops (C3b), and 55% of those results was officially communicated to faculty and other stakeholders (C3f).

⁵⁹ [Acta 8 de febrero de 2013](#), [Acta 6 de septiembre de 2013](#).

Table 32. Examples of Communication of Assessment Learning Outcomes

Program	Used	Dissemination	Change
Nursing Program	Faculty assembly discussions	PowerPoint Presentation, Assessment Reports	Syllabi, rubrics, teaching and learning methodologies, course evaluations
Department of Education	Sent communication to the stakeholders	Journal of the Education, Program Teacher Report Card, NCATE-CAEP Annual Report	Syllabi, rubrics, teaching and learning methodologies, course evaluations
Ferré Rangel Communication School	Sent communication to faculty members.	Digital newsletter	Syllabi
Department of Business Administration	Sent communication to faculty members and established informational meetings	Digital newsletter and videos (YouTube) with faculty assessment experiences. Meetings with professional and academic advisors.	Curricular review

Source: Prepared by Standard V Working Group, 2018.

Sagrado's assessment processes (as described above) resulted in changes in curricula and syllabi; and the dissemination of assessment was used to improve student learning experience, curricula⁶⁰, support services and faculty development. As mentioned before, this is particularly evident in those programs that are subject to professional accreditation (Nursing, Social Work, and Education). In addition, faculty members are incorporating these strategies in their courses and strengthening the assessment culture of Sagrado.

Other examples of Sagrado's mission and education goal alignment across the academic and support programs is the creation of a co-curricular transcript and faculty participation in conferences, seminars, and professional community involvement (C3c). The first is a novel way to document student participation in [service learning](#) or community engaged courses, voluntary work, and student leadership within Sagrado. This evidence was used as data in the decision making process of the identification of key indicators of student success (C3g). In addition, it has allowed Sagrado to be recognized for its commitment and to use this as leverage in fundraising and presentation of research proposals. The latter example, presents evidence⁶¹ of faculty participation in conferences and in publications where they use assessment learning outcome results as research topics. In doing so they also contribute to the valuation of the assessment process, their scholarship and the institution is recognized by a community of scholars. (C5).

⁶⁰ For example: [Ciencias del Ejercicio, 2013](#); [Programa de Mercadeo, 2017](#).

⁶¹ [ECFR Annual Report 2012-2013](#), & [Department Annual Report, 2015-2016](#).

The results of assessment throughout the institution are used to make decisions on where, when, and how many resources will be allocated. The budget planning process begins when Directors of all units submit a budget proposal to the Office of Financial Planning based on the priorities identified with the institutional goals as will be further discussed in Standard VI. As mentioned before, goals are aligned with the institutional assessment. However, there is limited evidence of this. (C3e)

Assessment information is particularly useful in the way Sagrado chooses to submit proposals for funding. The student services programs (TRIO's SSS, Title V HSI) are part of the learning experience in Sagrado and they impact the academic program through the development and strengthen of student skills and competences and they also have an effect on the persistent and retention⁶² of students. In addition, through these programs Sagrado was able to develop of online courses⁶³ designed to deal with students that would otherwise drop courses because his or her class schedule clashes with off-campus working hours. Likewise, the STEMmED⁶⁴ institutional grant impacted the institutional budget and enabled Sagrado to remodel the science laboratories with state-of-the-art equipment. These grants, be it through their proposal design or as a pre-condition, require continuous programmatic and student learning assessment. Thus, they also reinforce and validate Sagrado's emergent assessment culture.

Assessment of student learning is part of a comprehensive institutional assessment and receives support from the University's academic and support units, which engage in systematic planning and assessment of their programs that support overall student outcomes.

When the new Assessment Director took office, she presented a new perspective on assessment processes and on learning outcomes. In order to further develop an assessment plan, the Director:

⁶² Informe Anual Institucional Programa Apoyo al Estudiante (PAE) [2012-2013](#), [2013-2014](#), [2014-2015](#), [2015-2016](#), [2016-2017](#), Title V [2015](#).

⁶³ Informes CEDTEC DEDOS [2012](#), [2013](#), [2014](#), [2010-2015](#).

⁶⁴ Executive Summaries: [2012](#), [2013](#), [2014](#), [2015](#), [2016](#).

- met with facilitators from each academic unit to learn about the [status](#) of student learning process.
- gathered data in order to establish whether it was feasible to close previous cycles;
- created and administrated a faculty survey [Informe Encuesta a la Facultad acerca del Proceso de Avalúo, 2017](#) (Report on the Survey to the Faculty about the Assessment Process);
- presented and discussed results with faculty [Presentación Procesos de Avalúo, 2017](#); [Puntos discutidos en la reunión de facultad, 2017](#) (Topics Discussed at the Faculty Meeting);
- developed and convened faculty [workshops](#);

Figure 12: Assessment cycle



In summary, Sagrado maintains its efforts to promote and consolidate an assessment culture, but challenges still remain. The evidence found describes a process of assessment at all levels including learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate students that result in curricula and syllabi modifications, and ample dissemination among stakeholders. The documents examined also evidence moments where the cycles were closed, but there was information lacking. Some of the strategies used to close the cycle were faculty surveys and interviews. Moreover, the information collected was used to ascertain that curriculum changes and the Strategic Plan were alligned. Still (as presented in tables 28 to 32 above), the academic and support units continued the assessment in their respective areas. Support units have assessed their services, including utilization, satisfaction, evaluation of workshops offered (e.g. Library, CVC).

Recommendations:

In the analysis of this Standard, the following areas were identified as areas for improvement and further development:

- a. Enhance the culture of assessment in all programs of the University.
- b. Standardize assessment across all programs.
- c. Formalize assessment as part of the evidence based budget planning process.
- d. Improve dissemination of assessment findings and outcomes to stakeholders.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement

The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

Compliance with the Standard and Criteria

Sagrado meets the nine criteria of Standard VI. It also meets the Requirements of Affiliation 8, 10 and 11. Evidence to that effect can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap.

Criterion Number	Standard VI Criterion	Meet Criterion
C1	Institutional and individual unit objectives are clearly stated assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation	✓
C2	Clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes that provide for constituent participation and incorporate the use of assessment results	✓
C3	A financial planning and budgeting process that is aligned with the institution's mission and goals, evidence-based, and clearly linked to the institution's and units' strategic plan/objectives	✓
C4	Fiscal and human resources, as well as physical and technical infrastructure support operations	✓
C5	Clear assignment of responsibility and accountability	✓
C6	Comprehensive planning for facilities, infrastructure, and technology that includes consideration of sustainability and deferred maintenance and is linked to the institution's strategic and financial planning	✓
C7	Annual independent audit confirming financial viability with evidence of follow-up on any concerns in the audit's accompanying management letter	✓
C8	Strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources required to support mission and goals	✓
C9	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes, and availability of resources	✓

Sagrado makes continuous improvement to integrate best practices and standards of excellence in its planning processes, resource allocations and organizational structures for the fulfillment of its mission. The period that encompasses this Self-Study includes two strategic plans. The first of these is [PE 2014-17](#) and the second one is [PE 2017-20](#). Figure 1 in Standard I shows that both strategic plans share the following areas of emphasis: the **nature**

of the educational experience, the **context** or environment in which educational experience takes place, and the **feasibility** of that experience.

Institutional Planning

The [Priorization](#) and [Proyecto de Priorización de Programas Académicos basados en el Modelo Dickenson \(2012, Rev. March 2013\)](#), project mentioned in Standard I (2008, 2012, and 2013) was a participatory planning process that initiated in the Summer of 2008 through the Fall of 2012 reported in the [PRR](#). This project allowed Sagrado to carry out environmental, trend, and competitive analyses, where institutional and academic opportunities and challenges were identified and tackled. Mentioned in PRR, the outcome of the SSR was that from then on, all institutional objectives must be aligned to the strategic plan and the work plans must reflect the initiatives defined as priorities for each academic year.

The information gathered through the Priorization project was used to review and update the three strategic clusters or areas of emphasis in PE 2014-17, that are considered the three main institutional objectives: **nature** of educational experience; **context** of the educational experience; and **feasibility** of the educational experience described in PRR.

These institutional objectives are directly derived from the mission to *educate individuals in intellectual liberty and moral conscience, willing to participate in building a more authentically Christian Puerto Rican society: a caring community in justice and peace*. In 2013 (PRR) and to the present, Sagrado's feasibility of the educational objective has three main targets:

- institutional and learning assessment as the basis for planning and resource allocation
- increase the enrollment level and ensure fiscal requirements while properly focusing on societal needs and opportunities;
- growth of the Endowment Fund.

The three main institutional objectives mentioned before, remain unchanged. The difference is how initiatives and actions take shape within the University.

