

**INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF DE PUERTO RICO  
CENTRAL OFFICE  
VICE PRESIDENCY OF ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS**

**OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AFFAIRS**

**GUIDELINES FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AT THE  
INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO**

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## **GUIDELINES FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AT THE INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO**

The development and review of academic programs are pillars of the university work and a reflection of our commitment to academic excellence. These guides are based on the documents “Degrees and Credits” and “Credit Hour Policy” of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and the Report of the Special Committee for Curriculum Analysis of Major Concentrations of the University Council. Therefore, curriculum development at the University should be guided by the following parameters.

### **I. Total of Credits for the Academic Programs**

- 1) Associate: 60-65 credits
- 2) Bachelor: 120-130 (for four years programs)
- 3) Master: minimum of 30 credits
- 4) Doctorate: minimum of 30 credits
- 5) First Level Professional
  - i. Law: 83 credits
  - ii. Optometry: 140 credits
- 6) Professional Certificate: minimum of 12 credits
- 7) Minor (undergraduate): 18-27 credits
- 8) Speciality (graduate): 9-12 credits

Note: Exceptions to these credit parameters may be applied to meet professional accreditation requirements.

### **II. Hours-Credit**

The University defines one (1) credit for an academic term, as indicated below:

- 1) Fifteen (15) hours of face-to-face contact and a minimum of 30 hours of academic activities related to the course outside the classroom; or its equivalent in online academic activities
- 2) Fifteen (15) hours of face-to-face contact of the integrated conference-laboratory modality and a minimum of 30 hours of academic activities related to the course outside the classroom; or its equivalent in online academic activities
- 3) 30-45 hours of closed face-to-face or virtual laboratory
- 4) 45-60 hours of supervised practice

### **III. Curricular components**

- 1) Undergraduate level
  - General Education Program (PEG) requirements
  - Core requirements (if applicable)
  - Major requirements
  - Minor requirements (if applicable)
  - Related requirements (if applicable)
  - Prescribed Distributive Requirements (if applicable)
  - Electives courses (minimum of 3 credits for bachelors, but the component is optional for associates, masters and doctorates)
  - Minor program (if one is chosen)

- 2) Graduate level
  - Core course requirements (if applicable)
  - Specialization requirements
  - Operational requirements (if applicable)
  - Sub-specialization requirements (if applicable)
  - Prescribed Distributive Requirements (if applicable)
  - Electives courses (if applicable)
  - Minor Specialization (if one is chosen)

#### IV. Definitions

- 1) **Learning Outcomes:** It refers to statements of what students are expected to be able to achieve as a result of a learning activity. These can be at the level of academic program, course or instructional unit.
- 2) **Curricular Map:** It refers to the articulation, alignment or congruence between the different components of the curriculum, such as goals and objectives of the program, competency profile of the graduate and courses.
- 3) **Program Goals:** It refers to the general statements of the purposes of the academic program, which essentially respond to the needs of society, students and discipline.
- 4) **Program Objectives:** It refers to the dimensions of knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the goals of the program that contribute to the achievement of the goals of the academic program.
- 5) **Competency Profile of Graduates:** It refers to the knowledge, skills and attitudes competencies that the student must demonstrate as a result of having completed the program. In addition, it establishes a direct relationship between the competencies required for the exercise of the profession and the contents of the academic programs. The competency profile of the graduate is equivalent to the learning outcomes at the academic program level.
- 6) **General Education Requirements:** It refers to general education courses that aim to form a person with an integral education about human knowledge. For the associate degree 24 credits are required and for the bachelor degree 48 credits are required.
- 7) **Core courses Requirements:** It refers to the fundamental courses in an area or discipline of studies that serve as the basis for more than one concentration or specialty.
- 8) **Minor requirements:** It refers to the courses required in a particular discipline at the undergraduate level.
- 9) **Sub-concentration requirements:** It refers to the courses required as part of a specific area of study within a concentration at the undergraduate level.
- 10) **Related requirements:** It refers to the set of courses that do not respond directly to the discipline of the program, but are necessary to complete the desired academic formation.

