



## **TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT SYSTEM MANUAL**



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## **Introduction**

The Teacher Preparation Program of the University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla (PPM-UPRAg) offers a curriculum that prepares highly qualified teaching professionals in Elementary Education and English with Multimedia Technology at the Elementary and Secondary Levels. The mission of the program aims to prepare teacher candidates with a comprehensive understanding of the social and cultural issues and the pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are necessary to develop into an exceptional teacher. The program seeks to develop teacher candidates that will be distinguished by their knowledge, ethical principles, reflective nature, and disposition to adapt and tackle the problems that are associated with today's diverse classroom environment. Graduates from the teacher preparation program will display knowledge, commitment, and understanding of the professional standards and the practical attributes associated with exceptional teaching. Toward this end, PPM-UPRAg has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations. The garnered assessment data is used to evaluate and improve the performance of candidates, unit operations, and the overall quality of the teacher preparation program.

The purpose of this manual is to provide an overall explanation of the assessment system that has been developed with the objective of improving the PPM and the program's quality. An understanding of the assessment system will aid all stakeholders involved in the assessment process. Thus, for practical purposes in its use and to enhance comprehension, this manual follows a question and answer format that summarizes the essential areas and issues related to the assessment of PPM-UPRAg. The manual presents an overview of assessment methods and procedures within a determined timeline. The manual is divided into four sections: A) The Overall Accreditation Process, B) The Assessment System and Unit Evaluation, C) The Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation Procedures, and D) Use of Data for Program Improvement. An inventory of assessment documents are provided in the appendix part of this manual. Moreover, an inventory of assessment documents and a glossary of important terms are included as appendixes to facilitate the practical use of this manual.

## Part A: The Overall Accreditation Process

### 1. What are assessment, evaluation, and teacher program accreditation?

#### **Assessment versus Evaluation:**

The term assessment is often used interchangeably with the traditional concept of evaluation; this interchangeability is understandable because they are closely connected. While assessment is often used refer to “an activity or task used by a program or unit to determine the extent to which specific learning proficiencies, outcomes, or standards have been mastered by teacher candidates;” evaluation is used to refer to the “use of a broad range of instruments and procedures during a course of instruction or during a period of organizational operations” in order to determine possible adjustments or changes to improve the quality of performance (NCATE: [www.ncate.org/](http://www.ncate.org/)). This interrelationship between assessment and evaluation can be illustrated further by explaining the two types of traditional evaluations: a) summative, and b) formative.

- a) **Summative Evaluation:** This is a form of accountability-oriented assessment. It involves the use of data assembled at the end of a particular sequence of activities, to provide a macro view of teaching, learning, and institutional effectiveness.
- b) **Formative Evaluation:** Improvement-oriented assessment. The use of a broad range of instruments and procedures during a course of instruction or during a period of organizational operations in order to facilitate mid-course adjustments.

What is important about understanding these concepts is not that they are different, but rather that they are closely related and both refer to the use of instruments to assess the quality of performance in order to make decisions aimed at improvement. In the case of specific assessment, the instrument details the task or activity and a scoring guide used to evaluate the task or activity; this instrument is often called an assessment rubric. In the case of broader and systematic assessment, both formative and quantified information is used to determine the extent to which teacher candidates, programs, or institutions meet specific outcomes or standards. Information derived from assessments of candidate proficiencies in areas of teaching affects student learning, candidate knowledge, and the candidate’s overall disposition.

As illustrated in the previous paragraphs, assessment involves the collection of candidate and program, and institutional performance data which may be derived from a wide variety of sources, such as projects, essays or tests demonstrating subject content mastery; employer evaluations; state licensure tests; and other evidence of pedagogical and professional teaching proficiencies. The assessment system which is the subject of this manual can be defined as: A comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures that provide information for use in improving candidate and program performance.

#### **Accreditation:**

In education, accreditation is the process of assessing and enhancing academic and educational quality through voluntary peer review. Accreditation involves a voluntary and systematic process under which services and operations of an educational institution or program are evaluated by an external and independent organization to determine if professional teacher requirements and

standards are met. If standards are met, the organization confers accredited status to the educational institution or to a specific educational program. In the case of PPM-UPRAg, the program is in the process of accreditation by the following organizations.

**NCATE:** The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. NCATE accredits schools, colleges and departments of education in the United States that provide professional training for teachers and other school specialists. The overall mission of NCATE is to set national standards that help assure quality and credibility in preparation programs for professional school personnel. To accomplish its mission NCATE has developed a program review and evaluation process that links teacher preparation standards or performance based standards with state licensure requirements and certification. Universities and colleges seeking NCATE accreditation for teacher education programs are required to submit a Program Review demonstrating compliance with NCATE standards ([www.ncate.org/](http://www.ncate.org/)).

**TESOL:** TESOL is a Specialized Professional Association (SPA) that represents teachers, professional education faculty, and other school professionals who teach English to speakers of other languages. TESOL is a member organization of NCATE and has established standards for both students in schools and candidates preparing to work in schools. As a SPA, TESOL is responsible for the program review and evaluation process, within NCATE, for institutions seeking national accreditation in TESOL education (<http://tesol.org/education/ncate/>).

**ACEI:** The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) is a Specialized Professional Association (SPA) and constituent member organization of NCATE. ACEI is responsible for the program review process and evaluation, within NCATE, for institutions seeking national accreditation in elementary education (<http://acei.org/education/ncate/>).

## Part B. Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

### 2. How does the unit ensure that the assessment system collects information on candidate proficiencies outlined in the unit's conceptual framework, state standards, and professional standards?