1-Institutional and learning assessment

Through the years, Sagrado has tested several ways of addressing how institutional and learning assessment become central in the planning and resource allocation. In 2009, a

Planning, Assessment and Enrolment Management (PAEM) unit was created to gather and provide research and statistical information for planning. Regarding assessment, the PAEM had an Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) established in 2010 that developed a new Institutional and Learning Effectiveness Assessment Model detailed in the PRR. The OIRA was also responsible for assessing the strategic plan and, for the first time, establish and maintain a coherent linkage between planning, assessment, and allocation of resources. In addition, OIRA was closely involved in the phase II of the Priorization Plan (2012), specifically in relation to academic program reviews where as a result, policies and procedures were changed, and a cycle of program reviews was established PRR.

Explained in Standard III, as a result of the Priorization Project, Sagrado has gradually examined each academic program and has established a moratorium and closing timeline or an active revitalization effort. As presented in [Academic Programs](#) document, the number of academic programs has decreased accordingly, guided by the criteria established in the three phases of the Priorization Plan. This assessment of the academic programs guides the financial planning process for the academic offering making it viable for the University to explore new academic areas of potential development.

The data collected and analyzed for this Self-Studies shows that the assessment process, both Institutional and of the student learning process, was not uniform and thus reflected variable results that created gaps. This, however, did not stop the University from conducting assessment at different instances (academic departments and programs, satisfaction surveys) detailed in Standards III and V. It is recommended that a uniform assessment process be designed and implemented in order to guarantee a rational and systematic decision making.

As a result of the change in administration, the PAEM, as many others, underwent an evaluation of its objectives. In 2015, the outcome was a realignment of functions, and the Planning and Assessment unit retained institutional intelligence, strategic planning and retention. By 2017, the University realized that there was synergy between the Planning and Assessment Unit and the goals of the VPAA and, therefore, as shown in the organizational charts⁶⁵, the Planning and Assessment unit became part of the VPAA.

⁶⁵ Organizational Charts [2013](#), [2014](#), [2016](#), [2017](#).

The lack of uniformity in the assessment process before mentioned, together with the multiple changes of the Planning and Assessment unit, have contributed to certain level of instability in the process of resource allocation as tied to assessment data. Therefore, a uniform assessment practice coupled with a Planning and Assessment unit that is fortified will enable more precision in the data collection and analysis and thus enhance transparency and accountability to the process.

Another example of gradual changes in the implementation of the objectives is how the concept of entrepreneurship transforms and gains prominence from one strategic plan to another. In the 2013-2014 plan, the entrepreneurial vision is included for the first time as part of the Nature of the Educational Experience as a separate concept from citizen engagement [PRR](#). By the time the [PE 2017-20](#) is approved, entrepreneurship has become one of the central elements of the plan and an objective itself.

The ecosystem of entrepreneurship and innovation in Puerto Rico, given the current fiscal situation, encourages universities to exercise bold leadership and a new role that contributes to strengthening their community, social and economic environments, THROUGH the development of pertinent academic programs that will attract students who will successfully become productive members of our society. The strategic objective related to entrepreneurship is:

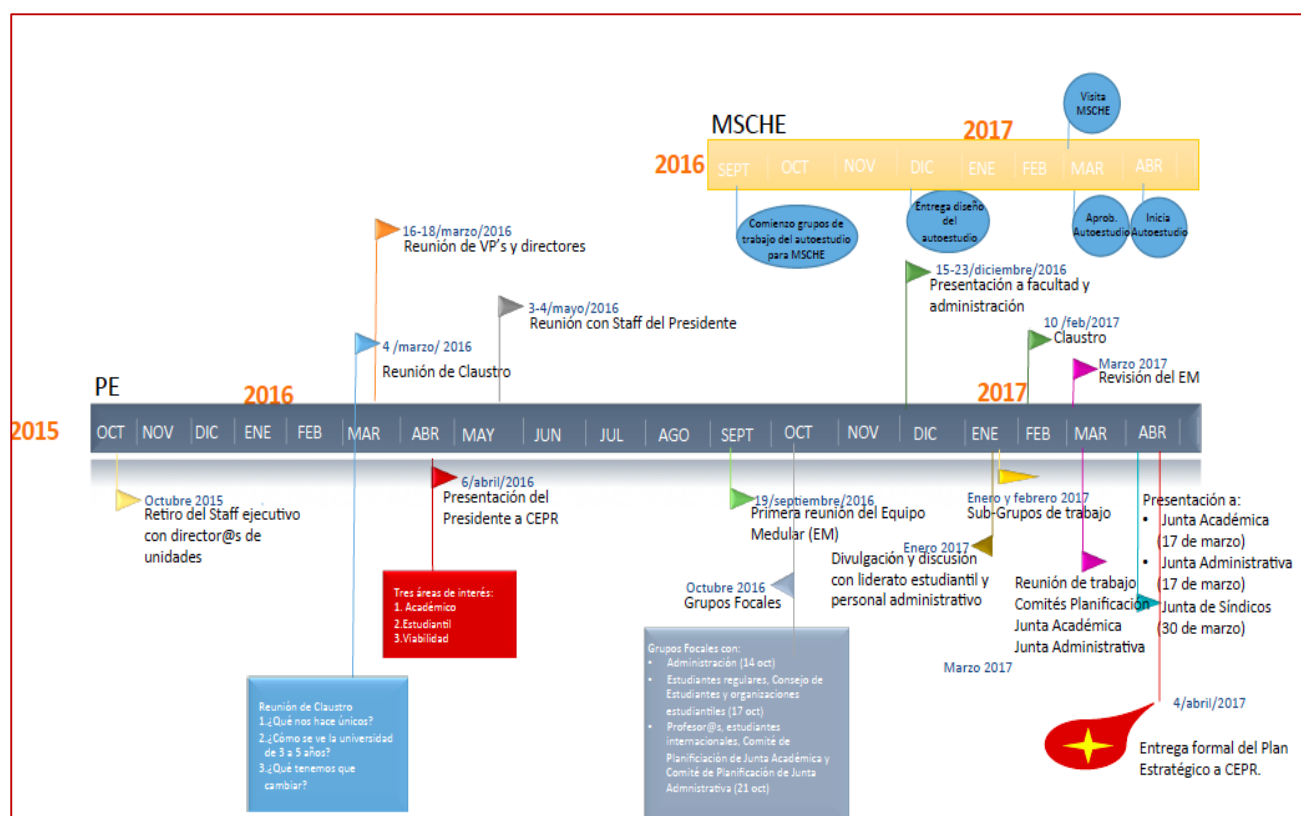
Redesign the interaction model between the surroundings and the academic project based on innovation, social responsibility, and entrepreneurship in order to impact the immediate context: businesses of all levels and sizes, non-profit sector, community-based initiatives, and government, among others.

In other words, Sagrado seeks to closely monitor the relationship between the University's internal interactions of innovation and entrepreneurship, and concrete actions resulting in tangible impacts that benefit the community within and without campus PE 2017-20.

Sagrado encourages a culture of open innovation, strategic planning, participatory design and continuous improvement with representation of the University community. As such, the design of the PE 2017-20 was the product of a participatory, open and innovative process that redefines this traditional instrument into an effective tool for the sustainable development of its academic project, human capital, its creative and investigative resources, and potential development of the ventures and companies of the University students.

During the 2016-2017 academic year, Sagrado designed and adopted its new strategic plan. This process was led by a Steering Committee with representation from all sectors of the community including students, faculty, administration, trustees and alumni PE 2017-20. This process led to the creation of working committees, public consultations, meetings, workshops, and presentations.

Figure 13: Strategic Plan and MSCHE reaccreditation timeline



The adoption of the strategic plan complied with the institutional regulations for its adoption and was presented to the accrediting agencies. The [PE 2017-20](#) establishes a value proposition with the following commitments:

- strengthen learning and research as the axes of knowledge development and the search for truth;
- promote the effective use of technology as a tool for self-learning, throughout life;
- establish an academic offer that favors its development as a university without borders that offers a flexible curriculum with multiple educational modalities and an interdisciplinary curriculum that reflects the continuous dialectic between human experience, reasoning, science, technology and creativity, elements fundamental for the development of knowledge and for the education of the educated person;

- develop a model infrastructure through the fusion of technology with all academic processes and services, adjusting physical facilities to technological advances. (C1)

Financial Planning

Top management regularly meet to review that the initiatives and actions are aligned with the institutional objectives. During these meetings, executives are entrusted with different assignments which will become the basis for the units' objectives that determine the work plans for the fiscal year. All operational units are central for the institution to achieve its goals, since their contributions are important means by which the improvement projects become a reality. The President, Vice-presidents, and Directors have an active participation when reviewing the priorities within their work areas and identifying the necessary resources for their implementation.

