

EVANGELICAL SEMINARY OF PUERTO RICO
776 Ponce de León Avenue
San Juan, PR, 00925

MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER
EDUCATION SELF-STUDY 2025-2026 REPORT



DRAFT

MSCHE SELF-STUDY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (SEPR or Seminario) is a non-profit, private, academic graduate educational institution in San Juan, Puerto Rico. It was established on September 11, 1919, to provide theological education, foster the development of pastoral leadership and the growth of faith within the Protestant tradition, and provide an academic space for reflection, fellowship, and spiritual growth for men and women who serve in various ministerial contexts.

SEPR originated from the fusion of four theological institutes in different parts of Puerto Rico. These theological institutes represent the main protestant denominations on the island: the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA), the American Baptist Churches (ABCUSA), the United Methodist Church, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Today, the Institution is sponsored and supported by the original four denominations of the evangelical-reformed tradition on the island and their respective counterparts in the United States: the Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico and the American Baptist Churches USA; The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of the Puerto Rico and the Christian Church Disciples of Christ in USA and Canada; the United Methodist Church in the USA; the Synod Borikén of Puerto Rico (PCUSA) and the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA); Iglesia Evangélica Unida en Puerto Rico and the United Church of Christ; and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Furthermore, the Seminario is the primary institution for pastoral and theological education and formation for other Pentecostal, Catholic, and independent denominations, preparing prospective candidates for pastoral ministry and lay leaders for leadership positions. Our student community comes from all regions of Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and Hispanic communities in the United States.

Vision, Mission, Values, and Institutional Goals Statement

Vision

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico will continue to be the primary teaching center for advanced studies of the Bible, Theology, and Practical Theology in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, and as one of the leading centers of theological studies in Central America and the US Hispanic community.

Mission

The Mission of Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico is to contribute to the integral formation of pastoral and lay leadership to serve in Christian ministries and participate in the Mission of the people of God in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, the United States of America, the Americas, and the world in an ecumenical, interreligious, and social context.

Values

Values keep the SEPR and its members on track. They guide strategic planning processes, decision-making, and day-to-day behavior. Grounded in organizational culture, everyone must live and demonstrate institutional values daily.

Along with the Mission, values are part of the strategic foundations of the Strategic Plan. Values are not future aspirations or what we want to be. They are our present and our guide. Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico is committed to fostering the following values in its primary stakeholders and students, faculty, and staff:

- *Community and Social System.* Wisdom, credibility, sensitivity, Christian commitment, administrative excellence, respect for life and nature, fostering inclusion, passion for justice and peace.
- *Students and Fellowship of Churches.* Academic and ministerial leadership, professionalism, relevance, consecration, spirit of service, and good witness.
- *Staff, Faculty, Administrators, and Collaborators.* Respect, integrity, camaraderie, motivation, participation, professionalism, transparency, dialogue, understanding, and loyalty.
- *All of them.* Prophetic commitment, solidarity, vocation of service, pastoral care, respect for dignity, quality, spirit of faith, love, and hope that encourages ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.

These values point to the ethical training that SEPR hopes to model as the central axis of the learning component. The dimensions of learning should reflect the integration of these values to produce knowledge and practices appropriate for Christian ministry.

Institutional Goals

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico carries out strategic planning with the entire institution community's active participation. As part of this planning exercise, the Institution analyzes its Mission, Vision, goals, and values to validate the alignment between the Strategic Plan (SP) and the Institutional Goals (IG). The Institutional Goals are:

- Forge pastoral and lay leaders involved in transforming society through innovative and relevant ministries for their congregations and communities.
- Accompany the student community in its spiritual, personal, social, academic, and professional development and growth, and to identify and respond to the continuing education needs of graduates and cooperating churches.
- Promote quality, contextuality, globalization, agility, and innovation in its programs from a critical perspective and a praxis that affirms the lordship of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God.
- Work to maintain an organization, programs, physical facilities, and systems that enable us to respond quickly to a dynamic, changing, competitive world rich in information, challenges, and opportunities.

Alignment of Institutional Goals with the Institution's Plans

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico has implemented a comprehensive evaluation process of its strategic, institutional, technological, and physical facilities plans, aligned with the recommendations of the MSCHE. This process involves clearly defined indicators and metrics to

establish short- and long-term evaluation cycles that ensure the effectiveness of all institutional initiatives.

SEPR aligns its institutional goals with the plans to ensure their fulfillment. This process allows us to demonstrate through the achievement of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) the fulfillment of the Institutional Goals (IG) and the fulfillment of the Mission. SEPR carries out strategic planning with the entire university community's active participation. As part of this planning exercise, the Institution analyzed the Mission, Vision, and Institutional Goals to validate the alignment between the Strategic Plan and the Mission. By prioritizing leadership development, student growth, academic excellence, and organizational efficiency, SEPR is well-positioned to thrive in a dynamic and competitive environment.

The Strategic Plan (SP) outlines a comprehensive roadmap for continuous improvement, focusing on improving student development, updating academic offerings, improving teacher training, optimizing administrative processes, upgrading technology, and fostering social responsibility. SEPR aims to provide high-quality education and a positive impact through these efforts.

The Seminario's Institutional Development Plan (IDP) details our vision, mission, and goals. It outlines a comprehensive plan to improve human, physical, and technological resources to support teaching, learning, research, and community service. The IDP prioritizes faculty professional development, technological advancements, and maintaining high-quality standards through accreditation and licensing.

The Technology Plan (TP) aims to improve technology infrastructure over the next three years to support teaching, learning, research, assessment, and community service. Key initiatives include the acquisition of computer equipment, the purchase of MS Office 365 licenses, the optimization of wireless connectivity, the upgrade of library information systems; the integration of service areas through the *Populi* platform, the implementation of a Learning Management System (LMS); improving classroom facilities; installing library access systems; and installing solar panels for energy efficiency and resilience.

The Campus Master Plan (CMP) outlines areas for improvement for the SEPR, detailing specific projects aligned with institutional goals. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are essential to measure compliance and progress, as in the other plans.

Main Study Programs

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (SEPR) offers six degrees:

- Master in Divinity (MDiv)
- Master in Arts in Religion (MAR)
- Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (MABTS)
- Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation (MACEF)
- Master in Counseling Family, Couple, and Marriage (MCFCM)
- Doctor in Ministry in Pastoral Care of the Family (DMin)

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the Continuing Education Program (CEP) underwent a revitalization process following a review that expanded our Mission. SEPR offers seven certifications for the clergy and lay leadership in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean:

- Certificate in Feminist Theology (Basic Level)
- Certificate in Feminist Theology (Advanced Level)
- Certificate in Administration of Churches and Ecclesial Programs
- Certificate in Ministry with Youth
- Certificate in Mission and Interculturality (Basic Level) (in collaboration with the Baptist Churches of PR).
- Certificate in Inclusion of the Elderly in Faith Communities
- Certificate in Intergenerational Pastoral Care
- Certificate in Christian Education for Children with a focus on spirituality and inclusion of special needs (In process)

In general, from the 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 academic year, we offered 7,566 contact hours of Continuing Education Programs (CEP) with 309 participants (duplicates). For these academic years, total revenue was \$77,600, exceeding our expectations. Thanks to Pathways for Tomorrow Praxis and [unclear], our certification programs will be redesigned, including the development of online resources to benefit participants. This online CEP offering will undoubtedly continue to generate new revenue for the institution.’

Student Enrollment Characteristics

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (SEPR) currently has an enrollment of 148 students. This number does not include audit or special students. If these students are added, the total enrollment is projected to be 216 by March 31, 2026. The distribution of students by program aligns with the overall enrollment breakdown by program. Below is a comparative table showing enrollment over the past five years, along with future projections.

Table 1: Student enrollment by degrees-unduplicated enrollment

Academic Year	#Total Students (Unduplicated)	Programs						
		MDIV	MAR	MABTS	MACEF	MCFCM	DMIN	Other
2025-2026	148	90	3	18	2	9	19	7
2024-2025	162	85	3	25	1	10	25	13
2023-2024	146	94	5	21	1	7	18	0
2022-2023	139	99	9	16	1	0	14	0
2021-2022	157	115	15	7	0	0	14	6
2020-2021	174	135	16	0	0	0	7	16
2019-2020	165	145	14	0	0	0	1	5

Table 2: Enrollment of audit student-unduplicated

Academic Year	# <i>Total-Audit Student</i>
2025-2026	68
2024-2025	56
2023-2024	61
2022-2023	80
2021-2022	67
2020-2021	65
2019-2020	50

Educational Effectiveness

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico engages ongoing evaluation of its educational effectiveness, which is measured through: 1) graduation rates, 2) persistence rate

1. *Master in Divinity (MDIV)*

- Graduation Rates 2023-2024: Enrolled (38), 66%.
- Graduation Rates 2024-2025: Enrolled (37), 54%.
- Persistence Rates 2023-2024: 71%.
- Persistence Rates 2024-2025: 57%.

2. *Master of Arts in Religion (MAR)*

- Graduation Rates 2023-2024: Enrolled (3), 67%.
- Persistence Rates 2023-2024: 67%.

Strategies in place to strengthen enrollment

Academics

SEPR has developed a comprehensive promotion, recruitment, admission, and retention plan to enhance enrollment.

- Ensure applicants' academic profiles match the educational expectations of each program.
- Ensure recruited and admitted students receive support services from all five (5) model areas.
- Provide students with opportunities for university community integration.
- Provide a link between the recruitment, admission, and retention offices to offer follow-up to students throughout their years of study.
- Identify prospective students at conventions of our sponsor denominations.
- Serve as intermediaries between the SEPR and sponsoring leaders to include constant promotion of SEPR academic programs.

- In August 2020, the MAR program's curriculum was revised, reducing it from 54 credits to 39.
- Additionally, during 2021-2022, new master's programs were introduced, including the Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies and the Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation
- In 2023, the Master's in Counseling Family, Couple and Marriage was developed. Likewise, SEPR submitted the substantive change to the MSCHE to offer courses in the online modality and serve a population outside the geographical limits of PR.
- In addition, certificates in the Continuing Education Program (CEP) are being developed.
- In August 2023, the MDiv program's curriculum was revised, reducing it from 83 credits to 75, with the purpose of increasing retention.
- In January 2023 the institution began renovating the physical facilities and improving technological and audiovisual resources to strengthen the teaching-learning process and increase access to academic databases in the library.

Administrative

- In the administrative process, integrating the *Populi* platform has made it possible to facilitate and integrate the student management system (SIS) and the management of LMS.
- Strengthening student services, an Institutional Development Coordinator was appointed, whose function is to seek external funds to strengthen the scholarship program.
- As part of the student services, a collaborative agreement (MOU) was made with Carlos Albizu University to provide psychotherapeutic support services to students and the community.
- The cafeteria was established to provide food service to students and the surrounding community.

Professional Board

SEPR has only one academic program that requires graduates to take a board to practice their profession (Master in Counseling Family, Couple and Marriage). The Counseling Program is currently in its second year and, as such, has not yet produced a cohort of graduates who have completed their degrees. The first admission cohort to this program will graduate by the end of 2025-2026. An Integrative Seminar is scheduled before graduation, including a pre and post-test. The Examining Board of Professional Counselors is responsible for administering the qualifying test that measures the knowledge and competencies established by law. The exam is one of the requirements for obtaining a license in this profession. The National Board for Certified Counselors prepares for the Professional Counselor Board exam, which is administered through a computerized system.

Faculty

SEPR has a faculty of four full-time, three Emeritus, and nineteen adjunct professors. The Faculty Ratio 2025-2026 is 7:1.

Financial Situation

SEPR has adequate financial resources to support its mission and goals. It also has the resources to ensure the continuity of academic programs and guarantee institutional operation in the coming years.

Table 3: Statements of Financial Position – Comparative Five (5) Years vs FY2019.

YEARS AUDITED						
	FY2024	FY2023	FY2022	FY2021	FY2020	FY2019
TOTAL ASSETS	\$4,996,257	\$4,617,416	\$3,925,567	\$3,355,647	\$3,226,236	\$3,463,466
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$1,353,394	\$920,026	\$1,129,396	\$1,151,793	\$1,207,523	\$1,301,802
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$3,642,863	\$3,697,390	\$2,796,171	\$2,203,854	\$2,018,713	\$2,161,664
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$4,996,257	\$4,617,416	\$3,925,567	\$3,355,647	\$3,226,236	\$3,463,466

Table 6.5: Amended Budget 2025, Current Budget 2026, and Variance 2025 vs 2026.

		BUDGET 2025	AMENDED BUDGET 2025	BUDGET 2026	VARIANCE 2025 VS 2026
Revenues					
	Total Mission Boards	179,500	182,000	185,000	1.6%
	Total Cooperating Churches-PR	126,500	130,000	130,000	0%
	Total Other Churches in the USA	19,700	19,700	20,200	2.5%
	Total Internal Sources	977,580	1,015,380	1,030,125	1%
	Total Other Donations	50,500	50,500	57,125	13%
Total Revenues		\$1,353,780	\$1,397,580	\$1,422,450	1.8%
Expenses					
	Academic & Institutional Assessment Office	521,743	513,943	557,386	8.5%
	Total Library	118,773	115,651	120,926	4.5%
	Total Education Support	214,747	214,747	219,323	2%
	Maintenance and Properties	99,717	99,717	99,717	0%
	Total Utilities	89,750	119,750	124,875	4%
	Finance	105,025	105,025	105,025	0%
	Presidential and Development Office	134,804	145,904	145,904	0%

	Total Capital Expenses	42,500	42,500	42,210	-1%
	Total Expenses	\$1,327,059	\$1,357,237	\$1,415,365	4.2%
	Net Income (Loss)	\$26,721	\$40,345	\$7,085	-82%
	Total Restricted Funds	990,929	1,877,686	847,817	-55%
	Total Restricted Expenses	990,929	1,877,686	847,817	-55%
	Net Balance Restricted Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	
	Net Income (Loss) After Restricted	\$26,721	\$40,345	\$7,085	-82%

The budget requested by the Institution and approved by the Board of Directors for Fiscal Year FY2026 is \$1,422,450. In preparing the annual budget, we considered the needs of various departments, including the Presidency, the Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, the Library, General Services, and Finance, along with their respective divisions

SEPR's financial status has shown a positive trend over the past five years. The total assets have increased from \$3,463,466 in 2019 to \$4,996,257 in 2024. This indicates a growth in the institution's financial resources, a positive sign of financial stability and growth.

Total liabilities increased from \$1,301,802 in 2019 to \$1,353,394 in 2024 (4%). The change is the result of expenses incurred on proposals acquired in the last two years. In 2023 the liabilities decreased to \$920,026. That financial position suggests that SEPR has been successfully managed. This decline in liabilities indicates that SEPR has effectively managed its debt and obligations, resulting in a stronger financial position.

Overall, SEPR's financial analysis shows a positive trend in its financial position and budget. The institution has successfully increased its assets, managed its liabilities, and generated surplus funds. The projected increase in revenues and expenses for 2025 indicates that SEPR plans to invest more in its operations, which could lead to further growth and improvements.

SWOT Analysis

The following points emerged during the SEPR Strategic Plan 2024-2029 and the Institutional Priorities discussions and must be carefully reviewed and supported by Working Group 6: Standard VI Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement.

Strengths

- Development of new academic programs and the adoption of distance education to attract more students.
- Successful acquisition of substantial external funds and subsidies.
- Remodeling and renting out properties and facilities to increase income.
- Diversification of income streams through new initiatives like the recording and podcast room.
- Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, enhancing institutional reputation and appeal.

Weaknesses

- Dependence on external funds and subsidies may not be sustainable in the long term.
- Financial sustainability concerns leading to ATS probation status.
- There are few administrative personnel and a lack of technical skills among the stakeholders.

Opportunities

- Further development and promotion of distance education programs to reach a broader audience.
- Exploration of additional grant opportunities and collaborations with other institutions.
- Enhancing the rental income from properties and specialized facilities.

Threats

- Great uncertainty in the higher education scenario.
- Potential difficulty in securing consistent external funding.
- Economic challenges that could affect donation levels and grant availability.
- Compliance and accreditation risk due to financial sustainability concerns.

Recommendations suggested during Priorities Discussion

Strengthening Financial Planning and Management

- Implement robust financial planning processes, including multi-year budgeting and regular financial audits, to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Develop a comprehensive financial risk management strategy to mitigate potential funding shortfalls.

Diversify Income Streams

- Expand the use of institutional assets by promoting the rental of upgraded properties and specialized facilities.
- Explore additional revenue-generating activities, such as offering professional development courses, certifications, and continuing education programs.
- Increase marketing efforts for distance education programs to attract a broader student base, including international students.

Enhance Fundraising Efforts

- Strengthen relationships with existing donors and actively seek new potential donors and grant opportunities.
- Leverage alumni networks and community partnerships to support fundraising initiatives.

- Develop targeted fundraising campaigns for specific projects and needs, clearly communicating the institution's mission and impact.

Operational Efficiency Optimization:

- Developing skill-based reorganization and regularly reviewing and optimizing operational processes to reduce costs and enhance efficiency.
- Implement energy-saving measures and sustainable practices to reduce utility expenses and enhance environmental responsibility.
- Fostering a culture of continuous improvement:
 - To encourage innovation among stakeholders (faculty, staff, and students).
 - Provide professional development opportunities for staff and faculty to enhance skills to contribute to the institution's (or institutional) success.

Implementing these recommendations can enhance SEPR's financial position, decrease dependence on external funding, and support long-term sustainability while continuing to meet its mission and objectives.

INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES ADDRESSED IN THE SELF-STUDY

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (SEPR) identified four institutional priorities that will guide the Institution throughout the Self-Study Process. Priorities include increased student enrollment, financial stability, efficiency, sustainability, academic excellence, and new offerings.

Institutional Priority # 1 - Increase Student Enrollment

SEPR is committed to increasing student enrollment through a comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy, emphasizing academic programs that are relevant to prospective students. A vibrant student body is crucial for SEPR to fulfill its mission of theological education and formation. In today's changing religious landscape and competitive market, attracting and retaining students requires a proactive and strategic approach. Declining enrollment threatens long-term viability, impacting program quality, faculty retention, and the overall learning community, ultimately jeopardizing SEPR's ability to prepare future religious leaders.

Rationale: Increased student numbers are vital for:

- Building a dynamic learning community and expanding the seminary's reach.
- Supporting diverse programs, attracting qualified faculty, and enhancing instruction.
- Providing resources for programs, faculty, student support, and facilities.
- Enhancing visibility and attracting students, faculty, and donors.
- Equipping future religious leaders to serve evolving community needs.
- Fostering a vibrant learning environment and promoting relevant, high-quality offerings.
- Data can inform recruitment/retention strategies and ensure continuous improvement.

In short, prioritizing recruitment, retention, and relevant offerings is a strategic imperative for the seminary's mission, sustainability, and service to the church and community.

Institutional Priority # 2 - Financial Stability

SEPR is dedicated to ensuring the long-term sustainability of its theological education and missional formation. One of our key initiatives is a comprehensive economic development strategy aimed at securing financial stability and operational efficiency. This strategy focuses on diversifying income sources, reducing reliance on sponsoring denominations, and building a robust base of external, recurring support. Addressing the challenges SEPR faces, including limited tuition income, fluctuating donor contributions, and rising operational costs, is essential for our success.

Rationale: Financial stability is essential for:

- Providing resources for programs, faculty, students, facilities, and future investment.
- Supporting faculty development, curriculum updates, resources, and new program development.
- Offering affordable tuition and financial aid to a diverse student body.
- Maximizing resource impact through streamlined processes and cost-saving measures.
- Diversifying revenue, building endowment, and engaging in strategic financial planning.
- Exploring alternative revenue, enhancing community visibility, and creating partnerships.
- Maintaining public trust through sound financial practices and transparent reporting.

In short, prioritizing financial stability is essential for the seminary's mission, quality education, and service to its community. A strong financial foundation enables the formation of future leaders.

Institutional Priority # 3 - Academic Excellence

SEPR is committed to providing relevant theological education that bridges traditional and contemporary needs, as seen during the development of programs designed to meet the needs of denominations, the community, and the job market, with each program evaluated for internationalization potential. This balance of tradition and innovation is essential for preparing future religious leaders in today's interconnected world.

Rationale: Academic excellence is essential for:

- Offering programs that address contemporary challenges (social justice, interfaith dialogue, digital ministry).
- Attracting and retaining high-caliber students and faculty through strong programs and scholarships.
- Reaching diverse students through online, hybrid, and distance learning modalities.
- Developing cross-cultural understanding and a global mindset through internationalization efforts.
- Fostering innovative teaching, curriculum, and research to address contemporary issues.
- Equipping leaders for diverse contexts through intellectual, spiritual, and professional growth.

- Evidencing learning outcomes, program effectiveness, and alumni success.

In short, these priorities are strategic imperatives for the seminary's relevance, attracting quality individuals, and fulfilling its mission of preparing 21st-century leaders.

Institutional Priority # 4 – Organization Enhancement

SEPR and its continued commitment for excellence, needs a comprehensive transition to modern technologies. It entails faculty, administrative staff, and students in focal training. This strategy prioritizes staff and faculty technological skills to enhance organizational productivity, agility, and continuity. A cross-training program is needed to continuously address any personnel gaps identified in the skills assessment. This proactive approach is crucial in ensuring SEPR's continued relevance and impact in preparing and developing future leaders.

Rationale: Organizational Model Review is essential for:

- Optimizing structure and processes to achieve strategic goals.
- Aligning skill enhancement strategically with priorities.
- Integrative organizational skills design.
- Special focus on demonstrable learning outcomes.
- Promoting accountability and measurable skills.
- Using data to inform resource allocation and program development.
- Demonstrating organizational effectiveness.

In short, these priorities are a strategic investment in the seminary's future, enhancing effectiveness, improving learning, and ensuring continued relevance.

Integrating these institutional priorities into the MSCHE Self-Study will provide a structured framework for SEPR to assess its progress toward strategic objectives and ensure adherence to MSCHE standards.

SELF-STUDY INTENDED OUTCOMES

SEPR expects to obtain the following outcomes during the Self-Study process:

1. Continuous improvement and innovation are needed to ensure quality levels for constituents, the achievement of priorities, and our mission and goals.
2. Assess compliance with standards and use results to improve institutional processes by addressing the Institution's priorities, mission, vision, values, and institutional goals.
3. Engaging the institutional community in a transparent and inclusive self-assessment process by carefully analyzing various data sets, including disaggregated data, to ensure student support and achievement of institutional mission and goals.
4. Ascertain SEPR's compliance with sustainable evidence through self-study, aiming to uphold the institutional commitment to continuous improvement, demonstrating adherence and compliance to MSCHE Standards and Accreditation and Affiliation Requirements.

5. Notify the entire community via the website, institutional platform, and social media about SEPR's compliance with accreditation standards and licenses.

STANDARD I

Mission and Goals

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

Introduction

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (SEPR) is a non-profit, private, ecumenical graduate institution located in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The Seminario offers graduate studies programs in theology, religion, pastoral ministry, and professional counseling. It was established on September 11, 1919, with the purpose of offering theological education, developing pastoral leadership, and promoting growth in the Christian faith from a protestant perspective. Its purpose is to create an academic environment for theological reflection, camaraderie, and spiritual growth for the men and women who serve within diverse ministry contexts. Currently, the academic offering has been expanded to make it attractive to people of other denominations, including non-denominational churches, non-Protestant or non-Reformed faiths, and, in the case of the Master's in Counseling, to a secular audience.

The Institution is sponsored and supported by six historical denominations and their respective partners in the United States. Currently, the Seminary offers six degrees:

1. Master in Divinity (MDiv) confers the opportunity of theological education to men and women whose vocational goal is to serve in the ordained ministry (Appendix 1.1 - Curriculum).
2. Master in Arts in Religion (MAR) for men and women interested in analyzing the religious experience from an interdisciplinary perspective and who are interested in serving in a variety of educational institutions (Appendix 1.2, Curriculum).
3. Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation (MACEF), aimed to develop lay people and church leaders interested in specializing in the areas of Christian education, formation processes, and educational leadership. (Appendix 1.3, Curriculum).
4. Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (MABTS) focused on comprehensive development for lay people and church leadership in the areas of Biblical Studies and theology. (Appendix 1.4, Curriculum).
5. Master in Counseling Family, Couples, and Marriage (MCFCM), a program focused on professional counseling. (Appendix 1.5, Curriculum).
6. Doctor in Ministry (DMin) degree, that challenges clergy to be more intentional and faithful in their leadership within congregations and other institutions (Appendix 1.6, Curriculum).). The SEPR has contributed to the development and growth of protestant churches on the island, working to create leaders with an elevated sense of ecclesiastical responsibility and fidelity to God. Our ministry strives for theological and pastoral academic excellence.