The unit has designed a comprehensive assessment system that articulates multiple assessments that gather and document information about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of candidates, as well as unit administrative variables in order to monitor and improve candidate performance and unit operations. The system integrates internal sources of information such as, grades, teaching-supervisor reports, and specific instruments designed to measure candidate proficiency and performance (*see NCATE at Uprag.edu/ Exhibit 2a.1a Conceptual Framework Fig. 2: UPRAg Teacher Preparation Program Candidates Proficiencies Assessment Model*). External sources of information are also used, for example, results of state licensure exams (called PCMAS) which assess academic and professional knowledge, and employer and candidate satisfaction surveys. Moreover, in order to ensure that candidates meet the proficiencies established in the unit's conceptual framework and standards stipulated by NCATE, ACEI, TESOL, and state requirements as described in the candidate profile, the unit gathers quantitative and qualitative data on the candidates' progress and accomplishments (*see NCATE at Uprag.edu/ Exhibit 2a.1b Conceptual Framework Table 1: Teacher Education Unit, UPR Aguadilla Teacher Candidates Proficiencies-Standards Alignment Matrix*).

The system supports learning by providing opportunities for interaction and exchanges of information among candidates, faculty, cooperating teachers, administrative personnel, and the professional community. This collaboration provides opportunities for developing appropriate circumstances for adjustments and improvement of performance. Because of its successive terms of a sequence, the assessment system provides a continuous nonlinear recurrence relation between its components - planning, implementation, analysis, and dissemination - (*see the conceptual diagram: Unit Assessment System, p. 6*). This nonlinear system is an ongoing cycle that allows the unit-head and program directors to operate with some flexibility. The system permits entering at various stages to make necessary adjustments based on the continuous flow of data and feedback.

The system considers varied sources of information, such as: exams, candidate portfolios, reflective journals, interviews, supervision and observation reports, candidate work samples, and results of state certification exams. The assessment data is analyzed and recommendations are developed and executed. The system focuses on the teacher candidate as the center of the educational process. The system is organized around the six core areas of the unit's conceptual framework:

- Conceptual Knowledge,
- Assessment,
- Life-Long Learning,
- Diversity,
- Ethics, and
- Technology.

Moreover, the system involves a continuous and collaborative effort which compiles candidate performance data from each of these components along four continuous transition points: 1) Admission to the University and Unit program, 2) Admission to Student Teaching, 3) Student Teaching, and 4) Program Completion (see Table 1: Unit Assessment System: Transition Point Assessments). The process ensures that candidates receive appropriate career and academic counseling, and tutoring services.

The key assessments were developed collaboratively by the faculty at UPRAg. The instruments and corresponding scoring guides and rubrics are administered to determine candidate performance and formative development at four transition points. The findings are analyzed by the faculty to identify tendencies and unit-program strengths and areas that need improvement. For example, if candidates do not demonstrate a satisfactory alignment level in written communication skills, extensive writing workshops are offered to improve their performance; if a graduate does not pass the state licensure exam, a recommendation to repeat certain courses and/or participation in professional development workshops would be recommended.

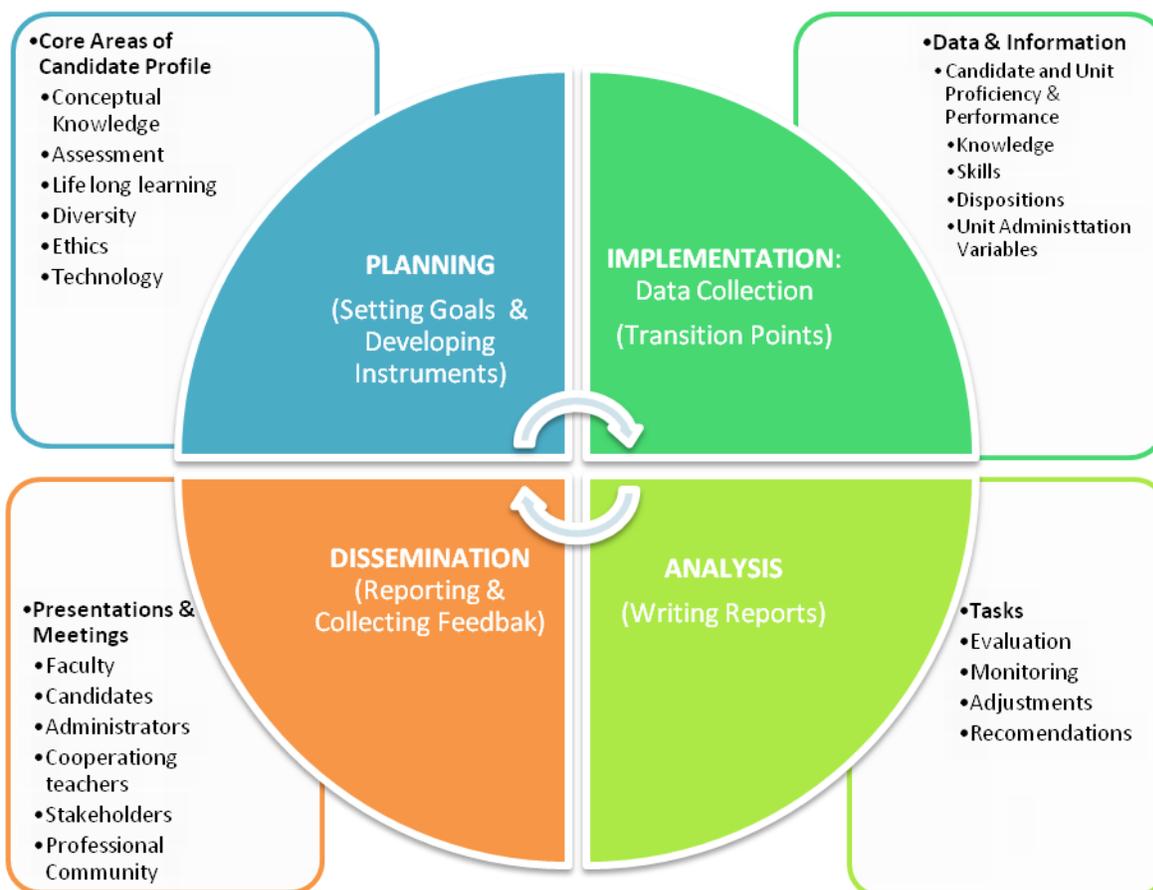
### **Unit Assessment System: Transition Point Assessments**

The assessment system follows a comprehensive approach that delineates a series of activities divided into concrete tasks along transition points. Administrators, faculty, and teacher candidates are able to participate in the assessment of all facets of the program. The assessment data and information leads to decisions involving:

- Concepts of quality and their implications in all facets of the program
- Program adjustments involving academic policy related to:
  - curriculum design,
  - the structure of curriculum: content, learning experiences, time and space allocations
- Institutional and program management, including human and material resources
- Adjustments in assessment and evaluation procedures
- Teacher training and professional development
- Processes of curriculum implementation

The conceptual diagram that follows highlights the essential parts of the assessment system and illustrates the relationship between the continuous and ongoing nature of the assessment activities and procedures:

Figure 1: Unit Assessment System



3. What are the key assessments used by the unit and its programs to monitor and make decisions about candidate performance at transition points?