As a continued form of improvement and following recommendations from the [SSR](#), one of the recent improvements to the financial planning process is the creation of a [budget committee](#) appointed by the President that has representatives from the following stakeholders: academics, student services, and administrative support units, that alongside the Vice-president of Finance and Operations (VPFO) and the Financial Planning Director work on a draft of the budget that must be aligned to the strategic plan and institutional goals. (C2, 3, 5)

Budget preparation process

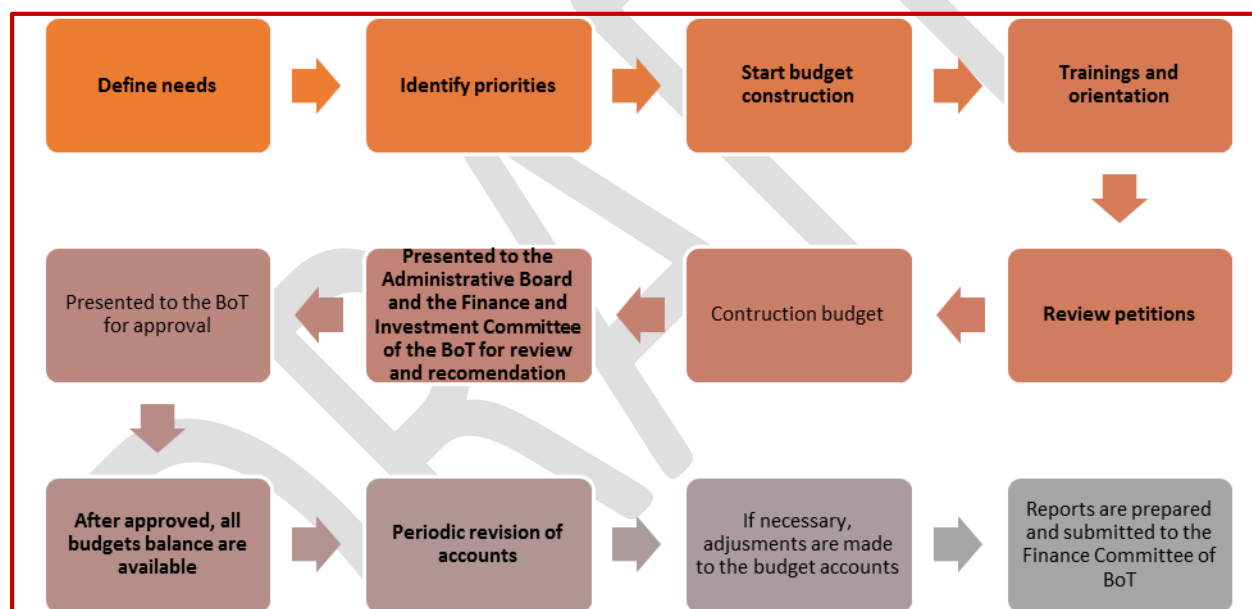
In the [PRR](#), the University explained that the Regression Analysis Model provides accumulated results that allow budget predictions following a conservative or prudent approach. Sagrado maintains a systematic process for preparation and control of the institutional budget. The [Financial Planning Office](#) gathers, organizes, interprets and evaluates the information sent by all units across the organization as part of the annual budget preparation. It is the budget committee's duty to review the petitions and assign the priorities within the operational and capital budget. Petitions must support the University's objectives and institutional priorities.

During the distribution of resources, the committee may request additional information, carry out meetings, review historical facts, and consider other internal and external factors. This rigorous process allows the University to have a better perspective of the ongoing

situation and an estimate of the income, expenses and capital allocations. Following the AFICA consultant's [recommendations](#), budget requests are assigned a priority ranking and various interactions take place until the anticipated resources until the “most likely” scenario match the initiatives classified as top-priority projects.

The entire academic, student and administration support units, participate in this budget exercise. The process to present petitions⁶⁶ of operational funds and capital purchases is participative. Unit [directors](#) present their needs according to the unit's work programs, aligned to the University's strategic plan. As presented in the following flowchart, Sagrado's budget is a continuous process.

Figure 14: Budget flowchart



Budget activities and timeframe⁶⁷ associated with each stage of the process is detailed in the Budget Calendar and Work Plans. Budget allocation is fundamental to achieve the institutional objective of feasibility of educational experience. Resources are allocated as per the following criteria:

- safety and compliance with regulations or security issues;
- strengthen the academic and the student service programs (enhance the student experience);
- improve the work environment, new human resources and talent development;

⁶⁶ [Budget Call Letter 2012-13](#); [Budget Call Letter 2013-14](#) - Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2014-15](#) - Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2015-16](#) - Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2016-17](#) - Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2017-18](#) – Approved.

⁶⁷ Examples: Budget Calendars: [2012-13](#); [2013-14](#); [2014-15](#); [2015-16](#); [2016-17](#); [2017-18](#) and examples of working plans: [2014-15](#); [2015-16](#).

- encourage competitiveness;
- technology plans;
- preservation and maintenance physical assets. (C2, 3, 5)

Depending on the nature of the expenditure, executives of different units evaluate and approve the allocation. For example: the Chief Information Officer reviews requests for expenditures on information technology and security systems. Likewise, the Director of ICS reviews requests for expenditures on improvements to the physical plant and facilities. The Vice-president of ODHR participates in the allocation of budget for payroll and fringe benefits.

The preliminary budget (operational and capital) is presented to the Administrative Board's⁶⁸ [Minutas/Agendas/Presentaciones Junta Administrativa] Finance Committee that is composed of representatives from the faculty, staff, and students for their recommendations. The budget is then submitted to the [BoT's](#) Finance and Investment Committee for recommendations and approval. Finally, the budget is presented to the BoT for discussion and approval⁶⁹.

Once approved, the budget⁷⁰ is available to all units at the beginning of each fiscal year. Opening balances are uploaded into the Kuali Budget Module⁷¹ and identified by account/object code providing each unit director with a useful tool to keep track and control of the assigned funds. The reports provided by Kuali and Ethority facilitates the assessment that leads to better decisions in the financial planning, budgeting and resource allocation process. Capital expenditure allocations have been limited to the amount of noncash depreciation expense minus cash required for long-term debt payments.

Sagrado recognizes that even with all considerations and details captured in the budget, deviations from the budget may arise. Adjustments to the budget (surplus or reductions) are made, considering the order of priorities aligned with the institutional goals to expand its services and maximize market opportunities using prudent budgetary practices. If any saving

⁶⁸ Examples: [2010](#), [2014](#), [2015](#), [2017](#).

⁶⁹ Presentations to the BoT and Acts are available for review upon request.

⁷⁰ [Budget Call Letter 2012-13](#)- Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2013-14](#) - Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2014-15](#) - Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2015-16](#) - Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2016-17](#) - Approved; [Budget Call Letter 2017-18](#) – Approved.

⁷¹ Examples Kuali instructions: [2015-16](#), [2017-18](#).

is identified, the available funds are redirected to other units in need, bearing in mind the priorities. The budget also includes a reserve for unexpected situations.

Capital Improvements

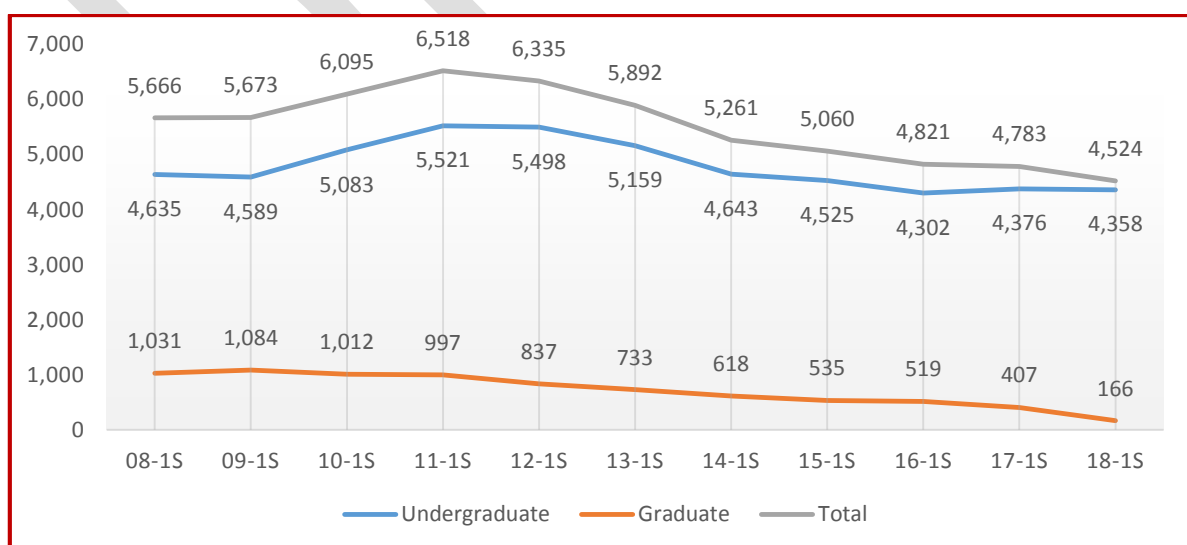
Generally, capital improvements are petitioned by the Oficina de Instalaciones, Conservación y Servicios (ICS; Office of Facilities, Conservation and Services) and the Centro de Informática y Tecnología Integrada ([ITI](#)); Center for Integrated Technologies and Information) in order to execute the infrastructure objectives. These improvements are capital projects and part of the financial planning for the capital budget. Capital improvements are guided by the [Guía-Procedimiento en Proyectos Capatales](#). This process is led by the Oficina de Compras (Procurement Office) who is responsible for drafting the request for proposals based on the unit's needs, evaluate responses to the proposals, and make recommendations.

