



August 31, 2006

Ms. Jean Avnet Morse
Executive Director
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Dear Ms. Morse:

We have read the fiscal and general analyses of our Periodic Review Report (PRR). The Review Report was prepared by Dr. David H. Buchanan, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Salisbury University, in consultation with Dr. Anthony J. Garro, Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs at Herbert H. Lehman College – CUNY.

We are in general agreement with Dr. Buchanan's report. It is a good synthesis of our own findings, as reported in our PRR and Self-Study. This notwithstanding, we would like to address two themes which were highlighted: Our capacity to respond to enrollment growth demand in light of a slow-growing budget for the following years, and the extension of our outcomes assessment efforts.

As pointed out in Dr. Buchanan's review, our funds are mostly from state appropriations and, because of a contracting Puerto Rican economy, we have been facing budgetary pressures. Hence, we have decided not to increase enrollment for the following years or to do so only marginally. The report expresses some concern as to how the public will respond to this policy. First, this is not an inflexible position. If additional income becomes available we will be open to meet increased demand, should it occur. Second, we believe the public will understand that enrollment levels must be kept in line with available resources. As stated in the Review Report, given our situation "this makes budgetary sense."

Assessment of student learning was also mentioned as an area where more has to be done. In particular, the report states the need to ensure that the effort is not limited to some departments, but rather that all disciplines be covered as well as General Education. We agree. In fact, our new Strategic Plan calls for such overall attention in objective 1.1, and in objective 1.2, it stresses assessment through external accreditation requirements for some programs:

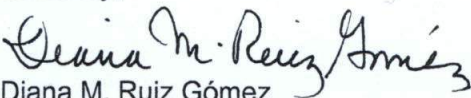
- 1.1 *Continuous improvement of programs will be assured through systematic assessment, so that:*
 - *All academic programs will be submitted to formative assessment activities each year, placing emphasis on student learning outcomes.*
 - *A five-year formal comprehensive assessment/revision schedule will continue to be enforced.*
 - *General Education will be appropriately integrated*

- 1.2 *Obtain external professional accreditation for the following bachelor's degree programs:*
 - *Education (all variants)*
 - *Business Administration (all variants)*
 - *Electronics Engineering Technology*

(Note: external accreditation enforces assessment)

We are committed to these objectives and will work effectively towards their fulfillment.

Sincerely,



Diana M. Ruiz Gómez
Acting Chancellor

