# Student Manual

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**January - December 2023-2024**

# STUDENT MANUAL
## JANUARY - DECEMBER 2023-2024

## INTRODUCTION

The **International Iberoamerican University (UNiB)** is a postgraduate institution of higher education whose objectives and guiding principles guarantee equal educational opportunities for all people through the continuous enrichment of its study programs.

The purpose of the *Student Manual* is to define the rights and responsibilities of students as members of the university community to disseminate the rules of conduct and regulations that ensure a cordial relationship and an appropriate environment among students, faculty and administration. It also aims to promote a suitable environment for the integral development of the students during their educational formation.

This manual is a supplement to the *Institutional Catalog* which main objective is offering information that may be of help and guidance for the student's university life. The student should consult the same to learn about institutional policies and regulations, student services, and the Academic Progress Standard, among others.

## ABOUT US

### UNiB Authorization

The International Iberoamerican University is authorized by the Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP, Junta de Instituciones Postsecundarias) http://www.ce.pr.gov with Certification number 2021-040.

## MISSION

The International Iberoamerican University is a higher education institution committed to safeguarding equal opportunities and respect for diversity. It prepares competent, autonomous professionals with the purpose of contributing to social, cultural and economic development within an intercultural framework under the principles of education for all and the universalization of knowledge, through a quality distance learning model.

# VISION

To be a university of excellence, sustainable, adapted to the characteristics of its students, recognized for its academic programs with an applied and practical approach. The University commits itself to the service of society in a border-free framework, broadening opportunities through networking, internationalization, diversity and interculturality.

# INSTITUTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## Goal 1:

- Consolidate an international educational community based on respect and diversity of origin in a multicultural experience that favors the integrity and well-being of its participants as well as the environment.

## Objectives G1:

- Implement institutional policies aimed at creating ties, knowledge transfer, creation and the well-being of people.
- Extend the current student orientation and support system to favor persistence in the academic program.
- Improve elements of institutional management, enabling effective communication towards a prompt resolution and service to members of the community.

## Goal 2:

- Provide high quality academic programs aimed at people without distinction of geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic origin, through a competency-based training model, with a cooperative and collaborative methodology.

## Objectives G2:

- Design high quality curricula aligned with the institutional, professional, academic, and scientific framework, with a flexible teaching-learning model adjusted to the student's profile in response to changes in society.
- Implement educational methodologies adapted to the environment, the student's profile, and the distance learning modality.
- Develop educational technologies that favor the quality of the teaching-learning processes consistent with the study methodology.
- Implement permanent self-evaluation processes for continuous improvement and high quality.

## Goal 3:

- Foster the creation and transfer of knowledge by promoting research projects and national and international collaboration networks.

## Objectives G3:

- Expand strategic ties of national and foreign collaboration with educational institutions, business, and social contribution entities.
- Establish actions, according to strategic lines in favor of exchange, inter-institutional mobility of faculty, administrative personnel, and students.
- Promote intra- and inter-university collaborative and participatory work aimed at the creation and transfer of knowledge.

## Goal 4:

- Consolidate an efficient and organized institutional management model based on compliance with the stated mission and objectives.

## Objectives G4:

- Implement an internal quality assurance system aimed at self-assessment and continuous improvement in accordance with international standards.
- Organize actions of governance, administration and finance planned towards the efficiency and sustainability of the University.
- Consolidate a management model that facilitates access to the programs offered to students according to their social and cultural background.
- Expand current strategies to achieve growth in enrollment and academic offerings in accordance with academic, professional, and general requirements.

## Goal 5:

- Strengthen the institutional educational project in accordance with a model that promotes the development of a flexible teaching-learning curricular framework, structured through the use of advanced educational technologies favoring the quality of processes.

## Objectives G5:

- Articulate academic-administrative initiatives to optimize the institution's strategic decision making based on evidence by applying data mining and educational process mining techniques.
- Promote networks, action frameworks, research and practical application projects based on students' and faculty's diverse experiences and backgrounds.
- Strengthen the digital environment according to the new educational and social challenges, providing resources according to the training requirements of faculty and students.

# SENIOR UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS

- Dr. Jesús Arzamendi Sáez de Ibarra, chairman of the Board of Directors.
- Dr. María del Carmen Rivera Rivas, rector.
- Dr. Carolina Rodríguez Canales, Director of Planning and Accreditation.
- Ms. Gigliola Insuasty, Vice Rector for Student Affairs and International Relations.
- Dr. Carmen Lili Rodríguez Velasco, Academic Dean.
- Mrs. Lillian Díaz Figueroa, Dean of Student Affairs.
- Carol Morales Miranda, Dean of Administration and Finance.

# ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT

- Dr. Eduardo García, Director of the Department of Environment and Sustainability.
- Dr. Manuel Masías, Director of the Department of Innovation, Business and New Technologies.
- Dr. Silvia Pueyo, Director of the Department of Language, Education and Communication Sciences.
- Dr. Irma Domínguez, Director of the Department of Health Sciences.
- Dr. Roberto Álvarez, Director of the Department of Projects.

# OTHER DEPARTMENTS

- Dr. Kilian Tutusaus, Director of Educational Technology.
- Dr. Mayra González, Professional Counselor.
- Mr. Ramón Güilamo, Registrar.
- Ms. Yara L. Cruz, Librarian.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Administrative Hours**: Monday - Friday, 8:00am - 5:00pm
  Mailing Address: PO Box 3385 Arecibo, PR 00613-3385
  Physical Address: Bo. Arenalejos Sector Palache, Carr. 658, Km 1.3 Arecibo, PR. 00612
  Telephone Numbers: 787-878-2123 /787-878-2126
- **Student Technical Support**: through the Virtual Campus 24-7
  Contact access enabled in the PANAL, top menu, "Contact" button
- **Faculty availability:** Through the Virtual Campus 24-7
  Contact access enabled in the virtual campus, Faculty icon, within the frameworks of each subject.

# STUDENT AFFAIRS DEANSHIP

The Dean of Student Affairs is the executive authority responsible for student services and reports to the Office of the Vice Rector for Student Affairs and International Relations. This department is responsible for managing student services in favor of institutional processes, constantly seeking quality assurance and student welfare.

- Implements actions consistent with the nature of the institution and in this regard.
- Evaluates and provides student services in accordance with institutional policies, state and federal laws, and licensing agencies.
- Addresses student complaints and makes the necessary arrangements to present alternatives or solutions to their requirements.
- Promotes and collaborates in formulating standards, academic and administrative policies to strengthen student services.
- Is responsible for ensuring strict confidentiality in the processes and handling of university documents.
- Coordinates, supervises, and evaluates the tasks performed by each of the areas of the dean's office to guarantee its operation and increase its level of quality and excellence.

# CALENDARS

## ACADEMIC CALENDAR

### *Masters*

| Time | Action |
|---|---|
| February of each year. | Start of the modules for the Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, the Master in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language, the Master in Education with a Specialty in Higher Education, the Master in Education specializing in Teacher Training and the Master in Education with a Specialty in ICTs in Education. |
| March of each year. | Start of the modules for the Master in Project Design, Management and Administration. |
| June of each year. | Start of the modules for the Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, the Master's Degree in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language, the Master in Education specializing in Higher Education, the Master in Education with a Specialty in Teacher Training, and the Master in Education with a Specialty in ICTs in Education. |
| September of each year. | Start of the modules of the Master in Project Design, Management and Administration begin. |
| October of each year. | Start of the modules for the Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, the Master in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language, the Master in Education with a Specialty in Higher Education, the Master in Education with a Specialty in Teacher Training, and the Master in Education specializing in ICTs in Education. |
| Upon completion of 66% of the master's degree. | The student can begin their master's thesis. It will not be possible to defend the master's thesis before finishing and passing all the subjects. |

## *Doctorates*

### Doctorate in Projects with a Specialty in Research

| Length | | Action |
|---|---|---|
| 3 months | **Phase I.** General Subjects | The module has 5 subjects and may be commenced at any time; to move on to the next phase, the student must have approved the "Virtual Collaborative Work Environments" subject and two additional others. |
| 12 months | **Phase II. Teaching** Core Subjects | The subjects selected in the doctoral file are taken according to their line of research. This phase is taught four times a year: February, May, August, and November. |
| 12 months | **Phase III.** Research | This phase consists of two stages: 1. Research Project Preparation: Research Works I and Research Work II. Both Research Works have a duration of two months each. 2. Thesis Proposal Preparation Stage. 8 months duration. |

### Doctorate in Education with a Specialty in Research

| Length | | Action |
|---|---|---|
| 3 months | **Phase I.** Tutoring General Subjects | May be started at any time. It consists of the *Research Seminar* and the subject *Methodology of Scientific Research*. |
| 12 months | **Phase II. Teaching** Core Subjects | Students should only take the subjects they have selected in the doctoral file according to their line of research and academic formation. Students should begin with the one whose academic period is closest to them, depending on when the teaching phase begins. The subject lecture periods begin on the first workday of the month. The student is only able to start the tutoring of a subject until the 10th of the month. |
| 12 months | **Phase III.** Research | This phase consists of two stages: 1. Research Project Preparation: Research Works I and Research Work II. Both Research Works have a duration of two months each. 2. Thesis Proposal Preparation Stage. 8 months duration. |
| 12-24 months | **Phase IV.** Doctoral Thesis Preparation | Progress 1 includes chapters 2, 3 and 4 of the thesis and progress 2 includes chapters 1, 5 and 6 of the thesis. Furthermore, a scientific article must be approved for publication in an indexed and recognized journal. Journal approval of the publication is required for submitting the Doctoral Thesis (DT). |
| 3 months | **Doctoral Thesis Dissertation** | The thesis writing process culminates with the presentation of the thesis before an Academic Panel approved by the Academic Committee of the program. |

## *Holidays*

Assistance or service to students in the physical facilities of the university will not be available on the following days of the year:

- January 1**, New Year**
- January 6**, Three Kings Day**
- Third Monday of January**, Martin Luther King's birthday**
- Third Monday of February**, Presidents' Day, George Washington, Puerto Rican Heroes**

- March 2, **U.S. Citizenship Day**
- March 22**, Abolition of Slavery**
- Good Friday (according to the lunar calendar)
- Last Monday in May**, Memorial Day**
- July 4, **Declaration of Independence of the United States**
- First Monday of September**, Labor Day**
- October 8**, Discovery of America and Columbus Day**
- Second Tuesday in November**, General Elections (every four years).**
- November 11, **Veteran's Day**
- November 19, **Puerto Rican Culture and Discovery of Puerto Rico Day**
- Fourth Thursday in November**, Thanksgiving Day**
- December 25**, Christmas**

# DESCRIPTION OF EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES

For distance programs, it is necessary for the student to have a computer with the following software, hardware, and infrastructure for the current virtual campus configuration of the university:

Equipment

- Computer (computer) mid-range or higher. As of the date of this writing, Intel Pentium G860 3 Ghz.
- Monitor.
- Webcam and audio system.   The Program requires videoconferences and supervised examinations using these devices.