Fiscal

Revenue from Tuition and Fees

A gradual reduction in operating revenues is a direct result of the reduction in enrollment during the period covered by this Self-Study is shown in figure 15. The worsening economic conditions and changes in demographics have impacted institutions of higher education and overall enrollment has decreased.

Figure 15: Total Enrollment USC First Semester



For many students, tuition cost is a determining factor in the decision to seek higher education. The University is aware of the cost sensitivity of prospective students and their families. True to its mission, Sagrado has implemented modest increases to cost per credit and fees. For the past two years, Sagrado has maintained tuition⁷² and fees at the same level. (C3)

In 2017, the University reviewed its definition of “applications for admission” as applied to the process of converting applicants into admitted and enrolled students. The reviewed definition is aligned with the definition provided by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). This change is reflected on the reports that Sagrado prepares for to the accrediting agencies Standard & Poor’s, and Moody’s every year. The process of converting applicants into admitted and enrolled students, as reviewed, allows the Admissions Office to be more targeted in its recruitment and enrollment strategies. In addition, it provides more accurate information on prospective students used in the development of the University’s marketing strategies for various reasons:

- increase the Sagrado brand recognition and call rate
- position Sagrado in the prospective’s mind, and
- increase the outreach.

The information also strengthens the University’s institutional intelligence used for financial planning, the budgeting process, and in the allocation of resources in furtherance of the institutional objectives. (C3, 5, 6)

Revenue from Auxiliary Sources

Although tuition and fees are Sagrado’s primary sources of revenue, there are additional sources of revenue that are used to support the institutional goals. Revenues from auxiliary enterprises and other sources include occupancy of the University Residences, renting of facilities, Continued Education Program, private and public grants, and fundraising efforts. Some of these have been impacted by the reduction in students and the economic situation. Detailed in Figure 16, revenues from auxiliary sources have been reduced by \$404,000 (\$3,602,000 for fiscal year 2013 to \$3,198,000 for fiscal year 2017).

⁷² Normas Financieras (Financial Requirements) [2015-16](#), [2016-17](#).

Figure 16: Breakdown of additional sources of revenue.

	Audited 2013	Audited 2014	Audited 2015	Audited 2016	Audited 2017
Sales and services auxiliary enterprises	1,982	1,998	2,032	1,793	1,974
Private gifts and grants	762	336	161	150	327
Fund raising	379	236	325	108	328
Sales and services of educational activities	479	436	390	499	569
Total	3,602	3,006	2,908	2,550	3,198

University Residences

Explained in Standard IV, occupancy in the University Residences (dormitories and apartments) fluctuates mainly due to students enrolled in the Nursing Program who need lodging at different times in the academic year. A higher and more stable occupancy rate would provide the University with additional revenues.

In addition to the University Residences, Sagrado has spaces for rent that are available such as the CAP, the Chapel, sports facilities, the theater, classrooms and other spaces.

Continued Education

Another source of revenue is Sagrado's long standing [Department of Continued Education](#). This department has been accredited by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) since 1998 and was reaccredited in 2016. It provides courses, workshops, trainings, and professional certifications to adults and youth. Table 32, shows that this unit provides learning activities to a diverse population of an estimate of 300 per year that represent approximately \$600,000.00. Aligned with the [PE 2017-20](#) and the institutional goals, this unit is evolving to be a more comprehensive long-life learning center.

Table 32: Participants and courses offered by the Department of Continued Education

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Average
Participants	4,718	4,530	4,564	3,969	3,645	3,276	3,546	4,144	3,093	3,943
Courses	331	315	315	314	305	271	277	314	254	300

Grants

Grants (public and private) are an important source of revenue that allow for the development of innovative initiatives in support of Sagrado's mission to educate and student learning experiences. Originally a separate unit, the Office of External Resources provides technical support to in-house grant writers and, also, procures, drafts, and submits

grant proposals such as Title V-HSI, STEMEd, PAE, National Endowment for the Humanities, Walmart Foundation, Fundación Ángel Ramos, Fundación Puertorriqueña de las Humanidades, among others. Grants are an important source of funding for academic research and for this reason, in 2016 the unit was integrated to the VPAA.

Fiscal Requirements

As previously mentioned, Sagrado continues to face the challenges of operating in an environment of increased competition, a reduced pool of candidates resulting from a declining population on the island (particularly in the target audience), and depressed economic conditions in Puerto Rico. Within that reality, Sagrado has been able to maintain a stable financial condition while continuing to push forward its strategic plans and objectives and support its mission through planning and analysis processes⁷³.

Figure 17: Condensed Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

	Audited 2013	Audited 2014	Audited 2015	Audited 2016	Audited 2017
Tuition and fees, net of scholarships	\$ 37,631	\$ 35,630	\$ 32,468	\$ 30,697	\$ 30,249
Auxiliary enterprises and other revenues	14,137	9,267	8,157	7,464	8,055
Total Operating Revenues	51,768	44,897	40,625	38,161	38,304
Instruction and Academic Support	23,701	21,988	21,138	20,583	19,335
Student Services and Student Aid	6,439	6,212	6,158	6,758	6,938
Institutional Support	10,371	10,104	9,927	11,496	11,244
Other Expenses	3,445	3,163	3,531	3,549	3,238
Total Operating Expenses	43,956	41,467	40,754	42,386	40,755
Increase (decrease) in unrestricted net assets before Minimum Pension Liability Adjustment	7,812	3,430	(129)	(4,225)	(2,451)
Minimum Pension Liability Adjustment	(5,076)	2,134	(5,709)	(2,844)	3,840
Increase (decrease) in unrestricted net assets	2,736	5,564	(5,838)	(7,069)	1,389
Increase (decrease) in temporarily restricted net assets	(9,390)	197	(140)	(482)	6,355
Increase (decrease) in permanently restricted net assets	7,208	1,698	(319)	37	(4,816)
Change in Net Assets	\$ 554	\$ 7,459	\$ (6,297)	\$ (7,514)	\$ 2,928

Sagrado is a tuition driven institution; therefore, financial results are directly and proportionally related to changes in enrollment. Enrollment, fundraising activities, other sources of revenue (non-enrollment), and expenditures in capital projects support institutional objectives and improve the educational experience. During the period under analysis, Sagrado has invested to improve facilities, additional technology for the

⁷³ Financial Statements are available for review upon request.

classrooms, campus-wide digital technology improvements, faculty development, and academic and administrative support areas⁷⁴. While the institutional policy governing investments establishes diversification, investment balances are subject to market volatility and may increase or decrease depending on prevailing conditions. As part of the assessment process, the institutional policies on investments have been reviewed over the years and the Institution has acted accordingly to protect investment gains, whenever possible.

Accrued pension costs continue to be a liability that is, to a significant extent, hard to control and forecast. In 2006, the University's defined benefit [pension plan](#) was frozen, but the University is still required to make contributions based on actuarial assumptions that change over the years. Such variability and absence of control represent a continuum. Consequently, the Minimum Pension Liability Adjustment fluctuated significantly during the period up to a change of over \$7 million from fiscal year 2014 to fiscal year 2015, resulting in a reduction in unrestricted net assets, as shown in figure 18⁷⁵. This uncontrollable financial hit resulted in the University failing to meet two important financial indicators: the AFICA ratios required by bondholders and the U.S. Department of Education composite score.