The Seminary has 4 full-time professors, biblical scholars and theologians. Full-time positions include a library director, an acting Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, Coordinators of Counseling and DMin program, and 19 adjunct professors.

As mentioned in the previous self-study in 2019, the Seminary was affected by the devastation left by the passing of two hurricanes in 2017. Thanks to the commitment and dedication of its staff, students, and supporting religious communities on the Island and abroad, we were still able to resume and fulfill our academic calendar and continue with major repairs and permanent improvements to maintain our facilities in optimal conditions and fully operational for our community.

Mission, Values and Goals

On March 30, 2019, after a self-assessment process, the Board of Directors adopted a revised version of the mission of the SEPR as recommended by the Self-Study Group and the Faculty in a unanimous decision. The statement of mission, values, and goals constitutes an updated and valid representation of the collective vision of institutional purpose and role in a changing society that faces increasing national and global challenges (Appendix 1.7, Strategic Plan 2024-2029 & Appendix 1.8 Institutional Catalog).

SEPR mission is to contribute to the integral formation of pastoral and lay leaders to serve in Christian ministries and participate in God's people mission in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, the United States of America, the Americas, and in the world in an ecumenical, interreligious, and social context.

Our goals are the following:

- Equip pastoral and lay leaders involved in the transformation of society through ministries that are innovative and relevant to their congregations and communities.
- Guide the student community in its development as well as in its spiritual, personal, social, academic, and professional growth, and identify and respond to the needs for continuing education of our alumni and supporting churches.
- Encourage the quality, contextuality, globalization, agility, and innovation of our programs, from a critical perspective and praxis. To achieve these goals, we must work to maintain an organization, programs, physical facilities, and systems that enable us to respond with agility to a dynamic, changing, and competitive world, rich in information, challenges, and opportunities, as well as to bear witness that affirm the realm of Christ and the kingdom of God.

In the pursuit of our mission and goals, our steps will be guided by the following values:

- With the community: wisdom, credibility, sensitivity, Christian commitment, administrative excellence, respect for life and nature, encouraging inclusion, passion for justice and peace.
- With students and the churches: Academic and ministerial leadership, professionalism, pertinence, dedication, spirit of service, and bearer of good testimony.
- With the personnel and collaborators: Respect, integrity, fellowship, motivation, participation, professionalism, transparency, dialogue, comprehension, understanding, and loyalty.

- With every person: Prophetic commitment, solidarity, service vocation, pastoral care, respect for the dignity, quality of faith and spirit, love and hope, promotion of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.

We aspire to represent excellence in response to the educational and development needs of the pastoral and lay leadership of the Church while affirming the significance of a transformative theological education. The mission, values and goals are clearly described and communicated through:

- Training and orientations for faculty members are held twice a year. (Appendix 1.9)
- Curricular offerings aligned with current Christian ministry needs, both theoretical and practical.
- Orientation to new admissions where the institution's mission, goals, values and administrative process are conveyed.
- Official website and social media platforms (See Official website and social media)
- Public displays on bulletin boards across campus. (Appendix 1.10)
- Dissemination of brochures. (Appendix 1.11)
- Co-curricular activities to support and strengthen mission. (Appendix 1.12)
- Religious and community engagement.
- Active participation of staff and faculty in congregations' worship service, denominational assemblies, book presentations (faculty and community authors), conferences, and symposiums, as well as on social media.

The approved mission, goals and values are disseminated throughout the community and stakeholders. The dissemination process continues as students, administrative and support staff, as well as faculty.

SEPR upholds the values and goals of its mission as the guiding principles for educational and administrative organization, as well as for its social engagement. The institution actively communicates its mission through multiple channels of religious and social media, engaging both its ecclesial community and the general public. Through its academic, ministerial, and ecumenical functions, the SEPR seeks to embody a public presence that is responsive to the social and ecclesiastical realities of Puerto Rican culture — including its transnational, multivocal, and pluralistic character. With a sustained focus on the church's ministry in both local and global contexts, the Seminario is committed to fostering academic, theological, and pastoral excellence through critical dialogue conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and intellectual openness.

Inclusiveness in the Process of Adoption of Mission

The Seminary revised its mission through a collaborative process that examined the changing needs of our churches and society, the transnational character of Puerto Rican communities expanding throughout the United States, and opportunities for alliances with seminaries in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. During the development of post-hurricane recovery funding proposals following hurricanes Irma and María, the Seminary conducted a SWOT analysis that informed the Self-Study Report. That analysis identified the following:

- Strengths: Centennial institution; interdenominational and ecumenical seminary; multiple accreditations; excellent, diverse, and socially committed faculty; leading theological library of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean; international networks; prime location; strong student and alumni commitment.
- Weaknesses: Faculty approaching retirement age; challenging hiring new faculty; need to maximize the information systems usage; expand student enrollment from part-time to full-time, and across the Caribbean.
- Opportunities: Strengthen relations with Puerto Rican and Latino diaspora in the United States; continue adding library holdings for international access and resources; strengthen collaborations with theological and professional counseling institutions within Puerto Rico and Latin-America; expand continuing education and distance learning programs.
- Threats: Puerto Rico's demographical issues; reduction in the birth rate and increase in aging population; challenging public policies.

Findings

- SEPR has clearly defined statements of mission, values, and goals, developed through a broad and collaborative institutional process.
- The Self-Study process identified the challenges and opportunities for future development of the institution.
- The community recognizes that SEPR's mission statement is a reliable instrument for decision-making and an evaluation tool for institutional performance.

Recommendations

- Annual reviews and evaluations assess the degree to which the Seminario's mission and objectives are effectively integrated into institutional operations.
- Develop strategies to ensure the consistent integration of the Seminario's mission and goals into curriculum development, administrative decision-making, and fundraising activities.

STANDARD II

Ethics and Integrity

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

The commitment of the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico to the ethical values that have defined its institutional character throughout its 106 years of service was reaffirmed. Evidence substantiating compliance with Standard II was presented in this report.

Institutional Commitment to Academic and Intellectual Freedom

At the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, ethics and integrity were upheld as foundational values and defining pillars of its educational mission. In all institutional activities, alignment was maintained between its mission, contractual obligations and commitments, adherence to established policies, and truthful self-representation. The institution's mission, vision, values, and institutional goals were articulated and codified in the following published documents: the Institutional Catalog (Appendix 2.1, Institutional Catalog), the Faculty Manual (Appendix 2.2, Faculty Manual), and the Student Manual (Appendix 2.3, Student Manual), all of which were approved by the institution's Board of Directors. A strong institutional commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression for all constituents was sustained throughout.

A clearly defined policy was established and sustained to safeguard faculty academic freedom to teach, conduct scholarly inquiry, and disseminate their findings within the boundaries of their respective disciplines, consistent with the institution's mission and standards of good practice. Intellectual property policies (Appendix 2.4, Intellectual property policies) were developed and implemented to ensure the protection of copyright for all institutional constituents, including faculty and students, in full compliance with applicable federal and commonwealth statutory provisions. Standards of academic integrity and ethical conduct were articulated in the Student Manual (Appendix 2.5, Student Manual) and integrated into the institutional regulatory framework. Clear operational definitions of plagiarism, academic fraud, and the inappropriate use of technology were explicitly codified therein to ensure transparency and institutional accountability. Moreover, a structured disciplinary process was established to ensure consistent and equitable communication of institutional expectations across the entire campus community, in a manner reflective of the institution's commitment to ethical behavior and integrity in all its operations.

A comprehensive orientation was provided to all students prior to the start of each academic term, with the objective of familiarizing them with institutional academic policies and the full range of resources available to them, in accordance with the institution's commitment to transparency and informed constituent participation. An environment of respect for the diversity of thought was cultivated and sustained, in which the free exchange of ideas and freedom of expression were actively promoted as core institutional values reflective of the seminary's educational mission. Faculty members were afforded the academic freedom to engage in scholarly research and pedagogical innovation within the parameters established by the institutional mission, consistent

with standards of good practice in higher education as defined by accrediting bodies. In a similar manner, students were encouraged and provided with structured opportunities for open dialogue and the sustained development of critical thinking skills within a respectful and intellectually rigorous academic environment.

Climate of Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion

A sustained institutional climate of respect, diversity, and inclusion was cultivated and maintained across all dimensions of organizational life at the SEPR. Institutional policies and practices were developed and implemented to ensure equitable treatment of all constituents, including faculty, students, and administrative staff, in a manner consistent with the institution's mission and its commitment to the inherent dignity of every person. Diversity of thought, background, and experience was recognized and affirmed as an institutional asset that enriches the academic community and strengthens the educational enterprise. Structural mechanisms were established to foster an inclusive campus environment wherein all members of the community were afforded equal access to institutional resources, opportunities, and participation in academic and co-curricular activities. The institution's commitment to these values was reflected in its published documents, curricular offerings, and institutional practices, demonstrating alignment between stated mission and operational reality in accordance with the standards of good practice established by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico was established and operated as an interdenominational institution wherein no single denomination or set of religious principles was favored over others, reflecting a deep institutional commitment to ecumenical collaboration among churches and denominational traditions (Appendix 2.6, Evidence of Religious Diversity Promotion Initiatives). Policies related to the prevention of discrimination, sexual misconduct, and unethical conduct were systematically disseminated among faculty, staff, and students, ensuring broad constituent awareness and institutional accountability in a manner consistent with the standards of good practice in higher education. (Appendix 2.7, Non-Discrimination Policy). The institution's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion was operationalized through structured training initiatives and the formal adoption (Appendix 2.8, DEI) and communication of institutional policies governing non-discrimination and inclusive practices across all dimensions of campus life (Appendix 2.9, Inclusive Language Workshop Training Records).

Grievance Policies and Fair Employment Practices

Transparency and accessibility in conflict resolution were ensured through the institution's formally established 'Procedure for the Investigation of Student Grievances' (Appendix 2.10) and the Employee Manual (Appendix 2.11), both of which were made publicly available on the institutional website at se-pr.edu, in a manner consistent with the institution's commitment to open and accountable governance. The Office of Human Resources was designated as the administrative unit responsible for managing procedures pertaining to the resolution of employment-related complaints, with the express purpose of guaranteeing impartial investigative processes for all institutional personnel, regardless of position or rank. These governing policies and procedures were developed and implemented to ensure that all claims and grievances were addressed in a fair, equitable, and timely manner, reflective of the institution's commitment to ethical conduct, integrity, and the protection of the rights of all constituents in accordance with the standards of

good practice established by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. (Appendix 2.12, Human Resources Grievance Resolution Procedures)

Specific procedures for the review of academic grades and other academic matters were delineated in the Student Manual (Appendix 2.3, Student Manual) and made systematically accessible to all enrolled students, ensuring clarity, consistency, and procedural transparency in the adjudication of academic concerns, consistent with the institution's commitment to fair and equitable treatment of all constituents. Formal institutional protocols were developed, adopted, and implemented to address reported instances of harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct, ensuring strict and documented compliance with applicable federal regulatory frameworks, including Title IX, as evidenced in the Annual Safety Report (Appendix 2.13, Annual Safety Report) filed pursuant to the Campus Security Act (Appendix 2.14, Campus Security Act). These ethical policies and compliance procedures were systematically enumerated and made publicly accessible through the institutional web portal Annual Safety Report, thereby reinforcing the institution's commitment to a safe campus environment and the rigorous maintenance of integrity standards across all organizational levels, in a manner reflective of good practice as defined by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The proactive and structured dissemination of these procedures through formally organized orientation sessions and training workshops for both students and personnel were documented and sustained, reaffirming the existence of robust institutional mechanisms for the ongoing cultivation and enforcement of ethical conduct throughout all dimensions of institutional life. (Appendix 2.15, Student and Personnel Orientation and Workshop Training Records).

Specific procedures for the review of academic grades and other academic matters were delineated in the Student Manual (Appendix 2.3, Student Manual) and made systematically accessible to all enrolled students, ensuring clarity, consistency, and procedural transparency in the adjudication of academic concerns, consistent with the institution's commitment to fair and equitable treatment of all constituents. Formal institutional protocols were developed, adopted, and implemented to address reported instances of harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct, ensuring strict and documented compliance with applicable federal regulatory frameworks, including Title IX, as evidenced in the Annual Safety Report (Appendix 2.13, Annual Safety Report) filed pursuant to the Campus Security Act (Appendix 2.14, Campus Security Act). These ethical policies and compliance procedures were systematically enumerated and made publicly accessible through the institutional web portal [insert policy repository link], thereby reinforcing the institution's commitment to a safe campus environment and the rigorous maintenance of integrity standards across all organizational levels, in a manner reflective of good practice as defined by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The proactive and structured dissemination of these procedures through formally organized orientation sessions and training workshops for both students and personnel was documented and sustained, reaffirming the existence of robust institutional mechanisms for the ongoing cultivation and enforcement of ethical conduct throughout all dimensions of institutional life.

Governance and Conflict of Interest Management

Institutional personnel at the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico were governed by a formally adopted Code of Ethics (Appendix 2.16, Code of Ethics) designed to ensure impartiality and transparency in all institutional decision-making processes, consistent with the institution's overarching commitment to ethical conduct and integrity in its operations. The Office of the President and Human Resources oversee compliance with established ethical policies, with a

special focus on preventing conflicts of interest in procurement activities and personnel hiring processes, thereby safeguarding the integrity and objectivity of institutional governance at all organizational levels. Members of the Board of Directors and all institutional employees were required to sign a formally adopted conflict of interest policy and were provided with structured orientation on its provisions and implications through the Office of Human Resources, ensuring broad constituent awareness and documented institutional accountability in a manner reflective of good practice as defined by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. (Appendix 2.17, Board of Directors Manual).

Truthful Communication, Accessibility, and Collaborative Relationships

A commitment to honest, clear, and truthful communication was upheld across all institutional communications and public representations of the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (Appendix 2.18 Communications Code of Ethics). All publications, promotional materials, recruitment communications, and digital platforms were maintained to ensure reliability, accuracy, and currency of information, consistent with the institution's obligation to transparent and ethical self-representation (Appendix 2.19. Admissions and Recruitment Promotional Materials). Information provided in admissions materials, institutional brochures, and official websites was verified to be precise and truthful, and all public relations communications were confirmed to accurately reflect the institution's mission, achievements, and opportunities, in full alignment with the standards of good practice established by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The Student Manual (Appendix 2.3, Student Manual) was utilized as a formal instrument for the transparent communication of ethical expectations and standards of academic integrity, ensuring that all members of the student community were provided with a clear and comprehensive institutional framework of reference from the point of their matriculation.

Respecting to institutional accreditation status, the SEPR was accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and held professional accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), licensure from the Puerto Rico Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP), and recognition from multiple denominational bodies. Documentation of all accreditation statuses was made publicly available on the institutional website. Institutional regulations, policy manuals, governance documents, and the organizational chart were systematically published and maintained on the institutional web portal. Furthermore, institutional information was disseminated through formally structured semi-annual meetings between the administration and the faculty, ensuring broad constituent awareness and reinforcing the institution's commitment to open, accountable, and participatory governance at all organizational levels.

Public statements issued by the SEPR affirmed and operationalized its commitment to its mission as an institution of higher education, with all institutional policies, support services, and programmatic offerings developed and aligned in furtherance of that mission. A continuous process of institutional reflection on the values of justice, equity, and inclusion was sustained, through which an inclusive community was consolidated that explicitly welcomed all persons and formally prohibited discrimination based on race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other protected characteristics. This commitment to social justice was manifested in concrete institutional actions, including the organization of structured dialogues on prophetic witnesses and formal ethical training initiatives, ensuring that public statements and strategic plans served as active guides for organizational culture and institutional practice. All academic programs, including curricular offerings, areas of specialization, and certificate programs, evidenced the sustained development

of a high-quality curriculum aligned with the values and mission of the institution, in full accordance with the standards of good practice established by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

Affordability and cost transparency were actively promoted through the Office of Financial Aid, through which students were systematically informed of available financial assistance options via structured informational events and regularly updated online resources, consistent with the institution's commitment to equitable access to theological education. Institutional coherence was further reinforced through the provision of essential support services, including access to library resources (Appendix 2.20, Library Access Records) and the Dr. Juan Bek Center for Psychotherapeutic Services (Appendix 2.21, Dr. Juan Bek Center for Psychotherapeutic Services MOU). A robust network of formal collaborative agreements was established and maintained with peer institutions, including the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón (Appendix 2.22, MOU Universidad del Sagrado Corazón), Albizu University (Appendix 2.23, MOU, Albizu University), the Fundación Red Ecu  mica de Educaci  n Teol  gica (REET) (Appendix 2.24, MOU, Fundaci  n Red Ecu  mica de Educaci  n Teol  gica (REET)), McCormick Theological Seminary, Duke Divinity School, Wesley Theological Seminary, the Seminario Evang  lico de Teolog  a de Matanzas in Cuba, and the Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico (Appendix 2.25, MOU), all of which served to broaden and enrich the resources available to the institutional community.

Regulatory Compliance and Periodic Evaluation

Strict compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies of federal and commonwealth accrediting and regulatory agencies was ensured and sustained at the SEPR, thereby guaranteeing institutional transparency and accountability across all dimensions of its operations, in full alignment with the standards of good practice established by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The institution's accreditation status was maintained and proactively disclosed to all relevant constituents with respect to its standing before the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), the Puerto Rico Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP), the Senate of United Methodist Church (Appendix 2.26, the Senate of United Methodist Church Report), and PCUSA Committee on Theological Education (COTE) (Appendix 2.27, PCUSA Committee on Theological Education (COTE) Report). Annual Report other applicable regulatory and accrediting bodies. In demonstration of its continuous commitment to quality standards, monitoring reports, periodic compliance reports, and all additional requirements mandated by accrediting and licensure agencies were regularly prepared and submitted in a timely and thorough manner.

Periodic external audits required by applicable regulatory agencies were undergone and completed by the SEPR, demonstrating the institution's sustained commitment to external accountability and transparent governance (Appendix 2.28, Finance Office Appendices and External Audit Documentation). A systematic and periodic evaluation of ethics and integrity was conducted through the comprehensive review of institutional policies, processes, and practices, ensuring that established ethical frameworks retained their relevance, effectiveness, and applicability in daily institutional operations. These policies were regularly reviewed and updated to address emerging challenges and evolving regulatory expectations, in a manner consistent with the institution's commitment to continuous improvement and institutional effectiveness. This evaluative process was grounded in an ongoing and structured reflection on the institutional values of justice, equity, and inclusion, with the expressed purpose of advancing the institution's transformation into an

increasingly just, equitable, and supportive academic environment (Appendix 2.29, Academic Integrity Policy)

Curricular evaluation and revision processes were conducted in alignment with recently adopted accreditation principles, further demonstrating the institution's responsiveness to evolving standards of quality in theological higher education. The manner in which institutional policies were integrated into the organizational life was publicly discussed and examined, with structured opportunities provided for the engagement of students and faculty in deliberative discussions concerning institutional priorities, areas of strength, and opportunities for improvement, consistent with the institution's commitment to participatory governance and constituent-centered decision-making (Appendix 2.29, Academic Integrity Policy & Appendix 2.30, Artificial Intelligence Policy).

Conclusions

"As a faith-based and ecumenical institution that has operated in Puerto Rico for 106 years under applicable federal and commonwealth laws, the SEPR affirmed that its religious identity informed and gave expression to its institutional mission, vision, and core values. Notwithstanding this confessional foundation, institutional governance, academic rigor, financial management, and the protection of student and employee rights were administered in full accordance with the highest standards of higher education practice, consistent with the expectations of the MSCHE and all applicable accrediting and regulatory bodies. All institutional policies were formally adopted and approved by the Board of Directors and were subjected to periodic review and revision to ensure ongoing regulatory compliance, operational effectiveness, and the sustained delivery of an education of academic excellence befitting the institution's mission and its longstanding commitment to the formation of servant leaders for the church and society. The evidence presented throughout this self-study demonstrated that ethics and integrity were not merely aspirational values at the SEPR, but were operationalized, institutionalized, and embedded across all dimensions of its organizational life, reaffirming identity as a higher education institution of integrity, accountability, and enduring purpose in the service of the people of Puerto Rico and the broader ecumenical community."

Findings:

1. SEPR demonstrates a commitment to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights.
2. The institution fosters a climate of respect among students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives.
3. SEPR has a documented grievance policy that is disseminated to address complaints or grievances raised by students, faculty, or staff. The institution's policies and procedures are fair and impartial and assure that grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately, and equitably.
4. SEPR has procedures to avoid conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict in all activities and among all constituents.

STANDARD III

Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

Introduction

The Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico (SEPR) is a private, non-profit institution of higher education at the graduate level, dedicated to theological, ministerial, and professional formation within an ecumenical and interdisciplinary perspective. Since its founding in 1919, the Seminary has been committed to contributing to the integral formation of pastoral and lay leaders engaged in Christian service in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, the United States, and other international contexts.

The institutional mission of SEPR centers on the academic, spiritual, and ministerial preparation of leaders capable of responding to the contemporary challenges of the church and society. In alignment with this mission, SEPR designs and offers learning experiences that integrate academic rigor, theological reflection, interdisciplinary research, and social commitment. This integration is reflected in the curricular structure of the academic programs, in co-curricular experiences, and in the institutional assessment processes that ensure educational quality.

SEPR is duly authorized to operate as an institution of higher education by the Office of Registration and Licensing (ORLIE) and its Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP) of the Puerto Rico Department of State, which certifies the institution's current academic offerings (Appendix 3.1 – JIP Certification Letter). This certification confirms that the institution is authorized to offer graduate programs in various areas of academic and professional formation.

Likewise, SEPR holds institutional accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) (Appendix 3.2 – SAS Copy) and programmatic accreditation for biblical and theological programs from The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) (Appendix 3.3 – ATS Web Copy). These accreditation and external review processes contribute to strengthening academic rigor, promoting the continuous evaluation of educational programs, and support institutional development, thereby ensuring compliance with academic standards and external evaluation processes oriented toward institutional improvement.

SEPR currently receives the sponsorship and support of the following denominations: Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Puerto Rico, Methodist Church of Puerto Rico, Boriquén Presbyterian Synod of Puerto Rico, United Evangelical Church of Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It also receives support from other Pentecostal and Catholic denominations, as well as independent churches that send their candidates to receive formal theological education at SEPR. Accordingly, SEPR offers students from these six sponsoring denominations courses on the history, polity, doctrine, and worship of their respective traditions, along with other academic experiences that equip them to exercise pastoral ministry within their congregations.

SEPR currently offers six graduate academic programs that address the theological, ministerial, and professional formation needs of its students and the communities they serve. These programs include:

- Master of Divinity (MDiv)
- Master of Arts in Religion (MAR)
- Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (MABTS)
- Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation (MACEF)
- Master of Arts in Counseling: Family, Couple, and Marriage (MCFCM)
- Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Care of the Family (DMin)

The curricular design of the academic programs responds to institutional processes of curricular planning, review, and assessment that seek to ensure coherence among learning outcomes, the institutional mission, and the needs of the ministerial and social context.

Academic Programs

The academic programs of SEPR are designed to offer rigorous, coherent, and contextualized learning experiences that enable students to integrate theological reflection, academic research, and ministerial or professional practice. Each program has clearly defined learning outcomes, an organized curricular structure, and academic assessment processes that ensure educational quality and curricular relevance.

The curricular sequences of the programs constitute evidence of the institutional curricular design and establish the progression of courses, the areas of formation, and the credits required to complete each degree. (Appendix 3.4 – Institutional Catalog 2023-2026-inglés-page 62-63, page 67-68, page 71-72, page 75-76, page 120-121, page 128-129.).

