

**Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico**

**Toward Excellence:  
Update on the MSCHE Accreditation  
Process and Evaluation Team Visit**

**Prof. Mishelle Rivera Santos - Chair  
Prof. Marla Mendez Silvagnoli- Secretary**

**March 1, 2024**

# Welcome



# MSCHE

MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION  
ON HIGHER EDUCATION



# PUCPR-MSCHE Meeting Agenda

- Committee members
  - Executive Committee
  - Steering Committee: Working Groups Chairs
- Updates on the Accreditation Process
  - PCUPR Self-Study recommendations
- Accreditation status
  - Timeline
  - MSCHE Evaluation Team
  - Dr. Domes recommendations
- Important Reminder
- Questions

# PCUPR-MSCHE Executive Committee



**Prof. Mishelle Rivera**  
Chair



**Dr. Mónico Sanabria**  
Co-chair



**Prof. Marla Méndez**  
Secretary



# PCUPR-MSCHE Steering Committee



## Arecibo Branch Campus



**Dr. Yazdel Martínez**  
Dean of Academic Affairs



**Dr. Mabel Saavedra**  
Liaison

## Mayagüez Branch Campus



**Dr. Frank J. Sierra**  
Dean of Academic Affairs



**Prof. Lillian Seda**  
Liaison



# PCUPR-MSCHE Steering Committee

## Working Groups Chairs



- **Working Group I: Mission and Goals - Dr. Ana Plaza**
- **Working Group II: Ethics and Integrity - Prof. Juan D. Vilaró**
- **Working Group III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience - Dr. Ivette Torres**
- **Working Group IV: Support of the Student Experience - Dr. Arvin Báez**



# PCUPR-MSCHE Steering Committee

## Working Groups Chairs (cont.)



- **Working Group V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment - Prof. Carmen Velázquez**
- **Working Group VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement - Dr. Ilia Rosario**
- **Working Group VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration - Mrs. Marisol Suárez**
- **Working Group VIII: Institutional Federal Compliance- Dr. Waddy Mercado**

# PCUPR-MSCHE Accreditation

Status: Stage



**Self-Study**



**Evaluation**



**Accreditation**



# Priority based Self-Study

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- First University in Puerto Rico with this Self-Study approach.
- Alignment of Institutional Priorities with MSCHE Standards.
- Allows for assessment and review of the Institutional Strategic Plan.

# Compliance with MSCHE Standards

**Standard I - Mission and Goals**

**Standard II - Ethics and Integrity**

**Standard III - Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**

**Standard IV - Support of the Student Experience**

**Standard V - Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

**Standard VI - Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

**Standard VII - Governance, Leadership, and Administration**



# Self Study Findings: Areas of Strength

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- **Mission and Goals** aligned with Institutional priorities and appropriate to higher education
- **Highly qualified faculty** staff who demonstrate PCUPR's commitment to an excellent education
- Robust **academic curriculum**
- **Student support services** enhance the chances to achieve their goals

# Self Study Findings:

## Areas of Strength

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- Attention is paid to the **research** area, which benefits students and faculty
- **Resilience** establishing a support system to address the emotional and academic needs of students, faculty, and administrative staff.
- **Planning and Budgeting** processes are linked to the available resources and the budget based on the objectives established in the Strategic Plan.

# Self Study Recommendations: Attention to Student Needs

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- Foster **connections with alumni**
  - Provide internships and exchange experiences to students
- Assertive **communication plan**
  - Close communication gaps and promote student support services opportunities
- Promote greater participation of faculty in **academic guidance** and enrollment processes

# Self Study Recommendations: Attention to Student Needs (cont.)

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- Improve the **tutoring services assessment** process
  - Expand and strengthen offerings
- Expand course offerings

# Self Study Recommendations: Curriculum and Research

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- Create a **faculty development institute**
  - Development plan: teaching strategy, assessment, emerging technology, research, proposal development
- Develop **innovative certifications and degrees**
  - Foster entrepreneurship, relevant to labor market needs, and reflect current population changes.

# Self Study Recommendations: Curriculum and Research (cont.)

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- **Faculty exchanges**
  - Strengthen collaborative alliances, expand international experience and recruitment.
- **Strengthen research** efforts and resources
  - Identify priority lines of research
  - Improve the research incentive for professors and students.



# Self Study Recommendations:

## Human Resources, Administration, and Finance

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- Strengthen the **academic and administrative assessment** culture
  - expand assessment training opportunities, improve the process to gather feedback and insights
- Establish a **database system** to gather information at the different institutional levels
  - Strengthen the decision-making processes and assess the institutional goals.

