

University of Puerto Rico will only recruit PhD's ^[1]

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By Cynthia López Cabán / End.cynthia.lopez@elnuevodia.com ^[2] endi.com As of next August, the University of Puerto Rico will recruit only professors who have a doctoral degree, informed Antonio Garcia Padilla, president of the institution. The measurement, that was unanimously approved last Thursday in an extraordinary session of the Board of Trustees - is prospective- which means that it will not affect the group of permanent professors of the public university system. At the moment the UPR has 2,338 (46%) professors who have a doctoral degree, while 2,632 (52%) have masters. The vice-president for academic affairs of the UPR, Celeste Freytes González, explained that the decision comprises of the Plan de Diez para Década, a planning document of the institution that promotes the excellence and quality in the academic programs of the system that is made up of 11 campuses. "One of the characteristics of great programs is that they have professors with doctoral degrees and resources", she said in an interview with El Nuevo Dia. The determination also looks to fulfill the professional accreditations requirements for some programs like computer sciences, business administration, and chemistry. However, the temporary spokesman of the Confederation of Associations of University Professors (CONAPU), Javier Córdova, understands that the determination responds to economic motivations. "The move is more to save money that for academic excellence", pointed the university professor. He explained that now the university administration can shield itself under the requirement of the doctorate, and refrain from granting seats with marginal benefits. "It is a form to fortify hiring by means of contracts for service, which has increased in the last few years", affirmed the professor of the UPR in Arecibo. Córdova favored the requirement, as long as, it is not used as excuse to advance another agenda. He also said that the measure would be almost impossible to implement in areas of difficult recruitment like in computational sciences, mathematics and business administration. In order to take care of this situation, an exception in the measure from the Board of Trustees was included. According to Freytes, it is provided so that in the areas of difficult recruitment a substitute appointment can be made, a temporary person or someone who is pursuing the doctoral degree.

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