



Inter American University of Puerto Rico

March 16, 2020

Dr. Edward Moreno
President JIP

***RE: IAUPR STATUS OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES ADOPTED BASED ON THE
USDE GUIDANCE AND THE MSCHE WAIVERS RELATING TO COVID-19***

Dear doctor Moreno,

Certainly, we are living tough COVID-19 related moments not only in Puerto Rico, but around the world. This situation has forced Puerto Rico's governor, Mrs. Wanda Vázquez, to issue a "lockdown" and "curfew" which will be in force from March 16 to March 30, 2020. As a responsible institution, Inter American University of Puerto Rico (IAUPR) has decided to decree an academic and administrative recess during the term of the Governor's order. IAUPR has also prepared an Emergency Protocol to give continuity to the teaching and learning process after the effect of this lockdown and curfew, which was put into effect since March 16, 2020, and until the end of the period of social distancing.

IAUPR is a system made up of nine academic units and two professional schools. The nine academic units are authorized by MSCHE to offer distance learning education. Although the two professional schools do not have this authorization, its faculty members use the Blackboard platform and different web-based resources to support and enhance their courses, and to facilitate the learning process. Thus, the Emergency Protocol contemplates the use of distance learning, and different protected electronic means to give continuity to the academic and administrative work. The two professional schools will put this strategy in place in accordance with the guidance issued recently by MSCHE and USDE to: *"temporarily waive for the substantive change requirements for distance education and contractual agreements in response to the coronavirus."*

The academic calendars were also revised so that the necessary remedy and space can be provided for those students and employees who, due to any health-related situation or the lockdown/curfew of the Governors' order, are unable to finish the academic term within the regular period.

Office of the President

In order to comply with the Postsecondary Institutions Board (JIP) request that was made on your March 13, 2020 communication, IAUPR informs the following:

- 1. Distance education:** IAUPR will started on March 31, 2020 with all the academic courses online, even the course that were offered in person, at the moment of the lockdown/curfew Order. Only the two professional schools, the School of Law and the School of Optometry, are not authorized to offer distance learning education. Nevertheless, both schools' faculty members use the Blackboard platform and different web-based resources to support and enhance their courses and to facilitate the learning process of their students. The faculty has also been under the training process for the designing and teaching of distance learning courses through different strategies. It is important to note that most of the IAUPR faculty members are trained to design and teach distance learning courses, nevertheless, those who are not, are at present receiving a rigorous training to teach online courses. As stated previously, an Emergency COVID-19 Protocol was also adopted to manage any academic situation, if necessary, in each academic unit and professional school.
- 2. Academic Calendar:** IAUPR reviewed its academic calendars to make the necessary changes for the current term.
- 3. Temporary sites for instruction:** At the present, Inter American University academic units or professional schools, do not contemplate or plan to establish any temporary site for instruction.

As soon as possible, considering the lockdown/curfew order dictated by the Puerto Rico Governor, any situation or change in the aforementioned plans will be informed by written notice to JIP, by authorized IAUPR staff.

Cordially,



Manuel J. Fernós,
President

c. Hon. Elmer Román, Secretario de Estado

Lcdo. Samuel Wiscovitch Coralí, Secretario Auxiliar de Servicios

Leda. María Varas, Directora Ejecutiva ORLIE

Sra. Maribel Cruz, Especialista ORLIE