# PCUPR-MSCHE Accreditation

Status: Stage



**Self-Study**



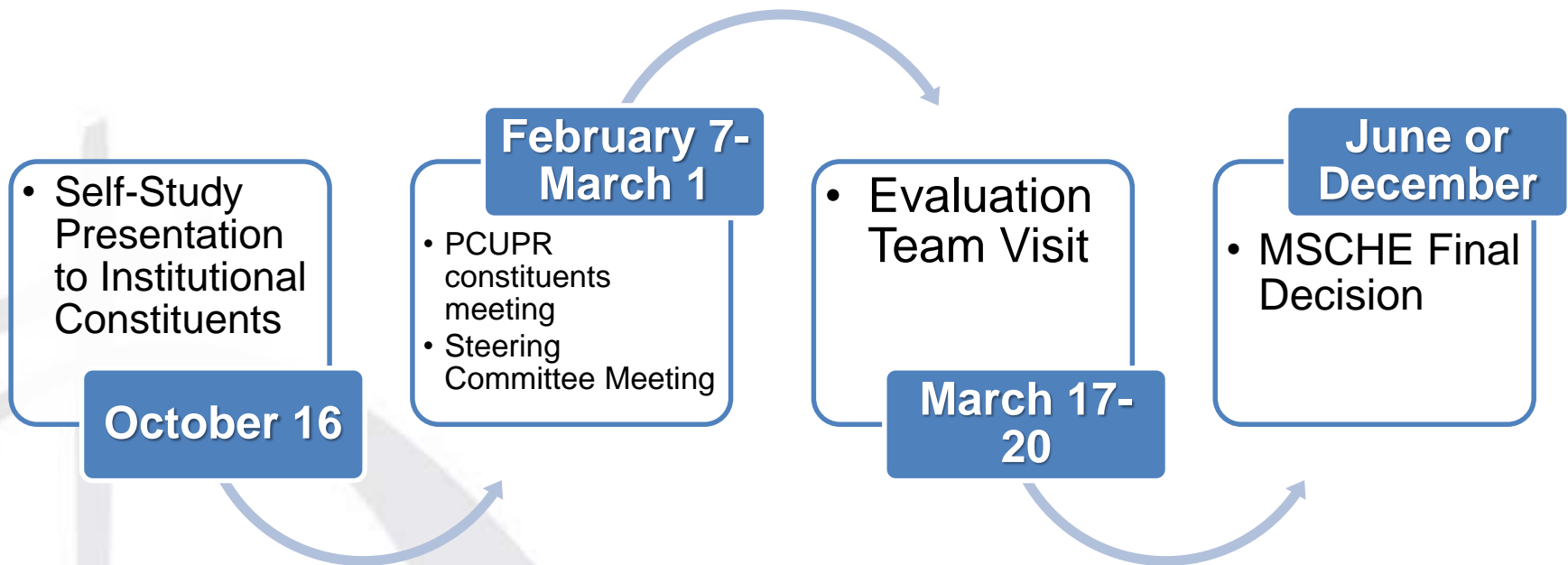
**Evaluation**



**Accreditation**

# PCUPR-MSCHE Accreditation

## Status: Timeline



# MSCHE Evaluation Team President

## Dr. Chris Domes

- Evaluation Committee President
- President of [Neumann University](#), appointed on July 17, 2017.
- A strong proponent of Catholic Franciscan education and possessing an impressive record of accomplishment that spans 35 years in higher education.
- Has led initiatives in strategic planning, fundraising, academic program expansion, enrollment management, community relations, technology access, and campus growth.



President of  
Neumann University

# Evaluation Team



- [Dr. Maria Baez](#), Manager, Accreditation and Strategic Planning, Strayer University, FL
- [Dr. Sabine Charles](#), Chief Internal Auditor, Touro University, NY
- [Dr. Catherine N. Duckett](#), Associate Dean, School of Science, Monmouth University, NJ
- [Dr. Ann M. Fallon](#), Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, St. John Fisher University, NY

# Evaluation Team (cont.)



- [Dr. Roger Wilbur Gee](#), Professor, Holy Family University, PA
- [Dr. Wilson Luna](#), Dean of Students, Gateway Community College, CT
- [Dr. Claudia Morales](#), Director of Education in Health Sciences, Universidad Andres Bello, Chile

# Preparation for Evaluation Team Visit: Dr. Domes Recommendations

- We should highlight:
  - ✓ Who are we?
  - ✓ What are we doing to shape the University?
  - ✓ How the self-study helped the University?
  - ✓ What are we focusing our attention on?
  - ✓ Are we reaching the mission?
  - ✓ How are we assessing?
  - ✓ How do we know we are serving students correctly?
  - ✓ How do we know we are fulfilling students' needs?

# Importance of the Accreditation Process

- Evidences that PCUPR provides a **quality education**
  - Employers, institutions, and others can trust our students have been sufficiently educated.
- Aligned to the agency **standards** and **requirement of affiliation**
  - Qualify for financial aid and federal loans under the USDE
- A degree from an accredited school is **valuable**.



# Before the visit

- Review **Self-Study** and discuss recommendations with peers.
  - Attention to Student Needs
  - Curriculum and Research
- Review **Dr. Domes recommendations.**
- Review **reflection** questions.

# During the Visit



## Accessability

- Ensure all necessary personnel and documents are readily available to the Evaluation Team.



## Transparency

- Encourage open communication and transparency throughout the evaluation process.



## Cooperation

- Collaborate with the Evaluation Committee and provide assistance as needed.



## Flexibility

- Remain flexible to accommodate any unforeseen circumstances or requests.

# Questions ?



For additional questions, comments or recommendations you can write to: [msche@pucpr.edu](mailto:msche@pucpr.edu)