Figure 18: Condensed Statements of Financial Position

	Audited 2013	Audited 2014	Audited 2015	Audited 2016	Audited 2017
Assets:					
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,253	\$ 2,588	\$ 1,312	\$ 360	\$ 463
Investments	2,837	-	-	-	-
Accounts receivable, net	4,885	5,122	4,623	4,586	4,042
Other current assets	1,462	1,063	698	491	359
Current Assets	12,437	8,773	6,633	5,437	4,864
Investments	21,059	26,753	24,789	21,067	23,892
Capital Assets, net	42,280	45,794	46,262	47,158	44,853
Other non-current assets	4,328	3,991	3,547	2,686	2,247
Total Assets	\$80,104	\$85,311	\$81,231	\$76,348	\$75,856
Liabilities:					
Current liabilities	\$ 4,673	\$ 5,975	\$ 5,549	\$ 6,071	\$ 6,793
Bonds payable	23,133	22,299	21,449	20,283	19,431
Other non-current liabilities	3,036	2,929	2,645	2,577	1,908
Accrued Pension costs	7,427	4,815	8,594	11,938	9,317
Total Liabilities	38,269	36,018	38,237	40,869	37,449
Net Assets:					
Unrestricted	28,355	33,919	28,079	23,565	24,954
Temporarily restricted	1,514	1,718	1,578	5,718	12,073
Permanently restricted	11,966	13,656	13,337	6,196	1,380
Total Net Assets	41,835	49,293	42,994	35,479	38,407
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$80,104	\$85,311	\$81,231	\$76,348	\$75,856

⁷⁴ Presentations to the BoT related to the budget are available for review upon request.

⁷⁵ Financial Statements are available for review upon request.

AFICA Ratios

The University has complied and is current with all bond related payments from the issuance of Puerto Rico Industrial, Tourism, Education, Medical and Environmental Control Financial Authority bonds in 2012 ([AFICA](#)). As part of the bond agreement, the University is required to meet two financial ratios for each completed fiscal year. Sagrado is currently in compliance with this requirement based on its last completed fiscal year 2017. For fiscal years 2015 and 2016, the University failed to meet the required ratios. This was due mainly to the minimum pension liability adjustment that led to a material decrease in unrestricted assets in fiscal year 2015. In addition, the one-time payments associated to the [Voluntary Transition](#) Program for employees impacted FY2016. As a result of failing to meet the ratios, Sagrado had to engage for two consecutive years an external consultant who made recommendations to improve the University's finances and operations. As of 2016-2017, Sagrado is compliant with the AFICA ratios.

Federal Student Aid Program

The University submits information of its financial statements to the U.S. Department of Education (DoE) through the ezAudit platform to determine financial responsibility required to participate of the Federal Financial Assistance Program. A composite score of at least 1.5 is required in order to receive funding. For fiscal year 2016, the DoE informed Sagrado that the calculation erroneously reflected an addback the pension liability and, therefore, the composite score was below the 1.5 threshold. The calculation used by Sagrado was consistent with relevant regulatory Code of Federal Regulations guidance, consistent with the calculation used in previous years, and verified by the University's external auditors. In addition, the calculation used had never been questioned in the past by the DoE or any other relevant party. Sagrado appealed the DoE's determination and is still pending a formal response on the calculation. However, the DoE granted the University a new Program Participation Agreement and formally notified that Sagrado is compliant with the composite score and, therefore, the University is financially responsible⁷⁶.

Endowment Fund

Sagrado's Endowment Fund is invested to grow the principal, following the investment policies to leverage other sources of revenue for future investments or expenditures. The

⁷⁶ Documents related to the University's appeal to the DoE are available for review upon request.

Endowment Fund is nurtured from fundraising activities and private donations from individual and corporate donors, and revenues have been used for student scholarships and the improvement of facilities that support academic projects and student life. For example:

- “El Sabor Tiene Nombre” (2010 and 2011) for the restoration of the Chapel;
- “El Sabor Tiene Nombre” (2012-2016) for scholarships;
- “El Futuro es Sagrado 2015-2020” is an ongoing effort to raise funding for the improvement to the Library, scholarships, and the Endowment Fund.

In recent years, Sagrado’s increased presence in virtual and social media has made it easier for individual donors to contribute. Outreach to corporate sponsors such as AT&T, Pepsi, El Mesón and others has yielded positive results. However, economic conditions in Puerto Rico have made fundraising particularly challenging and, therefore, it is recommended that the University focuses on the development and fundraising strategy in order to increase the Endowment Fund.

Human Resources

In 2009, the Office of Human Resources developed a prioritization plan that included initiatives aimed at strengthening the organization in order to improve student services and institutional operations as defined in the strategic plans. Mentioned in the [PRR](#), these initiatives were: Academia de [Desarrollo de Talentos](#) and [Transfórmate](#). These projects established the basis for the initiation of important changes at the institutional level, strengthening collaborative work, refocusing processes, management development, and supervision. Following are the results of these projects from 2013 to 2015 included:

- the elaboration of transitional approaches geared toward changing employees’ functions;
- the reformulation of intermediate managerial levels;
- the offering of continuing education to supervisors; and
- the designing of a succession plan. However, in the academic year 2014-2015, the implementation of Transfórmate was postponed due to the reformulation of organizational priorities upon the retirement of previous University President, Dr. José Jaime Rivera.

In 2015, the Office of Human Resources was restructured and separated from the Deanship of Administration and a new independent Vice-presidency for Organizational Development and Human Resources (ODHR) was created to strengthen and achieve the institutional objectives. Since its inception, ODHR has improved its processes and implemented changes to increase institutional efficiency. Among them are the following:

- A new electronic platform was implemented substituting SENSE with Automatic Data Processing ([ADP](#)) that facilitates the management of human resources including payroll, personnel profile, and attendance.
- As discussed in Standard II, the Employee Handbook 2017 and other institutional employment related policies⁷⁷ and procedures were reviewed. All employees received a copy of the Employee Handbook and the institutional employment related policies and procedures. Likewise, new employees received their copy during the onboarding orientation process, where this information was explained to them. These documents are periodically reviewed.
- Provide trainings to employees on employment related policies and procedures, coordinates wellness and benefit⁷⁸ workshops, in addition to professional trainings to supervisors, among others.
- Trainings by third-party providers are also coordinated and, in some cases, Sagrado may cover all or part of the cost, depending on the institutional needs.
- Managed the Voluntary Transition⁷⁹, Program conducted in 2015, until completion. The purpose of this program was to offer employees the opportunity to retire, with benefits not available otherwise.
- Started a new Performance Management Program using the ADP⁸⁰ platform, specifically designed to support employees' professional development by recognizing their contributions and providing the tools to help them overcome areas of opportunity in their performance. In 2016 the unit ran a pilot exercise which provided valuable information to retrain managers and improve the overall Program. The pilot also provided sufficient information to be considered for the next evaluation cycle. (C4, 5, 6)

⁷⁷ For example: [Política para el uso de acceso a cámaras de imágenes](#); [Política para solicitar y utilizar licencia de enfermedad](#); [Política para empleados sobre abuso de alcohol y uso de sustancias controladas, narcóticos y drogas](#)

⁷⁸ [Presentación Oriental Group 2015](#); [Plan de Pensión](#), [Social Security internet presentation](#)

⁷⁹ [Mensaje a la comunidad del Programa de Transición Voluntaria](#)

⁸⁰ Sistema Gerencia del Desempeño: [Taller 1](#), [Taller II](#), [Taller III](#)

ODHR is instrumental in projects that impact talent acquisition, employee development, compensation and benefits.

Technology

Centro de Informática y Tecnologías Integrada ([ITI](#); Center for Integrated Information Technologies) is responsible for the selection, implementation and maintenance of all information technologies in the Institution. ITI has an IT Master Plan, as discussed in the [PRR](#), which has evolved through the period under analysis due to advances in technologies and the need to update obsolete systems that better support Sagrado's needs and institutional objectives.

In its continued assessment of its resources, ITI identified the need to upgrade its then financial existing software (Poise) with one that was more robust and would allow for more control, reporting and visibility as to financial resources. Sagrado implemented the Kuali Financial System (Kuali) in 2013 where it maintains its general ledger, purchasing, accounts payable, and property and equipment modules. The integrated system has allowed for increased control and visibility of financial resources and reports.

Subsequent to the Kuali implementation, Sagrado also implemented the use of Ethority, a report-writing software that allows for custom made information reports to help with the analysis of performance information and for monitoring results to budget among other things. Both Kuali and Ethority are mentioned throughout this section as part of the budgeting and assessment process. In addition, a comprehensive information system to enable more efficient academic workflow and student support called Jenzabar will be discussed later. (C4, 5, 6)

Physical Space and Facilities

Formerly known as the Oficina de Terrenos y Edificios (Office of Grounds and Buildings), ICS is responsible for the maintenance of physical spaces, improvements to facilities, and operations, and other strategic capital projects approved by the BoT. As discussed in [PRR](#), ICS has a Facilities Master Plan that was created in 1998 and has evolved over the years to respond to the University's needs and strategic goal. Given that the academic project is the programmatic center of Sagrado's mission, the master plan includes requests made by the academic and student support services units prioritized according to the University's goals. (C3) As part of the financial planning process, each year ICS develops a work plan of the

improvements, renovations, remodeling as well as the construction of new structures for each academic year. ICS organizes the work plan into the following categories: compliance, savings and energy, sustainability, major repairs, a/c and permanent improvements. The work plan is then aligned with the Institution's needs for the budgeting and allocation process. The primary sources of income for improvements to physical plant and facilities are: capital funds, AFICA funds and federal funds.