Master in Divinity (MDiv)

The Master in Divinity (MDiv) (Appendix 3.5 – MDiv Expectations) constitutes the primary theological formation program of SEPR and is oriented toward preparing men and women for pastoral leadership and other forms of ministry within their faith communities.

The program promotes a comprehensive formation that combines biblical, theological, historical, and pastoral studies with experiences oriented toward the practice of Christian ministry. Through its curriculum, students develop a critical understanding of the Christian tradition, religious diversity, and the social contexts in which the life of the church unfolds. In alignment with the mission of SEPR, learning is fostered through a broad, critical, and integrative understanding of the challenges facing the Church both globally and locally in Puerto Rico and the Americas. Students learn to value and distinguish religious plurality within Christianity and other world religions.

Theological education at SEPR is broadly ecumenical. The institution serves the denominations mentioned above that send their students — whether candidates for pastoral ministry or lay persons — to receive theological education. Faculty members come from the sponsoring denominations, as well as from other Christian denominations and independent churches. The institution intentionally promotes the development of an ecumenical consciousness in Church leadership,

while simultaneously preparing students to serve within their particular denomination. SEPR is open to other Christian ecclesial groups joining this educational endeavor through partnerships or special agreements.

The MDiv program establishes clearly defined learning outcomes that articulate the knowledge, skills, and ministerial competencies students are expected to develop throughout their academic formation. These learning outcomes guide the curricular design of the program, the pedagogical strategies of the faculty, and the institutional processes for assessing student learning.

Upon completing the Master of Divinity (MDiv) program at SEPR, students are expected to demonstrate the following academic, ministerial, and formative competencies:

Biblical and Theological Knowledge

1. Demonstrate a critical and integrative understanding of the principal challenges facing the Church in the contemporary world, both at the global level and within the context of Puerto Rico and the Americas.
2. Analyze and interpret biblical texts using diverse methodologies and approaches for the study of the Old and New Testaments.
3. Explain the historical development of Christian thought, demonstrating an understanding of the historical and theological context of the Christian faith.
4. Demonstrate broad knowledge of the biblical, theological, historical, and pastoral traditions of Christianity.
5. Evaluate the religious phenomenon from interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives, including the study of other world religions.

Contextual and Social Understanding

1. Analyze the social, political, economic, and cultural context in which Christianity develops in Puerto Rico and the Americas.
2. Demonstrate sensitivity and openness toward religious diversity, both within Christianity and in relation to other religious traditions.
3. Apply theological reflection to the analysis of contemporary social issues, including topics related to social justice, human dignity, and community well-being.

Ministerial and Professional Competencies

1. Demonstrate the ministerial skills necessary for pastoral leadership, including preaching, worship, Christian education, pastoral care, community service, and ecclesial administration.
2. Integrate biblical, theological, and contextual knowledge into ministerial practice within faith communities.
3. Exercise pastoral leadership in diverse ministerial contexts, both in congregational ministry and in other spaces of community service.
4. Demonstrate the capacity for collaborative work, promoting the development of talents and gifts within faith communities.

Spiritual and Ethical Formation

1. Demonstrate personal and spiritual growth consistent with the values and ethical responsibilities of Christian ministry.
2. Practice ethical leadership committed to human rights, social justice, and community service.
3. Articulate a clear vocational identity within the framework of the Church's mission and its service in the world.

Research and Lifelong Learning

1. Conduct theological research using appropriate academic methods, demonstrating critical thinking and intellectual rigor.
2. Integrate theological knowledge with ministerial practice through processes of reflection, research, and written analysis.
3. Demonstrate commitment to continuous learning and ongoing ministerial development.

The skills acquired in the MDiv program foster qualities such as commitment to human rights, respect for others, social sensitivity, spirituality, and human wisdom, which result in effective service to God and the community.

Throughout the program, students develop pastoral skills such as preaching, worship, Christian education, ecclesial administration, pastoral care, chaplaincy, and community service. These skills enable students to understand the importance of new models of Christian ministry based on teamwork and the development of talents within the church and the community.

As part of the institutional processes of assessment and continuous improvement, the program underwent a recent curricular revision. Under its previous curricular structure, the program required 83 academic credits to complete the degree (Appendix 3.6 – MDiv 83-Credit Control Sheet). Following an institutional curricular evaluation process, the program was reviewed and updated, reducing the total number of credits to 75, with the purpose of strengthening curricular coherence, facilitating students' academic progression, and responding to the contemporary needs of Christian ministry. This revised version began to be implemented in the 2023 academic year (Appendix 3.7 – Revised MDiv Curricular Sequence, 75 Credits).

Courses are currently offered on a semester basis in the afternoon schedule and must be completed with a minimum GPA of 2.70, within a maximum of nine (9) years. The courses to be completed within the Master of Divinity are divided into the following areas: Biblical Studies (which help students become familiar with the challenges of in-depth critical study of the biblical texts of the Old and New Testaments); History and Theology Studies (which aim to enable students to understand, cultivate, and articulate the biblical and philosophical foundations of theology through systematic understanding and critical reflection); Interdisciplinary Studies (which foster a broad understanding of religious experience by providing a distinct academic and curricular emphasis across different fields and areas of human knowledge focused on the religious phenomenon); World Religions (which critically analyze, compare, and appreciate those religious traditions that have contributed to culture and interreligious dialogue); Church Ministry Studies (which contribute to the development of skills for Christian ministry); Denominational Principles (which contribute to the process of theological-practical integration according to each denomination); and a course in Practical Theology and Supervised Ministry (a reflection on pastoral leadership, with

emphasis on the nature and dynamics of the call and ministerial vocation from a biblical-theological, spiritual, pastoral, communal, prophetic, and existential perspective, with particular focus on understanding the various common dynamics that arise in the local church, specifically through the analysis of lived experiences in that context, as well as the development of skills to manage them). In the final year of MDiv studies, and as part of the degree requirements, each student will present a Research Project (Thesis) (Appendix 3.8 – Research Project Evaluation Rubric), in which they will demonstrate their capacity to research and integrate the vocational, historical, biblical, theological, and practical pastoral dimensions of their ministerial vocation. This project will be discussed and approved by the faculty. Each student will demonstrate having achieved a satisfactory level of integration of their theological studies and professional training, within the particular configuration of their personality, vocation, and faith.

Master in Arts in Religion

The Master in Arts in Religion (MAR) (Appendix 3.9 – Program Expectations – MAR) offers an interdisciplinary academic formation oriented toward the critical study of the religious phenomenon from theological, historical, social, and comparative perspectives. The program promotes the academic analysis of religion in general and of the Christian tradition in particular, with special attention to the historical, critical, and systematic study of Christianity within broader social and cultural contexts.

The distinctive focus of the program is the study of the religious phenomenon in its multiple phenomenological dimensions through a multidisciplinary and comparative perspective. Through this approach, the program seeks to develop in students a broad understanding of religious experience, of the disciplines used for its study, and of the role of religion in history and in contemporary society.

The Master in Arts in Religion responds to several important needs related to the study of the religious phenomenon in Puerto Rican society and in the global context. First, the program recognizes the importance of studying religion as a cultural and social phenomenon that contributes to the formation of worldviews, value systems, institutions, and social practices. Second, the program responds to the challenges of globalization through the academic analysis of diverse religious traditions, promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding among different religious communities. Finally, the program contributes to the development of higher education in Puerto Rico by offering specialized academic resources for the multidisciplinary study of the religious phenomenon.

As part of the institutional processes of assessment and continuous improvement, the program underwent a curricular revision. In its previous curricular version, the program required approximately 54 academic credits, organized into areas of formation such as interdisciplinary studies, the Judeo-Christian tradition, world religions, and elective courses (Appendix 3.10 – MAR Control Sheet, Previous Version).

As a result of an institutional process of curricular evaluation and revision aimed at strengthening the academic coherence of the program and facilitating student progression, the curriculum was updated and reduced to 39 academic credits. This revision allowed the program to be concentrated in more clearly defined areas of study aligned with the academic objectives of the degree (Appendix 3.11 – MAR Control Sheet, 39 Credits). Courses are currently offered on a semester

basis in the afternoon schedule and must be completed with a minimum GPA of 2.70, within a maximum of five (5) years.

The curricular revision was approved by the Office of Registration and Licensing (ORLIE) under the Board of Postsecondary Institutions of Puerto Rico (JIP) and began to be implemented in the 2020–2021 academic year (Appendix 3.12 – JIP-MAR Certification – Program Curricular Structure).

The revised study plan for the MAR program is organized into four main curricular components, which allow for the development of a solid and interdisciplinary academic formation in the study of religion. The Core Courses component consists of 12 academic credits and includes foundational courses oriented toward the theoretical and methodological study of the religious phenomenon. Among these courses are: Theories of Religion, Research Methodologies in the Study of Religion, Religion and Social Change, Introduction to the Integration Seminar, and Integration Seminar. These courses provide students with essential conceptual and methodological tools for the academic analysis of religion and should be completed primarily during the first semesters of the program. The Introduction to the Integration Seminar and Integration Seminar courses are taken during the final stage of the program and constitute the academic space in which students develop their final research project.

The World Religions component requires 9 academic credits and is oriented toward the academic and comparative study of diverse religious traditions from a non-confessional perspective. Courses in this area may include topics related to: Afro-Caribbean religions, Islam, Judaism, Amerindian religions, pre-Columbian Caribbean religions, among others. This curricular component promotes a broad understanding of religious pluralism and fosters intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

The Directed Electives component requires 9 academic credits in courses related to the interdisciplinary study of the religious phenomenon. Among the courses that may form part of this area are: Sociology of Religion, Psychology of Religion, Anthropology of Religion, Philosophy of Religion, among others. Likewise, this component may include courses in biblical languages such as Biblical Greek and Biblical Hebrew, which allow students to develop linguistic competencies relevant to the study of religious texts.

Finally, the program includes 9 credits in free electives, allowing students to deepen their understanding in particular areas of interest within the field of religious studies or related disciplines. This reduction in the number of elective credits reflects the curricular revision carried out, which sought to optimize the structure of the program and concentrate its academic focus.

As part of the curricular revision process of the Master in Arts in Religion program, the academic assessment mechanisms used to evidence the achievement of student learning outcomes were also reviewed. In the previous 54-credit curricular sequence, the program required students to pass four comprehensive examinations, corresponding to the areas of Biblical Studies, Theological Studies, World Religions, and Interdisciplinary Studies. These examinations were designed to assess students' general mastery of the principal areas of the program. As a result of the curricular revision that reduced the program to 39 credits, the assessment system was adjusted to align with the new academic focus of the revised curriculum. In the new curricular sequence, the comprehensive examination requirement was reduced to two main areas of assessment: World Religions and Interdisciplinary Studies, which reflect the program's multidisciplinary emphasis on the critical analysis of the religious phenomenon. This modification allowed the assessment of learning to be concentrated in the core components of the program, while the students' academic research process

was strengthened through the development of a publishable academic article as the final degree requirement, developed within the framework of the Introduction to the Integration Seminar and Integration Seminar courses, in which students define the research topic, the methodological approach, and the development of the manuscript (Appendix 3.13 – Integration Seminar Assessment Rubric – MAR). Although SEPR does not guarantee the publication of these works, the academic assessment process certifies that the articles developed by students meet the research criteria necessary for possible publication. This revision of the assessment model reflects SEPR's institutional commitment to strengthening curricular coherence, the continuous improvement of academic processes, and the alignment among program objectives, teaching strategies, and methods for assessing student learning.

Upon completing the Master in Arts in Religion (MAR) program at SEPR, students are expected to be able to:

- understand the religious phenomenon in its diverse manifestations from a multidisciplinary and comparative perspective.
- systematize a broad knowledge of the Judeo-Christian tradition and a basic knowledge of other world religions.
- critically analyze the role of religion in history and in contemporary society.
- integrate the understanding of the religious phenomenon into the analysis of their personal and professional context.

Through this program, the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico contributes to the development of professionals and academic leaders capable of analyzing the religious phenomenon in a critical and contextualized manner, promoting interdisciplinary dialogue and understanding among diverse religious traditions.

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (MABTS)

As a result of the institutional processes of assessment and academic planning aimed at responding to the theological formation needs in Puerto Rico and the region, SEPR developed the Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (MABTS) program. This new academic offering was approved by the Office of Registration and Licensing (ORLIE) – Board of Postsecondary Institutions of Puerto Rico (JIP). It began to be implemented in January 2022, expanding the institution's academic offerings and strengthening the biblical and theological formation of ecclesial and lay leadership (Appendix 3.14 – Program Approval Certification by JIP-MABTS).

The Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (MABTS) (Appendix 3.15 – Program Expectations – MABTS) is a graduate program designed to offer a solid academic formation in the study of the Bible and Christian theology. This program is intended for both ecclesial leaders and laypersons interested in deepening their biblical and theological analysis from an academic, critical, and contextualized perspective. The program is aligned with the institutional mission of the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico to contribute to the integral formation of pastoral and lay leadership to serve in diverse ecclesial and social contexts.

The program responds to the growing need to offer theological and biblical formation to ecclesial leaders who exercise ministries in churches and religious organizations, but whose ministerial contexts do not necessarily require the completion of the MDiv degree. In Puerto Rico and the Caribbean region, there is a growing number of lay leaders who actively participate in specialized

ministries within churches, such as Christian education, preaching, evangelization, ecclesial administration, and pastoral accompaniment. The MABTS program seeks to respond to these needs by offering academic tools that enable these leaders to strengthen their biblical and theological understanding in order to face the contemporary challenges of the church and society.

The purpose of the program is to equip ecclesial leadership in the areas of Bible and Theology through the development of academic competencies that enable the critical interpretation of the Holy Scriptures and theological reflection on the Christian faith. Through this program, students develop skills to apply exegetical, hermeneutical, and theological methodologies in the analysis of biblical texts and in contextualized theological reflection. Likewise, the program promotes the development of a biblical, theological, and historical culture that strengthens Christian leadership and contributes to the development of transformative ministries that respond to the contemporary challenges facing the church.

The MABTS program consists of a 39-credit academic program, designed to be completed in approximately two years of study, although students have a maximum period of six years to complete all degree requirements. To obtain the degree, students must complete the required credits with a minimum GPA of 2.70, fulfill the assessments established in each course, and satisfactorily complete the program's final research project. Courses are currently offered on a semester basis in the afternoon schedule and must be completed within a maximum of six (6) years.

The program curriculum is organized into four main programmatic areas, which allow for the development of academic competencies in biblical study, theological reflection, and academic research (Appendix 3.16 – MABTS Program Curricular Sequence). The Biblical Studies component requires 18 academic credits and is oriented toward the critical analysis of Old and New Testament texts from diverse academic perspectives, including historical, literary, theological, and sociological approaches. Among the courses included in this area are: Study of Religion and the Bible, Introduction to the Old Testament I, Introduction to the Old Testament II, Introduction to the New Testament I, Introduction to the New Testament II, and Biblical Hermeneutics. These courses provide students with fundamental tools for the exegetical and hermeneutical analysis of biblical texts. The Theological Studies component requires 12 academic credits and focuses on the study of the historical development of Christian thought and the various theological currents that have influenced the Christian tradition. Among the courses included in this area are Theology and History I, Biblical Theology, and elective courses in theology that allow students to deepen their understanding of specific topics such as Reformation theology, feminist theology, and theology of the Holy Spirit.

The program also includes 6 credits in biblical languages, in which students may choose between Biblical Hebrew or Biblical Greek. These courses provide the linguistic tools necessary for the critical analysis of biblical texts in their original languages, thereby strengthening the exegetical competencies of students.

As a final program requirement, students must complete a 3-credit Research Project, which represents the integrative exercise of the competencies developed throughout the program. In this project, the student designs and develops an academic research study under the supervision of a faculty member, integrating biblical analysis, theological reflection, and specialized bibliographic review (Appendix 3.17 – MABTS Research Project Manual). The research project requires the writing of an academic paper that demonstrates the student's capacity to critically analyze a research topic and articulate their findings using methodological tools proper to the biblical and

theological sciences. The final paper must be presented and orally defended before a faculty committee as part of the program's assessment process.

Upon completing the MABTS program, students are expected to be able to:

- apply diverse methodologies and approaches for the critical reading of biblical texts from the Old and New Testaments.
- analyze exegetical, hermeneutical, and theological theories in the interpretation of biblical texts.
- develop coherent theological arguments based on the critical analysis of the sources of Christian theology.
- apply biblical and theological research methodologies for the development of academic projects.
- use the grammatical foundations of a biblical language (Hebrew or Greek) for the critical interpretation of the Scriptures.

The program uses multiple mechanisms to assess student learning. These include written papers, exegetical analyses, oral presentations, bibliographic reviews, and midterm examinations in courses. The primary instrument of programmatic assessment is the Research Project, which allows for evidence of the integration of competencies acquired throughout the program.

Through this program, SEPR strengthens its commitment to the academic formation of ecclesial leaders and laypersons who contribute to the development of faith communities with a deeper biblical and theological understanding. The program fosters critical thinking, academic research, and the development of competencies that enable students to participate actively in the mission of the church in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, and other international contexts.

Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation (MACEF)

The Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation (MACEF) (Appendix 3.18 – Program Expectations – MACEF) is a graduate program designed for the academic and ministerial formation of ecclesial leaders interested in developing educational processes within faith communities. The program integrates biblical, theological, and pedagogical studies with the purpose of strengthening educational leadership in churches, religious institutions, and Christian formation programs.

As part of the institutional process of expanding and strengthening SEPR's academic offerings, this program was developed to respond to the training needs of educational leadership in churches and religious organizations. The Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation was approved by the Office of Registration and Licensing (ORLIE) – Board of Postsecondary Institutions of Puerto Rico (JIP) as a new academic offering and implemented beginning in January 2022, to broaden the opportunities for ministerial and theological formation at the institution (Appendix 3.19 – Program Approval Certification by the Board of Postsecondary Institutions – MACEF).

The purpose of the program is to equip ecclesial leadership to develop educational ministries that respond to the contemporary challenges of Christian formation. The curriculum fosters the development of pedagogical, biblical, and theological competencies that enable the design, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs in ecclesial contexts.

The program seeks to enable students to integrate biblical and theological knowledge with pedagogical theories and educational methodologies that promote meaningful learning experiences within Christian education. In this way, the program contributes to the development of transformative educational ministries that respond to the spiritual, social, and formative needs of faith communities.

The development of programs for the formation of educational leadership in Puerto Rico's churches responds to an identified need within the country's ecclesial and educational context. Various churches and religious organizations maintain formal educational programs, such as Christian schools, biblical institutes, and Christian education programs, which require personnel trained in the areas of Bible, theology, and pedagogy.

In response to this need, SEPR developed MACEF as an academic program that integrates biblical and theological formation with pedagogical competencies oriented toward the development of educational programs in ecclesial contexts. This program seeks to prepare professionals capable of designing and implementing educational programs in churches, Christian schools, and religious organizations.

The Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation consists of a 40-credit academic program (Appendix 3.20 – MACEF Program Curricular Sequence), designed to be offered primarily in an afternoon format, with the purpose of facilitating access for students who are actively engaged in ecclesial ministries or work responsibilities during the day. To obtain the degree, students must complete the required credits with a minimum GPA of 2.70 and fulfill all program requirements within a maximum period of six (6) years. Additionally, students must meet the assessment requirements established in the courses, satisfactorily complete the supervised educational practicum, and pass the Research Project in the Educational Setting, which constitutes the program's final academic integration requirement.

The Core Courses component includes 12 credits in Bible and theology courses that provide students with an academic foundation for the critical analysis of biblical texts and the development of theological thought. Among the courses included are: Study of Religion and the Bible, Introduction to the Old Testament I, Introduction to the New Testament I, and Theology and History I. These courses provide the fundamental tools for exegetical and theological analysis that underpin the development of Christian education.

The Specialty Courses component requires 24 credits in courses focused on Christian pedagogy, human development, spirituality, and educational leadership. These courses include, among others: Foundations and Principles of Christian Education, Jesus and the Educational Ministry, Christian Education for Children and Youth, Educational Ministry with Adults and the Elderly, Christian Education and Special Education, Educational Management and Leadership, Religion and Social Change, and Spirituality. This set of courses seeks to develop the competencies necessary to design and implement educational programs that respond to the needs of diverse groups within the ecclesial community. The program also incorporates an innovative component oriented toward the development of educational strategies to serve students with functional diversity within Christian education programs.

The final component of the program includes 4 credits corresponding to a supervised educational practicum and the development of a research project. The supervised educational practicum offers students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during the program in an ecclesial educational setting. During this experience, the student participates in the planning,

development, and evaluation of educational activities in ministerial contexts under the supervision of a faculty member and a cooperating person from the practicum setting (Appendix 3.21 – MACEF Program Educational Practicum Manual).

As a final program requirement, students must complete a Research Project in the Educational Setting, which consists of an integrative monograph in which the student analyzes a problem or topic related to Christian education from biblical, theological, and pedagogical perspectives. This project provides evidence of the integration of the knowledge, skills, and competencies developed throughout the program (Appendix 3.22 – MACEF Research Project Manual).

Upon completing the MACEF program, students are expected to be able to:

- apply biblical interpretation methodologies and theological reflection in the development of Christian educational processes.
- explain the biblical, theological, pedagogical, and sociocultural foundations that undergird Christian education.
- design and implement teaching and learning processes that respond to the needs of diverse groups within the faith community.
- analyze the curricular design process for Christian education programs.
- apply educational strategies that promote the inclusion of students with functional diversity.
- develop leadership and administrative competencies for the management of ecclesial educational programs.

The program uses multiple mechanisms to assess student learning. These include written papers, pedagogical essays, reading analyses, oral presentations, and rubric-based assessments in courses (Appendix 3.23 – MACEF Research Project Rubric). The primary instrument of programmatic assessment is the Research Project, in which the student demonstrates the integration of the pedagogical, biblical, and theological competencies acquired throughout the program.

Through this program, SEPR strengthens its institutional mission of forming leaders capable of serving in Christian ministries in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, and other international contexts. The Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation contributes to the preparation of Christian educators and ministerial leaders who can develop innovative, inclusive, and contextualized educational programs within faith communities.

Master of Arts in Counseling: Family, Couples and Marriage (MACFCM)

The Master of Arts in Counseling: Family, Couple, and Marriage (Appendix 3.24 – MCFCM Program Expectations) is a graduate program oriented toward the formation of professionals in the field of counseling with a specialization in family systems, couple relationships, and marital dynamics. This program provides students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to offer professional counseling services in diverse clinical, community, and educational contexts.

As part of the process of expanding and diversifying SEPR's academic offerings, this program was approved by the Office of Registration and Licensing (ORLIE) – Board of Postsecondary Institutions of Puerto Rico (JIP) in August 2022, as a new academic offering in the area of mental health and professional helping services (Appendix 3.25 – Program Approval Certification by the JIP).

This program represents a significant expansion of the institution's academic offerings, as it constitutes the first program at the Seminary that does not focus exclusively on biblical or theological studies, but instead integrates professional counseling formation with the institutional values of service, professional ethics, and social commitment.

The MCFCM program is developed in compliance with the academic and professional requirements established for the formation of professional counselors in Puerto Rico, regulated by Law No. 147 of August 9, 2002, known as the Law to Regulate the Practice of Professional Counseling in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as amended (Appendix 3.26 – Law No. 147, August 9, 2002). The curriculum is designed in accordance with recognized professional standards in the field of counseling, including the guidelines of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), as well as the provisions of the Puerto Rico Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, the entity that regulates the practice of the profession in the country.

The curricular structure of the program includes courses oriented toward the development of competencies in diagnosis, therapeutic intervention, psychopathology, professional ethics, cultural diversity, and research processes, as well as supervised clinical experiences that allow students to apply the knowledge acquired in real professional practice settings.

The purpose of the program is to prepare professionals equipped to offer counseling services to individuals, couples, and families, through the application of theoretical models, therapeutic strategies, and ethical principles inherent to the counseling profession.