Table 1: Unit Assessment System: Transition Point Assessments

Transition Points	Proficiencies (#)	Key Assessments	Criteria and Expected Performance Level
1. Admission to the university and unit program		Admission Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Admission Index of 2.60 or higher</li> </ul>
2. Admission to Student Teaching	1, 2, 3, 6,7, 8	Grades in the following courses EDPE3008, EDFU 3017, EDPE 4335, EDPE 4005, EDPE 4047, EDPE 4048, EDPE 3129, Assessment Instruments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field Experience Observation Instrument (FEOI)</li> <li>Field Experience Performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Point Average of 2.50</li> <li>Grades of C or above in pedagogical content knowledge and skills</li> <li>Field experience assessment instruments</li> <li>➤ Meet at least 70 percent of</li> </ul>

		(FEPEI)	the proficiencies assessed in the rubric
3. Student Teaching	4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Teaching Practice Evaluation Assessment Instruments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Work Sample(TWS)</li> <li>• Formative Teaching Practice Evaluation</li> <li>• Philosophical and Pedagogical Essay</li> <li>• Cooperating Teacher Questionnaire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TWS performance level of 85 percent or above</li> <li>• Questionnaire performance level of 85 percent or above</li> <li>• Candidates from all the programs must achieve a minimum grade of B in the practice</li> </ul>
4. Program Completion	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	General GPA Assessment Instruments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCMAS</li> <li>• Institutional Exit Survey (Program Completers' Survey)</li> <li>• Employers Questionnaire (Employer Satisfaction Survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GPA of 2.50 or higher</li> <li>• PCMAS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fundamental content with a minimum score of 92 percent</li> <li>➤ Professional and pedagogical knowledge: at the elementary level a minimum score of 89 percent; at the secondary level: a minimum score of 87 percent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Approval of all credits that comprise the program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Elementary Education, 137;</li> <li>➤ Education with a Major in English with Multimedia Technology, 120;</li> <li>➤ Pass Student Teaching with a B or higher.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

#### 4. How is the unit assessment system evaluated? Who is involved and how?

The assessment system follows a comprehensive and systematic procedure designed to gather relevant quantitative and qualitative data and information in order to monitor and measure candidate, unit, and program performance. Specifically, the system includes two unit program assessment committees; each committee is headed by a coordinator which schedules meetings and supervises assessment tasks. The two program assessment committees are charged with the responsibility of compiling, summarizing, analyzing, and reporting the findings along with appropriate recommendations for changes and adjustments. The committees are supervised by the UPRAg's Coordinator of Assessment who is selected by the Dean of Academic Affairs.

The Unit's assessment system assures accountability of candidate, program and unit operations. This is made possible through a collaborate effort that is based on a clear feedback process that ties assessment to ongoing revision of the curriculum, to instruction, and to unit operation. The role of the Assessment Committees is to sustain the assessment system by the coordination of

retreats, a calendar of working sessions, and systematic meetings to assure the participation and collaboration of all members of the professional community. These processes contribute to the development of the assessment instruments and rubrics consistent with the conceptual framework, and to facilitate the evaluation of the assessment system through the discussion of findings on a regular basis. During these sessions, candidates and faculty review candidate performances on the assessments completed during each transition point. The results inform and advise them about forthcoming next steps for courses, field experiences, PCMAS preparations, and related matters. Plans are collaboratively designed, so that the program sequence can be followed to ensure overall improvement and success.

The Program Assessment Committee Coordinators aggregate data every semester and share the information with the Unit and UPRAG's Assessment Coordinator, which advises the Dean of Academic Affairs. The assessment committees attend focused meetings every semester with cooperating teachers and are open to sharing data relevant to the discussions. The assessment system assures that the faculty, candidates, advisory committee and other members of the professional community voice their concerns; this effort allows the unit to analyze its current data and to improve the assessment process by creating new assessment tools and tasks.

Each assessment committee develops a work plan in correspondence to the goals, objectives, and evaluation measures used to manage and improve the unit operations and programs. Data is compiled and analyzed, and the findings are reported to all stakeholders. Access to relevant assessment documents is assured through the unit's web-page and orientation and evaluation discussions are regularly scheduled. To confirm the accuracy of the findings, gauge the practical use of the assessment instruments and evaluate overall assessment procedure, the assessment committees meet at regular intervals throughout the academic year; to this end, the committees also schedule meetings that incorporate the faculty and teacher candidates in the overall evaluation of the assessment system.

## **5 How does the unit ensure that its assessment procedures are fair, accurate, consistent, and free of bias?**

The unit is committed to the continuous revision and refinement of the assessment process so as to eliminate sources of bias, and to accomplish the fairness, accuracy, and consistency of the assessment procedures. The Unit systematically collects and reviews unit-wide and program specific data from multiple assessment sources at various times during the academic year. It is the responsibility of the assessment committees that make up the assessment system to analyze the data and to assure the accuracy, fairness, and consistency of the assessments and the administrative procedures.