Periodic Assessment (year-end)

Periodic revision of accounts (income and expenses) is made by the Financial Planning Office after the enrollments closing dates (October and March). Variances are communicated to the Executive Committee and, if necessary, adjustments are made to budget accounts. In addition, variance reports are prepared and submitted twice a year to the Finance and Investment Committee of the BoT.

Prior to 2017, Sagrado used to monitor and report income and expenses twice in each semester to make projections. However, as a result of the recommendations made by the AFICA consultant, Sagrado moved to a new way of monitoring income and expenses by reporting performance monthly through monthly financial statements and comparing year to date budget to previous year results, thus improving in its financial accountability. This affords flexibility and enables the University to respond quicker to situations that require a deviation from the budget and even strategic initiatives⁸¹. As part of the improvements recommended by the consultant engaged for the AFICA initiatives, several budget and reporting recommendations have been or will be implemented (C9).

Audit and compliance

Internal Audit

Internal audits are performed annually using a risk assessment matrix. In order to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest, the internal auditor reports to the [Auditing Committee](#) of the BoT. Until 2016, Sagrado had a staff who regularly performed internal audits and made recommendations to management. However, in 2016⁸², the BoT opted to outsource this service and contracted an external CPA firm to perform this service and whose day to day operations are coordinated through the General Counsel.

⁸¹ Presentations to the BoT on budget deviations are available for review upon request.

⁸² BoT Resolution dated December 5, 2016 is available for review upon request.

External Audit

In addition to internal audits, Sagrado is subject to financial audits that are performed each year by an external and independent CPA firm that render audited financial statements⁸³. These are required in order to be eligible for to participate in the different funding programs that the University benefits from such as the following:

- the U.S. Department of Education Federal Assistance Programs - Title IV that provide economic assistance to students OMB⁸⁴;
- grants that, as discussed before, are an important source of funding for academic research and improvements to facilities that support student services (Title V-HSI, STEMmED, PAE, National Endowment for the Humanities, Walmart Foundation, Fundación Ángel Ramos, Fundación Puertorriqueña de las Humanidades, among others;
- CEPR grants for academic research and scholarships for students CEPR Audits⁸⁵.

Audited financial statements are required in order to be in compliance with the AFICA Loan Agreement. Likewise, the Endowment Fund, Defined Benefit Pension Plan Fund, and the 1165(e) Retirement Plan (401(k) Plan) are audited as required by applicable laws and regulations⁸⁶. (C8, 9)

In addition to the above listed audit and compliance reports, the University receives a management letter from its external audit firm listing areas of concern or attention⁸⁷. Over the years, the reports have included comments or findings, none of which are considered a material, as noted in their reports. The following are examples of non-material findings or comments and how Sagrado has responded:

1-Information technologies and systems have been an area of commentaries over the years and, therefore, have received greater attention when it comes to budgeting for capital improvements.

⁸³ Financial Statements are available for review upon request.

⁸⁴ OMBs are available for review upon request.

⁸⁵ CEPR audits are available for review upon request.

⁸⁶ Financial Statements for the Defined Benefit Pension Plan, and the 1165(e) Retirement Plan (401k) are available for review upon request.

⁸⁷ Management Letter from the external auditors are available for review upon request.

- As discussed previously, the financial reporting platform Kuali and the Ethority financial reporting software were both implemented during the period under analysis.
- The student information management system was updated by the implementation of Jenzabar⁸⁸, a comprehensive system that integrates modules and applications for eLearning, early alert, and student support services, as discussed in Standard IV. Some situations arose in the daily operations in terms of program configuration and training. The University responded by contracting an industry expert on Jenzabar – Campus Dynamics - to support the staff in the completion of the implementation and solve some of the outstanding reporting and processing situations. This area is still in progress.

2-The development of a Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) and Business Continuity Plan are also mentioned in the reports as areas for improvement. Sagrado responded by reviewing its DRP, but it is recommended that the University update it for further improvement and testing. (C6)

3-As mentioned earlier, the audited financial statements and notes show that the University has complied with the required AFICA ratios and the DoE's composite scores. However, for fiscal years 2015 and 2016, the University failed to meet the required ratios and the composite score primarily due to the impact of pension plan liability to the net assets, as explained above.

Most situations identified in the reports were areas for improvement addressed by the time the report was formally issued, as evidenced in the "management response" section. Consequently, such findings or comments have not been an issue in subsequent years' reports.

Resources

The role of ODHR is key in identifying and engaging employees with the competencies needed for the University to achieve the institutional objectives. The role of the Vice-presidency of Finance and Operations is key, not only in the planning and budgeting process but also in modernizing physical spaces in pursuit of the goals. Likewise, ITI is instrumental in identifying new tools, software and platforms and enables the University to strengthen its

⁸⁸ [Next Generation ERP; Jenzabar Executive Presentation.](#)

technologies and information systems. The University has been able to become more efficient, lean, and to improve processes using new technology such as the ADP Workforce Now platform, mi.sagrado portal, e-mail system improvement, Ethority, Kuali, and other tools. The ITI unit has been basic for the attainment of all these improvements.

Technological improvements have been instrumental in the effectiveness of all internal communication systems by becoming more accessible and agile at all levels throughout the Institution (C3, 8).

Sagrado has an institutional organization that integrates structures, resources and planning processes for the fulfillment of its mission, accreditations and regulations. However, there are certain areas that need to be addressed.

Recommendations

In the analysis of this Standard, the following areas were identified as areas for improvement and further development:

- a. Establish a uniform assessment practice that can more precision in the data collection and analysis in order to guarantee a rational and systematic decision making.
- b. Fortify the Planning and Assessment unit in order to enhance transparency and accountability to the process.
- c. Develop fundraising strategies to increase the Endowment Fund.
- d. Increase and stabilize the occupancy rate of the University residencies for additional revenues.
- e. Updating and further improvement to the DRP, including testing.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an institution with appropriate autonomy.

Compliance with the Standard and Criteria

The University meets the three criteria and subcriteria of Standard VII and the Requirements of Affiliation 12, 13 and 14. Evidence gathered and analyzed demonstrates that Sagrado meets Standard VII. (It can be reviewed in the Documentation Roadmap. Some documents, given their sensitive nature, can be examined at the Office of the Board of Trustees of the University⁸⁹.

Criterion Number	Standard VII Criterion	Meet Criterion
C1	Clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that outlines its roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision-making by each constituency	✓
C2	A legally constituted governing body that:	
C2a	Serves the public interest, ensures that stated mission and goals are met, has fiduciary responsibility, and is ultimately accountable for the institution	✓
C2b	Has sufficient independence and expertise to ensure the integrity of the institution	✓
C2c	Ensures that neither the governing body nor its individuals interferes with the day-to-day operations of the institution	✓
C2d	Oversees at the policy level the quality of programs, approval of degree programs and awarding degrees, establishment of personnel policies and procedures, and the assurance of strong fiscal management	✓
C2e	Plays a basic policy-making role in financial matters to ensure integrity and strong financial measurement	✓
C2f	Appoints and regularly evaluates the performance of the Chief Executive Officer	✓
C2g	Is informed in all operations by principles of good practice in board governance	✓
C2h	Establishes and complies with conflict of interest policies	✓
C2i	Supports the Chief Executive Officer in maintaining the autonomy of the institution	✓
C3	A Chief Executive Officer who:	✓
C3a	Is appointed by, evaluated by, and reports to the governing body	✓

⁸⁹ Mrs. Glorianna Ydrach serves as custodian of the Archives of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Ramón Ruiz, Chairman of the Governance Committee, will provide access to confidential documents.

Criterion Number	Standard VII Criterion	Meet Criterion
C3b	Has appropriate credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the institution	✓
C3c	Has authority and autonomy required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position	✓
C3d	Has the assistance of a sufficient number of qualified administrators to enable the effective discharge of duties	✓
C4	An administration demonstrating:	✓
C4a	A clearly documented organization structure and clear lines of reporting	✓
C4b	An appropriate size and with relevant experience to assist the Chief Executive Officer to fulfill his role and responsibilities	✓
C4c	Members with credentials and experience consistent with the institution's mission and their roles	✓
C4d	Skills, time, assistance, technology and information systems expertise required to perform their duties	✓
C4e	Regular engagement with faculty and students to advance the goals and objectives of the institution	✓
C4f ⁹⁰	Systematic procedures for evaluating administrative units and use of assessment data to enhance operations	✓
C5 ⁹¹	Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administrations	✓

Sagrado prides itself for having a student-centered University that serves around four-thousand five hundred students every year ([Retención, Matrícula y College Board](#)). The Board of Trustees (BoT), the President, the Executive Leadership Team and the different instances of shared governance, continue its professionalization by making sure that every year they are in a better position to serve the institutional mission and goals and to provide students with a richer educational experience. Diverse initiatives on the side of the management team and participation of trustees in different board development activities sponsored by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) are clear signs of that commitment. Sagrado has both the structure and the governance, leadership and administrative practices required from an institution of higher education.