Infrastructure

- Continuous Internet connection for a daily work of at least 2 hours.

Software

The following are the programs to be installed (includes the recommended configuration):

- Operating system (in its most current versions):
  - Mac OS X
  - GNU/Linux - Ubuntu or Linux Mint distribution.
- Web browser (in its most current versions).
  - Mozilla Firefox
  - Google Chrome

- Microsoft Internet Explorer

- Safari

**Notes:**

* It is recommended to always have the most current version of these browsers.

* All browsers must have JavaScript™ enabled.

* To use Chats and Whiteboard, Java™ must be enabled.

* To use ticket-based authentication you must allow access, read or work with cookies.

* All the technical characteristics provided may vary to improve the quality of the services provided to the student. Any changes will be reported and will not affect current students.

* These specifications do not preclude the student from accessing a program nor are they a requirement since the computer services offered by the University are accessible by many computers available at public or hourly computer rental sites. However, these are the characteristics that enable efficient performance and an optimal use of the pedagogical resources available in the virtual campuses. Access to a computer is always recommended.

# STUDENT EXPERIENCE SUPPORT SERVICES

The university is committed to student success through a system of accompaniment that influences the quality of the experience, as well as persistence, retention, and completion of studies.

## Objective

Contribute to the academic success of students in alignment with the institutional mission.

## Duration

The Service begins at the time of enrollment, continues during the course of studies and ends when the student concludes and obtains the degree.

## ACADEMIC PROGRESS SUPPORT

The Guidance and Counseling Program is designed to guide students throughout the development of their studies, supported by appropriate professionals, with an interest in providing support to achieve educational objectives, which involves:

• Helping the student to acquire a rhythm and study habits based on commitment, discipline and autonomy.

• Guiding the student to acquire competencies that will allow them to successfully progress through the virtual study methodology, such as: *time management, reading, self-study and use of technology*.

• Provide accurate information on the curriculum, the timetable for its completion, the academic progress standard, academic activities, forms of evaluation, and the length of academic time.

- Guiding the student in such aspects as: *adapting to the virtual study method, planning and habits, preparing activities, perseverance,* and *orientation*.
- Establishing a procedure by which students experiencing difficulties in progressing as expected are identified and supported to achieve their academic goals.
- Facilitating communication between professors and area directors to settle concerns and questions of an academic nature related to the subject contents, evaluation activities, grades, among others, that may prevent the student from progressing as planned.

## PROCEDURE

An assistance schedule is designed in accordance with the study schedule proposed by each program. The student is assisted by means of telephone calls scheduled according to their date and time availability.

## SECRETARY OF STUDENT SERVICES

Provides guidance on such aspects as access to the virtual campus, study material, credit transcripts, required documentation and other administrative processes that arise throughout the academic life. Students have access to both telephone and in-person assistance at the university's facilities in Puerto Rico.

## TUTORS AND PROFESSORS

As in a physical Virtual Campus, students have access to their professors to clarify their questions and concerns.

- They guide the student during the learning process.
- They resolve any concerns through the virtual campus.

## LIBRARY SERVICES

Virtual academic portal that offers information services and digital resources to support and streamline academic research.

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The support area helps students with problems in the virtual campus platform, related to the performance of online academic activities, study contents or grades obtained.

# COUNSELING SERVICE

Some situations may affect academic performance. Students who exhibit personal emotional difficulties that prevent them from progressing in their studies will be referred to the counseling professional for individual support. This service provides the opportunity to discuss situations such as anxiety, depression, lack of motivation, social adjustment, among others.

The counseling service is a preventive and remedial process provided to our students virtually or in-person by a professional with academic background and vast experience in the field. Through this service, the development of the student's intellectual, social, and emotional capacities is promoted.

Several remedial services are offered, such as emotional management, management of personal difficulties, family conflicts, focus on personal development, habit planning, etc., that favor the continuity of studies.

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

The counseling area will address any claim of reasonable accommodation for any candidate requiring special services. Those students with special needs should request a reasonable accommodation by consejería@unib.org, who will evaluate and advise the student on the steps to follow regarding the accommodation.

# LIBRARY SERVICE

## ABOUT THE LIBRARY

### Location / Access / Population

**UNiB Virtual Campus**. Internet access is for the exclusive use of the Academic Community and is designed to offer 24/7 service.

The Library has a professional staff with great pedagogical experience, knowledge, skills and abilities in information management and technology to train its students and professors with curricular and scientific support. They also possess technological, social, linguistic (English and Spanish) and multidisciplinary skills.

## UNiB LIBRARY PHILOSOPHY

Our Library's philosophy is to support, promote and contribute through its information and knowledge services to the "Open Access" movement. For this reason, we combine and make use of the infinite number of existing projects on the web, available in full text with no restrictions and free dissemination. To reach its maximum expression of development, we believe that scientific knowledge must be disseminated through traditional and non-traditional tools and formats that enable universal accessibility, free of charge and for the benefit of humanity.

Likewise, to expand its information search and management services, UNiB has subscribed to the full-text bibliographic information databases, electronic books, and discovery service of the *EBSCO Information Services*.

The Virtual Library of the International Iberoamerican University is an academic website whose function will be to become the best virtual space for information services and academic research that promotes international academic teaching and learning, contributing to the achievement of the institutional and academic objectives of our university through:

1. To offer excellence and quality in all Library services.
2. To arrange, maintain and develop current and relevant electronic collections for the academic programs.
3. To create a community of teaching, learning, research, and academic and scientific innovation.
4. To offer, by means of the Internet and various electronic media, information services of excellence to the academic community it serves, without limitations on time or space.
5. To facilitate access to updated, scientific, multisectoral, and fee-based sources of information to meet the needs of our students and support teaching.
6. To preserve, organize and transmit knowledge for future generations.
7. To train its users in the skills of searching, handling, and effective use of information.

## OBJECTIVES

### General objectives

- To develop an articulated digital bibliographic service model that can be applied and used in various programs of study related to the Virtual Campus for online teaching.

### Specific objectives

- Develop a tutorial module to manage and use the entire bibliographic service.
- Design an online library with the current means of virtual support and a real prospect of its potential as a support for learning and part of the learning itself.
- Analyze the digital development of the basic bibliography of each subject and provide digital equivalents.
- Locate free "generic" sources of information that can replace paid firms.
- Classify useful and evaluated information on sites where they can access for digital acquisition of books and magazines.
- Establish agreements with on-site and virtual libraries.
- Create a library catalog and document collection that provides autonomous access based on an articulated structuring of the information.

## LIBRARIAN

- This person is responsible for monitoring the information management of the Virtual Library.
- It works with information, which is the vital resource, raw material that is the support resource in the management of students' knowledge.
- Available through the Virtual Campus 24-7.
- It is adapted to new technologies to meet the requirements of modern society.

## BASIC AREAS AND SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY CONSULT WITH THE LIBRARIAN

### *Librarian consultation*

This area offers the services known as virtual reference where you interact synchronously or asynchronously with the librarian for consultations. Web forms, FAQ area, e-mail, chat or videoconference are used for this purpose when necessary and by mutual agreement.

### *Electronic catalog*

The virtual library is an electronic platform that tries to reproduce and improve the behavior of a Center for Geographic Studies, with all the relevant services of administration, classrooms, meeting places, offices, and the library itself.

This is not intended to replace a face-to-face teaching-learning system with a completely distance system, but there can be different phases and models, from completely face-to-face, passing through mixed systems where each component (face-to-face/online) has a different specific weight, to completely distance offerings.

The aim is to reproduce all the interactions necessary to achieve a successful teaching-learning process in this new virtual campus environment. This provides an unbeatable opportunity to not limit learning to simply mimic the objectives and results of face-to-face teaching and learning, but to opt for achieving more efficient goals and fruitful educational innovations.

The university, through its "online" services by means of a Virtual Campus will facilitate access to an "online" Library and will provide free access to its digital archive for any student. Performance of the IT support is directly related to the number of users it serves, in this case it supports a total of 8,000 students.

The "online" Library has several types of categorized digital files to facilitate their availability, such as: (1) Notes by subject, (2) Campus news highlights, (3) Supplementary material by subject, (4) Cross-curricular material.

The type of documentation contained includes: annotated news, defended theses, links to sites of interest, links to documents of interest and discussion forums. All online material is free to use and disseminate and can be accessed and downloaded by active students.

The Virtual Campus offers an information search system which, in addition to searching for information on websites and documents, searches the entire Virtual Campus, including forums, chats and messages.

### *Subject literature*

Area where different types of literature pertinent to each program and selected by the faculty or librarian are collected and stored.

### *Scientific journals*

Collection of links or services (open access or paid) of multidisciplinary or thematic professional journals.

### *Search engines and library directories*

Area where links to Internet search services and web directories of recognized libraries are located.

### *Theses and dissertations*

Collection of links and services in which theses, dissertations and multidisciplinary or thematic research papers are stored.

### *Electronic consultation*

Collection of documents, Internet links, electronic books and general or thematic audiovisual materials for reference use by the community.

### *User training*

Services organized to train our users in the use of database services, search for scientific journals, documents, theses, style manuals, among other resources as support tools for research. In addition to training in information management skills (search, selection, analysis, organization of information). Various forms of training are used (information sheets, presentations, or audiovisual resources).

### *EBSCO Databases*

Description of resources offered:

- Academic Search Complete

  *Academic Search Complete* is the most comprehensive and useful multidisciplinary full-text database of its kind. It includes more than 9,100 full-text journal titles and about 7,900 refereed publications and also provides indexes and abstracts for more than 13,690 periodicals and miscellaneous publications, including monographs, reports and conferences. The database features PDF content dating back to 1887.

It includes information in the areas of: Basic Sciences, Engineering, Architecture and Technology, Agricultural and Marine Sciences, Education, Social Sciences, Humanities and more.

- **Business Source Complete**

*Business Source Complete* contains the premier collection of full text and bibliographic records of the most prestigious and widely used academic journals in the fields of economics and management.

This database includes full text for more than 3,850 journals of which 2,006 are refereed. This database also includes full text for 917 books, 2,530 market research reports and 1,446 country economic performance reports, among others.

- **Education Source**

A great resource for the study of education, this bibliographic and full-text database covers scientific research and information to meet the educational needs of students, professionals, and policy makers.

Education Source was developed from a merger of databases from EBSCO and H.W. Wilson and includes many unique sources not previously available. This information source offers the world's largest and most comprehensive collection of full-text educational publications, covering a wide range of international journals, monographs, yearbooks and more. It offers bibliographic records for thousands of publications and full text for more than 1,800 journal titles, more than 550 books and monographs, and hundreds of conference reports.

- **Fuente Academia Premier**

It is a multidisciplinary database with information from prestigious periodicals produced in Spanish. It is a highly relevant and pertinent academic collection that provides information in all areas of knowledge, namely, social sciences, humanities, education, computer science, engineering, linguistics, arts and literature, medical sciences, ethnic studies, and law.

The more than 850 periodicals and 30 full-text books included in Fuente Académica are produced by the publishers of the most prestigious universities and research centers in the Spanish-speaking world and represent the results of the most important research efforts in the region.

