

University of Puerto Rico at Bayamón
Computer Science Department

Continuous Improvement Background Report
For the Cycles on
Academic Years 2005-2006 through 2007-2008
And
Academic Years 2008-2009 through 2010-2011

Accreditation and Assessment Committee
Revised on August 2012

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present the continuous improvement process in place at the Computer Science Department for the cycles on academic years 2005-2006 through 2007-2008 and academic years 2008-2009 through 2010-2011. These cycles took place before sending the request for consideration for accreditation to ABET on January 2012. The Assessment and Accreditation Committee decided that the information presented here provides a much needed background for the Evaluation Team.

2005-2008 Cycle

During the first year of this cycle, the Board of Trustees of the University of Puerto Rico approved a document submitted by then President Antonio García-Padilla entitled *Ten to the Decade (Diez para la Década*, in Spanish). This document contained ten broad goals for the university for the 2006-2016 years, among them the aim to attain accreditation for all eligible programs, including Computer Science and Information Systems. At that time, the Computer Science Department at Bayamón offered a bachelor's degree that was a hybrid between Computer Science and Information Systems. This program could contain more advanced coursework in both areas. The Committee decided that an assessment process was needed in order to determine the requirements for a future revision of the program. Students, alumni and employers were surveyed for this purpose and the data were collected and analyzed. This cycle concluded when recommendations for curricula modifications were made on academic year 2007-2008 as a result of these analyses. These modifications resulted in the implementation of two programs grounded on the same Department. These programs were known at the time as Applied Computing Science and Information Systems & Technology.

2008-2011 Cycle

The objective of this cycle was to assess the new programs so that two goals could be met: (1) confirmation of institutional accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and (2) paving of the way for a future request for accreditation by ABET. This cycle was crucial since, as a result of the implementation of the two new programs, the Department recruited two professors with a Ph.D. in Computer Science or closely related fields. These professors would be in charge for the development of new advanced coursework and for performing research. The Information Systems & Technology program was coordinated by a professor with a doctorate in this discipline. Also, the Department established an External Advisory Board during these years. This board is composed of students, alumni and employers and had their first meeting on academic year 2010-2011. The Accreditation and Assessment Committee submitted a set of educational objectives to the External Advisory Board for consideration. Modifications proposed by the board were integrated to the objectives after approval by the faculty of the Department. These educational objectives became effective immediately.

It is important to note that during academic year 2009-2010 there was a transition in leadership positions at the university, campus and departmental levels. This situation, coupled with a two-month student strike, caused a disruption in the assessment process of the new programs. Fortunately, it was also during this academic year that the chairman of the Department established a new Assessment and Accreditation Committee.

The cycle goals were met. The institution received confirmation of accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Also, a revision of our Continuous

Improvement Plan was implemented so that a more systematic assessment process could be achieved.