Board of Trustees (BoT)

The Institution is committed to the continuous professionalization of its governance practices, which has allowed the organization to better fulfill its mission and goals. Organizational development efforts launched at the end of Dr José Jaime Rivera's tenure as President ([Academia de Desarrollo de Talentos](#) and [Transfórmate](#)) and the organizational

⁹⁰ Discussed in Standard V

⁹¹ Discussed in Standard V

redesign that began with the appointment and leadership of President Gilberto Marxuach-Torrós in 2014, have promoted transformational efforts to place the University in a better position to focus on and advance its institutional mission: to *educate individuals in intellectual freedom and moral conscience, who are willing to participate in the construction of a more authentically Christian Puerto Rican society: a community of solidarity unified in justice and peace.*

Governance at Sagrado is regulated by the Estatutos de la Universidad del Sagrado Corazón (Estatutos; Corporation By-laws) that are reviewed regularly and whose most recent version was approved by the board on March 22, 2018 ([Estatutos 2018](#))⁹². (C1) The Estatutos delineate the BoT's composition and powers. The BoT is comprised of 25 trustees who offer their time, talent, and financial support to advance the institutional mission and goals. Three (3) seats are reserved for trustees representing the Society of the Sacred Heart, congregation that founded the Institution in the late nineteenth century. Other three seats are reserved to trustees recommended by the Archbishop of the San Juan Archdiocese where the University is located. The Archbishop proposes nine candidates, out of which the BoT selects three (Estatutos 2018, p. 4). Other 19 members are prominent citizens with proven track records in diverse fields such as higher education, the banking industry, architecture, consumer goods, insurance, securities, the arts, law, among many others ([Manual de Procedimientos de los Comités Permanentes](#), p. 34). (C2b) The University President is a member ex-officio with no voting rights (Estatutos 2018, p. 13).

Board members not only attend regular board meetings but also participate in committee work and board development activities. Annual retreats, strategic planning meetings and educational activities organized by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB⁹³ 2016) provide trustees with opportunities to learn and lead more effectively (Estatutos 2018, p. 11). (C2g)

The BoT holds ordinary meetings four times a year, providing strategic direction and overseeing the implementation of administrative and academic policies (Estatutos 2018, p. 11). (C2a) It has different working committees to fulfill its duties (Manual de Procedimientos de los Comités Permanentes, pp. 4-13). Each Committee has an annual calendar for its

⁹² Acta dated March 22, 2018 is available for review upon request.

⁹³ [2016 Board Assessment: AGB Consulting; Self-Study Criteria for Governing Board.](#)

meetings; materials and minutes are available for review. Currently, it has the following permanent board committees:

- Executive Committee
- Audit Committee
- Academic Affairs Committee
- Student Affairs Committee
- Finance and Investments Committee
- Institutional Development Committee
- Physical Infrastructure and Technology Committee
- Governance Committee

([Estatutos 2018](#), pp. 12-18).

The Board also creates and runs special committees whenever they are needed, as was the case with the process of recruiting a new president. At that point, a special committee of trustees and former trustees was appointed⁹⁴.

The recruitment and selection process of trustees is handled by the Governance Committee ([Estatutos 2018](#), p. 17). Trustees serve for three-year periods that can be renewed up to twelve years⁹⁵. For at least two years now, the Governance Committee has facilitated a self-assessment and board assessment⁹⁶ process informed by the AGB and that served trustees and officials to produce internal evaluation reports and assess the performance of the board and of each one of its members on a yearly basis.

Sagrado firmly believes in the participation of the different community components in the decision-making process at the University. Faculty and staff serve different BoT committees as consulting members. Faculty members, staff and students participate both in strategic planning and in committees for the preparation of this study. The experience in the ad hoc strategic planning committee demonstrated how a multisectoral composition (trustees, faculty, staff and students) fostered a richer discussion and effective execution.

The whole governance structure at Sagrado serves a main purpose, namely, making sure the student educational experience improves and is constantly assessed and enhanced, guided

⁹⁴ Informe de la Secretaría de la Junta de Síndicos 2013-2014 is available for review upon request.

⁹⁵ Tabla de Años de Servicio de Síndicos is available for review upon request.

⁹⁶ [2016 Board Assessment: AGB Consulting](#); [Self-Study Criteria for Governing Board](#).

by the institutional mission and goals (Estatutos 2018, p. 6). That explains why the BoT created a Student Affairs Committee in 2015⁹⁷. (C2d) Since its inception, the Student Committee has overseen student services, practices and policies that impact the student experience at Sagrado and will have an ongoing impact in assessing that University programs are aligned with the institution missions and goals ([Estatutos 2018](#), p. 15).

Since his arrival, President Marxuach-Torrós has held separate meetings at the beginning of each semester (one with all faculty members and another with administrative personnel) to inform the [community](#) on strategic initiatives and finances, and to provide the space to receive suggestions and ideas.

Explained in Standard VI, the BoT reviews and approves the institutional annual budget (Estatutos 2018, p. 6)⁹⁸. Through various committees, the BoT works hand in hand with the Vice-president of Finance and Operations (CFO) to ensure that Sagrado follows the best practices of fiscal controls and administration, and that both its investments and finances are handled in a manner that protects the fiscal well-being of the Institution (Estatutos 2018, p. 16). Those policies and practices are reviewed by an Internal Auditor that reports its findings to the BoT and by independent External Auditors, as described in Standard VI (Estatutos 2018, p. 14). (C2d, e)

Trustees abide by the Código de Ética⁹⁹ and the Política para Evitar Conflicto de Interés en la Contratación con el Gobierno Federal (presented previously in Standard II). In addition, Sagrado and its trustees comply with the IRS and insurance requirements regarding conflict of interest¹⁰⁰. Trustees similarly follow the [Decálogo](#) (Decalogue) in the performance of their fiduciary duties and expected behavior (C2h).

Selection of new President

The BoT launched a search effort for a new President and created a [special committee](#) when the then Presidente, Dr José Jaime Rivera, announced his retirement in 2014. Said committee facilitated a consultation process whereby different sectors of the community were able to contribute to the articulation of a profile and model of competencies required for the position of president of the University. The committee, led by a former Chairperson

⁹⁷ Acta dated September 11, 2015 is available for review upon request.

⁹⁸ Annual Budget review presentations are available for review upon request.

⁹⁹ [Código de Ética 1995](#); [Código de Ética 2018](#).

¹⁰⁰ Insurance policy conflict of interests signed by trustees are available for review upon request.

of the Board, Rafael Martínez-Margarida CPA, conducted the six-month search process and made a recommendation to the BoT that unanimously ratified the selection of the current president¹⁰¹. (C3a)

Gilberto Marxuach-Torrós was appointed tenth President of Sagrado on August 4, 2014¹⁰². A lawyer by training, [Marxuach-Torrós](#) brings an interdisciplinary background and perspective, given his studies in Liberal Arts at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana (the *curriculum vitae* is included in the Road Map). After earning a Juris Doctor at Yale University, he began his professional career that took him up the ladder in one of Puerto Rico's most prestigious law firms, serving as a legal and investment advisor to institutions of higher education; through several entrepreneurial stints; and a tenure as Chief Legal Counsel and Advisor to Puerto Rico's Governor. While in public service, Marxuach-Torrós was responsible for the creation of important educational policies and legal frameworks in Puerto Rico. What is more, Marxuach-Torrós is an intellectual, avid reader and practicing Catholic that honors the values and principles that provide an ethical framework to our Institution and our mission. (C3b)

The Governance Committee facilitates the performance evaluation of the University President and make recommendations to the BoT ([Estatutos 2018](#), pp. 5, 17). Initially appointed for a three-year period, President Marxuach-Torrós was evaluated by the BoT at the end of said period. (C2f, C3a)