Other prestigious periodicals include:

- *Anuario de Derecho Internacional* (University of Navarra),
- *APORTES: Revista de Mexicana de Estudios Sobre la Cuenca del Pacífico* (University of Colima),
- *Boletín del CEMLA* (Center for Latin American Monetary Studies),
- *Ciencia Veterinaria* (University of La Pampa),
- *Comunicación y Sociedad* (University of Guadalajara),
- *Cuadernos de Literatura* (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana-Colombia),
- *Revista de Ciencias Sociales* (FLACSO),
- *Perspectivas en Política, Economía y Gestión* (University of Chile),
- *Problemas del Desarrollo: Revista Latinoamericana de Economía* (Autonomous University of México),

- *Psykhe* (Pontifical Catholic University of Chile),
- *Revista de Contabilidade e Financas* (University of Sao Paulo)*,*
- *Revista Internacional de Seguridad Social* (Blackwell Publishing)*,*
- *Revista de la CEPAL* (United Nations Publications), among others.

- **GreenFile**

*GreenFILE* provides information from reliable research on all aspects of human impact on the environment.

It features a collection of titles from academic, government and general interest sources on global warming, green building, pollution, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, recycling and many more. This database provides index and abstracts for more than 384,000 records, as well as full-text Open Access for more than 4,700 records.

- **Library Information Science & Technology Abstracts**

(LISTA) indexes more than 560 core publications, approximately 50 priority publications and about 125 selected publications, in addition to books, research reports and papers. Subject coverage includes library science, classification, cataloging, bibliometrics, online information gathering, information management, etc. Database coverage goes back to the mid-1960s.

# ON ACADEMIC LIFE

Academic life spans from the official date of enrollment in the university to the date upon completion of studies and fulfillment of the requirements for graduation.

When starting academic life:

- The student will provide all the required documentation and sign the necessary documents to complete the enrollment.
- A student enters the program of studies once they meet the admission requirements.
- The student takes the subjects according to the study program. They will have access to the Campus and will receive printed study materials as they progress through the program.
- Through the virtual environment (virtual campus) the student has access to information about the program of studies and the corresponding calendar.
- The student is always considered an active student, except when events occur that lead to "withdrawn" or "terminated" status.
- If the curriculum is modified, the university agrees to maintain in force the curriculum established at the time of enrollment, up to two years later, calculated with respect to the start date of the program.
- All students entering the program for the first time must successfully complete the required participatory activities for distance studies.
- Every student will have information about the professors involved in the program of studies they are taking.

# INSTITUTIONAL STANDARDS

## STANDARD OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

### Purpose

The Standard of Satisfactory Academic Progress contains the criteria and establishes the guidelines for student academic achievement.

### Objectives

- Increase student retention.
- Increase graduation rate.

## PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

In relation to academic performance, a university student should:

- Strive to seek and express the truth while respecting discrepancies.
- Actively participate in the Virtual Campus and try to participate in face-to-face social activities, if any.
- Maintain qualifications that meet the requirements of the university.
- Respond to professor/tutor follow-up requests to verify the student's progress.
- Request their withdrawal from the university if they exceed the academic terms of duration established in this standard.
- Preserve, enrich and disseminate the values of the University and the country.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### Master's programs

Master's programs have a two-year duration. Satisfactory academic progress requires:

- Complete at least 40% of the program's credits within the first year of studies.
- Pass 50% of the subjects attempted in the first year.
- Achieve a minimum GPA of 3.00 points.

### Doctoral programs

Doctoral programs have a duration of five years. Satisfactory academic progress requires:

- Complete within the second year of studies at least 40% of the program credits.
- Pass within the second year the total number of subjects attempted.
- Achieve a minimum GPA of 3.00 points.

# SUPERVISED EXAMS (*PROCTORING*)

## ONLINE EVALUATION SYSTEM

For distance evaluation systems, there are basically three tools that minimize the risk of impersonation when performing an evaluated activity:

- Access through username and password.
- Traceability indicators.
- Videoconference controls: asynchronous and synchronous.

## ACCESS BY USERNAME AND PASSWORD

All enrolled students are assigned an access account through PANAL, which is the way to access the Moodle platform where they study the program. This account includes a unique username and password that the student can change at any time.

### Traceability indicators

Once the evaluation has been submitted, there are a series of indicators that warn of possible irregularities, for example:

- Grades that do not correspond to the trajectory followed by the student throughout the Program.
- Changes in the writing style with respect to other submissions for developmental testing.
- Substantial variations in response times.
- Variations in the IP of the computer that submitted the exam and its relation with the grades (This aspect is only valid for static IP's, since the dynamic ones will always be for the same user).

These indicators do not validate cases of fraud, but they do alert the professors to request the student by videoconference or to summon them in person to verify the veracity of the answers provided.

## STUDENT IDENTITY VERIFICATION PROCEDURE

### *Controls via videoconference: asynchronous and synchronous*

UNiB has different systems for controlling the identity of students through videoconferencing, specifically:

Initially, the student must show their personal identification document to the webcam to prove that they are who they claim to be.

**Asynchronous supervision system**, where the student is recorded while taking the exam. After the exam has been submitted, the recordings are reviewed to verify the student's identity, and that the required standards for the activity have been met.

In the *asynchronous supervision system*, the student is asked to perform the evaluation in front of a webcam that records the student while they take the test

- **Synchronous supervision system** through which professors can request the student to make a videoconference, at any time, during the test.



**Figure 1:** Start of the video surveillance system.

Once this first phase has been completed and all the steps have been completed, the student may start the examination.

The supervisor records the result of the supervision in the section configured for this purpose and adds the appropriate comments according to the result.

If any incident is found, an alert is issued to the Program Director and the subject's main professor for review and corrective action.

Validity of the evaluation grading is conditional on the result of the supervision. In the current version of the asynchronous supervision system, a minimum of three supervised examinations are required during the program:

- The first, when 15% of the credits of the Program have been passed. This includes a period of familiarization with the virtual campus platform.
- The second, when 45% of the credits of the Program have been passed.
- The third, when 70% of the credits of the Program have been passed.

In the case of the synchronous proctoring system, the student may be required to initiate an unscheduled proctoring, while taking the exam, by which they, are prompted to activate a communication channel via videoconference with UNiB proctoring staff.

Both videoconferencing control systems - asynchronous and synchronous - require: from the technical point of view, audiovisual recording devices (video [webcam] and audio). From a legal standpoint,

ensure that the recording of information complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (FERPA Act) regarding the terms of privacy and data protection. The 1974 federal law known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as the Buckley Amendment, protects the privacy of student education records and transfers rights to students once they reach the age of 18 and attend any postsecondary institution or college. The student is informed of this during the admission process. This is also specified in the document that the student completes and signs when registering.

# EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

The International Iberoamerican University offers two types of evaluation techniques: subjective and objective.

a) **Subjective Evaluation Techniques**. This category includes the tests and activities that comprise a tutor's or professor's assessment and is particularly useful for evaluating multiple aspects of the student, such as the student's opinion, initiative, ability to act in relation to specific contexts or situations, ability to cope with problems, demonstrate social skills and apply the appropriate use of the tools provided to solve activities. This includes: academic work assignment, practical activities, developmental exam with open-ended questions, forum activity, oral report and portfolio.

b) **Objective evaluation techniques**. Objective assessment techniques refer to examinations composed of closed-response and/or directed-response questions.

In the first case, the student must answer a question by choosing a single answer from among several given options; in the second, the student must write a minimum response (usually one word), which may be scored as correct or incorrect by the examiner.

This evaluation technique contrasts with the subjective evaluation in which the examiner does not make any value assessment. This includes multiple-choice, true/false, matching and identification exercises.

## PROGRAMS AND SUBJECT EVALUATIONS

The program subject evaluations are carried out using three of the evaluation instruments defined in the previous section to combine both subjective and objective techniques and evaluate different aspects (knowledge, attitudes, and competencies), integrating different cognitive styles. In addition, some programs may include face-to-face evaluations at the university or monitored by a tutor.

The final grade of the academic programs will be obtained by weighing the credits of each of the subjects and the Master's Thesis.

## REGARDING THE MASTER'S THESIS

The Master's Thesis is the final project (FP) of the Master's programs. To begin the thesis the student must have completed 66% of the credits of the program.

The standards established in the Master's Thesis Guidelines are located in the Virtual Campus. These guides have been designed to provide the necessary guidance throughout the process of preparing the Final Project (FP).

The student will conduct the oral defense in person at the International Iberoamerican University. Students who do not live in Puerto Rico can conduct the defense in virtual format or by videoconference with guaranteed technical and academic means.

In relation to the submitted thesis document and the defense conducted, the thesis panel:

1. Will evaluate the work presented by the student.
2. It may require the student to make changes, improvements and/or corrections when necessary to improve formal or methodological aspects.
3. It may reject the thesis under serious situations, such as plagiarism, and require the student to start a new thesis according to the Institution's Thesis Regulations.

The minimum grade to pass the thesis will be B = 80% or a GPA of 2.50 to 3.49 and 7.0 to 8.5 in the European system.

All student appeals must follow the established appeals procedure, keeping in mind that it should take no more than 10 working days after receiving the Master's Thesis grade.

The University will conduct an investigation that will handle the appeal. This process will take no more than one month and has two possible outcomes: maintain or revise the grade.

If the grade is maintained, the Thesis Action Record closes. If the grade is revised, it will be reviewed, and a new grade will be given.

Any impact on the processes will be addressed by the Program Director by creating a written record of the procedures and actions.

## IN RELATION TO THE DOCTORAL THESIS

The Doctoral Thesis will begin once the student has passed Phase III Research. The standards established in the Doctoral Thesis Guidelines are found in the Doctoral Thesis Manual.

The student will conduct the oral defense in person at the International Iberoamerican University. Students who do not live in Puerto Rico can carry out the defense in virtual format with guaranteed technical and academic means.

In relation to the submitted thesis document and the defense conducted, the thesis panel:

1. Will evaluate the work presented by the student.
2. It may require the student to make changes, improvements, and corrections when necessary to improve formal or methodological aspects.
3. It may reject the thesis under serious situations, such as plagiarism, and require the student to start a new thesis according to the Institution's Thesis Regulations.

Possible qualifications for the thesis are:

| Values | | | Qualitative values |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0- | Grade Point Average | % | |
| 10 - | 4.00 – 3.50 | 100 - | A |
| 8.5 - | 3.49 – 2.50 | 89 - | B |
| 6.9 - | 2.49 – 1.60 | 79 - | C |
| 4.4 - | 1.59 – 0.80 | 69 - | D |
| 0 | 0.79 – 0.00 | 49 - | F |

All student appeals must follow the established appeals procedure, keeping in mind that it should take no more than 10 working days after receiving the Doctoral Thesis grade. The University will conduct an investigation that will handle the appeal. This process will take no more than one month and has two possible outcomes: maintain or revise the grade.

If the grade is maintained, the *Thesis Action Record* closes. If the grade is revised, it will be reviewed, and a new grade will be given.