To assure fairness, each program schedules meetings throughout the academic year in which faculty discuss and evaluate candidate development, as well as the effectiveness of assessment instruments. Through a systematic review and discussion by a broad range of stakeholders which include faculty, candidates, cooperating teachers, and administrative personnel, the unit assures that all candidates and transition points are accurately assessed. All instruments and rubrics used as part of the assessment system must be aligned with the competencies of the conceptual

framework, and with state and professional standards. These instruments are continuously subjected to revision and refinement based on the results of the evaluation procedures.

Accuracy and consistency is ensured by integrating multiple assessments and evaluation procedures that occur along four transition points: 1) admission to the university and unit program, 2) admission to student teaching, 3) student teaching, and 4) program completion. The variety of assessments at different transitional points allows for comparative analyses and evaluation leads to necessary adjustments to improve the quality of the assessment instruments and administration procedures. The assessment committees ensure that all transition points are consistently and accurately assessed. Much effort has been made to design the instruments that measure candidate performance. Student teaching supervisors currently use the Teacher Practice Manual (*see NCATE at Uprag.edu/ Exhibit 2a.4.a Manual de Orientación de Práctica Docente*) which is a guide for the practicum supervision. In addition, all course syllabi are continuously revised to assure that candidates are provided with sufficient opportunities to develop the proficiencies outlined in the unit's conceptual program. All course syllabi are also aligned with state, national, and professional standards. Furthermore each department has aligned the Conceptual Framework with the specific SPA standards.

Moreover, to ensure fair and unbiased assessment procedures, all data and findings are submitted by the assessment committees to the Unit and, the Office of Planning and Institutional Studies (OPEI), and the Assessment Coordinator under the Dean of Academic Affairs for statistical analysis and further evaluation. The multiple sources and levels of analyses and evaluation allows for triangulation which ensures accuracy, consistency and the avoidance of bias. Based on this systematic assessment procedure, the unit takes the corrective actions necessary to improve the transparency of the assessment instruments and procedures.

## **6. What assessments and evaluation measures are used to manage and improve the operations and programs of the unit?**

The assessment system guides the efforts of monitoring and evaluating unit operations such as, the quality of the curriculum, faculty and candidate performance, and formative instructional, field and clinical experiences. The quality of the curriculum, services, resources, policies, and structure is assessed by means of surveys that take into account the degree of satisfaction of the candidates. The quality of the teaching and learning process is guaranteed by faculty evaluation in compliance with the internal faculty regulations and certifications of the institutional Administrative Board. The main sources of information for assessments and evaluation used to manage and improve operations and unit programs are the following:

- **State Licensure Examination (PCMAS in Spanish):** Upon completion of the Unit programs, all candidates must meet or exceed the state pass rate scores of the PCMAS: Puerto Rico Teacher Certification Examination. The PCMAS is administered once a year and includes a general knowledge component, a professional component for the elementary and secondary levels, and a specialization component. All candidates must pass the PCMAS to be certified as teachers in Puerto Rico. Examination results are used by the institution to evaluate the performance and quality of the Unit Programs. For example, data pertaining to the fundamental, professional, and pedagogical knowledge

components, together with the other academic requirements described above, are used for comparative analysis; PCMAS reports are particularly useful in comparing and evidencing UPRAg teacher candidates' academic and professional knowledge and the Unit's overall performance in relation to other teacher candidates and other teacher preparation programs of institutions in Puerto Rico. PCMAS results are also particularly useful in advising those teacher candidates as to remedial help and reinforcement in areas where they have not measured up to expectations. More specifically, candidates who do not pass the PCMAS are notified, in writing, that they must complete a sequence of specific courses to improve academic and professional performance.

- **Institution Exit Survey:** The survey takes the form of a questionnaire that is administered to all graduates. In this program completers' survey, candidates are asked to answer questions which are aimed at obtaining data and information regarding the quality and administration of the Unit. Candidates are asked for specific recommendations to improve the Unit's programs and its operations. Data are compiled and evaluated for decision making in regards to the unit's curriculum and procedures.
- **Employer Questionnaire:** This instrument is administered to employers one year after the program completers are practicing their teaching profession. The questionnaire aims to inquire about the teaching performance of program completers and the employer's insight and satisfaction. Employers are asked to answer specific questions related to the program completers that they employ and supervise. The data and information garnered is used to make decisions which may include recommendations to enhance candidate proficiency and improve unit program operations. More specifically, data results are analyzed and evaluated for decision making in regards to the unit's course content, overall curriculum, and operational procedures. This questionnaire integrates the participation of external sources in the assessment process.
- **Cooperating Teacher Questionnaire (CTQ):** During the student teaching transition points, candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions are assessed by using the CTQ. The CTQ is administered by the cooperating teacher; the aim is to assess the knowledge achieved by the candidates. The cooperating teacher assesses the candidates' overall performance. The data and information obtained is used to determine whether the candidates have accomplished professional, state, and institutional standards and have developed and demonstrated proficiencies that support learning by all students. Furthermore, the data obtained is analyzed and used along with the data and information provided by the assessments described above for the improvement of unit program operations.

## **Part C: The Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation Procedures Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation**

### **7. What are the processes and timelines used by the unit to collect, compile, aggregate, summarize, and analyze data on candidate performance, unit operations, and program quality?**

The Unit gathers information and aggregates data from the Registrars' Office and the office of Planning and Investigation (OPEI) and assessment information for statistical analysis and further evaluation. This analysis occurs along four transition points (Admission to the university and unit program, Admission to Student Teaching, Student Teaching, and Program Completion). The results are presented to the faculty for analysis and recommendations for program improvement. The Unit programs determine their plans for improvement based on these results and on departmental goals for the academic year.

Furthermore, in an effort that seeks the advice of the academic and general community, program and institutional assessment and evaluation reports are periodically produced and disseminated via official exchanges of information with other institutions and organizations and by publication on the institution's program web sites. Stakeholders and interested parties have complete access to assessment and evaluation reports and are asked to comment and make recommendation for program improvement.