The program seeks to develop in students the competencies that will enable them to:

- understand the processes of human development and family dynamics.
- apply theoretical counseling models and intervention strategies.
- conduct diagnostic assessments using professional instruments and classifications with international systems such as the DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition) and the ICD-10/ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases, 10th and 11th Revision).
- develop evidence-based therapeutic interventions to address the emotional, behavioral, and relational needs of families, couples, and marriages.

The development of professional training programs in family, couple, and marital counseling responds to a growing need in Puerto Rico related to the social and emotional challenges facing contemporary families. Factors such as the increase in domestic violence, family conflicts, relational crises, and the psychosocial consequences of recent events such as the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the need for professionals trained in the area of mental health and counseling.

In this context, SEPR developed this program with the purpose of contributing to the formation of professionals who can offer therapeutic and supportive services to families, couples, and marriages from a professional perspective grounded in ethical, scientific, and humanistic principles.

The Master of Arts in Counseling: Family, Couple, and Marriage (Appendix 3.27 – MCFCM Curricular Sequence) consists of a 60-credit academic program, structured to be completed in approximately three years of study. Courses are offered primarily in the afternoon schedule, in

order to facilitate access for students who work or who participate in ministries and community services.

To obtain a degree, students must:

- complete the 60 required program credits.
- maintain a minimum GPA of 3.00.
- complete all academic requirements within a maximum period of six years.
- satisfactorily fulfill the supervised clinical experiences and research requirements established by the program.

The program curriculum is organized into three main components, which integrate theoretical formation, the development of professional competencies, and supervised practical experiences.

The core courses component includes 29 credits in fundamental areas of professional counseling, such as: foundations of counseling and professional ethics, human development, counseling theories and models, social and cultural diversity, individual and group counseling, assessment and testing administration, diagnosis and treatment in counseling, and research techniques and program evaluation. These courses provide the theoretical and conceptual foundation necessary for the professional practice of counseling.

The specialty component includes 21 credits focused specifically on family, couple, and marital counseling. Among these courses are: foundations of counseling in family, couple, and marriage; crisis intervention processes; family counseling strategies and case management; family mediation and conflict resolution; management and intervention in domestic violence; and sexual education across different stages of development. These courses allow students to develop specialized competencies to address relational and family issues in diverse contexts.

Within the program's formative process, the curriculum includes the Integrative Counseling Seminar course, which is offered in the final stage of the academic program. The purpose of this course is to integrate the theoretical knowledge, professional competencies, and practical experiences acquired by students throughout the program. During this seminar, students participate in case analysis activities, review of fundamental concepts of the discipline, and conceptual integration exercises that strengthen their preparation for professional practice.

Likewise, the Integrative Seminar course includes a review component oriented towards preparation for the licensing examination required for the Professional Counselor license in Puerto Rico, administered by the Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors in accordance with the legislation currently governing the practice of professional counseling in the jurisdiction. This process allows students to consolidate the knowledge acquired in fundamental areas such as counseling theories, clinical diagnosis, professional ethics, intervention processes, and psychological assessment.

The inclusion of this course strengthens the curricular coherence of the program by facilitating students' transition from academic formation to licensed professional practice, contributing to the development of professionals prepared to respond to the mental health needs of families, couples, and communities in Puerto Rico.

In alignment with the formative process, the program includes 10 credits of supervised clinical experiences, comprising a professional practicum and an internship. During these experiences,

students must complete a total of 600 hours of supervised clinical practice, distributed as follows: 300 hours of professional practicum — of which a minimum of 250 hours must consist of direct client contact — and 300 hours of internship. This allows students to develop competencies in individual, couple, and family counseling under the supervision of licensed professionals in the field of human behavior (Appendix 3.28 – Practicum and Internship Manual) / (Appendix 29 – Practicum Supervision Manual). These practical experiences constitute an essential component of the program, as they allow for the integration of theoretical knowledge with professional practice in real service settings.

In fulfillment of the academic requirements of the program, students must complete a research project developed within the Research Techniques and Program Evaluation course. This project consists of applied research in the field of counseling that enables the analysis of a relevant problem in the area of family, couple, or marriage through the use of appropriate research methodologies (Appendix 3.30 – Research Thesis Development Manual). The research project is designed to strengthen students' research competencies and promote the use of scientific evidence in the professional practice of counseling.

As part of the institutional strategies aimed at strengthening the professional formation of students and expanding community access to mental health services, SEPR has established collaborative initiatives with Carlos Albizu University, an institution recognized for its distinguished history in the formation of professionals in psychology and mental health (Appendix 3.31 – Collaborative Agreement with Albizu University). Within the framework of this collaboration, the "Dr. Juan Bek" Psychotherapeutic Services Center was established at SEPR's facilities, with the purpose of offering accessible psychological and psychometric services to the community. This center provides services such as psychological consultations, psychometric assessments, and individualized support in areas such as grief, emotional management, caregiver support, and conflict resolution. In addition to providing services to the community, this initiative strengthens opportunities for academic and interinstitutional collaboration in the area of mental health and counseling. Through this type of partnership, SEPR promotes the development of community service spaces that reflect its institutional commitment to the integral well-being of families and communities in Puerto Rico. This collaboration is also aligned with the institutional priorities established in the Strategic Plan 2024–2029 and the Campus Master Plan & Development Plan 2024–2029, which identify the strengthening of academic partnerships and the development of community services as key strategies for expanding the institution's social impact (Appendix 3.32 – Strategic Plan 2024–2029; Appendix 3.33 – Campus Master Plan 2024–2028).

The MCFCM broadens SEPR's educational mission by integrating professional counseling formation with the institutional values of service, social justice, and accompaniment. Through this program, the institution contributes to the preparation of professionals who can respond to the emotional, relational, and social needs of families and communities in Puerto Rico and other contexts.

Doctor in Ministry in Pastoral Care of the Family (DMin)

The Doctor in Ministry (D.Min.) program in Pastoral Care of the Family (Appendix 3.34 – Program Expectations – DMin) at the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico is designed to strengthen and deepen the ministerial practice of ecclesial leaders committed to offering pastoral service that is faithful to Jesus Christ and relevant to the contemporary challenges of the twenty-first century. The program is oriented particularly toward the pastoral care of the family,

recognizing the centrality of family dynamics in the life of faith communities and in the social context.

The curriculum provides opportunities for advanced study, critical reflection, and the interdisciplinary integration of theological, pastoral, and social knowledge related to family ministry. Through academic experiences, ministerial practices, and applied research processes, the program seeks to contribute to the development of pastoral leaders capable of responding in an informed and contextualized manner to the realities faced by families in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, and Hispanic communities in the United States.

Upon completing the Doctor in Ministry in Pastoral Care of the Family program, students are expected to have developed the following competencies:

1. Develop a comprehensive understanding of oneself as part of a family system, both nuclear and extended.
2. Analyze the diverse social structures of the family and their multiple manifestations in different cultural contexts.
3. Integrate an understanding of the family from a bio-psycho-social and spiritual perspective.
4. Critically examine the conflicts and challenges faced by contemporary families, particularly in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Hispanic communities in the United States.
5. Apply fundamental pastoral care skills in family and community contexts.
6. Develop interdisciplinary competencies for the management of family conflicts.
7. Cultivate spiritual values grounded in the biblical and historical traditions of Christianity.
8. Demonstrate pastoral sensitivity and commitment to social service in ministerial contexts.
9. Affirm a pastoral, vocational, and professional identity oriented toward the service of the church and the accompaniment of families.
10. Analyze the role and responsibility of the family within its ecological and social context.
11. Critically interpret biblical and theological perspectives related to family life.
12. Apply research skills to the study of issues related to the pastoral care of the family.

The doctoral program requires the completion of 24 academic credits organized into core courses and an applied research project. Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.00 to complete the program and will have a maximum period of five (5) years to fulfill all academic and research requirements.

The curricular structure of the program (Appendix 3.35 – DMin Curricular Sequence) is developed in a progressive academic sequence that integrates theoretical, methodological, and pastoral courses focused on the interdisciplinary understanding of the family and its context. The courses include areas such as anthropological foundations of the family, research methodology, human sexuality, family conflicts, Christian spirituality, and family ecology.

The program culminates with a thesis defense, which constitutes the integrative component of doctoral formation. Through this research, students must demonstrate their capacity to integrate the theological, pastoral, and methodological knowledge acquired during the program and apply it

to a concrete ministerial situation related to the pastoral care of the family. The D.Min. thesis is conceived as applied research, oriented toward examining specific issues within particular pastoral contexts. Unlike dissertations of a theoretical nature, the D.Min. The research project seeks to generate knowledge that contributes directly to ministerial practice and to the development of contextualized pastoral strategies (Appendix 3.36 – DMin Thesis Manual).

The research process includes the formulation of a thesis proposal, the defense of the proposal before an academic committee, the implementation of the research project, and the final thesis defense. This process allows students to demonstrate advanced competencies in conceptualization, methodological design, data analysis, and theological reflection applied to pastoral ministry.

Faculty Support Services

The improvements made to the facilities of the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico (SEPR) have included the design of an infrastructure that provides better acoustic conditions and sound insulation in classrooms and administrative offices. Likewise, wireless internet access has been strengthened in various areas of the campus, particularly in the library, administrative offices, and classrooms, with the purpose of supporting the processes of teaching, learning, and research.

Also noteworthy are the efforts of the Juan de Valdés Library (BJV) in the digitization of the historical and intellectual heritage available in the public domain, which facilitates open access to academic resources used in the Seminary's teaching and research processes.

The faculty of SEPR plays a fundamental role in the processes of teaching, academic advising, and institutional development (Appendix 3.37 – Faculty Composition and Credentials). This academic body represents the institution in diverse academic spaces, communities, and churches. Each faculty member possesses the academic and professional qualifications required for the functions they perform.

Currently, the institution maintains an approximate student-to-faculty ratio of 7 to 1 (7:1), with an average class size of 15 students, which fosters a close and participatory learning environment. Regular faculty hold doctoral degrees, while approximately 76% of the teaching faculty consists of adjunct instructors, which allows for the expansion of the diversity of academic and ministerial experiences available to students.

The institution maintains a Faculty Handbook (Appendix 3.38 – Faculty Handbook), which establishes the policies, norms, and procedures that regulate academic work, including processes related to appointments, evaluations, promotions, sabbatical leaves, and other institutional provisions.

Over the past decade, the Seminary's regular faculty has consisted of four (4) professors, some of whom also assume administrative responsibilities. These responsibilities include functions such as the Seminary Presidency and the Deanship of Academic and Student Affairs. The Seminary promotes the ongoing professional development of its faculty through participation in academic activities, conferences, and educational events that contribute to the strengthening of pedagogical strategies and learning assessment. To support these initiatives, the institution allocates budgetary appropriations for faculty professional development, although at certain times these initiatives have been limited by institutional financial conditions.

The academic excellence of the faculty is also reflected in their intellectual production and participation in specialized academic communities. Faculty members regularly participate in international academic conferences such as those organized by the American Academy of Religion (AAR) and the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL). Likewise, some professors have collaborated with organizations and academic forums such as the Association for Hispanic Theological Education (AETH), the Ecumenical Network of Theological Education (REET), and the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI), among other professional associations in their respective disciplines.

Faculty members also actively participate in conventions, conferences, and academic dialogue forums, and collaborate in ecclesial life through preaching, workshops, and educational activities across various churches and denominations. Additionally, they have contributed curricular materials for church educational programs, articles to local press, and denominational publications, reflecting the Seminary's institutional commitment to academic and ministerial service to the community.

Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities

SEPR offers diverse co-curricular activities throughout the academic year directed at both students and the general public. These activities promote dialogue and reflection on topics of social interest, such as social justice, human rights, economics, violence, gender-based violence, among other issues. Faculty members frequently integrate into their courses the participation of specialists and guest speakers who contribute academic and professional perspectives on topics relevant to course content. These activities allow students to interact with experts and broaden their understanding of the topics discussed in the classroom. In many cases, these conferences are also open to the academic community to promote interdisciplinary dialogue. Among the activities included are: book presentations, discussion forums, academic panels, chapel services, expert lectures, and visiting professors. Likewise, theologians from Latin America, the Caribbean, the Hispanic community in the United States, and Europe have delivered lectures on relevant theological topics.

Juan de Valdés Library

The Juan de Valdés Library (BJV) constitutes the primary center of access to specialized information in theology, religion, and ministerial studies at SEPR, and represents one of the most important academic resources for theological study in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. The library directly supports the institutional mission of forming professionals and Christian leaders committed to pastoral service, theological reflection, and social transformation.

In fulfillment of this mission, the library provides resources and services oriented toward supporting the teaching, learning, and research processes of students and faculty. Among its primary functions are the provision of specialized information resources, support for academic research processes, the availability of adequate spaces for individual and collaborative study, and the development of information literacy competencies that strengthen students' research skills.

The Juan de Valdés Library also maintains ties with professional organizations and collaborative networks that strengthen access to specialized academic resources and promote the professional development of library personnel. Among these affiliations are the American Theological Library Association (ATLA), one of the leading international organizations in the field of theological libraries, and ArchiRed, a network dedicated to the preservation and access of historical archives in Puerto Rico.

The library's collection includes more than 84,000 volumes, in addition to a wide variety of academic resources and databases comprising specialized journals, theses, and monographs. These resources directly support the master's and doctoral academic programs offered by the institution and contribute to the development of theological, historical, and pastoral research.

Likewise, the Historical Archive on Puerto Rican Protestantism is a unique collection of the Juan de Valdés Library, which constitutes a significant source for academic research in the areas of ecclesiastical history, contextual theology, and religious studies. Similarly, the library strengthens graduate-level academic research through access to specialized databases in theology and religion, and research advisory services offered to students (Appendix 3.39 – List of Available Databases). These services particularly support students developing integrative projects, master's theses, and doctoral research projects, facilitating access to relevant academic sources and promoting the development of advanced research competencies.

Taken together, the bibliographic resources, specialized collections, and research support services offered by the BJV constitute an essential component in the development of students' academic experience and contribute significantly to the fulfillment of the educational objectives of the Seminary's academic programs.

Learning Assessment

All academic programs are clearly described in the institution's official publications, such as the institutional catalog (Appendix 3.40 – Institutional Catalog 2023–2026), informational materials available in administrative offices, and the Seminary's official website at www.se-pr.edu. These resources allow prospective and current students to become familiar with program requirements, curricular structure, and the estimated time to complete their studies.

Individuals interested in enrolling at the Seminary receive orientation from the moment they establish their first contact with the institution. This process includes formal interviews with faculty members, during which the academic and ministerial expectations of the program are discussed.

During their time at the institution, students receive academic advising, the purpose of which is to support their academic, ministerial, and professional development. Through this process, students can design individualized academic plans, clarify degree requirements, and receive guidance on their academic progress. Institutional information, including academic offerings, academic calendars, and course schedules, is communicated through the institutional website, institutional email, and digital platforms used by the institution.

The Office of Financial Assistance publishes information related to scholarships, financial aid, and the Federal Student Loan Program available to eligible students. Likewise, some scholarships are sponsored by cooperating churches that support students enrolled at the Seminary. To benefit from these scholarship programs, students are evaluated by faculty members in terms of leadership, ministerial commitment, and academic progress.

Students also have access to the services of the Seminary's Professional Counselor, who offers guidance related to academic planning, time management, and personal development. This office also channels referrals for academic or emotional support when necessary.

The Seminary recognizes the importance of student learning assessment processes in ensuring academic quality and institutional effectiveness. For this purpose, the institution maintains an Institutional Assessment Plan (Appendix 3.41 – Institutional Assessment Plan 2023–2026), which

establishes the principles and procedures that guide assessment processes across the various academic programs. This plan allows for the systematic and continuous collection of information to evaluate whether students' academic development is aligned with the competencies defined in the graduate profile, the objectives of each academic program, and the institutional mission.

Faculty have received training in educational assessment processes as part of the institutional efforts directed at strengthening the quality of the teaching and learning process. In this context, assessment is integrated into curricular design through clearly defined learning objectives and the use of assessment rubrics, which establish transparent criteria for the evaluation of students' academic performance. The rubrics allow students to clearly understand the criteria by which their academic activities and assignments will be evaluated. Likewise, these tools enable faculty members to align evaluative activities with the learning objectives established for each course.

The systematic use of rubric has contributed to improving transparency in assessment processes and to strengthening students' understanding of the academic expectations of their courses.

Findings

1. *Relevant academic offerings aligned with the institutional mission:* The Seminary maintains a diversified academic offering that includes programs in theology, biblical studies, Christian education, counseling, pastoral ministry, and continuing education programs. The incorporation of programs such as the Master of Arts in Counseling: Family, Couple, and Marriage broadens the institutional mission toward areas related to mental health and family accompaniment, responding to identified social needs in Puerto Rico.
2. *Highly qualified faculty:* The Seminary maintains a teaching faculty with a high level of academic preparation. The participation of adjunct faculty allows for the integration of diverse ministerial and professional experiences that enrich student formation.
3. *Specialized academic resources:* The Juan de Valdés Library constitutes a fundamental academic resource for theological and religious research in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, with more than 84,000 volumes, archival collections on Puerto Rican Protestantism, and affiliations with academic networks such as ATLA and ArchiRed.
4. *Institutional support for student learning:* The Seminary offers multiple support services that strengthen the educational experience, including academic advising, professional counseling services, access to specialized bibliographic resources, and co-curricular activities that complement formal learning.
5. *Institutional learning assessment system:* The institution maintains an Institutional Assessment Plan that allows for the systematic evaluation of the achievement of student learning outcomes and the use of the information gathered to improve academic programs.

Recommendations

1. *Implementation of the Strategic Plan 2024–2029:* The Institutional strategic plan identifies as a priority the strengthening of academic programs, the development of new educational initiatives, and the expansion of the institution's presence in areas of social impact, including pastoral care, Christian education, and counseling.
2. *Development of academic and institutional partnerships:* Collaboration with institutions such as Carlos Albizu University and other academic organizations allows for the

expansion of opportunities for practical training, interdisciplinary research, and community service.

3. *Expansion of digital resources and access to information:* The digitization processes of historical archives and access to specialized academic databases strengthen the research capacities of students and faculty.
4. *Implementation of the Campus Master Plan:* The development of educational infrastructure, technological improvements, and the expansion of academic spaces contemplated in the Campus Master Plan offer opportunities to strengthen learning environments and support institutional growth.
5. *Growing need for professionals in mental health and family accompaniment:* The growing demand for trained professionals in mental health and family counseling presents a significant opportunity for the development and consolidation of the Counseling program.

Conclusion

The evidence presented demonstrates that SEPR has designed and implemented an educational experience coherent with its institutional mission of forming professionals and Christian leaders committed to ministerial service, critical thinking, and social transformation. The academic programs, curricular and co-curricular activities, faculty qualifications, and available academic resources contribute in an integrated manner to the development of student learning. The curricular structure of the programs, together with academic advising, student support services, and the specialized resources of the Juan de Valdés Library, strengthen the educational environment and promote the development of academic, ministerial, and professional competencies in students. Likewise, the Institutional Learning Assessment Plan allows for systematic monitoring of the achievement of educational outcomes and the use of findings to improve academic programs.

Through the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2024–2029 and the Campus Master Plan, the institution continues to strengthen its capacity to offer relevant, accessible, and contextualized learning experiences. These efforts reflect the institutional commitment to the continuous improvement of teaching and learning, as well as to the integral formation of leaders who respond to the contemporary challenges of the church and society. Taken together, the elements described in this standard demonstrate that SEPR possesses the resources, processes, and structures necessary to ensure a quality educational experience that promotes the achievement of student learning outcomes and contributes to the fulfillment of its institutional mission.

STANDARD IV

Support of Student Experience

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

SEPR ensures student recruitment through the implementation of admission policies and procedures strategically designed to align with the interests, abilities, and academic goals of this population in accordance with the institutional mission. The Seminary's mission statement indicates the type of student it seeks to form by defining its role as "contributing to the integral formation of pastoral and lay leadership to serve in Christian ministries" in both local and global contexts (Appendix 4.1) - Institutional Catalog).

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for orienting prospective students and receiving admission applications, along with the Counseling Coordinator and the Doctoral Coordinator. In order to direct recruitment efforts, the Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Plan (Appendix 4.2 - Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Plan) was presented in October 2023. The plan focuses on ensuring coherence between the academic profile of applicants and the expectations of each program. This approach is complemented by the comprehensive offering of support services across the five areas of the institutional model (Recruitment and Admission, Academic Services, Curriculum and Instruction, Student Services, and Financial Aid) for all admitted and recruited students. Additionally, the plan emphasizes the community integration of students through diverse opportunities.

Furthermore, the institution has acted firmly and intentionally in recruitment initiatives through the participation of representatives from the Institutional Development Office, Registrar's Office and Student Affairs in the annual assemblies or conventions of the sponsoring denominations and at graduate studies fairs to present academic offerings (orientation and distribution of brochures) (Appendix 4.3 - Photos). SEPR has also turned to the creation of videos with student testimonials, podcasts, and has allowed the public to attend a class free of charge, among other initiatives (Appendix 4.4 -Student testimonials, Appendix 4.5, podcasts, and Appendix 4.6 Classes free of charge).

Admission policies and procedures seek to ensure the appropriate selection of potential students, as well as equity and transparency in these processes. Admission applications for Master's and Doctoral programs are available for completion online on the institutional website. The website also includes a list of the documentation required to complete the admission process, as well as policies directed at international students and benefits for veteran students. The "International Student Admission Policy" (Appendix 4.7 -International Student Admission Policy) defines specific procedures for the admission of prospective students from this population. Likewise, admission processes offer a reasonable expectation of success in each program. SEPR, through its "Admissions Policy" (Appendix 4.8 - Admissions Policy) and the Institutional Catalog (Appendix 4.9 - Institutional Catalog), describes the requirements of each degree, the purpose of the

curriculum, and the estimated time to completion, ensuring that students understand the offerings and can follow their chosen program. (Appendix 4.10 - Satisfactory Academic Progress Process & retention patterns, % graduation rates, % persistence rates, admission, enrollment).

Clear and Accurate Information on Costs and Financial Aid

In compliance with the requirements of Title IV federal aid and the Student Right-to-Know Act, SEPR provides current and prospective students with clear and accurate information about all costs, available financial aid (scholarships and loans), estimated expenses, and detailed refund policies. This information is disseminated through multiple channels, including permanent publication on the institutional website (Institutional website), direct communications via email, announcements on the Dashboard in Populi (Populi), and through posters placed on various bulletin boards.

Likewise, all incoming students must participate in an orientation (DORI 6000) (Appendix 4.9 - Institutional Catalog & Appendix 4.11 - Orientation PPT) attended by all student services offices, including the Financial Aid Officer and the Director of Finance, the primary offices responsible for managing financial aid information for students. Students receive by email the important documentation discussed during this orientation. (Appendix 4.9 - Institutional Catalog; (Appendix 4.12 - Tuition and Fees Cost Policy); (Appendix 4.13 - Financial Aid Office Orientation Policies and Guides), (Appendix 4.14 -Student Loan Guide); (Appendix 4.15 - Financial Aid Application Guide); (Appendix 4.16 - Scholarship and Grant Announcements); (Appendix 4.17 -Refund and Repayment Policies and Procedures); Appendix 4.11 - Orientation PPT).

The institution has an ethical obligation to ensure that students understand the financial implications of their education. This is achieved through public documents such as the Institutional Catalog (Appendix 4.9 - Institutional Catalog), the Tuition and Fee Cost Tables, the Refund Procedure (Withdrawal) (Appendix 4.18), the Title IV Federal Return of Funds Policy (Appendix 4.19 - Title IV Federal Return of Funds Policy), and the incoming student orientation.

SEPR participates in the federal financial assistance program and maintains a Surety Deposit with the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) to maintain its eligibility in the student assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA). In addition, the institution operates under the USDE's Heightened Cash Monitoring-1 (HCM-1) method, which means it must first disburse funds to eligible students and pay remaining credit balances before requesting or receiving funds in the amount of those disbursements (Appendix 4.19 - Monitoring Report 2024) . The Strategic Plan 2024-2029 (Appendix 4.20 - Strategic Plan 2024-2029) includes a strategy to develop a scholarship fundraising campaign.