Any impact on the processes will be addressed by the Doctoral Director by creating a written record of the procedures and actions.

# ONLINE COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS

The PANAL is the communication channel between the student and UNiB. It contains the following tools:

**Profile:** Refers to the student's personal and contact information. It is the student's responsibility to keep his/her information updated, which he/she can manage independently through the "Edit profile" button.

- Admissions Department. Inquiries/requests should be sent here regarding. Information request about new programs, lectures or conferences.
- Student Affairs Deanship. Inquiries/requests should be sent here regarding:
    − Processing of certificates and degrees.
    − Request for a leave of absence (postponement of studies) and reinstatements.
    − Request for extensions of academic time.
    − Incidents in the shipment of printed material (volumes).
- Technical Support Department. Inquiries/requests should be sent here regarding:
    − Error when accessing the virtual environment.
    − Suggestions regarding the campus and PANAL.
- Deanship of Administration and Finance. Inquiries/requests should be sent here regarding:
    − Changes or modifications in financial information (Credit or debit card details, bank account numbers).
    − Request for invoices/receipts.

# ONLINE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

In relation to academic performance, a student at the university:

- Must pass all subjects and activities evaluated with rectitude and honorability.

- Maintain an appropriate ratio between credits in progress and approved versus the maximum time to complete the program.

- May appeal any rating obtained by following the Complaints and Grievance Process, described later in this Manual in *Part 7.M. IV. Academic Complaints*, specifically in *section IV.1. Complaints regarding grades*.

- They are responsible for the content of each of the documents they generate and/or where their name appears.

# CLASS ATTENDANCE AND INTERACTION POLICY

Regarding attendance and interaction in classes, a student at the university:

- Must participate and interact in the subject and/or Virtual Campus (forums and other activities); as specified in the evaluation of the subject and in those evaluations as instructed.

- Class participation and interaction can be evaluated in several ways, for example: evaluation and counting of messages posted in forums and other activities.

- This information will be detailed in the subject rubric.

# STANDARD RELATED TO ACADEMIC HONESTY

- The student shall not copy, plagiarize, or falsify documentation, information or data.

- Shall not incur in the provision of false information, change of identity or impersonation of oneself or others.

# ACADEMIC AND DISCIPLINARY CONTROL POLICY

Infringement is defined as any conduct that contravenes the exercise of student rights and duties. Violations are classified according to their level as less serious, serious, and very serious. This level shall be determined by the Disciplinary Committee.

The student under investigation will be considered innocent until the final resolution of the Disciplinary Committee.

When professors identify an infraction in one of their subjects, they should write a report on the situation, including evidence of the infraction, and forward it to the department director. The latter, in turn, sends a notification to the Vice-Rector for Student Affairs and International Relations, who convenes the Disciplinary Committee. This committee is made up of the following members:

- ViceRector for Student Affairs and International Relations
- Academic Dean
- Dean of Student Affairs
- Professional Counselor

The Vice-Rector for Student Affairs and International Relations chairs the committee, which is responsible for issuing the resolution of the case presented. If the student is not satisfied, they may appeal the decision within 10 days of receiving the resolution.

## Types of infringements

1. Less serious infractions:

   - Disrupting the normal progress of any academic activity through the Virtual Campus or visits to the university.
   - Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol or narcotics when visiting the university.

2. Serious infractions:

   - Repeating a less serious infraction.
   - Making written expressions through the Virtual Campus that are inappropriate or disrespectful to members of the university community.
   - Disobeying the provisions issued by the University authorities.
   - Executing fraudulent acts intended to alter the legitimacy of any academic activity through the Virtual Campus.
   - Presenting altered or falsified documents.
   - Distributing material through the Virtual Campus that may be offensive to the recipient.
   - Making written expressions through the Virtual Campus that are detrimental to the image of the University, the community, or its members.
   - Tampering with the University's computer systems without authorization or using these systems to tamper in systems external to the University without authorization. Making a maliciously false report to the Academic Control and Discipline Committee.
   - Making a maliciously false report to the Academic Control and Discipline Committee.
   - Incurring in plagiarism by copying any type of intellectual work without citing the source from which it was obtained, taking other people's ideas as one's own.
   - Entering the University when prohibited to do so, provoking disorders, or participating in them in any way so as to prevent university activities from taking place, and/or concealing, damaging or destroying property, documents or values of the University, its students, its staff or third parties.
   - Copying while taking an exam, whether or not through the proctoring process.

3. Grave infractions:

   - Repeating a serious infraction.
   - Tampering with University documents or documents of any kind.

- Committing acts of written violence through the Virtual Campus against members of the University Community, for example, threats, slander, libel, or interference in the exercise of their rights.
- Using the contents of the volumes for personal and usufruct effects.
- When visiting the University, carrying weapons (does not apply to law enforcement officers who by the nature of their work are required to carry them), trafficking, carrying, or storing drugs or raw materials used to obtain them and misappropriating property, documents or values of the University, students or any member of the community.
- Failure to appear on the day and at the time appointed for a summons from the Academic Control and Discipline Committee.
- Using the name or logo of the University, its agencies, and authorities, without the corresponding authorization.
- Denying identification when required during the proctored examination process through the Virtual Campus.

The Disciplinary Committee may expand or alter this list, without excluding or eliminating any type of infraction, depending on the cases investigated and adjudicated.

## Types of sanctions:

- For less serious violations, one or more of the following sanctions shall apply:
  - Verbal warning
  - Written reprimand
- Serious violations shall be punishable by one or more of the following sanctions:
  - Temporary suspension from the Virtual Campus and participating in all university activities (student "on leave") from one day to a maximum of four months.
  - Prohibited entry to the physical facilities and computer services of the University during the sanctioned period. The student in this situation will be considered a student in partial withdrawal status.
- For very serious infractions, one or more of the following penalties shall apply:
  - Prohibited entry to the physical facilities and computer services of the University during the sanctioned period (student on partial leave). The period in question shall be determined by the Academic Control and Discipline Committee.
  - Expulsion from the University, implying an indefinite ban on admission to the University (student in "permanent withdrawal").
- Sanctions will be registered in the student's record.
- Imposing the aforementioned disciplinary measures shall be done in accordance with the merits of mitigating or aggravating circumstances of responsibility that may occur in each case.
- Good academic record, previous irreproachable conduct, or repairing all or part of the damage caused may be considered as extenuating circumstances.

- The Academic Control and Discipline Committee may, in justified and critical cases, reduce the corresponding sanction by one degree in exchange for applying alternative sanctions that favor the student's rehabilitation and the benefit of the university community.
- Disciplinary measures shall be applied without prejudice to the exercise of the corresponding legal actions against those sanctioned in accordance with the legislation in force in the country. Being a distance University, legal actions outside the national territory or application of international standards are not excluded.
- If a university body has provided false, erroneous or incomplete information, it will be subject to this procedure if they are students. If they are professors, they will be sanctioned with the temporary suspension of their activities without pay for a period of one academic year. If it is a repeated offense, a termination procedure from the university will be applied. This investigation shall be conducted by the Academic Control and Discipline Committee itself following the same operating procedure.
- If a student and member of the Academic Control and Discipline Committee incurs in acts that affect the proper performance of the committee, they will be expelled from the committee, and the vacancy will be filled by the rector's office. If they professors, they will be sanctioned with the temporary suspension of their activities without pay for a period of one academic year. If it is a repeat offense, a withdrawal procedure from the university will be applied. This investigation will be carried out by the Committee itself following the same operating procedure.

# RULES OF CONDUCT

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

A student of the university is considered a person responsible for his or her actions in ethical, moral and legal terms, who accepts the mission of the university, and all its rules, regulations and bylaws, and therefore has the right to participate in the academic life.

In relation to behavior, a student at the university:

- Will make good use of the university services received.
- He/she shall not participate or involve the university or third parties in any illegal or illicit act, as well as in acts that affect the ethics, morals and/or integrity of his/her person, the university or third parties.
- Will fulfill his/her study schedule with responsibility.
- Will not give false information of any kind to the university.
- May not misuse or abuse his/her rights or obligations.
- May not copy, plagiarize or adulterate any document, information or data.

## RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE INSTITUTION AND STUDENTS

The right to quality education is inextricably tied to the Declaration of Human Rights and the university, as a legal entity, has the right and the duty to:

- The university looks to the creation, discovery, organization, transmission, and management of knowledge through its own dissemination and deployment and the process of reflection on the application of these same processes.

- The university seeks to educate people with a clear understanding and precise mastery of the basic principles of science and technology, with a comprehensive vision and perspective of natural and social phenomena, and with strong habits on study, work and research to act in their future activities with a solid and safe comprehensive preparation.

- The university bases its actions on the fact that each member enjoys the freedoms and rights granted by the constitution and laws of the country and the laws and regulations for the defense of peoples all around the world.

- The university defines a student, for the purposes of these bylaws and for effect and application in university life and policies, as any person who satisfactorily fulfills the admission requirements and has the status of student in accordance with current regulations, regardless of sex, race, nationality, religion, or political convictions.

Every person who complies with being a student at the university enjoys freedoms and assumes duties and rights towards the university and of the university towards him or her.

In general, a student at the university must show and demonstrate in any action of his or her university life a high and unrestricted respect for the rights of others, excluding any form of violence or incitement to it either physically or virtually.

The university protects individuality of opinion and behavior but does not protect the exclusion or aggression of others arising from individuality.

## RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE INSTITUTION TOWARDS STUDENTS

The student has the right to, and it is the duty of the University that the same:

- Provide a solid scientific, technical, professional, human and solidary training guided by the philosophy of the university itself.

- Develop a strong entrepreneurial and innovative capacity in each student to produce advances and provide solutions of direct application in society and the community.

- Promote the expression of opinion as part of the educational process within the solidarity and community respect that arises from the individual's own freedom of expression, opinion and behavior.

- Report, disclose and disseminate all information affecting university life, especially those related to university rules, regulations, and provisions.

- Inform each person of the personal data contained in the university's academic records.

- Have known and informed, fair, and equitable appeal mechanisms to express appeals and petitions.

- Provide mechanisms to be heard by the appropriate authority on any aspect of university life.

- Always uphold a space of freedom and equal rights, without discrimination of sex, race, nationality, religion, or ideology.

- Provide a well-known procedure for judging university infractions, as well as the sanctions to be imposed.

- Ensure privacy of student information and provide the means for students to amend it.

- Students should not be deprived of their right of expression with the consequences of their actions.

- Ensure freedom of assembly and association on terms accepted by society and its regulations.

- Ensure discussion with any faculty member on terms appropriate to a university conversation.

- Refrain from the use of research subjects without their informed consent.

- Provide academic advising and monitoring of any accepted or required university activity.

- Ensure an academic load that does not affect the student's physical, mental, and cognitive conditions.

## RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STUDENTS TOWARDS THE INSTITUTION

The fundamental right of students is to receive a quality education. This right is not limited to formal classroom activities but encompasses the full range of interactions and experiences with other members of the university community.