The assessment system procedures follow a continuous cycle that includes four stages: The first stage involves planning, which includes: a) the identification of proficiencies and expected performance levels, and b) the design of methods and instruments. The second stage involves the implementation of assessments and data collection and processing. The third stage entails a continuous process which includes: a) analysis of findings and developing corresponding recommendations, and b) writing reports. The fourth stage involves: a) the dissemination of results, b) implementation of recommendations, and c) collecting feedback. Thus, the assessment system provides a continuous recurrence relation between its four stages: 1) planning, 2) implementation, 3) analysis, and 4) dissemination. This process involves the active participation of the assessment committees which coordinate the execution of the assessment operations and procedures. The assessment committees respond directly to and are supervised by the Program Directors and the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Table, 2 summarizes the process and timeline used in the system's assessment of candidate performance, unit operations, and program quality.

**Table 2: Candidate and Unit Operations and Program Quality Assessment**

DATA COLLECTION & PROCESSING				ANALYSIS & DISSEMINATION			Format & Technologies
Transition Point	Key Assessment	Who collects?	Frequency	Who reports?	Frequency	Use of the Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports, tables, spreadsheets, charts, and graphs.</li> <li>• In Microsoft Office Excel Program formats</li> </ul>
<b>Admission to the university and unit program</b>	<b>Admissions Records</b>	<b>Unit Director</b>	<b>Every Admission Cycle</b>	<b>Assessment Committee</b>	<b>Every Semester</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback to stakeholders</li> <li>• Course and curriculum changes</li> <li>• Program adjustments</li> <li>• Adjustments or changes to assessment instrument</li> <li>• Changes in administration procedure</li> <li>• Orientation, and/or remedial tasks</li> </ul>	
<b>Student Teaching Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades for content knowledge and teaching methodology courses</li> <li>• Field Experience Observation Instrument</li> <li>• Field Experience Performance Evaluation Instrument</li> </ul>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Every Semester</b>	<b>Assessment Committee</b>	<b>Every Semester</b>		
<b>Student Teaching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Work Sample</li> <li>• Formative Teaching Practice Evaluation</li> <li>• Philosophical and Pedagogical Essay</li> <li>• Cooperating Teacher Questionnaire</li> </ul>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Every Semester</b>	<b>Assessment Committee</b>	<b>Every Semester</b>		
<b>UNIT ASSESSMENT</b>							
<b>Program Completion</b>	• PCMAS- State Licensure Exam	<b>Program Director</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Assessment Committee</b>	<b>Every year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback to stakeholders</li> <li>• Course and curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports, tables, spreadsheets, charts, and graphs.</li> </ul>
	• Institution Exit	<b>Program</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Every year</b>		

	Survey	<b>Director</b>		<b>Committee</b>		changes	
	•Employer Questionnaire	<b>Dean of Academic Affairs</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Assessment Committee</b>	<b>Every year</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• program adjustments</li> <li>• adjustments or changes to assessment instrument</li> <li>• changes in administration procedure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Microsoft Office Excel Program formats</li> </ul>

**8. How does the unit disaggregate candidate assessment data for candidates on the main campus, at off-campus sites, in distance learning programs, and in alternate route programs?**

The overall design of the assessment system is to facilitate the exchange of information that will facilitate decision making and promote accountability at all levels. This system depends on an effective process that nurtures and promotes critical analysis and constructive feedback from the entire professional community. The assessment committees coordinate a calendar of working meetings designed to discuss findings and aggregate additional information. The committees also solicit the collaboration of the faculty and the professional community in the improvement and development of assessment instruments and procedures in order to improve the assessment system.

The unit programs have designed a comprehensive assessment system that articulates multiple assessments that gather and document information about the achievement, skills, and abilities of candidates, as well as unit administrative variables in order to monitor, measure, and improve program and unit operations. The system integrates internal as well as external sources of information such as, exam results, course grades, clinical experience-supervisor reports, cooperating teacher assessment reports, survey-questionnaires, and the specific instruments designed to measure candidate proficiency and performance, results of state licensure exams on the achievement of academic and professional knowledge.

This information is garnered and analyzed at four transition points throughout the program. The information and data are compiled, analyzed, and disaggregated by committees with different responsibilities and purposes. The information is also presented to the faculty in the form of reports, charts, tables, and formal presentations of findings. Reports are also presented on the institution and program web-pages so that stakeholders are free to use the information for their own analyses, recommendations, and other professional pursuits.

Furthermore, the unit programs publish and make available assessment data results to the professional community by means of bulletin boards, annual reports, assessment reports, candidates' orientations, meetings, and faculty retreats, workshops, dialogues, and courses offered to teachers. Examples of these are: dissemination of results of teacher candidate performance in the PCMAS, faculty meetings, Academic Senate and Administrative Board meetings, workshops for cooperating teachers, bulletin boards, and in the institutional web-page. The unit will continue working toward maintaining the quality of the Program and faculty; revising the curriculum, the means of assessment and promoting the growth and development of candidates' knowledge, skills, and appropriate disposition necessary to impact student learning.

**9 How does the unit maintain records of formal candidate complaints and their resolutions?**

The Program Director, Dean of Academic Affairs, the Dean of Student Affairs and/or any member of the faculty that receives a student complaint must follow a standardized procedure that involves documenting all candidate complaints; this procedure requires the candidates to file a written confidential statement, specifying their complaint. The Program Director, Dean of

Academic Affairs, or the Dean of Student Affairs then meets with the candidate to address complaints. In addition, in order to facilitate the reporting and resolution of candidate and other student complaints, the unit and the faculty adhere to processes specified in the UPR General Student Regulations Handbook, (*see NCATE at Uprag.edu/ Exhibit 2b.3a: UPR General Student Regulations Handbook*).

However, most complaints at UPRAg follow a traditional path where a candidate first reports a complaint to a faculty member and if the matter is not resolved at this level, he or she take the complaint to the program director and if necessary to the Dean of Academic Affairs or the Dean of Student Affairs; most minor complaints are resolved at this first or intermediate level. Moreover, each program keeps a file on candidate complaints and their resolutions; this information is made available to assessment committees and is discussed as part of the information that is necessary in order to plan for improvement of administrative and academic performance.