Developmental Pathways and Academic Success Strategies

Each program has its particular requirements for admissions. Some identify students who require academic support upon enrollment, primarily through two pathways. First, international students with English language deficiencies (detected by the TOEFL) receive conditional admission, requiring them to take remedial courses and limiting their enrollment to 7 credits in the first year. Second, students admitted with an undergraduate GPA below the required 2.50 (e.g., 2.49) are classified as "Conditionally Enrolled Students" and must achieve a GPA of 2.70 in their first semester (3.0 for Counseling).

To ensure success, the institution offers support mechanisms such as ongoing academic advising by regular faculty and a Research Techniques course (TLLR 6601) (Appendix 4.21 - Research

Techniques TLLR 6601 syllabi). Monitoring is conducted through the Satisfactory Academic Progress Process (SAPP); if a student fails to meet this progress, they are placed in "Warning" status, notified in writing, and called in to discuss their situation and establish an improvement plan.

SEPR provides reasonable accommodations for students who identify as having special needs. The Reasonable Accommodation Policy (Appendix 4.22 - Reasonable Accommodation Policy) is included in the syllabus of all courses.

(SEPR) monitors student retention, persistence, and degree completion as core indicators of the effectiveness of its support systems and the coherence of its educational offerings. The institution collects and analyzes these metrics annually through the Satisfactory Academic Progress Process (SAPP), the ATS Annual Report Form (ARF), and internal enrollment management records, in alignment with the Institutional Assessment Plan 2024–2027 (Appendix 4.38) and the Strategic Plan 2024–2029 (Appendix 4.20).

SEPR acknowledges that the graduation and persistence rates reflected in the 2024–2025 ATS ARF data represent a significant area of concern and a priority for institutional action. The institution is committed to presenting these figures transparently, analyzing their root causes, and documenting the strategies already underway to improve outcomes.

Several institutional and contextual factors have contributed to the current graduation and persistence rates:

1. *Extended time-to-degree expectations.* SEPR's student population consists primarily of working adults and active ministry leaders who attend part-time. The MDiv program allows up to nine (9) years for degree completion, and other master's programs allow five to six years.
2. *Enrollment disruptions from external events.* Puerto Rico's higher education landscape has been significantly shaped by Hurricanes Irma and María (2017), recurring seismic events (2019–2020), and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2021). These compounding disruptions disproportionately affected SEPR's student population — many of whom are also pastoral leaders managing congregational crisis responses — and contributed to enrollment interruptions, leaves of absence, and extended time to degree across multiple cohort years that continue to affect current graduation rate calculations.

Institutional Strategies to Improve Retention, Persistence, and Completion

The Seminary has a service structure that facilitates direct student-faculty and student-services relationships, resulting in direct access to consultations, advising, and academic and administrative requests. The institution improves the learning environment and overall student experience through this comprehensive support system, which includes personnel, infrastructure, programming, orientation, and counseling, designed to address diverse academic, spiritual, personal, financial, and accessibility needs. The system is intended to ensure that students achieve their educational goals and become the leaders described in the mission statement.

1. **Orientation and counseling programs** are designed to improve retention and guide students throughout their educational experience. Admitted students participate in a Student Orientation (DORI-6000) (Appendix 4.11 - Orientation PPT) offered at the

beginning of each semester. In addition, they have access to the services of a Student Counselor who responds through referrals from the Dean's Office, and each student is assigned a regular faculty member as their Academic Advisor. Through an agreement with Albizu University, psychological services were established for the student population and the surrounding community (Appendix 4.25 - Collaborative Agreement with Albizu University). Approximately 100 therapy sessions are attended per semester.

2. **Academic Advising** represents the systematic institutional process of supporting the development and monitoring of each student's action plan, which is directly aligned with the achievement of their academic, pastoral, professional, and personal goals. Advising consists of identifying and developing a joint action plan, followed by continuous evaluation of academic progress and compliance with ministerial and professional requirements, which may include the recommendation of special programs, workshops, or project and travel opportunities. Academic Advising is a service provided directly by SEPR's full-time faculty to ensure that support is grounded in curricular and ministerial experience. To guarantee the uniformity and compliance of this process, the institution communicates and explains it in detail during new student orientations. Likewise, the responsibility of full-time professors as advisors is emphasized at Faculty Meetings (Appendix 4.23 - Faculty Meetings Minutes) and periodic faculty gatherings (Appendix 4.24 - PPTs from Faculty Meetings- "Encuentro de Facultad"). The institution encourages students to participate in advising at least once per semester, ideally before the start of classes or as the pre-registration period approaches. The availability schedule of faculty advisors is communicated annually during the first weeks of classes. (Appendix 4.24 - PPTs from Faculty Meetings & Appendix 4.11 - DORI New Student Orientations PPTs).
3. **Juan de Valdés Library Services.** The Juan de Valdés Library (BJV) constitutes a primary academic support service for students across all of SEPR's degree programs, directly contributing to student retention, academic success, and degree completion. The library's collection of more than 84,000 volumes, specialized in theology, religion, and ministerial studies, is complemented by access to curated academic databases in biblical studies, theology, and the social sciences, available to students through the Populi platform (Appendix 4.29 — Library Links in Populi). These resources directly support the research requirements of master's and doctoral-level coursework, including integration projects, theses, and the Pastoral Research Project of the DMin program.

Library staff actively support student academic development through individualized research advisory services, information literacy workshops, and research competency training sessions designed to strengthen students' capacity to locate, evaluate, and use scholarly sources effectively. In support of student writing development, the library developed and published an institutional Writing Model (Appendix 4.56-Writing Model) in direct response to a faculty-identified need, providing students with a structured guide for the preparation of academic work across programs.

To ensure that library services are accessible to students in all instructional modalities — including those enrolled in distance education courses — the institution provides remote access to library databases and digital resources through the Populi platform, ensuring equivalent support for on-campus and online learners. The effectiveness of library services is evaluated annually through the Library Services and Resources Evaluation (Appendix 4.49- Library Services and Resources Evaluation), and results are reviewed by the library director and the Academic Dean's Office to identify areas for improvement and inform resource allocation decisions. The library is directed

by a qualified library professional and is supported by library assistants, an archivist, and volunteers, ensuring that students have consistent access to expert guidance throughout their academic formation at SEPR.

4. **Improvement of technology and facilities** - Through the Pathways for Tomorrow Praxis project, funded by the Lilly Endowment Foundation since 2022, SEPR focused on improving the student experience through a technological, physical, and academic renewal of the institution (Appendix 4.26 - Pathways for Tomorrow Praxis project). With the purpose of directly supporting the on-campus learning experience, the project included the renovation of physical facilities, the replacement of classroom furniture, and the creation of a new Homiletics classroom and a preaching laboratory, a podcast and video recording studio (Appendix 4.27 - Photos). In addition, the chapel's sound and streaming system was updated, enabling the broadcasting of chapel services via Facebook Live (Appendix 4.28 - Facebook Live streamings).

As part of the improvements under the Pathways project, academic and distance learning support was strengthened through the recording and publication of virtual workshops for students and access to resources through the payment of database licenses for the library (Appendix 4.29 - Library Links in Populi).

SEPR is making a significant investment in distance education to improve the quality of online student experience. This includes the development of courses on the Populi platform, the acquisition of software such as ISPRING and Adobe Creative to create interactive content, and the implementation of the Mahara platform for a student electronic portfolio. Part of this strategy is the development of "micro-capsules" and other instructional videos. SEPR conducted faculty training sessions for online course design and was immersed in the development of courses to be delivered through distance education (Appendix 4.26 - Pathways for Tomorrow Praxis project).

5. **Improvement of curriculum and assessment processes**-The learning environment and student experience are strengthened and supported through the improvement of curriculum and assessment processes. This includes faculty training in the writing of objectives, revision of the academic offering, alignment of program objectives with courses, and the development of new programs (Appendix 4.30 - Faculty Training Materials). To ensure the quality of teaching, faculty received professional development workshops that included a Certification in Distance Education and instructional design workshops, as well as Faculty Meetings (Appendix 4.30 - Faculty Training Materials; Appendix 4.31 - Certification in Distance Education; & Appendix 4.23 - Faculty Meetings Minutes).

6. **Other services.** SEPR has other services for the student population, such as cafeteria and lodging.

Measuring and Enhancing Educational Outcomes

The Strategic Plan 2024–2029 (Appendix 4.20 - Strategic Plan 2024-2029) has as Goal 1 "to increase enrollment to 250 students and improve the retention rate." SEPR demonstrates its commitment to retention, continuity, degree completion, and student success through the systematic evaluation of its admission and student support processes. The institution follows processes to collect and analyze student performance data in order to sustain and implement strategies that improve outcomes for the entire student population. In addition, SEPR maintains a historical summary of degree completion by academic level. (Appendix 4.20 - Strategic Plan 2024-

2029; Institutional website). Curricular revisions ensure that the curriculum maintains its relevance (Appendix 4.32 - Master of Arts in Religion; Appendix 4.33 - Plan for the Doctor of Ministry Program revision)

For graduate and professional level formation, the institution offers opportunities for academic and research development with the support of qualified faculty. The effectiveness of these opportunities is assessed through the MAR Project Evaluation Form (Appendix 4.34 -MAR Project Evaluation Form), the MDiv Integration Monograph or Research Project Evaluation Form (Appendix 4.35 -MDiv Integration Monograph or Research Project Evaluation Form), CONS-6531 Research Techniques & Program Evaluation (Appendix 4.36), and the Pastoral Research Project (Thesis) of the DMin Program (Appendix 4.37).

To ensure student continuity and success, the Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Plan (Appendix 4.2 - Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Plan) also articulates a process of continuous follow-up through a strategic link between the academic and student services offices. Regarding active promotion, the plan includes the identification of prospective students at the conventions of the sponsoring denominations and collaboration as intermediaries to ensure the continuous promotion of SEPR's academic programs to sponsoring churches.

One of the goals of the Strategic Plan (Appendix 4.20 - Strategic Plan 2024-2029) is to "update the evaluation system to monitor institutional effectiveness, the rigor of academic programs, and evidence of student learning." The Institutional Assessment Plan 2024–2027 (Appendix 4.38 - Institutional Assessment Plan 2024–2027) is designed to collect information in a systematic and continuous manner to determine whether students' academic development aligns with the competencies described in the graduate profile and the goals of each program. Student learning assessment results are used to inform students of their strengths, opportunities, and areas for growth, and to make decisions that improve learning experiences and institutional services.

Policies and Procedures for the Recognition of Prior and Alternative Learning

SEPR regulates the acceptance of transferred credits through its Credit Transfer Policy (Appendix 4.39 - Credit Transfer Policy) and the provisions of the 2023–2026 Institutional Catalog (Appendix 4.9 - Institutional Catalog), ensuring transparency, equity, and academic rigor. These standards establish the criteria, documentation, and procedures required to validate prior studies completed at other institutions.

Regarding the transfer of credits, SEPR requires the student to submit an official transcript, along with course descriptions, syllabi, and/or catalog. Only courses of the same academic level and credit equivalency are accepted. The sending institution must be accredited by the Board of Postsecondary Institutions (JIP) and by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. In the case of the Master of Divinity (MDiv), accreditation must come from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) or its equivalent (Appendix 4.39 - Credit Transfer Policy).

Studies completed at foreign institutions must be translated and validated by a NACES member agency. In addition, courses must have a minimum grade of B, must not exceed five years of age, and the number of transferable credits is limited: up to 15 for the MDiv, 9 for Master of Arts programs, and 6 for the Doctor of Ministry (DMin). The request must be made within the first year of studies, and in the case of pursuing a second master's degree at SEPR, substituting more than 50% of the courses is not permitted.

Regarding prior non-academic and experiential learning, SEPR recognizes only military credits, provided they are certified through an official transcript issued by the Educational Services Office of the Armed Forces or the Puerto Rico National Guard. The Credit Transfer Policy (Appendix 4.39 - Credit Transfer Policy) establishes the specific criteria for each program.

Policies for the Secure Management and Appropriate Disclosure of Academic Records

SEPR protects the privacy of student academic records through the Document Management Policy (Appendix 4.40 - Document Management Policy), the Campus Master Plan (Appendix 4.41 - Campus Master Plan), and the Safeguarding Policy for Digital Documents (Appendix 4.42 - Safeguarding Policy for Digital Documents). These policies establish that student records are confidential and their custody rests with the Office of the Registrar, in compliance with the FERPA policy, and Law No. 186 on Social Security Numbers of September 1, 2006, as amended. Google Drive is the official corporate/institutional space for document storage which operates on a subdomain of the Seminary (Appendix 4.42 - Safeguarding Policy for Digital Documents).

FERPA grants students specific rights regarding their records. They have the right to inspect and review their records by submitting a written request to the Office of the Registrar. They may also request the correction or amendment of information they consider incorrect, with the right to a hearing if the change is denied. Furthermore, if a student believes that the Seminary is not complying with the law, they have the right to file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education.

SEPR has plans to optimize its technological infrastructure, which includes the continued integration of different service areas (Administration, Finance, Dean's Office, Registrar, Courses) through the Populi platform.

Administrative, Fiscal, and Academic Alignment of Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities

SEPR's mission emphasizes the integral formation of its leaders, which goes beyond mere academic learning and includes intellectual, spiritual, and practical development. Co-curricular and extracurricular activities, such as the Student Council and the monthly chapel services, contribute to an environment that fosters this integral development. In addition, students have the opportunity to participate in the Spiritual Formation Academy (Appendix 4.43 - Chapel Liturgy; Appendix 4.44 Student Council Activity Posters, Podcasts and General Announcements; Appendix 4.45 - Institutional Development Office Fundraising Activities).

By cultivating a sense of community and belonging and valuing diverse perspectives, these activities support SEPR's objective of preparing leaders for service in an ecumenical, interreligious, and social context. Students also have the opportunity to participate in book presentations and lectures, activities that foster research, learning, and creativity.

Periodic Assessment and Evaluation of Student Support Services

The effectiveness and sufficiency of student support services are periodically assessed using metrics and evaluations that include: satisfaction and evaluation forms (courses, continuing education program, academic programs, faculty), evaluation forms for academic and student support service offices, Student Support Services Satisfaction survey (Appendix 4.46 - Student Support Services Satisfaction survey), New Student Orientation evaluation (Appendix 4.47 - New Student Orientation evaluation), Office of the Registrar evaluation (Appendix 4.48 -Office of the Registrar evaluation), Library Services and Resources evaluation (Appendix 4.49 - Library

Services and Resources evaluation), and Course Pre-selection Sheet by Area (Appendix 4.50 - Course Pre-selection Sheet by Area). Feedback is also collected through program-specific instruments, such as the MAR Program Evaluation (Appendix 4.51 - MAR Program Evaluation) and the Graduation Candidate Survey (Appendix 4.52 - Graduation Candidate Survey).

The results of the evaluations allow for the verification of the effectiveness and improvement of services. This assessment system, guided by the objectives of the Institutional Assessment Plan (Appendix 4.38 - Institutional Assessment Plan 2024–2027), focuses on effectiveness, accessibility, feedback collection, and the use of results for continuous improvement, to review and modify academic programs and support services, faculty assessment, and to improve student success indicators. The results of institutional evaluations are included in the Strategic Plan 2024–2029 (Appendix 4.20 - Strategic Plan 2024–2029), shared with faculty, and used to validate continuous improvement through action plans.

SEPR seeks to ensure that fiscal and human resources, as well as physical and technical infrastructure, are adequate for the institution's operations through the allocation of its budget by area (Appendix 4.53 - Annual Budget). The Institutional Assessment Plan (Appendix 4.38 - Institutional Assessment Plan 2024–2027) (Assessment Plan for Student Learning Outcomes and the Effectiveness of Institutional Services 2019–2022) is intended to guide the periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal processes to ensure ongoing sufficiency and efficient use of funds.

The competency-based approach is intended to optimize human resources, ensure the continuous and high-quality delivery of services, and ensure that critical support services remain effective. The coherence and effectiveness of the support system, backed by qualified professionals, are vital for student retention and success (Appendix 4.54 - Academic Dean's Office Organizational Chart; Appendix 4.55 - Employee Manual, Faculty Manual).

The Institutional Assessment Plan (Appendix 4.38 - Institutional Assessment Plan 2024–2027) systematically collects information to ensure that academic development aligns with the competencies of the graduate profile. Student satisfaction is measured directly through the Student Support Services Satisfaction Index (Appendix 4.46 - Student Support Services Satisfaction Index) and specific forms from other offices or departments, such as the Registrar's Office and Library).

The "Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Plan" (Appendix 4.2 - Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Plan) is aligned to assessment results. The primary objective of collecting assessment data (satisfaction and retention) is to ensure compliance with institutional objectives and that assessment results are used for planning, resource allocation, and the improvement of educational effectiveness, including the revision of programs and support services.

Findings

1. *Comprehensive and mission-aligned student support ecosystem.* SEPR demonstrates a multi-layered support model spanning recruitment, academic advising, financial aid, psychological services, and technology-enhanced learning, organized across five institutional service areas. This structure ensures coherent coverage across the student lifecycle, from initial recruitment through degree completion. Student satisfaction with support services is measured annually through the Student Support Services Satisfaction Index (Appendix 4.46), the Graduation Candidate Survey (Appendix 4.52), and office-

specific evaluation instruments, reflecting an institutional culture of evidence that is directly tied to the Institutional Assessment Plan 2024–2027 (Appendix 4.38).

2. *Intentional and denominationally grounded recruitment and admission.* Recruitment efforts are strategically aligned with the institutional mission through participation in the annual assemblies and conventions of the six sponsoring denominations, graduate studies fairs, student testimonial videos, podcasts, and open class initiatives. Admission policies ensure transparency, equity, and a reasonable expectation of academic success, including clearly defined pathways for international students and conditionally admitted students who require additional academic support. The Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Plan (Appendix 4.2), presented in October 2023, reflects a structured and proactive institutional commitment to aligning student profiles with program expectations.
3. *Structured developmental pathways for students requiring academic support.* SEPR has established two well-defined conditional admission pathways that identify and support students who require academic scaffolding upon enrollment. International students with English language deficiencies receive conditional admission with remedial course requirements and a limited first-year credit load. Students admitted below the required undergraduate GPA are classified as Conditionally Enrolled Students and must meet defined GPA benchmarks within their first semester. Monitoring is conducted through the Satisfactory Academic Progress Process (SAPP), which includes written notification and individualized improvement planning for students who do not meet progress standards (Appendix 4.10). These mechanisms reflect SEPR's proactive commitment to student success from the point of admission.
4. *Significant institutional investment in infrastructure and distance education.* Through the Pathways for Tomorrow Praxis project, funded by the Lilly Endowment Foundation (2022–2029), SEPR has produced tangible improvements to the physical and technological learning environment, including a preaching laboratory, podcast and video recording studio, renovated classrooms, and expanded distance education capabilities through the Populi platform, ISPRING, Adobe Creative, and the Mahara ePortfolio system (Appendix 4.26). Faculty received professional development in online course design and instructional technology. These investments directly support access for SEPR's predominantly part-time, ministry-active student population and represent a sustained multi-year commitment to improving the quality of the student experience.
5. *Graduation and persistence rates reflect institutional and contextual challenges requiring active response.* The 2024–2025 ATS Annual Report Form (ARF) data indicates an overall institutional graduation rate of 26.7% (MDiv: 18.2%; MAR: 25%) and a persistence rate of 46.7%. SEPR acknowledges these figures as a significant area of institutional concern and priority. The institution has identified several contributing contextual factors, including the predominantly part-time enrollment pattern of students who balance ministry, family, and professional responsibilities; the compounding effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria (2017), recurring seismic events (2019–2020), and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2021) on cohort continuity; and curricular transition periods resulting from the reduction of the MDiv from 83 to 75 credits (2023) and the MAR from 54 to 39 credits (2020). SEPR is committed to analyzing these metrics with greater methodological precision, developing supplementary measures that more accurately reflect the completion patterns of its non-traditional student population, and implementing targeted strategies to improve outcomes.

The strategies described in this standard — including academic advising, the SAPP process, psychological services, scholarship development, and distance education expansion — constitute the institutional response framework currently in place.

6. *Systematic assessment of student support services with multiple evaluation instruments.* The institution employs a comprehensive set of evaluation instruments to assess the effectiveness and sufficiency of student support services, including the Student Support Services Satisfaction Survey (Appendix 4.46), the New Student Orientation evaluation (Appendix 4.47), the Office of the Registrar evaluation (Appendix 4.48), the Library Services and Resources evaluation (Appendix 4.49), and the Graduation Candidate Survey (Appendix 4.52), among others. Assessment results are shared with faculty, incorporated into the Strategic Plan 2024–2029, and used to validate continuous improvement through action plans, demonstrating institutional commitment to evidence-based decision-making.
7. *Co-curricular activities support integral formation and student belonging.* SEPR's co-curricular and extracurricular programming — including monthly chapel services, the Student Council, the Spiritual Formation Academy, book presentations, and lectures — contributes to an environment of community, belonging, and spiritual formation that extends beyond the academic curriculum. These activities are directly aligned with the institutional mission of integral formation and support student persistence by cultivating meaningful connections to the seminary community. Residential and cafeteria services further support students who require on-campus accommodation, addressing practical barriers to continued enrollment.
8. *Clear policies for transfer credit recognition and academic records management.* The Credit Transfer Policy (Appendix 4.39) and the FERPA-compliant Document Management Policy (Appendix 4.40), Safeguarding Policy for Digital Documents (Appendix 4.42), and planned integration of institutional records through the Populi platform provide transparent, equitable, and well-documented frameworks for prior learning recognition and the secure management of student academic records. Students are informed of their FERPA rights and the procedures for reviewing, correcting, and protecting their records through the Institutional Catalog and student orientation.

Recommendations

1. *Establish a formal intervention and re-enrollment protocol.* The 46.7% persistence rate indicates that a significant proportion of students do not re-enroll from one year to the next. SEPR should develop a systematic intervention protocol that includes structured outreach to students who do not register for a subsequent semester, identification of the reasons for non-enrollment, and clearly defined re-admission and re-enrollment pathways for students who interrupted their studies without completing. This protocol should be coordinated between the Dean's Office, the Registrar, and faculty advisors and should be documented as part of the Recruitment, Admission, and Retention Plan (Appendix 4.2).
2. To implement re-assessment after any implemented change.

STANDARDS V

Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (SEPR) demonstrates its commitment to academic excellence and institutional effectiveness through a comprehensive, systematic approach to assessing student learning. Consistent with MSCHE Standard V, the institution has established clearly articulated learning outcomes at the institutional, program, and course levels and has implemented processes for the systematic collection, analysis, and use of evidence to improve student learning and educational effectiveness.

Assessment at SEPR is guided by the institution's mission and vision and is integrated into its broader framework for institutional planning and continuous improvement.

The mission of Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico is:

To form leaders committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, capable of serving with excellence, social sensitivity, and ethical responsibility in diverse contexts.

The vision of SEPR is:

To be an ecumenical, inclusive, and transformative academic community that promotes critical thinking, contextual spirituality, and commitment to justice.

These institutional commitments inform the development of program learning outcomes, curricular design, and the evaluation of student learning across all academic programs.

Statement of Educational Effectiveness

For the SEPR, the assessment of student learning outcomes (Student Learning Outcomes) and the assessment of the effectiveness of institutional services are key to guaranteeing quality educational processes that enable the achievement of the mission, vision, goals, and institutional values. The following definition is articulated in the Assessment Plan:

The SEPR understands that the Evaluation of Learning is the main evaluation process to measure institutional excellence. The process is designed and established to gather enough evidence and feedback to identify where students are in their learning development, what they should do next, and what is the best way to achieve the expected learning outcomes. In practice, this means obtaining clear evidence on how to increase individual achievement, understanding between Faculty and students about what needs to be improved, and an agreement on the necessary steps to promote strong learning and academic achievement. (Appendix 5.1, Assessment Plan for Student Learning Outcomes and the Effectiveness of Institutional Services)

Through its website, the SEPR makes statements regarding its educational effectiveness and assessment processes.