The student's primary duty is to exercise this right to the maximum and to show conduct that enables other members of the university community the equal exercise of their rights and the fulfillment of their duties.

It is the duty of each student and the right of the University to require that each student:

- Contribute to their own and others' education in a cooperative, collaborative, and supportive manner by giving their best effort to individual or group study.

- Maintain a conduct and attitudes in the physical and virtual space that exemplify the development, excellence, and prestige of the university.

- Refrain from participating in acts or situations that may damage or undermine the image of the university without threatening the individual freedom for which the student is civilly, administratively, and criminally liable in their own right.

- Maintain a respectful manner in interactions with peers and with each of the members of the community that comprises the university.

- Always promote a culture of respect for the natural and social environment in an ethical and responsible manner.

- Accept and comply with the University's rules, regulations, and all applicable University policies.

- It is the prospect's responsibility to acquaint them self in order to comply with the statutes required in each country to practice the profession.
- Use university resources for strictly academic purposes and within the philosophy of the university.
- Not to incur in a regulated infraction and to comply with the penalties imposed in each case.
- Not provide false, misleading or misrepresentative information.
- Not participate or be part of activities considered by university regulations, or national or international laws and regulations, as crimes or terrorist activities or exaltation of violence or denigration of any person or organization, or any other that threatens people or society.
- Nor use the means and resources provided and/or used by the university for these purposes.

## RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE FACULTY TOWARDS STUDENTS

The rights of each student and duties of the Faculty constitute that each student:

- Have a known and informed, fair, and equitable appeal venue to any academic event in which the student desires or demands resolution.
- Inform the student of all evaluation mechanisms to which they will be subjected five (5) days prior to the beginning of each academic activity.
- Be treated equally.
- Not be forced to incur in any infringement in a conscious or unconscious forced or voluntary manner.

# COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS

The Complaints and Grievances Process is a mechanism that allows students to channel their complaints when they understand that their rights have been affected, when they are dissatisfied with a decision made by the administration or faculty, or when they understand that their ability to study or complete their program of study at the Institution is affected.

Both the administrative staff and faculty will be given the necessary time to present their version of the facts. If necessary, the complaint may be referred to the Board of Post-Secondary Institutions (JIP) and/or Puerto Rico law enforcement agencies.

This process will always be available on the UNiB website, *Student Manual* and in the *Faculty Manual*.

## ADMINISTRATION

This type of complaint includes: shipping services for materials, credits transcripts, certifications, diplomas, study plans and programs, as well as any other service provided by the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs.

When UNiB receives a complaint or grievance from a student related to administrative issues, the Institution's procedure for handling the complaint consists of the following steps:

- **First:** The student submits their complaint or grievance to the Dean of Student Affairs through any of the available contact tools, either the PANAL, email or phone call.

- **Second:** The Office of Dean of Student Affairs evaluates and investigates the complaint or grievance diligently, in a fair and equitable manner and within a period of no more than ten (10) working days from receiving the complaint.

- **Third:** The recipient of the complaint or grievance is contacted about measures and actions to be taken.

- **Fourth:** The planned measures are carried out based on the complaint or grievance received. Fifth: The student is notified of the action taken and decisions made.

## FINANCIAL

This type of complaint includes mistakes made when charging tuition or monthly fees, as well as other services. It also includes claims related to reimbursements.

When UNiB receives a complaint or grievance from a student related to academic issues, the institution's procedure for handling the complaint consists of the following steps:

- **First:** The student submits their complaint or grievance to the Dean of Administration and Finance, through any of the available contact tools, either the PANAL, email or phone call.

- **Second:** The Office of Dean of Student Affairs evaluates and investigates the complaint or grievance diligently, in a fair and equitable manner and within a period of no more than ten (10) working days from receiving the claim.

- **Third:** The recipient of complaints or grievances is contacted about measures and actions to be taken.

- **Fourth:** The planned measures are carried out based on the complaint or grievance received.

- **Fifth:** The student is notified of the action taken and decisions made.

## TECHNICAL

When UNiB receives a complaint or grievance from a student related to technical aspects (access to PANAL, to the Virtual Campus, problems uploading documents to the Virtual Campus) the Institution's procedure for handling the complaint consists of the following steps:

- **First:** The student submits their complaint or grievance to Technical Support, through any of the available contact tools, either the PANAL, email or phone call.

- **Second:** Technical Support evaluates and investigates the complaint or grievance within 24 hours of receiving the complaint.

- **Third:** The recipient of complaints or grievances is contacted about measures and actions to be taken.

- **Fourth:** The planned measures are carried out based on the complaint or grievance received. Fifth: The student is notified of the action taken and decisions made.

## ACADEMIC

When UNiB receives a complaint or grievance from a student related to academic issues, the institution's procedure for handling the complaint consists of the following steps:

### *Complaints regarding grades*

- **First:** The student submits their complaint or grievance to the professor of the subject using the "Message" tool available in the Virtual Campus, where they specify the reasons why they do not agree with the grade obtained. The complaint must be made within ten (10) working days from the publication of the notice.

- **Second:** The professor evaluates and responds to the student's complaint within ten (10) working days after receiving the complaint, explaining the grade given or the correction.

- **Third:** The professor makes the necessary corrections on the Virtual Campus and/or the student's transcript, if applicable.

- **Fourth:** The professor notifies the student of the action taken and the decision made.

- **Fifth:** If the student is not satisfied with the professor's final decision, they may submit their complaint to the department director using the "Letters to the Director" tool available on the Virtual Campus. The complaint must be made within ten (10) working days of the teacher's final decision.

- **Sixth:** The department director evaluates and responds to the student's complaint within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint.

- **Seventh:** If the student does not agree with the evaluation process carried out by the two instances, they may appeal the decision to the Academic Dean.

### *Complaints about faculty performance*

- **First:** The student submits their complaint or grievance to the department director, through the "Contact" tool available in the PANAL or directly from the Virtual Campus.

- **Second:** The Department Director evaluates and investigates the complaint or grievance within ten (10) workdays of receiving the complaint.

- **Third:** The department director forwards it to the Academic Dean's Office.

- **Fourth:** The Academic Dean's Office evaluates and investigates the complaint or grievance diligently, in a fair and equitable manner and within a period of no more than ten (10) working days from receiving the claim.

- **Fifth:** The recipient of complaints or grievance is contacted about measures and actions to be taken.

- **Sixth:** The planned measures are carried out based on the complaint or grievance received.

- **Seventh:** The student is notified of the action taken and decisions made. Each student will have the responsibility to maintain, preserve and project a respectful attitude towards the Faculty, as well as the university community in general. Any act of inappropriate conduct that affects the good name and image of the institution may be grounds for disciplinary action.

## *Final Project or Master's Thesis grade claims*

If the student is not satisfied with the grade obtained in the Master's Thesis Final Project, the deadline to request a review of the grade received is 7 working days after its publication in the academic transcript. The procedure to be followed is as follows:

- **First:** The student must contact the Evaluation Panel and request a review of the grade received. In the same message, the student should state the reasons why they are not satisfied and justify their position on the matter. The program coordinator then has 7 working days from the time that they receive the student's request to review the student's arguments and respond to the student's request.

- **Second:** If the Evaluating Panel considers that the complaint does not proceed, the student may request a new review from the program director, who in turn must respond within a maximum period of 7 working days.

- **Third:** If the program director also dismisses the complaint, the student, as a last resort, may submit it to the department director.

- **Fourth:** The Department Director will respond to the student within 20 working days. The Dean of Student Affairs or a representative will participate in the analysis of the case. The resulting decision shall be final by agreement between the parties involved or simple majority.

- **Fifth:** If there is any modification to the grade claimed in this process, the Evaluation Panel (with the approval of the program director) must process the modification of the grade in the student's file.

## *Doctoral Thesis Proposal and Doctoral Dissertation Grade Complaints*

If the student does not agree with the grade received in the Doctoral Thesis Proposal or in the Doctoral Dissertation, the deadline to request a review of the grade received is 7 working days after its publication in the academic transcript. The procedure to be followed is as follows:

- **First:** The student should contact the Academic Committee of the Doctorate and request a review of the grade received. In this same message, the student must state the reasons why they are not satisfied and justify their position on the matter. The Academic Committee then has 7 working days from the time that they receive the student's request to review the student's arguments and respond to the student's request.

- **Second:** If the Academic Committee considers that the claim does not proceed, the student may request a new review to the doctorate director, who in turn must respond within a maximum period of 7 working days.

- **Third:** If the doctorate director also dismisses the complaint, the student, as a last resort, may submit it to the department director.

- **Fourth:** The Department Director will respond to the student within 20 working days. The Dean of Student Affairs or a representative will participate in the analysis of the case. The resulting decision shall be final by agreement between the parties involved or simple majority.

- **Fifth:** If there is any modification in the grade claimed in this process, the doctoral Academic Committee (with the approval of the doctorate director) must process the modification of the grade in the student's file.

## *Complaints about the content, effectiveness, and expectations of the program*

- **First:** The student submits his/her complaint or claim to the subject professor through the "Contact" tool available on the Virtual Campus.
- **Second:** The professor evaluates and investigates the complaint or grievance within ten workdays of receiving the complaint.
- **Third:** The professor channels the complaint to the Academic Dean's Office.
- **Fourth:** The Academic Dean's Office evaluates the complaint or claim.
- **Fifth:** The recipient of claims or complaints is contacted about measures and actions to be taken.
- **Sixth:** The planned measures are carried out based on the complaint or grievance received.
- **Seventh:** The student is notified of the action taken and decisions made.

## *Complaints about Library services*

- **First:** The student presents their complaint or grievance to the librarian.
- **Second:** The librarian evaluates and investigates the complaint or grievance within ten (10) workdays of receiving the complaint.
- **Third:** The librarian notifies the student of the action taken and decisions made.
- **Fourth:** If the student is not satisfied with the final decision, they may submit their complaint to the Academic Dean's Office.
- **Fifth:** The Academic Dean evaluates and investigates the complaint or grievance within ten (10) workdays of receiving the complaint.
- **Sixth:** The recipient of complaints or grievance is contacted / about measures and actions to be taken.
- **Seventh:** The planned measures are carried out based on the complaint or grievance received.
- **Eighth:** The student is notified of the action taken and decisions made.
- **Ninth:** Complaints or claims from students about situations that affect order, respect, or discrimination of any kind, social condition, among others, will be channeled through the Dean of Student Affairs. Complaints or claims are handled in strict confidence.

The student has the right to appeal in accordance with the appeal process established by the institution.

## STUDENT COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES TO THE BOARD OF POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS (JIP)

The student is free to present to the administration a complaint or grievance about any situation that they believe affects their ability to study or complete their program of study at the institution.

Students will be informed that, if for any reason they do not agree with the actions taken by the institution to resolve the situation, they may contact or communicate with the Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP). The student must have exhausted all efforts with the institution to resolve his or her complaint before considering submitting it to the JIP.

