



I. INTRODUCTION

The accreditation process of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), Graduate School of Information Sciences and Technologies (GSIST) and the present Program Presentation document covers the period of 2008-2015. Since the last accreditation review, in 2008, the UPR-GSIST faculty and staff have worked continuously to evaluate and revise its master's program and have considered diverse ways to strengthen its curriculum aligned to student learning outcomes.

The School has provided extracurricular opportunities to enrich students learning experiences; has facilitated faculty with opportunities in different teaching modalities, stimulated the creativity and research endeavors, as well as contributed with continuing professional education opportunities geared to students, alumni and other interested information professionals. The GSIST has been able to developed strategies to strengthen and apply its technological resources within the program to enrich the learning-teaching-research environment. The process has led to the revision and implementation of the School's curriculum evidencing its commitment to ongoing proactive action in its planning, implementation and evaluation performances.

The Program Presentation (PP) 2015 is hereby respectfully submitted to the Committee on Accreditation.

A. Goals and Objectives of the Program Presentation Process, from the perspective of the faculty of the Graduate School of Information Sciences and Technologies, of the University of Puerto Rico (GSIST-UPR).

The self-evaluation process of the Master's Program in Information Sciences and Technologies at the University of Puerto Rico and the Program Presentation 2015 aims to facilitate the exploration and assessment of the School's planning and development, in terms of its curriculum, faculty, students, administrative and financial support, and its physical resources and facilities. The Program Presentation is a means whereby all components of the School's academic community can deepen their understanding, and learn more about the School's accomplishments, challenges, strengths, weaknesses, actual and future plans and projects—in the context of the School's commitment to renew the School's accreditation by the American Library Association.

At the same time, this process serves to stimulate greater commitment and support from the different elements of the School's academic community who are

participating in the self-study and assessment activities. This collaborative effort serves to strengthen the relationships between faculty, administration, students, alumni, employers and professionals working in the field. As a result, the School has a stronger base from which to implement its actual and future plans and projects.

The objectives of the PP process, from the perspective of the GSIST-UPR faculty are:

- To develop and implement an effective and efficient set of activities to successfully carry out the requirements for the School's continued accreditation status, in accordance with the [*ALA Standards for accreditation of master's programs in library & information studies, 2008*](#).
- To prepare a workable timeframe to carry out this process, in accordance with the [*Accreditation process, policies and procedures*](#) (Second edition, Committee on Accreditation, December, 2006).
- To actively involve all sectors of the School's academic community in this process, through a collaborative team effort.
- To identify, gather, create, organize and provide access to documents and evidence needed to support the different sections of the PP document.
- To create a flexible, positive working environment in which to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives of the process.
- To produce the PP document, as a final product, to serve as a clear and effective document the School's compliance with the ALA's 2008 *Standards for the accreditation of master's programs in library & information studies*.

B. Perspective on the PP Process and Product: Its Value and Importance

The GSIST's continued accreditation status with ALA, including the PP process, indicates that the School is firmly committed to and supports the American Library Association in its role as the accrediting agency for graduate programs of library and information studies leading to a Master's degree.

It also reemphasizes the importance the School places on the assessment and the quality of the education it offers. It demonstrates the School's commitment to the processes of self-study and peer review; to meeting standards of quality and integrity developed through the work of the ALA Committee on Accreditation and administered by the Committee and the ALA Office for Accreditation.

The fact that the GSIST is seeking continuing accreditation indicates the special value placed by the School in aligning itself with the tradition and practice of North American librarianship, even though it is located in a Spanish-speaking country outside of the continental United States. The importance of the United States and the American Library Association's leadership in the field is clearly recognized and reaffirmed by the School. The advantage for graduates of the School in being able to work in the United States and Canada with a Master's Degree from an ALA accredited School is of key importance to the GSIST.