Governance structure

Executive Leadership Team

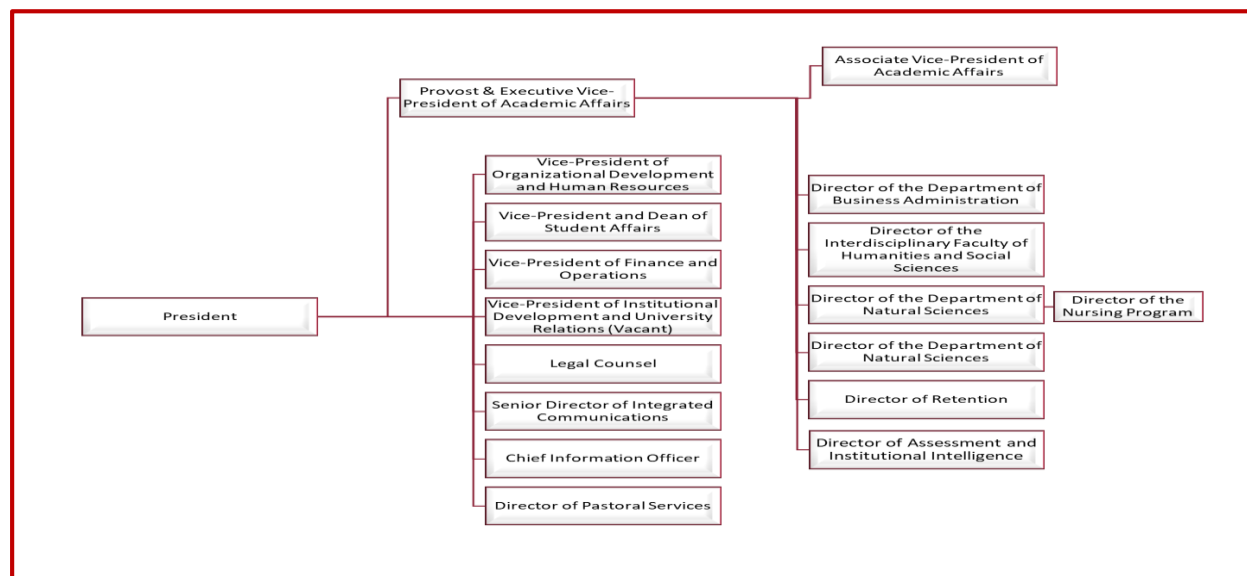
The University President, Chief Executive Officer, has a team of executive leaders that support him in leading the institution. [The Executive Leadership Team](#) (ELT) of the University comprises both those executives that report directly to the President and those who report to the Executive Vice-president of Academic Affairs (Chief Academic Officer) of the Institution. (C4a)

All of them are highly qualified and experienced professionals (the *curriculum vitae* are included in the Road Map). (C4b, c, d)

¹⁰¹ Informe de la Secretaria de la Junta de Síndicos 2013-2014 is available for review upon request.

¹⁰² Acta dated June 26, 2014 available for review upon request.

Figure 19: Organizational Chart of the ELT



Members of the ELT are either *ex officio* members of different BoT committees or report on a regular basis to them ([Manual de Procedimientos de los Comités Permanentes](#), p. 23, 25, 27, 29). In addition, the President and members of the ELT participate in consultative instances such as the Junta Académica (Academic Board) or the Junta Administrativa (Administrative Board). (C3d) Both the ELT and the BoT receive the inputs of several instances of shared governance in the Institution. The existence, activities and proceedings of the Consejo de Estudiantes (Student Council), the Junta Académica and the Junta Administrativa create the conditions for the participation of the different sectors of the community in making sure that the Institution complies with its policies and operates guided by its mission and strategic goals. (C4e)

Representative governance structures

The Junta Académica meets no less than 4 times a year ([Reglamento de la Junta Académica](#)). With participation from the faculty, students and members of the ELT, its meetings foster dialogues that inform institutional decision making regarding key academic affairs based on Sagrado's mission and strategic goals. Another governance structure is the Junta Administrativa ([Reglamento Junta Administrativa](#)) meets no less than 4 times a year. With participation from the faculty, students, staff, and members of the ELT, these meetings are

the opportunity for stakeholders to have input into institutional decision making regarding its administrative policies and financial affairs.

Explained in detail in Standard IV, the Consejo de Estudiantes ([Reglamento de Estudiantes](#)) meets regularly throughout the academic year. It receives guidance and support by personnel of the Vice-presidencia y Decanato de Asuntos Estudiantiles (VPSA; Office of the Vice-president and Dean of Student Affairs) and a faculty member as Counselor. Every semester, the Consejo de Estudiantes organizes a Student Assembly¹⁰³ with participation of the President and the ELT who listens to the students' concerns and suggestions for the improvement of the University experience. At the [Student Assemblies](#), President Marxuach-Torrós speaks to the student body about plans and the current situation of the Institution.

In addition to the Consejo de Estudiantes, every year residents from the University Residences elect the Concilio de Residentes (Residents Council) who represent them on housing and community living matters. Their main objective is to promote the wellbeing of residents and coordinate activities to support participation in student life. Students also participate in student organizations, each with their own governance structure. Mentioned in Standard IV, student organizations are recognized by the University in different institutional activities for their commitment to Institutional goals and values.

Every year, the University President presents progress reports to the BoT on: 1-academic, administrative and financial matters, 2-the University's state of affairs, and 3-the priorities for the ELT, aligned with the University's mission and the strategic objectives for each year ([Estatutos 2018](#), p. 19). In addition, President Marxuach-Torrós has established the practice of sharing similar reports with the faculty, staff and the student body. This practice has helped improve organizational communication and morale at all levels. (C2i, 3c; C4e)

Sagrado fosters the continued professionalization of its faculty and staff as well as that of the BoT. The belief that education is a life-long enterprise is at the core of this professionalization effort and, in turn, it enables the University to provide students with a richer educational experience. The shared governance presented in this Standard shows

¹⁰³ Students Assemblies: [Report and actions 11/18/2014](#); [Act](#) and [Actions 11/23/2015](#); [Minute](#) and [Actions 10/18/2016](#); [Minute](#) and [Actions 3/28/2017](#); [Report and actions 11/11/2017](#).

that Sagrado has an experienced membership committed to the University's mission that understands the importance of leveraging on best practices to achieve its strategic goals.

Recommendation

In the analysis of this Standard, the following areas were identified as areas for improvement and further development:

- a. Consider a share governance using the ad hoc committee that worked on the [PE 2017-20](#) as benchmark.

CONCLUSION

To educate is, in itself, an act of justice.
Society of Sacred Heart



Throughout this document Sagrado has presented conclusive evidence of how its mission and vision are designed, ratified, and successfully used as the principal guiding force for academic and administrative work. The mission itself is grounded on the principles of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. These principles of social justice are the pillars on which the University structures are built upon. And this foundation is conduit of ethical and integral behavior and oversight, right through the entire Sagrado community.

Sagrado is a student centered academic project. The curriculum is broad enough to ensure that students are exposed to diverse perspectives of contemporary discussions. As a liberal arts institution, Sagrado offers a plethora of courses within its general education designed to enhance students' understanding of classical, as well as cutting edge knowledge.

Departmental and specialization courses are designed to present the students an in depth view of the field and an opportunity to learn by doing. Finally, the curriculum offers a block of elective courses where the students can explore their passions. Transversal to the content of all courses are strong ethical teachings and the commitment to civic and community engagement.

This framework of courses is deployed by a group of highly competent faculty (both fulltime and adjunct) that present the perfect balance of scholarly and professional experience. The preferred pedagogical methodology is active-learning and faculty is continuously exposed to diverse means by which to perfect this approach.

A system of student support services is in place to foster the best adaptation to university life, while promoting student empowerment. Students are guided into experiences that promote local and global encounters. They are encouraged to participate in student government and organizations, and many other extra-curricular activities that are in turn documented in a separate official co-curricular and extracurricular transcript.

The University reinforces all support systems by making sure that all staff members evaluated and offered the opportunity to better themselves. This commitment is part of the vision to *offer a unique academic project, an innovative educational experience in which the classroom is the world, in an environment characterized by community life. It is based on the principle that human beings and Christian values are at the center of our project.*

Sagrado has been consistently cultivating and enhancing a culture of evidence-based decision making. In doing so, it has explored different assessment plans in several phases. These plans have changed in the last ten years as the University assessment teams have matured their strategies and have selected the most effective ones to give continuity to student learning measures and institutional valuation. Each phase served as an opportunity to learn and develop better approaches. However, these initiatives have also had the downside of creating instability in the model itself. Therefore, there are gaps in the data collected and, on occasions, data that is hard to track or use as comparison. The result is that Sagrado has an emerging assessment culture that needs to be strengthened.

Notwithstanding, all data collected and analyzed in the assessment process has served as crucial information in the planning process. This process is participatory and always built upon the University's mission and aligned to the strategic goals. The added value is in this alignment: purpose, strategy, performance, and culture.

It is then evident that Sagrado is a mission centric institution that holds dearly its purpose and promotes passion for the mission by engaging all members of the community as learners and potential leaders. In doing so, Sagrado is student centered beyond its academic project and is truly a social project. In that sense, the mission is audacious since it seeks to build a better society based on Christian values such as solidarity, justice and peace by providing excellence in education.