- 11) **Specialization requirements:** It refers to the courses required in a particular discipline at the graduate level.
- 12) **Sub-specialization requirements:** It refers to the courses required as part of a specific area of study within a specialization at the graduate level.
- 13) **Prescribed Distributive Requirements:** It refers to courses within a concentration or specialization suggested by specialists in the discipline for their relevance or affinity with the academic program (equivalent to targeted electives).
- 14) **Operational requirements:** It refers to credits related to the research, thesis and dissertation requirements that are part of a graduate program (for example, Doctorate in Education).
- 15) **Combined Study Course (Hybrid):** It refers to the course offered through the combination of face-to-face and online study modalities. The combined study requires fifty percent of the teaching-learning processes in contact hours (faculty-students) and fifty percent of work through the technological platform for distance learning used by the University. The set of contact hours and those corresponding to distance activities is equivalent to the credit hours of the corresponding classroom courses.
- 16) **On-line course:** It refers to the course offered through the technological platform for distance learning used by the University. The teaching-learning processes and the communication and interactivity between faculty-student and student-student is carried out through said platform. The academic work required in the online course is equivalent to the credit hours of face-to-face courses.
- 17) **Study by Contract with Web Support:** It refers to the course offered as a result of a written agreement signed by the student, the department director and the professor assigned to the course. This modality implies a face-to-face contact, with a previously established periodicity, and a continuous interaction between the professor and the student, through the technological platform for distance learning used by the University. The set of contact hours and distance activities is equivalent to the credit hours of the corresponding classroom courses.
- 18) **Elective Course:** It refers to the credits required in an academic program, which the student selects according to their academic and professional interests or preferences.
- 19) **Minor Concentration:** It refers to the option that a student has to complete 18 to 27 credits in a discipline or study area of their preference other than their major concentration at the undergraduate level.
- 20) **Minor Specialization:** It refers to the option that a student has to complete from 9 to 12 credits in a discipline or area of study of their preference other than their specialization at the graduate level.
- 21) **Practice:** It refers to the courses of experiences in real work scenarios, under the supervision of a professor, which are considered part of the requirements of the degree.

- 22) **Clinical Practice:** It refers to the courses of experiences in real work scenarios, under the direct and continuous supervision of a professor during the hours in which the student is in the practice scenario.
- 23) **Internship:** It refers to those learning experiences in real scenarios in which the student participates and that the University offers as part of the exchanges, agreements or agreements with other institutions. These internship experiences are not part of the degree requirements. However, when the internship experience replaces or is validated by a course in the student's academic program, it will be part of the degree requirements.
- 24) Laboratory courses must specify their nature in the description, as indicated below.
- a. **Presential Closed Laboratory:** Educational experience that is carried out in a specific physical installation that the student attends at a specific time. The environment is controlled and supervised. It involves the payment of a fee that is calculated considering the number of teaching hours ("lecture"), laboratory and the total credits of the course. Laboratory hours count to determine course credits and teaching academic load.
  - b. **Virtual Closed Laboratory:** Educational experience that is carried out through the institutional platform for distance education from any place that has access to the Internet. The environment is controlled and supervised. It involves the payment of a fee that is calculated considering the number of teaching hours ("lecture"), laboratory and the total credits of the course. Laboratory hours count to determine course credits and teaching academic load.
  - c. **Presential Open Laboratory:** Educational experience that is carried out in a physical facility provided by the Institution with a stipulated service schedule. The student attends the laboratory, depending on their availability. It is used to provide the student with additional hours complementary to the course content. It involves the payment of a fee. Laboratory hours do not count to determine course credits or teaching academic load.
  - d. **Virtual Open Laboratory:** Educational experience that is carried out through the institutional platform for distance education from any place that has access to the Internet. It is used to provide the student with additional hours complementary to the course content. It involves the payment of a fee. Laboratory hours do not count to determine course credits or teacher academic load.
  - e. **Conference-laboratory:** Educational modality that integrates the conference and the laboratory in the place or medium used for the teaching and learning process. This modality is equivalent to the conference for purposes of determining the credits of the course and the academic load of the professor. In addition, it entails a fee for the modality (not for the credits of the course) similar to that of the open laboratory and applicable when the course is offered in person.

## **V. Transversal Axes for Curriculum Development**

The University is committed to the integral development of the student, especially at the undergraduate level of his academic formation. That is why, the following thematic axes or conductive threads for the curricular development of the Institution have been postulated:

- 1) Christian-ecumenical values,
- 2) ethical values, and
- 3) democratic and civic values.

The University hopes to contribute to the moral, ethical and civic development of the student through an articulated curriculum that integrates the values that distinguish the University.

## **VI. Internationalization of Curriculum**

The University is committed to the internationalization of the curriculum that tends to the integral formation of the student with the professional competencies that allow him to perform effectively in a professional world and socially globalized and diverse. In this way, the University contributes to the development of professionals who, as leaders or agents of change, can contribute to social transformation in the communal, local, national, regional or international context.

On the other hand, given that the internationalization of the curriculum is not limited to student and teacher mobility, an international curriculum aims to impact all students through internationalization at home (internationalization at home or IaH). This includes, but is not limited to, working with the following elements of the curriculum through the General Education Program, majors and specializations, as applicable:

- 1) Goals
- 2) Competency profile of graduates
- 3) Course title or description
- 4) Objectives or expected learning outcomes
- 5) Thematic content of the course
- 6) Student learning activities
- 7) Student learning evaluation
- 8) Varied educational resources (for example: media, authors, approaches, languages)

These Guidelines for curriculum development at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico shall be effective immediately upon the signature of the President.

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The original version (in Spanish) of the 2016 Guidelines was approved by the President on February 5, 2016, and replaces the amended version of May 29, 2013.