### Appeal process

If the student does not agree with the decision made, they may appeal the decision within 15 working days once they have been notified of the decision. The steps to be followed are as follows:

- **First:** Submit a letter of appeal to the appropriate dean's office stating the reasons for disagreeing with the resolution.
- **Second:** The dean's office will evaluate the request for review and submit a report to the rector.
- **Third:** The rector evaluates and responds to the student's complaint within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint.

# CANCELLATION POLICY

The student cancels their enrollment when they request a total withdrawal from the program. To do so, the student must communicate their decision by means of a letter that can be sent by email or mail to the Student Affairs office.

Students who explicitly state their decision to withdraw from the program and disassociate themselves from the university, alleging deception, fraud, falsehood or similar circumstances on the part of the institution, officials or tutors, are permanently withdrawn without the option of readmission, reinstatement or return, since it is understood that their decision is final.

# COMPLETION AND GRADUATION POLICY

All students must comply with the degree requirements and the academic, financial, and administrative demands of the university:

## ACADEMIC

- Pass all subjects of the program's syllabus.
- Approve the final master's degree project with all the tasks involved in its progress, including the oral defense. In the case of doctorate, passing all the subjects, the research phases, the written thesis and the dissertation with favorable reports by the panel.

- Having no accusations of copying, usurpation or plagiarism in the final master's project or doctoral thesis, nor reasonable doubt about the mechanisms followed for the approval of the subjects, Final Project, Thesis and Dissertation.
- The transcript must be in finalized status.

## FINANCIAL

- Be in good standing with the payment of fees or value of the program.
- Have no financial debts with the university.
- Have paid the graduation fee.

## ADMINISTRATION

- Comply with the conditions of substance (concerning the elements that represent the content) and form (of presentation) of the academic documents that evidence the required previous studies, as well as the personal identity documents.

# INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR STUDENT IDENTITY VALIDATION

This policy establishes the mechanisms for the verification and authentication of the identity of students, with the purpose of guaranteeing that the person who participates in the distance programs offered by UNiB is the same person who enrolls, takes the courses, completes the program and obtains the degree. This policy has been established in compliance with federal requirements.

The International Iberoamerican University has an external intermediary office for the validation of data provided by the student in their application for admission to the institution.

## _Methods of validating identity_

The university uses one or more of the following methods:

### Photo identification

Requires verification of the student's identity by passport corroboration. The student must present a legalized copy of their valid passport with the written information, code, and photo completely clear and legible. This document will be kept as an identity document.

### Username and password

All students enrolling at the university receive a secure, individual username and password.

- The student is responsible for each and every one of the uses that occur under the use of their passwords on the virtual campus platform.
- The student may reset their password or change it if they identify unauthorized use.

### Traceability indicators

There are indicators that warn of possible irregularities, such as: grades that do not correspond to the trajectory followed by the student throughout the program, changes in the style of writing with respect to other submissions for developmental tests, substantial variations in response times.

These indicators alert the professors to require the student via videoconference or by summoning them in person, to verify the veracity of the origin of the answers provided.

### Thesis dissertation

To complete the program, once the master's thesis or doctoral dissertation has been accepted, the student must present the oral presentation or dissertation; the latter in the case of the doctoral thesis. This corroborates the authorship of the work and verifies the identity of the student as the person who carried out the accredited studies. For master's students this is done asynchronously, for doctoral students synchronously.

## *Honesty*

It is against the present policy for a student to provide another person with his or her password or to allow others to use his or her access information to enter the study platform and carry out academic activities on his or her behalf.

Students must not provide false information, change their identity, or impersonate themselves or others.

## *Student information privacy*

The University is in full compliance with the provisions of the Privacy Act (FERPA).

This law protects the privacy of student information in distance education by requiring that student consent must be obtained before any personally identifiable information in the student's education records is disclosed.

The university is responsible for ensuring that users who access student information through the internal management system maintain a limited and confidential use of the information to which they have access.

The Registrar's Office is responsible for safekeeping and maintaining the academic records of graduate and undergraduate students, both active and inactive, always considering the privacy and security of the records as required by law.

## *Policy review*

The identity validation and authentication process may be updated or revised in the event of future accreditation processes or policy updates, which may lead to the definition of new verification mechanisms.

# CREDIT TRANSFER POLICY

The university evaluates the recognition of content only between studies at the same graduate level. Validation takes place when the content of a subject is completely equivalent to the content of a subject in the curriculum of UNiB's programs. Legalized or original documentation is required for the evaluation to be carried out.

## *Course validation policy by transfer*

- A transfer student is a student who has passed courses with a grade of A or B in an official institution in Puerto Rico or abroad.
- Students applying for transfer must meet all admission requirements.
- It is the student's responsibility to present the catalog or course prospectus of the university where they took their courses.
- Courses that were taken more than ten years ago will not be validated.
- The courses must have the same or more credits with a description equivalent to the UNiB course description. Those courses whose number of credits is less than the number of credits at UNiB will be carefully evaluated by the academic dean considering the particular academic circumstances of the student submitting the application.
- Courses with a grade of Satisfactory (S) or Pass (P) or its equivalent will not be validated.
- Courses will not be validated from work experience.
- If the student has taken courses at more than one academic institution, each transcript will be evaluated independently.
- Up to 50% of the master's or doctorate credits taken at another institution may be validated.
- Only courses at the same academic level will be validated.
- Credits that are validated are permanently included in the student's transcript but are not used to calculate the student's grade point average.
- The university reserves the right to validate courses under conditions it deems exceptional.

# INSTITUTION CREDIT-HOUR POLICY

## *Introduction*

The purpose of this policy is to establish the criteria for distributing the time dedicated to study whether in contact with the professor or independently - according to the number of subject credits.

## *Scope*

This policy applies to all UNiB academic offerings.

## *Description*

The number of credits attributed to each subject is directly related to the estimated time that the student must dedicate to developing the competencies, acquiring the knowledge, and achieving the results of learning defined for the subject by completing the learning activities planned for said purpose.

Based on the standard that establishes that 1 credit is equivalent to 45 hours of study in the subject, of which 15 hours correspond to contact hours (hours of directed and supervised activities) and 30 hours to independent hours (hours of autonomous work by the student), the distribution of work time is defined according to the type of activities included for both types (contact hours and independent hours).

| Contact hours classification | |
|---|---|
| Directed and supervised activities | Participating in forum activities |
| | Correcting exercises |
| | Tutoring (individual - group) |
| | Work Placement/Practicum |
| | Thesis Tutorials |
| Evaluation activities | Exams |

| Independent hours classification | |
|---|---|
| Autonomous activities | Viewing and working with virtual presentation sessions |
| | Preparing forum activities |
| | Personal study of contents and readings |
| | Preparing individual or group work |
| | Conducting practical activities |
| | Conducting self-evaluation and reflection activities. |

## *Monitoring and evaluation*

The monitoring and evaluation of compliance with the credit-hour policy is a task carried out by the teaching team of the subject under the supervision of the corresponding academic management structures. This systematic process is focused on evaluating the adequacy of the estimated hours required to complete the subject based on its credits and the academic load.

In general, there are two cases that may involve adjusting the distribution of estimated hours for the subject, whether in directed and supervised activities, autonomous activities and/or evaluation activities.

1. When modifications are made to the subject, whether they are partial or radical updates in the subject materials, and/or in the activities (both formative and evaluation), the teaching staff adjusts the distribution of estimated hours as long as these modifications justify such an adaptation.

2. Each academic year, the teaching staff of the subject periodically makes an exhaustive and critical evaluation of the subject materials and the activities to be carried out by the students in relation to the corresponding learning outcomes.

This evaluation focuses on the following aspects aimed at continuous improvement:

• Volume and/or complexity of the contents

• Volume and/or complexity of Required Readings

• Volume and/or complexity of other subject materials (Recommended Readings, Multimedia, Video Lessons)

• Relevance of educational and evaluation activities

The opinions expressed by the students through the different means of communication available to them are considered as an added value for this evaluation: subject forum, private campus messaging, personalized follow-up by the Academic Secretary, Letters to the Director, as well as subject evaluation surveys.

This evaluation generally leads to implemented improvements of different types and levels of complexity. The improvement design has to consider the subject load in terms of hours/credits and the defined learning outcomes. Its implementation involves activating the evaluation process of hours/credits and adjusting the distribution of estimated hours for the subject's activities, if necessary

The modifications made when distributing the estimated hours for study dedication must be reflected in the corresponding subject's syllabus.

## ACADEMIC GRADING POLICY

UNiB's grading policy is based on the Grade Point Average Standard (GPA) used in American and Puerto Rican universities.

At the time of enrollment in a study program, the subjects of the study program to be taken are registered for the student. The credits enrolled are the total credits of the program and the student must fulfill the term of the academic life.

Grades will be expressed in the letters A, B, C, D, or F with the GPA scale. A course is passed with a minimum grade of B on the GPA scale.

At the end of the studies, the student receives a final grade for the program that is calculated from the weighted average of the grades obtained in the subjects and in the Master's Thesis.

All grades will be evaluated by the professor. The student may appeal a review in writing in case of disagreement with the final grade obtained in a subject or in some of the evaluation activities that comprise it. The student has 10 working days from the date of the grade's publication to do so.

## GRADING SYSTEM

The student receives detailed feedback on their performance in the evaluation tests, and the university uses a system equivalent to the GPA ("Grade Point Average") method when grading these evaluations. According to the UNiB system, grades are expressed in the letters A, B, C, D, or F.

To obtain the program's GPA: The points for each subject are multiplied by the number of credits or hours for each subject, added together and divided by the total credits or hours. The minimum grade at the end of the program must be B (2.50 - 3.49 GPA).

The equivalence between quantitative and qualitative score values in UNiB is shown below. The GPA method's equivalence is expressed as follows:

| Values | | | Qualitative values |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0- | Grade Point Average | % | |
| 10 - | 4.00 – 3.50 | 100 - | A |
| 8.5 - | 3.49 – 2.50 | 89 - | B |
| 6.9 - | 2.49 – 1.60 | 79 - | C |
| 4.4 - | 1.59 – 0.80 | 69 - | D |
| 0 | 0.79 – 0.00 | 49 - | F |

To ensure that grades are awarded fairly and consistently, especially in the case of subjective assessment techniques, all programs have evaluation criteria that professors must apply to their rubrics. These evaluation criteria (rubric) vary depending on the program and the academic activity being evaluated.

The evaluation system for each subject is fully and clearly explained in the "Subject Evaluation" document, which must be available in the "Evaluation" section of the subject's virtual classroom.

## SUBJECT RESIT

While the student is taking a subject, as previously mentioned, they must carry out three evaluation activities throughout the formative process (formative evaluation) and another at the end (summative evaluation).

In those cases in which student receives a grade lower than 7/10 (B) during the standard examination, they will have two opportunities to pass the subject through resit activities 1 and 2.

The student takes the first resit in the corresponding section enabled on the campus, where access to the evaluation instruments is shown.

If they fail again, they will have to take the second resit, whose maximum grade to obtain will be 8.5 points, implying an effect to the GPA. If the student fails resit 2, they must re-enroll in the subject.