One of the most relevant academic areas for fulfilling the Strategic Plan 2024-2029 guidelines is the assessment of student learning and institutional evaluation. Currently, SEPR has an Institutional Evaluation Plan that allows for the systematic and continuous collection of the necessary information to determine whether students' academic development aligns with the competencies described in the graduate profile and with the goals of each program, the institutional mission and vision, and the ministerial quality standards of the sponsoring denominations.

Institutional Framework for Assessment

SEPR maintains a comprehensive institutional assessment system designed to evaluate student learning, academic programs, faculty effectiveness, and student services. Assessment activities are an integral component of the institution's commitment to accountability, continuous improvement, and the fulfillment of its educational mission (Appendix 5.1, Institutional Assessment Plan).

Student learning is evaluated using a combination of direct and indirect assessment measures.

Direct measures include:

- Tests
- Analytical essays and written assignments
- Monographs and research projects
- Oral presentations and reports
- Case studies
- Theses and dissertations

These instruments provide direct evidence of student mastery of course and program learning outcomes.

Indirect measures include student surveys and feedback instruments, which provide insight into students' perceptions of their learning experiences and their satisfaction with institutional services (Appendix 5.2, Evidence). Faculty performance is also evaluated through student course evaluations and institutional review processes that support instructional improvement (Appendix 5.3, Course Evaluation Form).

In 2025, in preparation for the MSCHE Self-Study, SEPR strengthened its institutional assessment framework through the adoption of a formal Assessment Policy (Appendix 5.4, Assessment Policy). The policy establishes procedures for assessing student learning, evaluating academic programs, and using assessment findings to improve teaching and learning and institutional effectiveness.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the quality and effectiveness of academic programs, courses, student services, and faculty performance while maintaining alignment with the mission and vision of the seminary and with the standards of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The institutional assessment framework includes the following components:

- Student learning assessment.
- Assessment of student services and student satisfaction.
- Faculty evaluation processes.
- Compliance with licensing and accreditation requirements.
- Institutional evaluation and strategic planning.
- Processes for review, feedback, and continuous improvement.

Student Learning Assessment Process

To guide the implementation of student learning assessment, SEPR developed the document “Steps for the Development of the SEPR Student Learning Assessment Plan” (Appendix 5.1, Institutional Assessment Plan). This document establishes a structured and systematic process for assessing student learning across academic programs.

Establishment and Review of Learning Objectives

Program learning objectives are established and periodically reviewed to ensure alignment with the mission and vision of SEPR. These objectives articulate the knowledge, competencies, and ministerial skills that students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of their academic programs.

Alignment of Curriculum and Assessment

The institution implemented a systematic review of course syllabi across all academic programs to ensure alignment between program learning objectives and course-level outcomes. A standardized syllabus format was introduced and distributed to all faculty members to promote consistency and clarity in learning expectations. (Appendix 5.5, Syllabus Model).

To strengthen evaluation practices, rubric modules were developed, and model rubrics were provided to faculty to support transparent, outcomes-based assessment of student work (Appendix 5.6, Developed Rubrics).

Implementation of the Assessment Plan

Each academic program developed a Student Learning Assessment Plan that includes a calendar covering both semesters of the academic year. Faculty members teaching courses within each program submit course assessment reports at the end of each academic term, documenting the assessment methods used and the extent to which learning outcomes were achieved (Appendix 5.1, Institutional Assessment Plan).

Data Collection and Analysis

Assessment data are systematically collected and analyzed to determine whether students are achieving the learning objectives established for each academic program. The analysis of assessment data enables the institution to identify trends in student performance, evaluate the effectiveness of instructional practices, and identify areas for improvement.

Use of Assessment Results and Continuous Improvement

Consistent with MSCHE expectations, SEPR uses assessment results to inform decision-making and strengthen teaching and learning.

Assessment findings are communicated to faculty and institutional leadership to support reflection and program improvement. During the faculty meeting held on August 19, 2025 (Appendix 5.7, Agenda, attendance sheet, and report), the results of the student learning assessment process were presented and discussed.

The analysis indicated that the most frequently used assessment instruments included essays, tests, rubrics, research projects, theses, case studies, and oral and written presentations. Results showed that 90 percent of students met the established evaluation criteria.

The discussion of assessment results also identified student academic writing as an area requiring additional support. As part of the institution's continuous improvement process, faculty recommended several instructional strategies to strengthen students' writing skills, including:

- Diversifying written assignments across courses
- Providing examples of well-developed academic texts
- Offering reading and writing workshops
- Encouraging writing as a regular academic practice
- Using digital technological tools to support editing and revision

To further support student learning, the SEPR Library developed and published a Writing Model to guide students in the preparation of academic work (Appendix 5.8, Writing Model).

This initiative represents an example of "closing the loop," in which assessment findings lead directly to institutional action designed to improve student learning.

Faculty Engagement and Development

Faculty plays a central role in assessing student learning at SEPR. Faculty members design assessment instruments, evaluate student work, analyze assessment results, and participate in discussions regarding instructional improvement.

To strengthen faculty capacity in assessment practices, the institution offered Faculty Workshop No. 9 on Rubric Design. As part of this initiative, rubric templates and models were developed and distributed to faculty to support transparent and consistent evaluation practices (Appendix 5.9, Rubric Design Workshop and Models).

In addition, faculty submit a Program and Course Assessment Report each academic term. This report documents the assessment methods used, the level of student achievement of learning

outcomes, and recommendations for instructional improvement (Appendix 5.10, Assessment Reports submitted by faculty).

Integration of Institutional Mission and Faith Formation

As a theological institution, SEPR integrates faith formation and religious values into its educational programs. Courses incorporate opportunities for spiritual reflection and ministerial formation that complement academic learning.

Institutional activities such as chapel services and spiritual formation events reinforce the seminary's theological identity and contribute to the holistic development of students (Appendix 5.11, Calendar of Religious Activities).

Assessment Culture and Institutional Effectiveness

SEPR has developed a culture of assessment that is systematic, participatory, and oriented toward continuous improvement. Institutional and programmatic learning goals are clearly defined and aligned with the theological, ethical, and social values that guide the seminary's educational mission.

Faculty lead assessment processes that incorporate a wide range of learning activities, including portfolios, ministerial practice experiences, theological reflections, research projects, monographs, theses, and dissertations. These assessment activities provide evidence of student learning and allow the institution to evaluate the effectiveness of its academic programs.

Assessment results are used to:

- Review and improve curricula
- Strengthen teaching practices
- Support faculty development
- Develop instructional modules
- Enhance contextualized learning experiences

Through these processes, SEPR demonstrates its commitment to academic excellence, ministerial formation, and service to diverse communities.

Assessment of Student Learning

Clearly Articulated Educational Goals

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (SEPR) establishes institutional and program-level educational goals that reflect its mission to form leaders committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. These goals guide the design of academic programs and learning outcomes and are intentionally structured to promote academic excellence, social sensitivity, and ethical responsibility. Through this framework, SEPR ensures that student learning is oriented toward the contextual and transformative service that defines the institution's vision and educational mission.

Organized and Systematic Assessment of Student Achievement

SEPR implements student learning assessment processes that are systematic, participatory, and faculty-led, consistent with MSCHE Standard V. Faculty employ a variety of direct assessment measures, including rubrics, portfolios, ministerial practice experiences, theological reflections, essays, and case studies. These tools allow the institution to evaluate students' achievement of learning outcomes and assess their holistic development across cognitive, spiritual, and ethical dimensions. The results of these assessments are documented in the Annual Assessment Report by Programs and Courses, which provides evidence of student learning and program effectiveness (Appendix 5.12).

Meaningful Curricular Goals with Clearly Defined Assessment Standards

Each academic program at SEPR defines curricular goals that respond to the ministerial and social needs of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. These curricular goals are aligned with institutional learning outcomes and are evaluated through clearly defined assessment criteria and performance standards. Through these processes, faculty assess key competencies such as critical thinking, contextual spirituality, and commitment to justice—core elements of SEPR's institutional vision and educational philosophy. (Appendix 5.13, Learning – Alignment Table of Program Objectives and Goals with Institutional Learning Outcomes).

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Educational Effectiveness

Assessment results are systematically analyzed and compiled in the Annual Assessment Plan Report by Programs and Courses (Appendix 5.14). These findings are used to inform evidence-based improvements in teaching, curriculum, and institutional support services. Specifically, assessment results contribute to curricular review processes, faculty professional development initiatives, and the enhancement of student services. Through the documented use of assessment results, SEPR demonstrates its commitment to strengthening educational effectiveness and advancing its mission of academic excellence and social transformation grounded in theological and ethical reflection.

Periodic Review of Institutional Assessment Processes

SEPR conducts periodic reviews of its institutional assessment processes to ensure their relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with the institution's mission and strategic priorities. As part of these reviews, the results of program and course assessments are discussed and analyzed, and recommendations for improvement are developed. These discussions involve faculty, the Academic Dean's Office, the Office of the President, and representatives from student services (Appendix 5.15, Faculty Meeting Agenda, Attendance Sheets, and Presentation Materials).

These collaborative review processes strengthen institutional accountability and foster a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring that the assessment of student learning contributes meaningfully to the fulfillment of SEPR's vision of being an inclusive, ecumenical, and transformative academic community.

MSCHE criteria	Alignment with SEPR Mission and Vision
1. Clearly defined educational goals at the institutional and program levels	SEPR's goals are centered on the formation of ethical leaders committed to the gospel, which is reflected in the curricular objectives of each program. (Evidence — Curricular objectives of each program)
2. Organized and systematic assessments of student achievement	SEPR implements assessment processes led by faculty and academic staff that measure the spiritual, ethical, and professional development of students, in coherence with its mission. (Evidence — Student learning assessment report submitted by faculty)
3. Definition of meaningful curricular goals with clear evaluative standards	SEPR's programs integrate theological, ethical, and social standards that allow for the evaluation of whether students are prepared to serve in diverse contexts, as established by the institutional vision..
4. Use of assessment results to improve educational effectiveness	SEPR uses student learning assessment results to strengthen pedagogical activities, revise programs and courses, and plan professional development activities, all in keeping with its commitment to academic excellence and justice. (Evidence — Professional Development Plan and Workshop Evidence)
5. Periodic evaluation of institutional assessment processes	SEPR regularly reviews its assessment mechanisms to ensure they remain aligned with its transformative mission and inclusive vision. During the professional meetings held each year, institutional assessment processes are discussed, results are shared, and reports are produced. (Evidence — Report and faculty meeting agendas)

Master in Divinity (M.DIV.)

The Master in Divinity is the main academic program. Its objective is to contribute to the formation and development of academic and ministerial leadership of men and women to serve and participate in the mission of the people of God in Puerto Rico, in the Americas, and globally. The curriculum currently consists of 74 credits distributed in three programmatic areas: Biblical Studies, Theology and History, and Church Ministry Studies (Practical Theology). These in turn represent the competencies that describe a graduate from the program. Aligned with the mission of the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, it is expected that a graduate of the Master of Divinity program will be able to:

- Develop a general, critical, and comprehensive understanding of the problems and challenges that the world presents to the Church of today in its plurality, both globally as well as in Puerto Rico and the Americas.
- Value and critically discern plurality both in its ecumenical and interreligious character.
- Develop an understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural context of Christianity in Puerto Rico.
- Know the different methodologies and approaches to reading the Bible, both the Old and the New Testament.

- Develop a critical understanding of the interpretation of the Faith within the context of the history of Christianity and Christian thought.

Other program expectations are available on the webpage.

Assessment venues for this program are:

- *Student learning outcomes assessment in the courses* – Faculty members describe in their syllabi their evaluation criteria, including book reviews, bibliographical research, partial tests, short tests, reading analysis, case discussion, laboratories, fieldwork experiences, monographs, and argumentative, exegetical, or theological essays and their respective rubrics, among others.
- *Colloquium of pastoral experiences* - Students of the Master's in Divinity Program should participate in a course, Practical Theology and Supervised Ministry, aimed at reflecting on vocation and pastoral practice. Each course topic fosters the integration of acquired knowledge and skills throughout the curriculum and the diverse dynamics and experiences within their local church to define healthy, balanced, and constructive pastoral leadership patterns and behaviors. Each learning experience has its own assessment criteria, including reflexive essays, journals, analysis of readings or books, and oral reports, among others.
- *Congregational interview* – Each year, the Academic Dean interviews the sponsoring denominational leaders, enabling SEPR to gather information on the areas and competencies that ministry candidates need.
- *Integration Monograph* - This is the research work that every student must present during their last semester of study. It consists of a research project in which the student will have the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and mindsets acquired throughout the program by writing and articulating a monograph. The main purpose is for the student to demonstrate his/her ability to integrate the program's areas of competency (Biblical Studies, Theology and History Studies, and Church Ministry Studies), bibliographic research skills, and the critical analysis of a situation or dilemma of interest in ecclesial or community life. The process requires an oral presentation before a Faculty Committee, which will evaluate the student's academic performance. The evaluation of the monograph focuses on narrative articulation, the acquisition of knowledge, critical reflection, and discussion of the subject under research. For this purpose, three evaluation instruments were designed. The rubric for evaluating the integrative monograph and the rubric for evaluating the oral defense are aligned with the program's objectives and the competencies of the graduate profile. The following tables show the results of the execution of the students in the integration monograph in 2024 (n = 20) and 2025 (n=13) compared to the skills of the Master of Divinity program, the average and percentage by skills in the presentation and content in the written part, and skills in oral defense.

Table 5.2: Summary of the average and percentage by competencies in the MDiv's integration monograph 2024 (n=20).

Competencies	Minimum Execution Point	Average ($\bar{x}$) (Scales: max. 4 min. 1)	Percentage (%)
Formulates a reasonable and coherent theological argument as a result of a process of reflection on Christian tradition and the ministry of the church.	3.2 / 80%	3.45	86.25
Uses a critical and hermeneutical methodology to analyze scriptures, historical texts, and theological documents.		3.35	83.75
Identify prominent features of your ministerial context and how these affect pastoral work.		3.73	93.13
Articulates a clear position on your ministerial role at different levels of pastoral action: personal, congregational, national, global, and ecological.		3.58	89.38
Promotes pastoral principles informed by the values of the Kingdom of God: justice, peace, appreciation for diversity, and solidarity with the destitute and threatened nature.		3.65	91.25
Demonstrates verbal and written communication skills appropriate to the professional role.		3.70	92.5
Total		3.58	89.38

Table 5.3: Summary of the average and percentage by competencies in the MDiv's integration monograph 2024 (n=20).

Competencies	Minimum Execution Point	Average ($\bar{x}$) (Scales: max. 4 min. 1)	Percentage (%)
Formulates a reasonable and coherent theological argument as a result of a process of reflection on Christian tradition and the ministry of the church.	3.2 / 80%	3.50	87.50
Uses a critical and hermeneutical methodology to analyze scriptures, historical texts, and theological documents.		3.19	79.75
Identify prominent features of your ministerial context and how these affect pastoral work.		3.77	94.30
Articulates a clear position on your ministerial role at different levels of pastoral action: personal, congregational, national, global, and ecological.		3.50	87.50
Promotes pastoral principles informed by the values of the Kingdom of God: justice, peace, appreciation for diversity, and solidarity with the destitute and threatened nature.		3.81	95.25
Demonstrates verbal and written communication skills appropriate to the professional role.		3.81	95.25
Total		3.37	84

Table 5.4: Summary of the average and percentage of skills in the presentations and in the content of the written part of the MDiv's integration monograph 2024 (n=20).

Competencies	Minimum Execution Point	Average ($\bar{x}$) (Scales: max. 10 min. 6)	Percentage (%)
Presentation			
Bibliography	8.0/ 80.0%	9.4	94.0
Orthographic Quality		8.85	88.5
Clarity of written expression		8.95	89.5
Total Presentation		9.07	90.7
Content			
Organization and presentation of arguments		9.00	90.0
Exegesis		8.78	87.8
Hermeneutics		9.30	93.0
Theology		8.65	86.5
Church History		8.53	85.3
Pastoral Theology and practical areas		9.15	91.5
Integration of Competencies		9.00	90.0
Total content		8.92	89.2
Total	7.5/ 75%	8.96	89.61

Table 5.5: Summary of the average and percentage of skills in the presentations and in the content of the written part of the MDiv's integration monograph 2025 (n=13).

Competencies	Minimum Execution Point	Average ($\bar{x}$) (Scales: max. 10 min. 6)	Percentage (%)
Presentation			
Bibliography	8.0/ 80.0%	9.42	94.2
Orthographic Quality		8.54	85.4
Clarity of written expression		8.92	89.2
Total Presentation		8.96	89.6
Content			
Organization and presentation of arguments	8.0/ 80.0%	8.88	88.8
Exegesis		8.54	85.4
Hermeneutics		9.00	90.0
Theology		8.85	88.5
Church History		8.73	87.3
Pastoral Theology and practical areas		9.54	95.4
Integration of Competencies		9.04	90.4
Total of the Content		8.94	89.4
Total	8.0/ 80%	8.95	89.5

Table 5.6: Summary of the average and percentage of skills in the oral defense of the MDiv's integration monograph 2024 (n=20).

Competencies	Minimum Execution Point	Average ($\bar{x}$) (Scales: max. 10 min. 6)	Percentage (%)
Information management	8.0/ 80.0%	9.49	94.9
Ability to articulate arguments and responses		9.25	92.5
Ability to integrate the material into his/her ministerial vocation		9.85	98.5
Total		9.53	95.3

Table 5.7: Summary of the average and percentage of skills in the oral defense of the MDiv's integration monograph 2025 (n=13).

Competencies	Minimum Execution Point	Average ($\bar{x}$) (Scales: max. 10 min. 6)	Percentage (%)
Information management	8.0/ 80.0%	9.27	92.7
Ability to articulate arguments and responses		9.23	92.3
Ability to integrate the material into his/her ministerial vocation		9.92	99.2
Total		9.47	94.7

Master of Arts in Religion (M.A.R.)

The goal of the Master of Arts in Religion program is for graduates to develop the competencies that allow them to research the religious phenomenon from a multidisciplinary perspective and as a fundamental aspect of Puerto Rican society, to continue advanced studies in the field of religion and theology, in order to train for a better professional work in private or government agencies, teaching religion in educational institutions and training for lay professional service in churches or private denominations. The curriculum currently consists of 39 credits distributed in four program areas: Core courses, Interdisciplinary Studies and Languages, World Religions, and Electives. In keeping with the mission of the SEPR, the graduate of the Master of Arts in Religion is expected.

- Investigate the religious phenomenon from a multidisciplinary perspective.
- Understand the religious phenomenon in its various manifestations from a multidisciplinary perspective.
- Acquire a basic knowledge of various world religions.
- Integrate the understanding of religious phenomena into the analysis of their personal and professional situation, including the examination of the essential values of life in their various religious expressions.

Assessment venues for this program are:

- *Evaluation of the student learning outcomes assessment in the courses* – Faculty members state in their syllabi their evaluation criteria that include book reviews, critical analysis of readings or research articles, oral reports, reflections, bibliographic research, partial tests, case discussions, monographs and argumentative essays and their respective rubrics, among others.
- *Comprehensive tests* – As part of the requirements of the degree, the student must complete tests where he/she will demonstrate the knowledge acquired in each of the competency areas described in the graduate profile.
- *Performance assessment rubrics* – Faculty members reviewed the rubrics to assess the performance of each student in the competence areas. This action will enable the gathering of evidence of skills developed, as described in the graduate profile.
- *Monographic Research Project* – As part of the graduation requirements, each student must present a critical research project on an aspect of a religious phenomenon. The work must be interdisciplinary. It is expected that the student will demonstrate the theoretical, methodological and analytical skills acquired in the courses that make up the MAR program. The student will develop the research project under the tutelage of a professor of religion. It must be approved by the faculty in accordance with the rubrics.

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies

The curriculum is a two-year degree program. The student will need to complete 39 credits (13 courses). The MABTS program is divided into four programmatic areas.: Biblical Studies (18 crds.), Theological Studies (12 crds.), Biblical Languages (6 crds.) and Research Project (3 crds). Along with the mission and vision of the ESPR, and aligned with the ATS Standard Degree Program, the person who graduates from the program of Master of Arts (Biblical and Theological Studies) is expected to:

- Apply the different methodologies and Bible reading approaches from both the Old and New Testaments.
- Analyze the diverse exegetical, hermeneutical, and theological theories in the problem-solving of biblical text interpretation.
- Critically analyze the diverse theological tendencies, allowing one to build their own argument about the different sources of Christian theology.
- Develop a critical understanding of faith interpretation within biblical tradition and theological thinking.
- Apply the grammar and basic vocabulary of a biblical language (Hebrew or Greek) to read, translate, and interpret the Holy Scriptures and use the resources of the languages to develop a deep understanding of the biblical text.

Other program expectations are available on the webpage.

Assessment venues for this program are:

- *Research project* –The main focus for program assessment is the Research Project (3 credits). The student will develop an investigation in which they demonstrate the ability to

integrate the knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired throughout the program by designing, writing, and articulating a research monograph. The faculty has designed the rubrics to assess each student's performance against program expectations. This action will enable the collection of evidence of the skills developed by the student as described in the program's objectives.

- *Student learning outcomes in the courses* – Faculty members describe in their syllabi their evaluation criteria, including theological essays, exegetical monographs, book reviews, bibliographical research, partial and short tests, reading analysis, case discussions, oral reports, and their respective rubrics, among others. These assessment tools will be aligned with the program's objectives.

Table 5.8: Summary of the average and percentage by competencies of the written part of the MABTS's research project 2025 (n=6).

Competencies	Minimum Execution Point	Average ($\bar{x}$) (Scales: max. 10 min. 6)	Percentage (%)
Bibliography	8.0 80%	9.92	99.2
Orthographic Quality		9.58	95.8
Clarity of written expression		9.75	97.5
Organization and presentation of arguments		9.25	92.5
Biblical Exegesis		9.33	93.3
Biblical Hermeneutics		9.58	95.8
Theological framework		9.33	93.3
Integration of competencies		9.67	96.7
Total		9.55	95.5

Table 5.9: Summary of the average and percentage by skills of the oral defense of the research project 2025 (n=6).

Competencies	Minimum Execution Point	Average ($\bar{x}$) (Scales: max. 10 min. 6)	Percentage (%)
Information management	8.0 80%	9.17	91.7
Ability to articulate arguments and responses		9.75	97.5
Presentation of the research topic		9.42	94.2
Content mastery		9.50	95.0
Total		9.46	94.6

Doctor in Ministry

The Doctor in Ministry program is the highest professional degree offered at the ESPR. The purpose is to provide opportunities for advanced studies to acquire ministerial competencies for pastoral care of the family. The program currently comprises eight courses (24 credits). In keeping with the mission of the SEPR, the graduate of the Doctorate in Ministry program is expected to:

- Develop a basic understanding of him/herself as an integral part of his/her nuclear and extended family.

- Develop a basic understanding of the social structures of the family in its multiple expressions from a bio-psycho-social and spiritual perspective.
- Analyze the conflicts of modern Hispanic family life.
- Acquire competencies in pastoral care in general and, particularly, family pastoral care.
- Cultivate and develop spiritual values according to biblical and historical traditions.
- Affirm a pastoral, vocational and professional identity to serve the church in its care with families.

Assessment venues for this program are:

- *Evaluation of the student learning outcomes assessment in the courses.*
- *Drafting of Research Proposal*
- *Presentation and Defense of a Thesis* – This is the main graduation requirement of the program. The student has the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the competencies acquired through the design of a research proposal, conduct research and defend his/her findings before an expert panel.

Findings

- SEPR demonstrates that the assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.
- SEPR has seen significant improvement in data collection systematization, as evidenced by the Institutional Assessment Plan.
- Faculty evidence incorporates a variety of techniques to assess students.
- SEPR publishes statistics and studies related to student performance, evaluations of academic programs, satisfaction surveys from administrative and support offices, assessments of library services, surveys of graduates, among others.