Nevertheless, UPRAg has an institutional policy in place for formal student complaints that may demand a resolution involving disciplinary action. In case a candidate wants to file a formal complaint, he/she will be instructed to follow the filling complaint procedure that is specified and described in the UPRAg Catalog (*see NCATE at Uprag.edu/ Exhibit 2b.3b. UPRAg Catalog*). According to this procedure, the Program Director, Dean of Academic Affairs, the Dean of Student Affairs and/or any member of the faculty will direct the candidate to visit the Office of Student Ombudsperson, which has been assigned the responsibility of filing an official report of the complaint and initiating an investigation leading to an eventual resolution. Complaints are handled by the Office of the Student Ombudspersons (*Procurador del Estudiante*) with complete confidentiality, neutrality, and independence. The Student Ombudsperson is a faculty member designated by the chancellor to uphold standards of open dialogue and mediation of conflicts. The Office of the Student Ombudsperson is regulated by Certification 32-2005-2006 instituted by the Board of Directors of the UPR (*see Exhibit 2b.3c. Certificación 32-2005-2006 de la Junta de Síndicos de UPR - [http://ncate.uprag.edu/Exhibit\\_Room/](http://ncate.uprag.edu/Exhibit_Room/)*). All reports, evidence, proceedings, and resolutions are confidential and kept on file in the Office of Student Affairs.

## **Part D: Use of Data for Program Improvement**

### **10 In what ways does the unit regularly and systematically use data to evaluate the efficacy of and initiate changes to its courses, programs, and clinical experiences?**

The Unit is committed to strengthening and expanding the realm of coordination and dissemination of assessment data for continuous improvement of academic and administrative operations. With this purpose in mind, the assessment system provides for the systematic use of assessment data in order to make appropriate changes and improvements in overall program operations and candidate and unit performance. More specifically, the ongoing assessment procedures make possible the continuous revision of academic and administrative operations; and enable refinement of assessment instruments, adjustments designed to improve academic program operations, and upgrading of overall performance.

The role of the Assessment Committees is to guide the assessment process by coordinating instrument administration, scheduling meeting and retreats, developing a calendar of working sessions, and systematically overseeing the assessment tasks to assure the participation and collaboration of all members of the professional community. These processes contribute to the development and adjustment of assessment instruments and facilitate the implementation of improvement strategies. During the course of each academic year, the Assessment Committees discuss and report findings at faculty meetings, where candidates have representation.

In order to make a knowledge-based decision, faculty, cooperating teachers, teacher candidates, members of the professional community, and assessment coordinators meet with unit program directors on a regular basis. A candidates' group meeting is also convened each semester. During these sessions, candidates, faculty, and advisory committees review candidate performance, the assessment instruments used, as well as possible adjustments in course content, teaching strategies, and the course contact hours allotted to different proficiencies and skills. The assessment discussions usually lead to planning sessions in order to improve courses, field experiences, PCMAS candidate orientation and preparations, and related matters.

More specifically, the unit program directors and various unit faculty members attend focused meetings every semester with cooperating teachers in area schools and are open to sharing data relevant to program improvement. When a concern or desire for change is expressed, the unit analyzes its current data and may even create an assessment tool to gather new research. If this decision constitutes a unit change, sometimes it may be referred to the Dean for Academic Affairs and/or the Academic Senate in order to be approved.

The unit program directors also collect other program data such as student evaluations of faculty members who teach the professional education courses. These data are analyzed and compared with that of other faculty to identify opportunities for improvement. Data are used to better decide about faculty teaching loads and the appropriateness of faculty for particular courses and/or field experiences, in order to maximize the outcomes for candidates and improve the courses, programs, and clinical experiences. These data is also useful in planning faculty development activities and workshops. These workshops usually address individual collective faculty needs to improve their teaching, research, and service.

These assessment activities are instrumental in the unit's planning process to enrich curricular experiences so that all candidates will benefit from the exposure and interactions with peers from different institutions and backgrounds. The unit program directors also work with unit faculty and the Dean of Academic Affairs to assess resources needed to meet program goals. This information is used to develop the budget for the upcoming year. For example, as a result of the analysis of findings of academic year 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09, several changes have been recommended, and some of them are at the implementation phase.

### **11. What data-driven changes have occurred over the past three years?**

In recent years, the Unit's main goal has been to institutionalize assessment procedures for unit program improvement. To accomplish this endeavor, the Unit has undertaken practical efforts to expand the collection and use of data for program improvement. As a result of data garnered during 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 academic years, several changes have been recommended and implemented; the following list summarize some of the improvement measures instituted as a result of assessment efforts:

- a. The institutionalization of Program Assessment Committees and a Unit Assessment Committee that assume the responsibility of coordinating the collection and dissemination of assessment data
- b. The development of program assessment work-plans to guide and ensure that responsibilities and assessment tasks are carried out according to plan
- c. The scheduling of Unit faculty meetings during the course of each semester; these meetings are intended to share data and, follow up, adjustment, and developing of strategies aimed at upgrading Program and Unit operations and improving overall academic performance
- d. The scheduling of annual meetings with Department chairpersons in order to disseminate assessment data, receive feedback, and coordinate improvement efforts
- e. Annual One-day Unit Faculty Retreat for collaboratively setting goals, planning, data sharing, analysis, and decision making
- f. The development of assessment instruments for the collection of specific information and that can lead to program improvements
- g. The revision of syllabi so that Unit and SPA standards are reflected and appropriately aligned to course goals and objectives
- h. The involvement of candidates in the overall assessment effort by incorporating candidates' representatives into the assessment committees
- i. Use of the Unit's web-page to share and disseminate data and information, as well as receive feedback from candidates, faculty, and all stakeholders

### **12. What access do faculty members have to candidate assessment data and/or data systems?**

The faculty has two forms of direct access to candidate assessment data and the data assessment system. First, a hands on approach where the faculty can aggregate course assessment and candidate dispositions and program data at UPRAg unit Program portal for review and application to the courses they teach and to candidate student teaching. Faculty members form an essential role as evaluators in all programs in which they are instructors and have access to candidate data or the data system. Faculty is free to request assessment data from the Program

Director and research data from the Office of Planning and Investigation (OPEI). The requested data are delivered to faculty via email or hard copy, according to faculty preference. In addition, faculty also access data when they participate in assessment meetings, assessment workshops, and dissemination of assessment information activities. At that time, they may initiate data-driven changes by following established unit procedures described in section C of this report.

