

## **COLEGIO DE EDUCACIÓN**

### *Departamento Interdisciplinario de Educación Salud y Moda*

#### **Program Impact Standard 4 (4.1 & 4.2) Phase-in-Plan SSR & Addendum**

**The provider demonstrates the impact of its completers on P-1 student learning and development**, classroom instruction, and schools, and the satisfaction of its completers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation.

#### **Focus Group Report**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The EPP does not have direct access to data collected by the state (Department of Education of Puerto Rico) that can evidence the teaching effectiveness of our EPP completers. Instead, the EPP has established a phase-in plan of focus groups to study teacher preparation effectiveness and the impact of its completers on P-1 student learning and environment.

The EPP's objectives for this research are:

1. to document an understanding of the role and impact on student learning so that decision-making can be informed by robust evidence.
2. to involve appropriate stakeholders in program evaluation and improvement based on completers' fieldwork, and
3. to comply with a quality assurance system of valid data from completers' positive impact on P-12 student learning and development.

### **BACKGROUND**

Due to the change of government after the elections in November 2020 and the shutdown due to Covid 19, the Department had no personnel available to be contacted. The Institutional Review Board IRB had requested as part of the document consent letters from the Department of Education to carry out the meetings with the teachers (completers) from the Department. This had caused a significant delay in the processes. The IRB granted permission to comply with the procedure on March 5, 2021 (See: Approval of Investigation: Protocol:JRI-20-21-01).

According to the phase-in-plan, a representative completer from each program would be contacted. Meetings with the focus group would be held once per semester. The first meeting was held March 25, 2021, at 5:00 PM through ZOOM. The second meeting has been scheduled for May 2021. Each program identified a completer that committed to continuing to collaborate in this task.

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The focus group was representative of each of the following academic programs:

1. Completer #1 (History) Ponce Campus
2. Completer #2 (FACO) Ponce Campus
3. Completer #3 (English) Ponce Campus
4. Completer #4 (Biology) Mayaguez Campus
5. Completer #5 (English) Ponce Campus
6. Completer #6 (Autism) Arecibo campus
7. Completer #7 (Visual Arts) Ponce Campus
8. Completer #8 (English- Primary) Ponce Campus
9. Completer #9 (Physical Education) Ponce Campus

The following measures guide the data collection process:

- ✓ Interviews (Focus Group)
- ✓ Transcriptions
- ✓ Questionnaires
- ✓ Checklist of assessment measures
  - Grade Distribution by course data
  - English Version CAI-03 data
  - English Version CAI-02 Inventory of Techniques Assessment Instruments used in courses
- ✓ Results of assessment measures (Grade distribution comparison analysis December/January and May/June)

## **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

### **SUMMARY OF RESPONSES**

**QUESTION #1** Were your studies conducted at Pontifical Catholic University conducive to reaching your professional goals?

#### **Common Responses**

All participants agreed on the following:

- Pontifical Catholic University was instrumental in helping them achieve their professional goals
- The learning experiences, advice, and preparation obtained helped to achieve their professional goals.

#### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

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- The importance and emphasis on the concept of values and humanity emphasized at PCUPR is also part of reaching out to their students

**QUESTION #2** How has the academic training acquired at PCUPR contribute to developing the professional competencies for the exercise of the profession as a teacher in your field?

### **Common Responses**

Completers concur that the academic training received in their specialized fields has enabled them to work with particular situations and student populations in Puerto Rico and the states.

### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

Completers recognized the importance of all foundations courses as the core "to build." Completers also acknowledged that each phase, such as planning, assessment, and methodologies, has also been part of the training that has allowed them to succeed.

**QUESTION #3** How effective were **the field and clinical experiences** acquired in implementing teaching and assessment strategies?

### **Common Responses**

Completers shared a diversity of experiences in the clinical phase of teaching. They recognized how important it is to have those experiences from the beginning to determine if that is what they want to continue studying. Nevertheless, they agreed that the clinical experiences helped them determine that teaching was where they wanted to be. They were exposed to a range of teacher models.

In terms of the practicum experience, they indicated that the practicum experience prepared them for their experience in school.

### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

"If I had to put it in three words, they would be important, necessary, and rewarding."

" thanks to those experiences I had and the teachers' advice on clinical experiences, I dared, and here I am. Every day I love what I do, and it's thanks to the College of Education."

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" Now I recognize the ways practice and clinical experiences have helped me. I feel that as I grow as a professional, there will continue to be times when I recognize again the impact of the teacher preparation program on my professional life."

"who would imagine that practice was going to be **virtual**. That virtual experience has helped me to what I have been doing today,"

"clinical experiences allow that future teacher to make the comparison between the theoretical and what is real,"

**QUESTION #4** Have these learned experiences in the EPP been useful in the responsibilities assigned as a teacher?

#### **Common Responses**

Completers agree that the learning experiences acquired in the EPP have been helpful in the responsibilities assigned to them as teachers, especially during the times of hurricanes, earthquakes, and now the pandemic.

#### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

"The responsibilities of the teacher are immense, and these experiences in teaching practice and clinical experiences allowed me to understand, more than one already knew, to observe with one's own eyes, how great and important the responsibility that one as a teacher has in his/her hands."

**QUESTION #5** In what specific ways has the EPP prepared completers in using technology, different resources, and teaching materials considering the individual differences and students' diversity?

#### **Common Responses**

The EPP has prepared completers in using technology, different resources, and teaching materials in various ways. Completers indicated that they have benefitted from their EPP experience and apply it in their classes by:

- making and recording videos
- mini tutorials as if I were a "YouTuber,"
- virtual laboratories
- PowerPoint,
- Word document, among other things

#### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

"The population I work with, I have young people and adults, and the technology course, one of my favorites because I like technology, helped me."

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"now that with the pandemic it has been practically the engine that has helped me to the class because, since videos that they make, and that are used to making their videos on social networks, expressing their essays, using their technology in terms of science, showing the process of creating, for example, in physics, a cart that runs in a laboratory. In anatomy, technology has helped me a lot because there are 3D models that we can use to visualize the concept that I want to apply to them. So, without that base of technology courses, possibly the educational process would have been poor."

**QUESTION #6** Does the EPP prepare completers to apply techniques and various qualitative and quantitative tools to evaluate students' learning? How?

### **Common Responses**

Completers coincide that the EPP prepares them to apply techniques and various qualitative and quantitative tools to evaluate students' learning through the course COED 313 and COED 354 (Measurement, Evaluation & Assessment). Completers restated that this course was vital in teaching them how to prepare exams, tasks, techniques, how to evaluate them, and how to read and interpret those results, creating rubrics that assess quantitatively, for example, by establishing a rubric, from 1 to 5 to assess if a student executed a technique correctly (example in physical education). Additionally, creating tables and graphs to display results.

### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

This response was provided for question #5 but answered question #6

"A class that comes to mind is measurement, evaluation, and assessment. It obviously gives us the tools for us to create our exams, create our assessments, and measure what we want to measure, no matter what field we're working on."

"The first class that came to mind was the measurement, evaluation and assessment class that helps us numerically measure the student's progress and performances while observing the quality of this student learning process."

"The director compares me to the others, and that's a problem because I'm used to working as I was taught to me in my practice,"

"I felt very prepared to enter the classroom knowing what to expect from my students and how to compare where they are with the education history they have had to see if progress really is what we should be seeing or not and hence make educational decisions to improve and maintain progress. "

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**QUESTION #7 Does** the EPP provide completers with the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills and creativity? Provide specific examples.

#### **Common Responses**

According to the responses, the completers agree that the EPP allows them to develop critical thinking skills and creativity. These were some specific examples they implement in their classrooms:

- I put them to change roles. I do the organization of an event, but not everyone is going to organize the event. I put some who are hosts and others the employees of those hosts.
- I find a way to link them to real-life situations so that they see the importance and value of their lives
- I also like that they can communicate, not only by drawing, painting, or sculpture, but also to learn to verbalize, communicate and express themselves well.
- Last year there were elections, taking advantage of that moment the students, I did a task like about two weeks in which they had to see what the process was like in Puerto Rico.
- I integrate a lot with what is art and reading comprehension. In the arts, they have had to make comic threshing, infographics, posters, even some have had to sing. It has been a very good dynamic because, despite the distance, everyone can expose their views with their peers.

#### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

"Why? Because I want students to go through the experience of being employees and others of being bosses so that they see both scenarios."

"I try to use real-life situations to be able to teach the contents, the concepts and do it in a way that is meaningful to the student."

**QUESTION #8** How has the EPP contributed completers to serve the community? And **QUESTION #10** How has the EPP prepared completers to make positive contributions in the school environment for areas in need, demonstrating sensitivity, solidarity, and empathy toward those in the educational scenario?

#### **Common Responses**

Completers indicated that the EPP served as a model and contributed to serving their community. Belonging to student associations, doing research, and understanding the needs of students and families have been part of contributing to society and the school community.

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#### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

"As from what I learned at PUCPR, I helped structure a curriculum at the same school where I'm working right now. We did "research" from other curriculums in different states, as it is a school that seeks to prepare students for college life. "

"I believe that, more than anything else, I feel super blessed to have had the opportunity to study in La Católica because the quality of the classes, the quality of the teaching is of such high quality that I have been able to use it at the elementary, intermediate, higher level and with adults. It is a teaching that has helped me to help the community in different aspects, in different places, not a single community. I feel very competent with what Catholic University has given me that would not necessarily have been the same experience if I had left for another institution.

#### **QUESTION #9 How effective has the EPP been in reinforcing the Professional Standards of DEPR?**

Due to the time scheduled for the focus group, a limitation was presented on this question. It could not be done in full by interviewing the group. However, by analyzing the responses provided by the focus group participants, they show that the PCUPR TPP promotes development in several of the professional standards of the Puerto Rico Department of Education teacher. Some participants shared that the program prepared them to acquire pedagogical knowledge (Standard #2) and content knowledge (Standard #1). In turn, the EPP provided the clinical experiences in the first COED courses to observe and then, in the teaching practice, to apply the different methodologies necessary for the learning-teaching process (Standard #3) and student evaluation (Standard #6). Also, some mentioned courses in which the importance of recognizing and planning an environment was applied so that students integrate (Standard #4) and that the teacher can contemplate the diversity of characteristics he encounters and how to handle it in the school environment in students—also, having to apply different methodologies to integrate them into the classroom (Standard-5 and Standard #2). Participants also commented on their experience based on how the teacher sometimes integrates into the student's community and family and social environment to achieve teaching goals, and therefore elements necessary to contribute to their social and integral development (Standard #9).

**QUESTION #12** What areas (if any) require reinforcement from the EPP's program that involves attention in the professional scenario? **QUESTION # 13** What specific improvements can improve the EPP programs?

#### **Common Responses**



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Completers favored the EPP at PCUPR. It is considered a solid program, yet there is always room for improvement—areas such as expanding technology instruction to the systems used at home and the Department of Education such as TEAMS.

Another recommendation is to expand the diverse school populations in clinical experiences such as vocational schools and schools in different locations such as rural and urban areas, low-income schools, etc.

According to the completers, an urgent need to include in the methodology courses greater emphasis on working with students with special needs and emotional disturbances and making the necessary adjustments.

Another completer suggested that they would benefit from a more structured integration between the College of Education and other departments at the secondary level.

### **Noteworthy Individual Responses & Ideas**

"In the three years I have been working, I have seen that there are teachers who are graduates of Catholic University, and you can see the quality of these teachers."

"Did la Católica prepare me for that environment? Honestly, I have to say yes, it prepared me in a way to be more human so I could work with my parents. With my students, it prepared me to give them that encouragement, that affection because many of my students lack affection; they lack that "hi-five" that smile, that hug, that "you got it," that "you did it. "

"And I could always count on them [University Supervisors] in asking what I can improve on, what I can do in this case, or in that situation. That was my experience, but I'm sure it was a matter of the moment because it was something that wasn't in our hands; we had never been through that experience [earthquakes] by anyone from college or the students."

**Data results and conclusions are in process as stated in the SSR.**