Recommendations

1. *Strengthen the documentation and organization of assessment results* to facilitate longitudinal analysis and support strategic institutional decision-making. Expand opportunities for faculty and administrative staff to participate in training related to innovative and differentiated assessment practices. Enhance institutional communication channels for disseminating assessment results in order to promote transparency and broader participation in improvement efforts. In technological Integration, SEPR increases the use of digital platforms to support the systematic collection, analysis, and reporting of student learning data.
2. *Expand faculty and staff professional development in assessment practices.* Overall, the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico demonstrates a structured, mission-driven approach

to assessing student learning. The institution has established clearly articulated learning outcomes, implemented organized and faculty-led assessment processes, and used assessment results to strengthen teaching, curriculum, and institutional effectiveness. While opportunities remain to further strengthen documentation practices, expand professional development, and enhance technological integration, the existing framework reflects a sustainable culture of assessment and continuous improvement.

3. *Enhance institutional communication channels for disseminating assessment results.* Accordingly, SEPR meets the expectations of MSCHE Standard V by maintaining a systematic process for assessing student learning and by using evidence of student achievement to inform institutional decision-making and improve educational effectiveness.

Conclusion

The educational goals of SEPR's academic programs are clearly articulated and reflect the institution's mission to form leaders who are ethically responsible, spiritually grounded, and socially engaged. In addition, the assessment processes integrate ministerial practice, theological reflection, and evaluation tools that are responsive to the diversity of academic programs and the student body. Faculty plays a central role in the implementation and analysis of student learning assessments, promoting a culture of shared responsibility for academic quality and student success. Assessment findings are used to inform curricular reviews, strengthen teaching practices, and enhance academic services. SEPR periodically reviews its assessment processes to ensure their relevance and alignment with the institution's mission and vision of transformation and inclusion.

STANDARD VI

Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

Introduction

In compliance with its mission, vision, objectives, and institutional values, the SEPR demonstrates the quality of its academic and administrative processes and its approach to achieving economic sustainability. From this perspective, available budgetary and financial resources are directed toward fulfilling the institutional objectives and the Seminary's main purpose: theological formation. The annual budgets and allocations have been prepared to respond systematically, responsibly, creatively, and effectively to the financial needs and challenges facing the institution and the country. The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with the Strategic Plan 2024-2029 (Appendix 6.1- Strategic Plan 2024-2029), the Master Campus Plan (Appendix 6.2- Master Campus Plan) & Institutional Development Plan 2024-2028 (Appendix 6.3 - Institutional Development Plan 2024-2028), and the Institutional Assessment Plan 2024-2027 (Appendix 6.4 -Institutional Assessment Plan 2024-2027), and are sufficient to fulfill the institutional mission, vision, values, and objectives, as well as to continuously improve academic programs, professional certifications, library and community services.

Planning and Improvement Process

The SEPR demonstrates its planning processes, development of academic and administrative structures, financial procedures, and assessment of results through the Institutional Strategic Plan 2024-2029 (SP 2024-2029) (Appendix A) and the Development Plan and Campus Master Plan 2024-2028 (Appendix B). The Board of Directors approved these documents in December 2023. In 2024, the institution revised both documents to incorporate recommendations and recent guidelines from its accreditation agencies, the Board of Postsecondary Institutions of Puerto Rico, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and the ATS Commission on Accrediting. The SP 2024-2029 includes metrics to set milestones and conduct regular short- and long-term evaluations, demonstrating the effectiveness of both the plan and other financial efforts. The Strategic Plan also includes provisions for the 2025-2026 Self-Study processes.

To demonstrate achievement of its administrative and academic objectives and to improve programs and services for students, the institution maintains an adequate operational budget to address the challenges and opportunities identified through the SWOT analysis in SP 2024-2029. The institutional objectives established in the Strategic Plan are appropriately evaluated and aligned with the institutional mission and the four priority areas:

- Priority 1: Increase student enrollment — develop a model for promotion, recruitment, admission, and retention, and promote academic offerings.

- Priority 2: Increase financial stability, efficiency, and sustainability by reviewing the organizational and operational model.
- Priority 3: Achieve academic excellence through a relevant academic offer established by denominational demand and the needs of the social context, including the creation of new offerings, new modalities, and internationalization.
- Priority 4: Review and strengthen the organizational model to improve institutional effectiveness.

Currently, the institution's economic resources are sufficient to fulfill its mission as an institution of higher education, allowing it to develop and strengthen its academic offerings, continuing education programs, physical infrastructure, and IT and connectivity infrastructure. The Strategic Plan 2024-2029 outlines institutional goals, objectives, and values that align with academic needs and support student and community services.

The Development Plan and Campus Master Plan 2024-2028 outline the institution's vision, mission, goals, and values. They provide a detailed plan to improve human, physical, and technological infrastructure to support teaching, learning, research, and community service. The plans emphasize professional development, technological advancement, and the maintenance of high-quality standards through accreditation and licensing (Appendix B). The Campus Master Plan also highlights areas for improvement at the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico and specifies projects aligned with institutional goals. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are included to measure progress.

The Technology Plan aims to enhance technological infrastructure over the next three years to support teaching, learning, research, assessment, and community service. Key initiatives include acquiring computer equipment, purchasing Microsoft Office 365 licenses, optimizing wireless connectivity, upgrading library information systems, integrating service areas through the Populi platform, implementing a Learning Management System (LMS), enhancing classroom facilities, installing library access systems, and installing solar panels to improve energy efficiency and resilience (Appendix C). Furthermore, the SEPR aligns its institutional goals with these plans to ensure compliance. This process enables the institution to demonstrate fulfillment of its goals and, consequently, its mission by achieving the key performance indicators outlined in its plans.

The institution follows a financial and budgetary planning process in accordance with the Institutional Budget Manual (Appendix D). The procedures outlined in this manual are intended to facilitate comprehensive interdepartmental collaboration in budget preparation and administration. The budget allocations identify the fiscal resources that enable the hiring of teaching and administrative staff, the renewal of physical infrastructure, and the enhancement of the technological, IT, and connectivity infrastructure supporting institutional operations, as well as the development of academic and continuing education programs and the provision of multiple services to students and the community. The financial resources of the SEPR are documented in annual and multi-year budgets (including five-year projections).

As a result of the assessment of planning and financial processes, the institution has, in recent years, restructured its economic model to focus on three primary areas: (1) generating income through property rentals, including lodgings, houses, meeting rooms, cafeteria, and recording studio and podcast facilities; (2) securing external funds; and (3) conducting an ongoing fundraising campaign. These efforts have yielded promising results. The institution successfully

raised new funds primarily from external sources. These grants enable the development of permanent improvements to physical infrastructure, with a focus on enhancing technological, IT, and connectivity systems and expanding academic offerings. This includes exploring new modalities, such as distance education, and creating new certifications in continuing education.

The Strategic Plan 2024-2029, Development Plan, and Campus Master Plan 2024-2028 are based on information about the national context and input gathered from faculty, the executive committee, the administrative team, and the board meetings. The SEPR is committed to sharing information about its planning and financial processes with the Seminary community through board meeting minutes, faculty, student, and alumni representatives on the Board, Executive President communications, the institutional website, meetings with various constituent groups, and the annual meetings of the sponsoring denominations, at which the Executive President presents a formal institutional report.

HISTORICAL FINANCIAL TRENDS

The SEPR operates in accordance with the regulations approved by its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors holds final decision-making authority over the Seminary's processes and actions. Administrative decisions are guided by the recommendations of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, the Board's representative body. The Executive President presents progress reports on the objectives detailed in the Strategic Plan 2024-2029, along with financial statements and updates on administrative actions taken in alignment with the plan. Decisions of the Executive Committee, along with matters delegated to specific units, are carried out in accordance with its established priorities.

Financial planning is discussed with the management team and the Executive Committee, incorporating relevant economic and institutional trends and identifying areas of concern. The financial statements are audited annually by an external auditor, who provides recommendations to the Board and administration on corrective or improvement actions as needed.

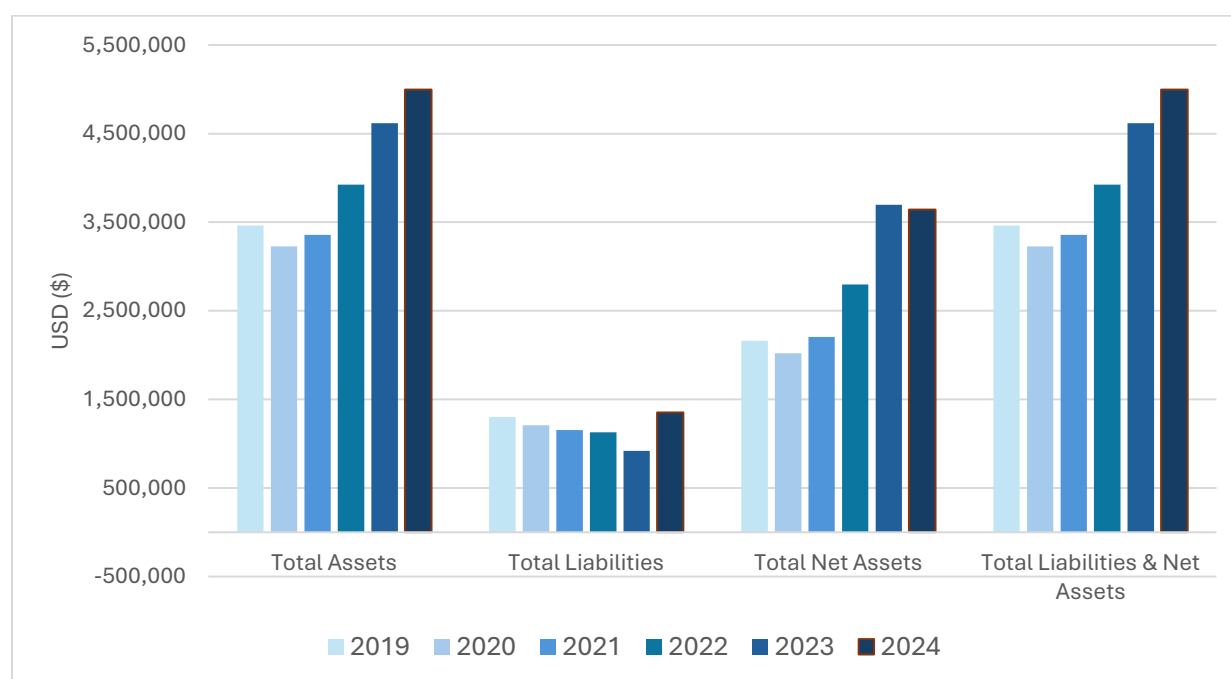
The following tables and graph illustrate the institution's budgetary assignments and financial position over five years, demonstrating consistent revenue growth, responsible expenditure management, and a sustained strengthening of net assets. Taken together, these indicators reflect the SEPR's commitment to financial stability and its capacity to fulfill its institutional mission.

Table 6.1 presents budgetary assignments from FY2020 through FY2025, covering all major revenue sources and expense categories. Total revenues grew from \$1,053,650 in FY2020 to a projected \$1,397,580 in FY2025, representing an increase of approximately 32.6% over five years. This growth is driven primarily by a sustained expansion of internal sources, which grew from \$688,750 in FY2020 to a projected \$1,015,380 in FY2025, reflecting the institution's strategic focus on generating income through property rentals, external grant funding, and ongoing fundraising efforts. Total expenses have been managed in close alignment with revenue growth, and the institution achieved a positive net income of \$40,345 in the projected FY2025 budget, demonstrating responsible fiscal stewardship.

Table 6.1: Budgetary Assignments 2020-2025.

Budgets						
	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Revenues						
Total Mission Boards	\$167,500	\$170,000	\$187,500	\$170,367	\$170,367	\$182,000
Total Coop. Churches PR	126,400	125,650	126,500	126,500	126,500	130,000
Total Other Ch USA	15,000	15,780	18,500	19,400	19,400	19,700
Total Internal Sources	688,750	725,425	863,100	905,700	928,700	1,015,380
Total other Donations	56,000	176,500	36,500	37,000	37,000	50,500
Total Revenues	\$1,053,650	\$1,213,355	\$1,232,100	\$1,258,967	\$1,281,967	\$1,397,580
Expenses						
Academic/Inst. Assessment Office	\$374,297	\$423,375	\$439,378	\$444,607	\$446,095	\$513,943
Library	79,591	77,746	104,008	110,890	115,650	115,651
Education Support	185,258	164,865	213,679	213,870	213,670	214,747
Maintenance and Properties	76,535	92,401	86,375	91,105	97,900	99,717
Total Utilities	93,475	95,225	110,050	109,300	106,850	119,750
Finance	100,816	129,497	101,295	105,025	105,025	105,025
Presidential & Development Office	100,178	166,228	134,317	134,804	154,277	145,904
Total Capital Expenses	43,500	64,019	43,000	42,500	42,500	42,500
Total Expenses	\$1,053,650	\$1,213,355	\$1,232,100	\$1,252,100	\$1,281,967	\$1,357,235
Net Income (Loss)				\$6,867	\$0	\$40,345
Total Restricted Funds				377,552	388,892	1,877,686
Total Restricted Expenses				\$377,552	388,892	1,877,686
Net Balance Restricted Funds				\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Income (Loss) After Restricted				\$6,867	\$0	\$40,345

Graph 6.1: *Statements of Financial Position – Comparative Five (5) Years vs FY2019.*



STATEMENTS ON FINANCIAL POSITION

The independent auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico, Inc. for the year ending December 31, 2024, confirming that the financial position and operations are fairly presented in accordance with U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The Seminary reported total assets of approximately \$5.0 million and total net assets of \$3,642,863, consisting of \$57,698 in unrestricted net assets and \$3,585,165 in donor-restricted net assets. The organization maintains significant investments, property, and equipment valued at \$2.0 million, as well as cash and certificates of deposit totaling approximately \$1.95 million.

For fiscal year 2024, the Seminary experienced a net decrease in net assets of \$54,527, as total operating expenses of \$1.83 million exceeded total revenues of \$1.78 million. Revenue sources included tuition and fees (\$394,718), donations and private grants (\$1.13 million), along with investment and rental income, as detailed in the audited financial statements. The Seminary continues to operate multiple degree programs and special initiatives funded through restricted grants. It also manages approximately \$743,000 in long-term debt with the Mission Investment Fund. Additionally, the institution maintains compliance with federal financial aid program requirements and is currently operating under heightened cash monitoring by the U.S. Department of Education. The institution is actively working to meet the Department of Education's requirements to resolve this status and has maintained compliance with all applicable federal program obligations.

Analysis of FY 2020–2024 Operating Revenues and Expenditures

The SEPR is dedicated to developing strategies that promote economic sustainability. Its institutional efforts focus on strengthening financial management by identifying innovative ways

to increase revenue and reduce costs. As outlined in Objective 5 of the Strategic Plan 2024-2029, administrative measures are being implemented to achieve financial and fiscal soundness and stability. Guidelines, administrative efforts, financial analyses, decision-making, and planning activities are geared toward achieving this institutional goal. The institutional financial analysis is presented in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Statements of Financial Position – Comparative Five (5) Years vs FY2019.

YEARS AUDITED						
	FY2024	FY2023	FY2022	FY2021	FY2020	FY2019
Total Assets	\$4,996,257	\$4,617,416	\$3,925,567	\$3,355,647	\$3,226,236	\$3,463,466
Total Liabilities	\$1,353,394	\$920,026	\$1,129,396	\$1,151,793	\$1,207,523	\$1,301,802
Total Net Assets	\$3,642,863	\$3,697,390	\$2,796,171	\$2,203,854	\$2,018,713	\$2,161,664
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$4,996,257	\$4,617,416	\$3,925,567	\$3,355,647	\$3,226,236	\$3,463,466

Financial Growth and Strategic Capital Investments

The SEPR has demonstrated significant financial resilience and strategic growth over the past five years, navigating financial pressures stemming from enrollment fluctuations, post-hurricane recovery, and broader economic challenges affecting higher education in Puerto Rico. An examination of the institution's balance sheet from FY2019 to FY2024 reveals a consistently positive trajectory characterized by asset expansion, a strategic use of debt to fund capital investments, and substantial growth in net assets.

Net Asset Growth and Recovery

The institution's net assets followed a largely upward trajectory during this period, beginning at \$2,161,664 in FY2019 and declining modestly to \$2,018,713 in FY2020, a year marked by disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. The SEPR demonstrated strong recovery, with net assets growing to \$2,203,854 in FY2021, then to \$2,796,171 in FY2022, and reaching \$3,697,390 in FY2023. While FY2024 showed a modest decrease to \$3,642,863, the overall five-year trend remains consistently positive, representing a net increase in total assets of approximately \$1.48 million, or 68.5% growth from the FY2019 baseline. This translates to a compound annual growth rate of approximately 11%, outpacing average annual U.S. inflation of approximately 4.3% over the same period (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024), and reflects sound institutional financial stewardship.

Asset Base Expansion

Total assets increased substantially from \$3,463,466 in FY2019 to \$4,996,257 in FY2024, representing an increase of \$1,532,791, or 44.3%. This expansion reflects the institution's strategic investments in physical infrastructure, technology, and academic and continuing education programs. This consistent upward progression of total assets, with the sole exception of a modest dip in FY2020, illustrates increasing institutional capacity. The FY2024 total assets represent the highest level achieved over the six years, underscoring the institution's strengthened resource base and expanded institutional capacity.

Liability Management and Strategic Financing

The liability profile reflects the institution's evolving approach to financing its growth and operations. Total liabilities decreased steadily from \$1,301,802 in FY2019 to \$920,026 in FY2023, demonstrating consistent debt reduction and effective liability management. In FY2024, liabilities increased to \$1,353,394, up \$433,368 from the prior year. This increase reflects a deliberate investment strategy to fund capital improvements that strengthen institutional capacity, rather than a deterioration in financial health. The elevator construction project and other infrastructure initiatives undertaken in FY2024 were financed through Lilly Endowment grants, a prudent approach that preserves operational liquidity while advancing critical capital projects.

Strategic Capital Allocation

A substantial share of the asset expansion, approximately \$350,000, has been allocated toward capital improvements that enhance both educational infrastructure and long-term financial sustainability. The SEPR undertook a campus-wide modernization initiative, equipping each learning space with updated audiovisual and computing equipment and expanding wireless connectivity throughout the campus. These infrastructure investments have positioned the institution to meet contemporary educational demands, support distance and hybrid learning modalities, and provide students with access to the learning tools needed for effective preparation in contemporary ministerial and community service contexts.

Revenue-Generating Infrastructure Investments

Beyond classroom enhancements, the SEPR has invested in specialized facilities that serve dual purposes: enriching the educational experience and generating new revenue streams. Notable additions include a podcast and an audio recording studio that enable media ministry training and generate rental income, a purpose-built homiletic laboratory chapel for practical preaching and worship leadership training, and newly constructed office spaces that provide both programmatic utility and additional rental revenue. Since their establishment, these facilities have generated approximately \$25,000 in recurring income annually, contributing to a more diversified and sustainable institutional revenue base.

Recent Capital Projects

Most recently, in the third quarter of FY2024, the SEPR initiated the design and construction of a new \$75,000 elevator system in the administrative and academic building, a project completed in 2026. This accessibility improvement project serves multiple strategic purposes: enhancing campus functionality for individuals with mobility limitations, ensuring compliance with accessibility standards and regulations, improving overall building utility and

long-term asset value, and adding capital value to the institution's asset portfolio. The elevator project demonstrates the SEPR's commitment to inclusive access and responsible stewardship of its physical plant.

Financial Position Assessment

The slight decrease in net assets from FY2023 to FY2024, while representing a departure from the upward trend observed since FY2020, should be understood in the context of strategic capital deployment rather than as an indication of operational weakness. The institution chose to increase its infrastructure investment in FY2024, accepting a temporary rise in liabilities and a modest reduction in net assets to position itself for stronger long-term financial and operational performance. The strong cash position of \$1,851,098 at year-end FY2024, as reflected in Table 6.3, provides a significant liquidity reserve, demonstrating that the institution maintains sound financial health despite higher liabilities. The combination of strategic capital investment, sustained operational strength, and solid cash reserves positions the SEPR favorably for continued growth and institutional development.

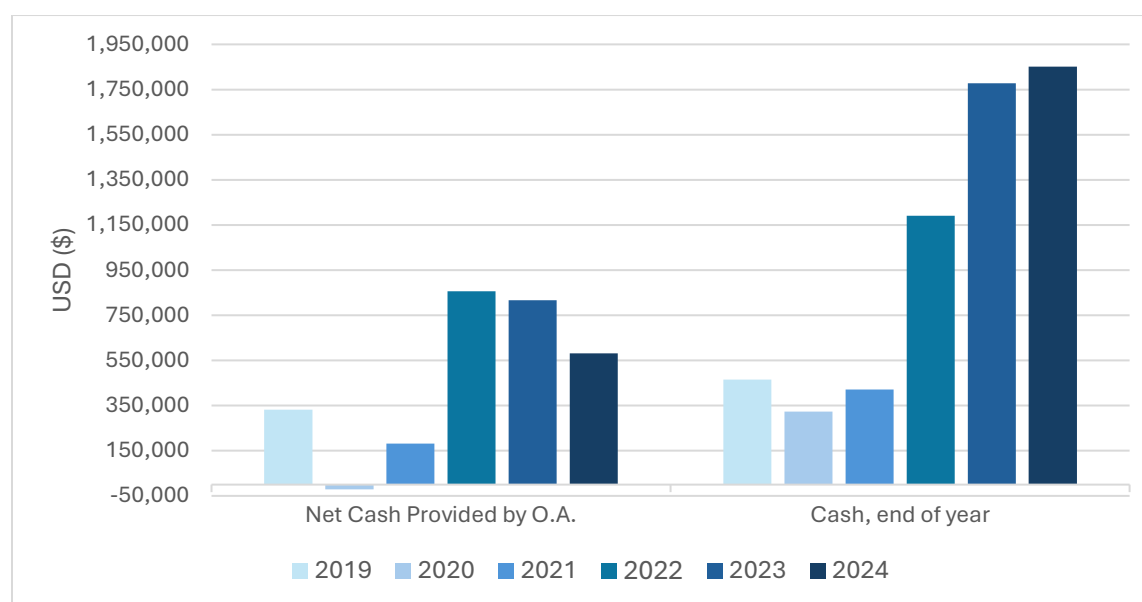
Comprehensive Analysis of Cash Flow Performance (FY2019 – FY2024)

The SEPR's cash flow statements for the six years from FY2019 to FY2024 demonstrate a consistent pattern of sound liquidity management, purposeful capital investment, and steady improvement in the institution's overall financial position.

Table 6.3: Statement of Cash Flows: Comparative Five (5) Years vs FY2019

YEARS AUDITED						
	2024 (1)	2023 (2)	2022 (3)	2021 (4)	2020 (5)	2019
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	\$581,603	\$816,962	\$856,100	\$181,425	(\$20,542)	\$332,036
Net cash from Investing Activities	(\$463,047)	(\$177,292)	(\$41,505)	(\$40,587)	(\$80,412)	\$47,675
Net Cash Used on Financing Activities	(\$45,605)	(\$51,970)	(\$45,655)	(\$42,904)	(\$41,004)	(\$55,929)
Net Increase in Cash	\$72,951	\$587,700	\$768,940	\$97,934	(\$141,958)	\$323,782
Cash, end of year	\$1,851,098	\$1,778,147	1,190,447	\$421,507	\$323,573	\$465,531

Graph 6.2: *Statement of Cash Flows: Comparative Five (5) Years vs FY2019*



Operating Activities: Core Operational Strength

The net cash provided by operating activities, representing the cash generated from the institution's core educational and ministry operations, reflects the financial soundness of the SEPR's primary mission activities. The institution recorded a cash outflow of \$20,542 in FY2020, attributable to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this represents the only year of negative operating cash flow during the entire period, confirming the temporary nature of this disruption.

The institution demonstrated strong recovery, with operating cash flows growing to \$181,425 in FY2021, then to \$856,100 in FY2022, and maintaining solid performance at \$816,962 in FY2023. While FY2024 recorded a decrease to \$581,603, this figure remains substantially positive, reflecting sound operational performance. The ability to consistently generate positive operating cash flow in five of the six years examined indicates that the SEPR's core educational programs, tuition revenues, and operational management remain sound, both operationally and financially.