Second, the faculty have access to candidate assessment data through reports that include data on pre-student teaching and student teaching evaluations, course grades, licensure scores (PCMAS), and candidate completion surveys, and employer satisfaction surveys. In addition, they can request approval to access PCMAS comparative reports. They also have access to annual reports prepared by department heads, dean of students, dean of academic affairs, dean of administration, and the chancellor's annual report, as well as the research data provided by OPEI for the university, and unit and program -wide Assessment Committee Reports. These reports are posted online through institutional web-pages.

**13. How are assessment data shared with candidates, faculty, and other stakeholders to help them reflect on, and improve their performance and programs?**

Assessment data are shared with candidates, faculty and other stakeholders through a variety of meetings, reports, and presentations throughout each academic year. Faculty, candidates, and administrative personnel are informed of the Unit Program performances. Assessment data and reports on all candidate and program requirements are disseminated in orientation and planning sessions each semester. Additionally, the program directors schedule meetings with individual candidates to discuss issues of personal improvement.

Other meetings are scheduled to provide enhanced opportunities to learn about and provide input to program updates and changes. Faculty and Assessment Committee meetings are the primary settings in which candidate and program data are reviewed and used. Each semester, reports are provided to the teacher education faculty; reports on candidates and the program is presented for discussion and feedback. At these meetings, faculty, candidates, and others are engaged in a review of candidate status, program status, and other data for the purpose of identifying needed changes for improvement.

The unit publishes and makes available assessment data results to the professional community by means of bulletin boards, annual reports, assessment reports, candidates' orientations, meetings, and faculty retreats, workshops, dialogues, and courses offered to teachers. Examples of these are: dissemination of data and reports of candidate and program performance and achievements at faculty meetings, Academic Senate and Administrative Board meetings, workshops for cooperating teachers, bulletin boards, and in the institutional web-page (<http://www.uprag.edu>).

**Conclusion**

The assessment system described in the previous paragraphs represents the effort that PPM-UPRAG has made to develop and incorporate a culture of systematic assessment as an integral part of programmatic improvement and review. This endeavor is still in its initial stages but, it has the potential to impact students and faculty administrators in a positive and productive route that will lead to improvement and eventual excellence. Adjustments and necessary changes in the teacher preparation program will be enacted as a result the assessment system that has been instituted.

However, it must be noted that in order for assessment plans to be effective, all stakeholders must work collaboratively to develop strategies that fit with the mission and goals set by the institution. Moreover, stakeholders must strive to establish the essential correspondence and practical alignment of the institutional mission and goal to the professional standards set by program's accrediting associations. The faculty and administrators at UPRAG are well, aware of the fact reliable assessment systems take years to enact and perfect. Thus, it is hoped that the system outlined in this manual will serve as an initial guide toward the implementation of a successful assessment system that will lead to academic excellence.

**References**

- ACEI: Association for Childhood Education International.* - <http://www.acei.org/>
- TESOL: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.* - <http://www.tesol.org/>
- NCATE: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.* - <http://www.ncate.org/>
- Conceptual Framework of the Teachers' Preparation Program* (2008). - <http://ncate.uprag.edu>
- Program Report for the Preparation of Elementary School Teachers Association for Childhood Education International* (2008). <http://ncate.uprag.edu>
- Program Report for the Preparation of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages* (2008). - <http://ncate.uprag.edu>
- UPRAG Institutional Report: Teacher Preparation Program* (2010). - <http://ncate.uprag.edu>
- Manual de Orientación y Procedimiento para la Práctica Docente: UPR-Aguadilla* (Spanish Version) (2008) - <http://ncate.uprag.edu>
- Practice Teaching Orientation and Procedures Manual: UPR-Aguadilla.* (English Version) (2010) - <http://ncate.uprag.edu>

## **APPENDIXES**

Appendix A: Assessment System Data and Information

Appendix B: Key Assessments

Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

## Appendix A: Assessment System Data and Information

The following exhibits form part of the assessment process of the UPR-Aguadilla's Teacher Preparation Program. They can be accessed by holding down the <CTRL key> and pressing <ENTER>

1. [Figure 5: PPM-UPRag Candidates Proficiencies Assessment System Model](#)
2. [Exhibit 2a.1: PPM-UPRag Teacher Candidates Proficiencies-Standards Alignment Matrix](#)
3. [Exhibit 2b.3c: UPR Board of Trustees Certification 32-2005-2006](#)
4. [Exhibit 1a.4c: Employers' Questionnaire](#)
5. [Exhibit 3b.5a: DEPR Circular Letter 10-2004-05](#)
6. [Exhibit 3c.1: Clinical Practice Admissions and Completion Rates](#)
7. [Exhibit 4a.3: Description of Key Assessments for Diversity](#)
8. [Exhibit 4b.5: UPRag Teaching Personnel Non-Puerto Rican](#)
9. [Exhibit 4c.3a: Demographic Profile of the PPM-UPRag Candidate](#)
10. [Exhibit 4c.3b: Data about Incoming First-Generation Candidates of the PPM-UPRag](#)
11. [Exhibit 4d.1: Cooperating Teachers Qualifications Summary](#)
12. [Exhibit 5a.3a: DEPR Circular Letter 10-2004-05](#)
13. [Exhibit 5a.3b: Preparation and licenses of cooperating teachers](#)
14. [Exhibit 5d.2: Professional Associations](#)
15. [Exhibit 6a.1: Institutional Organization Chart](#)
16. [Exhibit 6a.4: Faculty Course Load](#)
17. [Exhibit 6a.5: PPM-UPRag committees](#)
18. [Exhibit 6c.3a: Certification 2000-2001-110 UPRag Administrative Board](#)
19. [Exhibit 6c.3b: Faculty Scholarship Summary](#)
20. [Exhibit 6c.3c: Course Load](#)

## **Appendix B: Key Assessments**

The following key assessment instruments form part of the assessment process. These instruments are used to determine candidate, program, or unit performance.