At the same time, the School is aligned with Caribbean and Latin American library and information science organizations and associations, like ACURIL (Association of Caribbean University, Research and University Libraries) and BIREME-VHL, through its Virtual Health Library in Puerto Rico. It aims to strengthen its connection

to and support for the development of the field and the profession in the geographic area in which it is located, and with which it has strong ethnic and cultural affiliations. The unique position of the School to serve as a bridge between U.S., Caribbean, and Latin American issues and concerns in library and information science education is an important factor to keep in mind and contributes to its competitive advantage. The international relationship impacts many aspects of the School's planning, projects, and activities.

There is no doubt that the preparation of a PP offers an unique opportunity for self-assessment and planning. The continued efforts involved in identifying and creating relevant documents, in gathering and organizing data and in working together with a group of people representing diverse interests and expertise are a stimulus to critical reflection and analysis of past, current and future plans and projects. The need to establish priorities for making decisions that will affect different aspects of the School's program is an essential part of the process. Careful planning and effective communication become increasingly more important. The examination of how the School has progressed since the last accreditation, in 2008, is a focal point for the process, reflected in current and future plans and projects, as well as in the Program Presentation itself.

C. The Structure and Organization of the Program Presentation (PP) Process and Product

The coordination of the PP process has been assigned to a faculty member with experience in ALA accreditation from having participated in past efforts. Dr. Luisa Vigo-Cepeda, overall Coordinator of the process, with the collaboration first of Dr. Carlos Suárez-Balseiro, Acting Director (2013-2014) and, second, with Dr. José Sánchez-Lugo, newly appointed Director (from August 2014), and the faculty coordinators of the six steering committees (each corresponding to one of the six standards) have been responsible for the accreditation process and the preparation of the PP. Each of the six working teams includes a diversity of participants from among the School's constituency, for example, part-time faculty, administrative staff, students, alumni/ practitioners and employers. The six teams have conducted numerous face-to-face meetings and online activities using Skype and emails from the second semester of 2012-13 through the first semester of 2014-2015. The Steering Committee chairs are as follows:

Standard I. Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives. Coordinator: Dr. José Sánchez-Lugo, Ed.D., Professor/Director, jose.sanchez18@upr.edu

Standard II. Curriculum. Coordinator: Dr. Luisa Vigo Cepeda, Ph.D., Professor, luisa.vigo@upr.edu

Standard III. Faculty. Coordinator: Dr. Betzaida Vélez-Natal, DLS, Associate Professor, betsaida.velez@upr.edu

Standard IV. Students. Coordinator: Dr. Sergio Chaparro-Univazo, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Sergio.chaparro@upr.edu

Standard V. Administration and Financial Support. Coordinator: Dr. Carlos Suárez-Balseiro, Ph.D., Associate Professor, carlos.suarez5@upr.edu

Standard VI. Physical Installations and Facilities. Coordinator: Dr. Eliut Flores Caraballo, Ph.D., Professor, eliut.flores@upr.edu

In addition to this Introduction, the structure of the Program Presentation includes the following other sections:

II. The School's External Environment

- A. The economic, social and cultural context within which the School functions.
- B. Trends and issues in the information industry and in the library field affecting the School.
- C. The University of Puerto Rico (UPR) and the Río Piedras Campus, planning for the future.

III. Introduction and Overview of the GSIST

- A. Brief history and development of the School.
- B. Present day description of the School.

IV. Compliance of the School with each of the ALA Standards for Accreditation, including, for each of the six areas covered by a Standard:

- A. Introduction
- B. School's objectives aligned with this Standard
- C. Description of compliance with each section of the standard: (1) Summary of the School's compliance with this section of the standard (including specific objectives aligned with this section of the standard), (2) Achievements, (3) Evidence, (4) Challenges, (5) Steps to be taken.

V. Overview, Conclusions and Future Actions

- A. Overview of the Program Presentation process and product
- B. Key accomplishments in relation to each of the Standards
- C. Limitations and challenges
- D. Future Actions: planning and evaluation activities
- E. Closing Remarks: Reflection on the self study process

VI. References with Links to Documents