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY TO PROTECT INFORMATION CONTAINED IN ACADEMIC RECORDS (FERPA LAW)

The university complies with the provisions of the Buckley Amendment (*Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended*). This federal law protects the privacy of student education records and establishes the right of students to inspect and review those records. It also provides guidelines for correcting the accuracy of information through informal and formal hearings. Students have the right to file complaints, if they so desire, with "*The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 330 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, D.C. 20201*", in connection with alleged breaches of the Law by the University.

By identifying the student, the university enables the student to have access to the information that the university handles about said student. In case of amendment, the student will request the change through the PANAL.

## PROCEDURES AND MEASURES TO LIMIT ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

Student documentation is stored in a computer system, and physically stored and preserved in special rooms of the Dean's Office for Student Affairs. This office has the access key to the digital lock and the electronic key. The password will be changed every six (6) months by the Dean of Student Affairs.

The physical storage space for computer facilities and physical documentation is fireproof and at a safe temperature to preserve the physical and digital documentation.

## MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF CREDIT TRANSCRIPTS

The Registrar's Office is responsible for the custody and maintenance of all official student transcripts, as well as for delivering them and certifying that the student has met the requirements for graduation.

The data related to the student's academic record, such as enrollment data, subjects passed, withdrawals, credit transcripts, are kept in the database from the moment the student is admitted to the Institution until the awarding of the degree obtained.

## PROCEDURES AND MEASURES TO PROTECT ACADEMIC RECORDS AGAINST FIRE, FLOOD AND OTHER CATASTROPHES

Physical academic records are safeguarded in flood-proof, fire-proof and shock-proof cabinets and digital records are kept in a Backup.

## POLICY ON UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS TO SERVERS

The university's servers are considered an asset repository. Their security is therefore complete, including access control to the premises where they are located, hardware and software manipulation, and monitoring of the activities of the personnel assigned to their management, operation and/or maintenance tasks.

The university's servers are located in restricted access sites and only the Technology Director is allowed to access them. This address has the access key to these facilities, accessible with a digital lock and electronic key. The password will be changed every six (6) months by the Dean of Administration and Finance.

Unauthorized access by a student to the servers is considered a serious infraction and may lead to expulsion and/or a lawsuit by the university against the student, depending on the student's actions.

If a person outside the university gains unauthorized access, the university may sue.

Any member of the university community, employee, client or user, who without authorization accesses, uses, destroys, destroys, alters, dismantles or reconfigures the information technologies of the university, its properties or third parties, threatens access and information and attempts against the security to create intellectual products, causing damage to the institutional order.  Such conduct will be punishable by disciplinary action in accordance with university regulations, as well as other appropriate legal actions.

The university considers unacceptable, unethical and cause for disciplinary action including non-reassignment, expulsion, dismissal or any other legal action, any activity that violates the copyrights or patent protection and authorizations, as well as registered agreements and other contracts of the university or third parties. The institution will sanction any person who interferes with the intended use of information resources, attempts to obtain or obtains unauthorized access to these resources, or who without authorization attempts to, destroys, alters, dismantles, reconfigures, impedes the right to access, or otherwise interferes with the integrity of computerized information or information resources.

Reading this institutional policy is mandatory for users of the information system at the time of being granted access to it. Implementation of this policy will be the responsibility of each academic department or administrative directorate in coordination with the Dean of Administration and Finance.

## USE AND DISCLOSURE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

UNiB fully complies with the laws that protect the privacy of social security numbers. Any employee who discloses the social security number of other employees, students or any other person who has a contractual relationship with the Institution will be immediately terminated and legal action may be taken against the employee.

UNiB complies with Law No. 186 of September 1, 2006, which prohibits the use of the Social Security number as routine identification in public and private educational institutions from elementary to postgraduate level under penalty of administrative fines by the Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP).

In compliance with Law No. 111 of September 7, 2005, "Citizen Information on the Security of Information Banks Act", in case there is a security breach or unauthorized access to documents containing the social security number, the affected person will be immediately notified by mail, email or public service to obtain more information. The Department of Consumer Affairs (DACO) will also be notified within 10 days.

In accordance with Law No. 207 of September 27, 2006, an act to prohibit all employers of private companies and public corporations from using the Social Security Number of employees as a means of identification, UNiB does not use the Social Security Number for the identification of its employees or for its students.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The International Iberoamerican University, in compliance with the norms and dispositions established by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, establishes the Policy Against Discrimination, and therefore promulgates Equal Opportunities.

Article II, Section 1. states that the dignity and equality of each person is inviolable. All men are equal before the law. No discrimination may be practiced based on race, color, sex, birth, social origin or condition, or political or religious ideas. Both the laws and the system of public instruction will embody these principles of essential human equality.

Those students with special needs must request reasonable accommodation from the counseling area, who will evaluate and counsel the student regarding the steps to follow in order to grant such accommodation. If the request for reasonable accommodation is received in Student Affairs, the case will be referred to the counseling officer.

This is why the International Iberoamerican University excludes any discrimination in education, employment, and the provision of services for reasons of race, color, sex, birth, age, origin or social status, ancestry, marital status, religious or political ideas or beliefs, gender, sexual preference, nationality, ethnic origin, status as a veteran of the Armed Forces or physical disability.

This anti-discrimination policy extends to all functions and activities of the International Iberoamerican University and all its systems, such as employment and job selection, educational programs, services, admissions, and financial aid, among others.

This Policy is effective immediately and supersedes any other certification, policy or regulation of any kind that is contrary to this Policy.

The establishment and enforcement of this policy, as well as its publication, complies with the federal regulations of Title IX, Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; with the Veterans Act, 1974, Section 402, as amended; and with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of July 26, 1990.

## PLAN TO FACILITATE ACCESS TO INSTITUTIONAL FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (ADA LAW)

Although the university will offer all its courses through distance learning, non-face-to-face or asynchronous modalities, the physical facilities have the minimum requirements necessary to facilitate access to students with physical disabilities.  In addition, students who are deaf or have partial hearing loss will be able to use translator services through www.globalvrs.com, from American Sign Language, where they can receive services in Spanish or English. Thus, complying with the rules of the American Disability Act of July 26, 1990, as amended with changes and put into effect on January 1, 2009.

Students with special needs may contact the Dean of Student Affairs, who will refer the case to the Professional Counseling area as appropriate.

## MILITARY STUDENT RIGHTS

 UNiB complies with Law. No. 109 of April 11, 2003, which regulates the contractual relations between military students of post-secondary education in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and institutions of higher education. We recognize and respect the fundamental civil rights recognized in this law.

Any student who has been activated by the Armed Forces of the United States or by the Puerto Rico National Guard must notify and present evidence to UNiB of such activation and will immediately be granted an extension until the student reports that such activation has been completed. UNiB will notify the professors of the classes the student is currently active in and will remain inactive until their return. To the extent possible, UNiB will try to have the same professor offer the course to the student. If this is not the case, however, the necessary measures will be taken so that the student is affected as little as possible.

## PUERTO RICO COPYRIGHT POLICY (ACT NO. 55 OF THE YEAR 2012)

The creative work of faculty, non-teaching employees and students is subject to legal protection under the current Puerto Rico Moral Copyright Law, which repeals the Intellectual Property Law, Act No. 96 of July 15, 1988. This is for the student's benefit, that of the Institution and the community in general. The Institutional Copyright Policy, in line with the University's mission, aims to protect, recognize, and disclose the rights and responsibilities of the University community over the product of their intellectual or industrial work, including the right to receive income and other tangible benefits for their work.

Moral Copyright applies to full-time and part-time university faculty and staff, professionals, contractors, and students. The policy pursues the following objectives:

1. To serve the public interest by providing a procedure to make protected intellectual work, product of university work, accessible.
2. Encourage the research and development of ideas, as well as the publication of research and other forms of intellectual expression, through proper guidance and advice on how to

protect and register copyrights and the economic benefit that such protection and registration may generate.

3. Define the institutional interpretation on the applicability of the jurisprudence and regulations in force in the jurisdictional scope of the United States and in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico on the intellectual product subject to protection under copyright.

4. Protect the interests of the University and guide its employees and students on how to protect their copyrights.

## POLICIES FOR MAINTAINING ACADEMIC OFFERINGS AND COMMITMENT TO CONTINUITY OF STUDIES IN THE EVENT OF INSTITUTIONAL CLOSURE (TEACH-OUT)

### *Policy for maintaining the academic offer*

The university certifies that all programs offered have been the result of studies of social needs and scientific-professional demand, for which reason the offer of studies is pertinent and adequate and will be maintained if those needs and/or demand exist, which are expected to be no less than five years in order to reach a mass of graduates who can apply their knowledge.

The university assures all its students of the following:

- Provide a solution to each incident as far as possible.
- Update the contents every two years or whenever necessary.
- Update (if necessary) the sequence of the study program.
- Update (if necessary) the syllabus.
- Update methodologies on a discretionary basis based on student success levels.

Any changes enacted will not affect students active at the time of the changes and will be regulated in the rules of their academic life by maintaining their program of studies for two years.

### *Commitment of continuity of studies in case of institutional closure*

In the event that the university ceases its activities, it undertakes to bring all active students to the end of their studies under the terms of their contract (Enrollment Agreement).

The university is committed to the following:

- Set up a student service office for a period of one year to address any request.
- Maintain a list of active students by program to contain the following information: name, ID (passport or driver's license number), Login, estimated date of completion, student's academic and financial status.
- Continue to offer the programs through the Virtual Campus until the student completes their studies, at no additional cost.

- Apply the cancellation and refund rules contained in the Enrollment Agreement in the event that the student decides not to continue their studies.

- Following the rules established in Article 48, Regulation for the Licensing of Institutions of Higher Education in Puerto Rico of October 9, 2012, of the Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP).

  - Request the JIP to assume custody of the academic records of active students and graduates by delivering a digitalized copy of the same from the beginning of its operations.

  - Notify active students, alumni and the JIP of these measures through electronic and physical means.

## POLICY FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEES

Students may participate in institutional committees and extracurricular activities, as long as they are recommended by the program directors.

## POLICY ON BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

### *Objective*

In compliance with Law 104 of 2016, the Harassment and Intimidation or bullying Law, also known as the Alexander Law, and cyberbullying, UNiB establishes the following methods of prevention and action against this practice. The International Iberoamerican University supports the emerging legislation to safeguard the academic environment as one free of emotional and physical violence.

### *Justification*

This policy arises considering, as well interpreted from the law, that for students to learn and achieve outstanding academic standards, they need a safe and violence-free environment. Harassment, intimidation and bullying or cyberbullying are behaviors that interfere with the ability to learn in the country's public and private education system.

### *Defining and describing school and cyberbullying*

The law defines the following types of harassment and bullying:

- **Harassment and intimidation and/or bullying**; any pattern of actions intentionally carried out, whether through psychological, physical, cyber, or social abuse, that has the effect of frightening a student or a group of students and interferes with him/her, his/her academic opportunities and performance, both in the classroom and in his/her immediate social environment. Harassment and intimidation and/or bullying must be a pattern of harassment, consisting of more than one act, and usually extending over weeks, months or even years.