### **Spanish Version**

1. Evaluación del desempeño del candidato en la sala de clase
2. Formulario para la evaluación final del estudiante maestro
3. Planificación diaria de una lección
4. Evaluación de ejecución en la sala de clase (FEPEI)
5. Informe Escrito
6. Observaciones en la sala de clase (Experiencias de Campo) - FEOI
7. Muestra de trabajo del candidato (TWS)
8. Manual de Proyecto Orientado hacia la Investigación - Acción

### **English Version**

1. Student Teaching Evaluation
2. Candidate Final Evaluation Form
3. Daily Lesson Plan
4. Classroom Performance Evaluation (FEPEI)
5. Writing Report
6. Classroom Observation (Field Experience) - FEOI
7. Teacher Work Sample
8. Electronic Portfolio
9. Individual Oral Report
10. The Essay
11. Action Research Oriented Project

## Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

The following terms have been adopted from National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) website: [www.ncate.org/documents](http://www.ncate.org/documents). To review other terms and concepts related to assessment or NCATE, visit the organization's website.

**Accreditation:** A process for assessing and enhancing academic and educational quality through voluntary peer review. NCATE accreditation informs the public that an institution has a professional education unit that has met state, professional, and institutional standards of educational quality.

**Assessment:** An evaluated activity or task used by a program or unit to determine the extent to which specific learning proficiencies, outcomes, or standards have been mastered by candidates. Assessments usually include an instrument that details the task or activity and a scoring guide used to evaluate the task or activity.

**Assessment Data:** Quantified information communicating the results of an evaluative activity or task designed to determine the extent to which candidates meet specific learning proficiencies, outcomes, or standards.

**Assessment System:** A comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures that provide information for use in monitoring candidate performance and managing and improving unit operations and programs for the preparation of professional educators.

**Candidate Performance Data:** Information derived from assessments of candidate proficiencies, in areas of teaching and effects on student learning, candidate knowledge, and dispositions. Candidate performance data may be derived from a wide variety of sources, such as projects, essays or tests demonstrating subject content mastery; employer evaluations; state licensure tests; and mentoring year “portfolios” as well as assessments, projects, reflections, clinical observations, and other evidence of pedagogical and professional teaching proficiencies.

**Candidates:** Individuals admitted to, or enrolled in, programs for the initial or advanced preparation of teachers, teachers continuing their professional development, or other professional school personnel. Candidates are distinguished from “students” in P-12 schools.

**Certification:** The process by which a nongovernmental agency or association grants professional recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications specified by that agency or association.

**Clinical Practice:** Student teaching or internships that provide candidates with an intensive and extensive culminating activity. Candidates are immersed in the learning community and are provided opportunities to develop and demonstrate competence in the professional roles for which they are preparing.

**Conceptual Framework:** An underlying structure in a professional education unit that gives conceptual meanings through an articulated rationale to the unit's operation, and provides

direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, faculty scholarship and service, and unit accountability.

**Content:** The subject matter or discipline that teachers are being prepared to teach at the elementary, middle level, and/or secondary levels. Content also refers to the professional field of study (e.g., special education, early childhood, school psychology, reading, or school administration).

**Curriculum:** Courses, experiences, and assessments necessary to prepare candidates to teach or work with students at a specific age level and/or to teach a specific subject area.

**Dispositions:** The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. For example, they might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment.

**Diversity:** Differences among groups of people and individuals based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, language, exceptionalities, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic region in which they live.

**Field Experiences:** Field-based opportunities, in which candidates observe, assist, tutor, instruct, and/or conduct research. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings such as schools, community centers.

**Institutional Standards:** The unit's declaration of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of candidates preparing to teach or do other work in schools. The institutional standards should identify candidate proficiencies and be reflected in the unit's conceptual framework.

**Key Program Assessments:** The six to eight required assessments used by a program to demonstrate candidate mastery of the professional standards.

**Licensure Exam:** A standardized test administered by state authorities in order to determine that an individual has met certain qualifications specified by the state and is, therefore, approved to practice in an occupation as a professional. (Some state agencies call their licenses certificates or credentials.)

**Performance Assessment:** A comprehensive assessment through which candidates demonstrate their proficiencies in subject, professional, and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions, including their abilities to have positive effects on student learning.

**Performance Criteria:** Descriptions or rubrics that specify qualities or levels of candidate proficiency that are used to evaluate candidate performance.

**Professional Development:** Opportunities for *education faculty* to develop new knowledge and skills through in-service education, conference attendance, or sabbatical leave.

**Program:** A planned sequence of courses and experiences leading to a degree or recommendation for a state license.

**Rubrics:** An assessment instrument written for judging performance and indicating the qualities, levels of performance, and judgments about the degree of success of a candidate's performance on a specific activity.

**SPAs: Specialized Professional Associations:** The national organizations that represent teachers, professional education faculty, and other school personnel who teach a specific subject matter (e.g., mathematics, social studies, bilingual education, or special education). Many of these associations are constituent members of NCATE and have standards for both students in schools and candidates preparing to work in schools.

**Standards:** The declaration of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of candidates preparing to teach or do other work in schools. The standards should identify candidate proficiencies and be reflected in the unit's conceptual framework.

**Unit:** The college, school, department, or other administrative body with the responsibility for managing or coordinating all programs offered for the initial and advanced preparation of teachers and other school personnel, regardless of where these programs are administratively housed.

**Unit Operations:** Activities undertaken by the unit pertaining to governance, planning, budget, personnel, facilities, services and procedures such as advising and admission, and resources that support the unit's mission in preparing candidates.