- **Harassment and intimidation by any electronic means or through the use of the Internet and/or cyberbullying**; is the use of any oral, written, visual or textual electronic communication, made for the purpose of harassing, annoying, intimidating, and distressing a student, a student, or a group of students; and which usually results in harm to the affected student's physical, mental or emotional integrity, and/or property and unwanted interference with the affected student's

opportunities, performance and benefit. Even if the actions do not originate at school or in the immediate academic environment, cyberbullying has serious repercussions and adverse consequences in the educational environment.

## *Expectations and institutional policy*

UNiB aims to offer high quality programs to all its students. We firmly believe that our students deserve a safe, friendly, and respectful environment.

The university promotes a positive culture of zero tolerance to bullying or cyberbullying, such that the entire university community has the right to be respected, to learn or teach, and the right to feel safe in their environment. This policy aims to prevent bullying and to provide guidance on the policies established in this regard. To this end, the university seeks to create a culture that:

- Allows the student to thrive free from discrimination and any form of harassment.
- Does not tolerate, condone, or minimize harassing behavior.
- Is aware of what constitutes harassing conduct.
- Provides support to victims of harassment.
- Firmly handles harassment situations.

## *Responsibilities of the members of the university community*

The Dean of Administration and Finance is responsible for:

- Provide written versions of this policy and its processes to the entire university community on an annual basis.
- Inform all staff about the bullying or cyberbullying policy.
- Publish and disseminate this policy and process to the university community through the web page, catalogs, and institutional manuals.
- Monitor the implementation and execution of this policy and its processes.
- Maintain statistics on cases of harassment and bullying at the university and submit the same to the Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP) by July 1 of each year.

The Dean of Student Affairs is responsible for:

- Counseling the student on the bullying or cyberbullying policy.
- Guaranteeing the application of this policy considering the processes and consequences established herein, and with this ensure:
  - Prohibiting and refraining from tolerating any act of bullying or cyberbullying among members of the university community.
  - That any member of the university community who engages in bullying or cyberbullying will have limited or restricted access to the physical and digital facilities of the university until it is determined otherwise.
  - That all cases of bullying or cyberbullying will be dealt with within 72 hours after receiving the complaint.

Faculty and all university staff members are responsible for:

- Report any bullying or cyberbullying situation that is brought to their attention immediately to the Dean of Student Affairs.

Professional counseling is responsible for:

- Maintaining written documentation of the complaint of harassing conduct.
- Notifying both parties that an investigation of the complaint received will be initiated.
- Once the investigation has been conducted, notify the Office of the President of the results of the investigation and, if necessary, the Disciplinary Committee.
- Notify both parties of the results of the investigation and case resolution and disciplinary measures, if applicable.
- Provide support to victims of harassment.
- Harassment cases should be handled with discretion and responsibility.

## *Prevention strategies*

- The university will publish the bullying policy throughout the academic year to provide guidance to the entire university community on the issue and how to handle situations that arise in the educational setting.
- This policy includes the definition of bullying, how to prevent and how to act in case of observing or being subjected to bullying. It also establishes the intervention procedure; who to contact and the applicable disciplinary measures.
- The institution opens the communication channel for the recommendation of activities that reinforce and prevent risk situations. If feasible, the institution will coordinate campaigns with external agencies or entities.
- It will provide the following recommendations to students:
  - Never divulge passwords or access codes.
  - Never disclose your information or details of your private life to strangers.
  - Remember that the use of networks for illegal activities, such as fraud, scams, and pornography, among others, is very frequent.
  - If you consider yourself a victim of bullying or cyberbullying:
    * Keep the evidence either in a file or take pictures or still view of the screen and immediately report the situation to your teacher, Program Director, Department Director or Student Affairs.
    * Do not respond to harassment.

## *Procedure for protocol disclosure*

The bullying and cyberbullying policy will be disseminated throughout the year through the website, the *Institutional Catalog*, and the *Student Manual*.

## *Procedure for case documentation, confidentiality and record keeping*

### Case documentation

Harassment must be reported in writing to the Dean of Student Affairs. The case will be analyzed by the Dean of Student Affairs, who, if deemed necessary, will refer it to the counseling professional for handling.

The student should provide details about the harassment in the written report. In cyberbullying cases, the student must be able to evidence the same by means of still views, photos, or any other format.

The case will be documented following the case reporting procedure established in point *I: Procedure for Case Reporting*, in this policy.

### Confidentiality and recordkeeping

Documentation of students who are victims of bullying or cyberbullying will be safeguarded in a digital system and physically kept in special premises of the Dean's Office for Student Affairs.

This address has the access key to these facilities, which are accessible with a digital lock and electronic key. The password will be changed every six (6) months by the Dean of Administration and Finance. Only professional counseling staff will have access to these records and the information contained therein.

Those complaints that the Dean of Student Affairs, after careful evaluation, does not consider bullying or cyberbullying will be filed in the student's file.

## *Procedure for case reports*

### Sequence of actions:

- The student must report the bullying or cyberbullying incident to the Dean of Student Affairs in writing, via email or letter.
- The Dean of Student Affairs, if necessary, will channel the case in conjunction with professional counseling.
- The counseling professional will manage the case with the parties involved.
  - Notify the appropriate personnel; office of the principal, faculty, administrators of the student's involvement in a situation that is being addressed. Understanding that the situation affects the day-to-day academic performance of the student(s).
  - The Dean will handle the case, considering the existing regulations and the rights of the students and will recommend to the rectory and the Disciplinary Committee the solution of the case, according to the information gathered.
  - The resolution of the case may include the recommendation of counseling or any sanction to the harasser(s).

It will be the student's prerogative to file a complaint to the Puerto Rico Police, if they believe that the law has been violated.

## Officials in charge of handling the complaint or event

- Dean of Student Affairs
- Professional Counselor
- Disciplinary Committee

## Complaint investigation strategies

The university will handle complaints or grievances related to cases of harassment bullying or cyberbullying as follows:

- The student completes the Complaint or Grievance form, and the Dean of Student Affairs refers the same to the professional counselor.
- The counseling professional will interview the parties involved and evaluate the evidence presented, with the necessary confidentiality.
- They will have 15 days to conduct the investigation with the parties involved.
- If the student has filed a complaint with any state authority, the university will be subject to the determination of the court or authority concerned. In the meantime, the parties will undergo an orientation process.
- The counseling professional will make a preliminary, written, detailed report on the situation, which will be submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs.
- In the event of a violation of the policy, the case will be referred to the office of the principal and the Disciplinary Committee.
- Disciplinary measure(s) will be applied according to the offense committed.
- The file will be preserved indefinitely.

## Intervention strategies and case sanctions

### Intervention strategies

- Interviews with the victim and offender.
- Professional counseling with both parties.
- Resolve any possible incidents of bullying or cyberbullying, which may include, but is not limited to, referring the victim and/or bully to any other service it deems appropriate.

## Infractions

### Less serious

- Disrupting the normal progress of any academic activity through the Virtual Campus and / or visits to the university.

### Serious

- Making written expressions through the Virtual Campus that are inappropriate or disrespectful to members of the university community.
- Distributing material through the Virtual Campus that may be offensive to the recipient(s).
- Making written expressions through the Virtual Campus that are detrimental to the student's image.
- Making a maliciously false report to the Disciplinary Committee.
- Repeating a less serious infraction.

### Very serious

- Committing acts of written violence through the Virtual Campus against the student, for example; threats, slander, libel or interference in the exercise of their rights.
- Repeating a serious infraction.
- Failure to appear on the day and at the time appointed for a summons from the Disciplinary Committee. Such an appearance may be physical or by an electronic means that allows validating the student's identity.
- The Disciplinary Committee may expand or alter this list, without excluding or eliminating any type of infraction, depending on the cases investigated and adjudicated.

### Possible sanctions

- The counseling professional will recommend to the principal's office the need to activate the Discipline Committee.
- Said committee shall evaluate the case and apply disciplinary actions, which may include, but are not limited to:
  - Verbal warning,
  - written reprimand,
  - temporary suspension in the Virtual Campus of participation in all university activities,
  - prohibition from entering the physical premises of the university for the sanctioned period,
  - expulsion from the university, which implies an indefinite ban on admission to the university ("permanently withdrawn" student).
- Sanctions will be recorded in the file prepared and kept by the counseling professional. Imposing the aforementioned disciplinary measures shall be done in accordance with the merits of mitigating or aggravating circumstances of responsibility that may occur in each case.

  Good academic record, previous irreproachable conduct, or repairing all or part of the damage caused may be considered as extenuating circumstances.

- The Disciplinary Committee may, in justified and critical cases, reduce the corresponding sanction by one degree in exchange for applying alternative sanctions that favor the student's rehabilitation and the benefit of the university community.

- Disciplinary measures shall be applied without prejudice to the exercise of the corresponding legal actions against those sanctioned in accordance with the legislation in force in the country. Being a distance University, legal actions outside the national territory or application of international standards are not excluded.
- Students will be notified of their right to appeal the decision of the office of the principal and the Discipline Committee regarding disciplinary actions contained in this policy. The student will have the right to appeal within 10 days.

## _Follow-up strategies_

The counseling professional will determine the need for professional assistance for both parties based on the results of the investigation. If the intervention of a mental health professional is deemed necessary, referrals will be made to the appropriate agency, as described in the _Guidelines for Referrals to Health Professionals_ section. Follow-up and treatment will be part of the Action Plan.

The main objective of the Action Plan is to establish actions that contemplate socio-educational training and guarantee the safety of the parties involved. In addition, it should consider actions that contribute to the integral development and continuity of the students' educational goals.

The investigation report will be completed with the details and evidence that delimits the damage caused, if any, and will establish the Action Plan for both parties. Sanctions against the offender shall be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee.

The university has a responsibility to:

- Implement actions to stop bullying and/or cyberbullying.
- Monitor that such situations do not recur and act diligently if they do recur.
- Seek support from other institutions and agencies when necessary.
- Guarantee the immediate safety and protection of the integrity of the affected student, without blaming or stigmatizing the alleged harasser.
- Maintain the confidentiality of each of the people involved.

The mechanisms for the protection and confidentiality in the handling of the information and the file will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the _Record Handling and Confidentiality_ section.

Bullying and cyberbullying complaint files will be made available to law enforcement authorities and to the Board of Educational Institutions upon written request.

## _Guidelines for referrals to health professionals_

If Puerto Rican students require professional assistance, and under their prerogative, they will be referred to:

- Office of the Women's Advocate - (787)722.2977
- Addiction and Mental Health Services Administration (AMSCA) - (787) 763.7575.

- Psychological Services Association - (787) 764.7594.
- Private practitioners/hospitals.

International students will be referred by International Student Affairs to health professionals available in their country. These students will follow the process established in this policy. Once the counseling professional determines the need for assistance by a mental health professional, they will contact the Dean of Student Affairs who will contact the Vice Chancellor's Office for Student Affairs and International Relations for due process.

This manual will be available on the university's official website and will be revised biannually or on an as-needed basis, as the case may be.