Investing Activities: Strategic Capital Deployment

The investing activities data reflect the institution's commitment to long-term growth and infrastructure development. Except for FY2019, which recorded a positive cash flow of \$47,675 from investing activities attributable to market performance, every subsequent year recorded net cash outflows, a pattern consistent with an institution committed to sustained capital development.

The growth in capital expenditure culminated in a \$463,047 outflow in FY2024, the largest single-year capital investment during the period. This expenditure aligns directly with the infrastructure improvements described earlier in this section, including classroom modernization, technology upgrades, specialized facilities such as the podcast studio and homiletic laboratory, and the elevator construction project. The progression from investments of \$40,587 in FY2021 and

\$41,505 in FY2022 to the substantial expenditure of FY2024 demonstrates a deliberate strategy of accelerated capital improvement, made possible by the institution's strengthened financial position.

Financing Activities: Disciplined Debt Management

The financing activities category recorded consistent negative cash flows ranging from \$41,004 to \$55,929 annually, reflecting steady and disciplined management of the institution's debt obligations and financing commitments. Averaging approximately \$45,000 per year, these outflows are consistent with the structured repayment terms of the institution's Mission Investment Fund obligations. This pattern demonstrates financial discipline and stability in managing the institution's capital structure, with no evidence of emergency borrowing or disorderly financing decisions throughout the six years.

Net Cash Position: Building Financial Resilience

The cumulative effect of these three cash flow components reflects a substantial improvement in the SEPR's liquidity position. Following FY2020, which recorded a net cash decrease of \$141,958, bringing the cash balance to its lowest point of \$323,573, the institution achieved a sustained and significant recovery.

The cash position grew to \$421,507 in FY2021, then increased substantially to \$1,190,447 in FY2022, representing approximately 182% growth in a single year. This growth continued, with cash reserves reaching \$1,778,147 in FY2023 and \$1,851,098 in FY2024. The FY2024 ending cash position of \$1,851,098 represents an approximately 5.7-fold increase from the FY2020 low point of \$323,573 and a nearly fourfold increase from the FY2019 opening position of \$465,531, demonstrating the institution's sustained progress in building a sound liquidity reserve.

Strategic Implications and Financial Health Assessment

This cash flow analysis offers several key findings about the SEPR's financial trajectory. First, the institution has effectively managed significant external challenges, including disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic in FY2020, while maintaining operational viability. Second, the strong operating cash flows generated in recent years have provided the financial capacity to fund substantial capital improvements without compromising liquidity. Third, the ending cash position of over \$1.8 million provides a significant financial reserve, representing approximately 12 months of operational coverage and positioning the institution well for future opportunities and potential challenges.

The relationship between strong operating performance, strategic capital investment, and disciplined financing management has produced a reinforcing pattern of financial growth and institutional development. The SEPR has demonstrated not only the capacity to maintain financial stability, but also the strategic discipline to build institutional reserves while investing in the physical and technological infrastructure needed to serve its students and fulfill its mission.

Budget FY 2025 & FY2026

Table 6.4: Amended Budget 2025, Current Budget 2026, and Variance 2025 vs 2026.

	BUDGET 2025	AMENDED BUDGET 2025	BUDGET 2026	VARIANCE 2025 VS 2026
Revenues				
Total Mission Boards	179,500	182,000	185,000	1.6%
Total Cooperating Churches-PR	126,500	130,000	130,000	0%
Total Other Churches in the USA	19,700	19,700	20,200	2.5%
Total Internal Sources	977,580	1,015,380	1,030,125	1%
Total Other Donations	50,500	50,500	57,125	13%
Total Revenues	\$1,353,780	\$1,397,580	\$1,422,450	1.8%
Expenses				
Academic & Institutional Assessment Office	521,743	513,943	557,386	8.5%
Total Library	118,773	115,651	120,926	4.5%
Total Education Support	214,747	214,747	219,323	2%
Maintenance and Properties	99,717	99,717	99,717	0%
Total Utilities	89,750	119,750	124,875	4%
Finance	105,025	105,025	105,025	0%
Presidential and Development Office	134,804	145,904	145,904	0%
Total Capital Expenses	42,500	42,500	42,210	-1%
Total Expenses	\$1,327,059	\$1,357,237	\$1,415,365	4.2%
Net Income (Loss)	\$26,721	\$40,345	\$7,085	-82%
Total Restricted Funds	990,929	1,877,686	847,817	-55%
Total Restricted Expenses	990,929	1,877,686	847,817	-55%
Net Balance Restricted Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Net Income (Loss) After Restricted	\$26,721	\$40,345	\$7,085	-82%

Appendix 6 shows the complete FY2025 Budget, including all revenues and expenses sections, and Appendix 7 shows the FY2026 Approved Budget.

The institution has expanded its payment options through the Populi platform, accelerating revenue collection and improving accessibility for students and their supporters. Payment is now accepted via PayPal and bank draft, in addition to the credit card payment options already provided by the platform, and is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Additionally, the institution

has acquired technology tools and plugins compatible with the Populi platform to enhance and integrate services for students, faculty, and the broader community. This initiative aligns with SP2024-2029 Goal #3. These improvements have reduced accounts receivable turnaround time, provided sponsoring denominations and family members with direct payment options to support students, and enabled students to access their account balances and payment due dates at any time.

Audit Students Initiative

The Audit Students Policy was amended in August 2019. This initiative has contributed to growth in the number of audit students, though enrollment has varied across academic years, generating an additional source of institutional income.

Table 6.5: Enrollment Audits Students Trends AY2021-22 to 2025-26 (Including all academic periods).

Academic Year	1st Semester (Summer & Fall)	2nd Semester (Intensive & Spring)	Total Enrollment Audits Students	Total Credits	New Income
2021-2022	38	29	67	248	\$12,450
2022-2023	30	57	80	276	\$13,800
2023-2024	39	22	61	235	\$11,850
2024-2025	29	27	56	207	\$10,350
2025-2026	44	51	95	342	\$17,100

There are cases of hearing students who enroll in more than one course per academic period. The 2025-2026 academic year shows a recovery in the number of auditing students. The institution presents this data as evidence of the effectiveness of its social network advertising campaign.

Continuing Education Program

The institution continues to promote continuing education for church leaders and the general public in Puerto Rico and Hispanic communities throughout the United States. In the past academic years 2024-2025 and 2025-2026, the following certifications have been offered:

Table 6.6: Enrollment Continuing Education Program Trends

Certificate	Academic Year				
	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
	Enroll \$	Enroll \$	Enroll \$	Enroll \$	Enroll \$
Administration of Churches and Ecclesial Programs	27 \$6,750	12 \$3,000	15 \$3,750	30 \$10,500	
Feminist Theology (Basic)	34 \$8,500	16 \$4,000	9 \$2,250		
Feminist Theology (Advance)	14 \$3,500				
Ministry with Youth	25 \$7,500	11 \$4,400		10 \$4,000	
Inclusion of the Elderly in Faith Communities		29 \$7,250	10 \$2,500		
Mission and Interculturality (Basic Level)					7 \$2,450
Intergenerational Pastoral Care					20 \$8,000
Total	100 \$26,250	68 \$18,650	34 \$8,500	40 \$14,500	27 \$10,450

For the Spring 2026 semester (January–May), the SEPR has scheduled the offering of two advanced-level continuing education certificates: the Certificate in Feminist Theology (Advanced Level) and the Certificate in Mission and Interculturality (Advanced Level). In addition, the institution will introduce two new certificate programs, the Certificate in Intergenerational Pastoral Care and the Certificate in Ministry with Children of Functional Diversity, both of which are projected to generate supplementary institutional revenue. These programs were developed in direct response to needs identified by pastoral and lay leaders across affiliated faith communities, reflecting the institution's commitment to contextually relevant theological education. The operational costs associated with the Continuing Education Program remain modest, as many of these courses are taught by faculty members who volunteer their instructional time and professional expertise, thereby minimizing program expenditures while sustaining academic quality and community impact.

External Funds through Proposals and Special Projects

In alignment with its long-term financial sustainability strategy, the SEPR has pursued a systematic approach to securing external funding by developing and submitting competitive educational proposals to private foundations and grant-making entities. These efforts reflect the institution's proactive commitment to diversifying its revenue base and expanding its

programmatic capacity. The following initiatives are currently in active development as a direct result of these efforts.

1. Lilly Endowment Initiatives (Total Award: \$3,949,277 | 2022–2029)

- ***Pathway for Tomorrow Praxis Project, Phases I & II (2022–2027)*** — The SEPR was awarded two grants totaling \$1,050,000 in support of academic program development and the expansion of distance education modalities (Appendices 8 & 9). The project pursues three primary objectives: (1) the design and development of new academic programs, including a Master's degree in Counseling in Families, Couples, and Marriage, and a Professional Certificate in Youth Ministry; (2) the conversion and delivery of existing master's and doctoral degree programs through fully online distance education formats; and (3) the development of a two-level online Continuing Education Program targeting pastors, ministers, lay leaders, and the broader community. These initiatives are designed to extend the Seminary's geographic reach beyond the San Juan metropolitan area to students throughout the Island and across the diaspora in Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States. The grants have also enabled the recruitment of specialized personnel to address identified areas of institutional need, strengthening the SEPR's operational and academic capacity in direct alignment with its mission.

- ***Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer Program, Phases I & II*** — The Seminary received two grants totaling \$1,299,320 over five years in support of this specialized initiative (Appendices 10 & 11). The program is designed to develop evidence-informed strategies that cultivate worship and prayer practices among children, with particular attention to children with special needs and their integration into congregational life. To this end, the project provides training to pastoral and lay leaders, equipping them with the pedagogical and ministerial competencies necessary to support children's spiritual formation. As an additional institutional benefit, this initiative has facilitated the Seminary's direct engagement with local congregations, thereby creating new channels to promote academic programs, certificates, and continuing education offerings.

- ***Strengthening Hispanic Pastoral Leaders and Congregations Initiative, Phases I & II*** — This initiative represents an investment of \$1,549,957 over five years (Appendices 12 & 13). The project is designed to strengthen the well-being, resilience, and leadership effectiveness of pastoral leaders, their families, and the congregations they serve, with particular emphasis on preventing ministerial burnout. A significant component of this initiative, \$830,000, is allocated to the full renovation of the Seminary's residential lodging building, which has remained non-operational since sustaining damage during Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. Upon completion, the building will provide thirty residential units for student housing. The first two floors are projected to be fully renovated and operational by August 2026, at which point the institution anticipates generating approximately \$84,000 in new annual residential income. Upon full completion of the construction project, projected recurring income

is estimated at approximately \$126,000 annually, representing a meaningful and sustainable contribution to the institution's long-term revenue base.

- ***Planning for a National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders*** — This one-year planning grant of \$50,000 funded a comprehensive needs assessment examining the economic circumstances of pastoral leaders across the six sponsoring denominations (Appendix 14). In addition to generating actionable data to inform future programming, the initiative provided structured training to 30 participants in ecclesial finance and administration, building financial literacy capacity within the Seminary's denominational constituency.

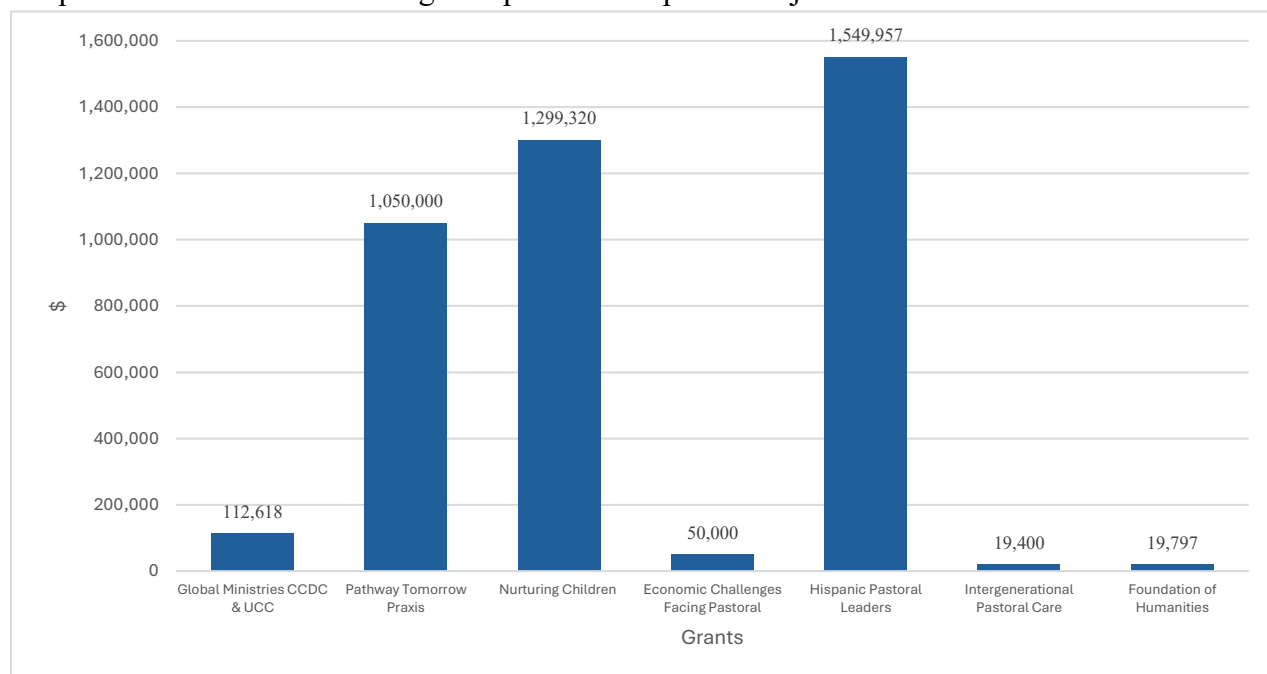
2. Other Grants & Initiatives (Total Awards: \$151,815.75 | 2022–2026)

In addition to its partnership with Lilly Endowment, Inc., the SEPR has secured supplementary external funding through grants and collaborative initiatives with denominational mission boards, ecumenical organizations, and humanities foundations. These awards collectively reflect the institution's expanding network of external partnerships and its capacity to attract diverse funding in support of its academic, archival, and community engagement priorities.

- ***Global Ministries Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ (CCDC/UCC) — Institutional Support Grant*** — The Global Ministries Board of the CCDC and UCC committed three years of financial support to the SEPR for administrative and financial strengthening, covering the period from March 2023 through February 2026 (Appendix 15). The total award of \$112,618.75 was disbursed on a declining annual schedule as follows: \$48,700.00 in Year 1, \$36,525.00 in Year 2, and \$27,393.75 in Year 3. This structured support has directly reinforced the institution's administrative infrastructure and financial management capacity during a critical period of institutional development.
- ***Certificate in Intergenerational Pastoral Care — Curriculum Development Initiative*** — With a total investment of \$19,400, funded through a combination of institutional resources and a grant from the Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, the SEPR undertook the design and development of a new Certificate in Intergenerational Pastoral Care (Appendix 16). This certificate program is specifically designed to equip pastoral and lay leaders of the sponsoring denominations with the theological frameworks, practical tools, and ministerial competencies required to cultivate an intergenerational ecclesiology and spirituality, one that intentionally integrates children, youth, adults, and older adults into the full life of the congregation. The program reflects the Seminary's commitment to addressing emergent needs within its denominational communities and is scheduled for delivery in the upcoming academic semester.
- ***Research Room of the Historical Archive of Puerto Rican Protestantism*** — Through a grant of \$19,797 awarded by the Puerto Rican Foundation for the Humanities, the SEPR advanced the systematic organization, cataloguing, and preservation of primary source documentation held within the Historical Archive of Puerto Rican

Protestantism, with particular focus on the records of the Evangelical Council (Appendix 17). This initiative significantly enhances the Archive's accessibility and utility as a scholarly resource, supporting research across a broad range of historical, theological, and cultural fields. Upon the formal conclusion of the grant-funded project in December 2024, the Seminary demonstrated its commitment to the Archive's long-term sustainability by retaining Dr. Helen Santiago in her role as Archivist and Coordinator of the Historical Archive, ensuring the continuity of preservation efforts and research support services beyond the grant period.

Graph 6.3: External funds through Proposals and Special Projects 2021-2025.



SEPR maintains comprehensive documentation of its financial resources and planning processes through a coordinated framework of development plans, annual operating budgets, and multi-year budget projections. This documentation addresses the enhancement of human, physical, technological, information technology, and connectivity infrastructure, as well as ongoing self-study and accreditation requirements. Through this integrated approach, the institution demonstrates that its fiscal resources are adequate to sustain current operations and strategically aligned to support continuous institutional improvement. The financial resources supporting institutional operations are presented in the sections that follow.

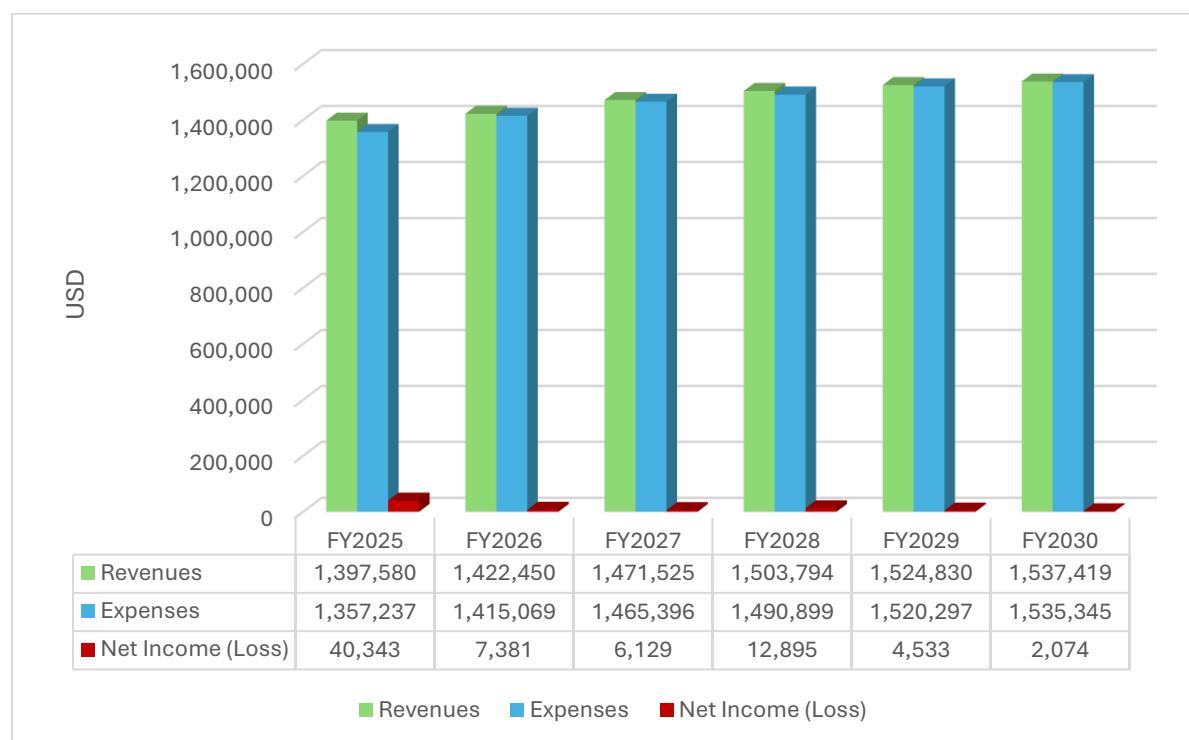
PROJECTIONS 2025-2030

Below, we present the Amended FY2025 budget, the Approved FY2026 budget, and the next four-year budget projection. (Appendix 19).

Table 6.7: Budget 2025 and Budget Projection FY2026 to FY2030

	BUDGET FY2026	BUDGET FY2027	BUDGET FY2028	BUDGET FY2029	BUDGET FY2030
Revenues					
Total Mission Boards	185,000	185,000	185,000	185,000	185,000
Total Cooperating Churches-PR	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000
Total Other Churches in the USA	20,200	21,200	22,200	22,700	22,700
Total Internal Sources*	1,030,125	1,071,106	1,097,257	1,112,089	1,118,319
Total Other Donations	57,125	64,219	69,337	75,041	81,400
Total Revenues	\$1,422,450	\$1,471,525	\$1,503,794	\$1,524,830	\$1,537,419
Expenses					
Academic & Institutional Assessment Office	557,386	598,672	618,261	638,079	646,295
Total Library	120,629	120,926	120,926	122,002	122,002
Total Education Support	219,323	216,900	216,900	216,900	216,900
Maintenance and Properties	99,717	101,870	101,870	104,023	104,023
Total Utilities	124,875	134,175	140,371	147,000	154,105
Finance	105,025	105,025	105,025	105,025	105,025
Presidential and Development Office	145,904	145,904	145,904	145,904	145,904
Total Capital Expenses	42,210	41,924	41,642	41,364	41,091
Total Expenses	\$1,415,069	\$1,465,396	\$1,490,899	\$1,520,297	\$1,535,345
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 7,381	\$ 6,129	\$ 12,895	\$ 4,533	\$ 2,074
Total Restricted Funds	847,817	713,367	537,542	275,600	44,600
Total Restricted Expenses	847,817	713,367	537,542	275,600	44,600
Net Balance Restricted Funds	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Net Income (Loss) After Restricted	\$ 7,381	\$ 6,129	\$ 12,895	\$ 4,533	\$ 2,074

*Internal sources total includes Tuition, Academic Fees, Residential Rentals, Facility Rentals, and Investment Income. Allocations from Project, Initiatives, or Proposal are included in the Restricted Funds section.

Graph 6.4: *Projected Budget FY2025-FY2030 (Revenues vs Expenses).*

▪ ***Investment and Endowments***

The majority of the SEPR's investment portfolio is managed through the Presbyterian Foundation, a pooled investment fund comprised primarily of the Presbyterian Endowment Fund and diversified securities holdings. A portion of the institution's investments is maintained and managed independently, consisting principally of cash reserves, short-term investments, and asset-backed securities, including instruments issued by the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation. Together, these investment vehicles constitute a diversified and responsibly managed portfolio that supports the institution's long-term financial stability. The principal endowment funds held by the SEPR are identified below.

ENDOWMENTS

DORCAS D. DAVIS FUND.....	\$371,446
BROWNLEE-LIMARDO UCC-BI.....	\$500,000
WALTON FOUNDATION (ENDOWMENT).....	\$312,714
AURELIO ROQUE SCH. FUND.....	\$ 30,000
SALVADOR/ROSALINA VELEZ FUND.....	\$ 71,351
REV. ERNESTO BADILLO CHURCH ADMINISTRATION FUND.....	\$ 50,019
SEMINARIO EVANGELICO PR ENDOWMENT (OTHERS).....	\$ 85,185
TOTAL ENDOWMENTS.....	\$1,420,715

INVESTMENTS

POPULAR SECURITIES.....	\$ 51,747
MISSION INVESTMENT FUND (MIF).....	\$227,444
PCUSA NEW COVENANT FUND.....	\$202,692
TOTAL INVESTMENT.....	\$481,883

TOTAL ENDOWMENTS & INVESTMENTS..... \$1,902,598

The investment and endowment funds managed by the SEPR serve as a critical source of financial support for core institutional functions, including library operations, ongoing acquisition of library resources, and student scholarships. Students without formal denominational endorsement are among the primary beneficiaries of this support, receiving financial assistance drawn from the earnings of the Dorcas D. Davis Fund and other designated endowments.

Two endowment funds carry donor-imposed restrictions that direct their use toward specific academic programs. The Walton Foundation Fund designates a portion of its annual earnings to support instruction in Reformed Theology, allocating funds to administrative course costs and associated overhead. The Rev. Ernesto Badillo Fund is similarly restricted, with its annual earnings designated to support the Church Administration and Leadership course. Fund allocations cover instructional staff compensation, administrative costs, and program overhead. Additionally, a portion of the fund's annual earnings is designated for a yearly academic recognition award presented to a graduating student who demonstrates exceptional performance in the course.

As of September 30, 2025, the combined total of the SEPR's endowments and investment holdings reached \$1,902,598, representing an increase of \$128,545, or approximately 7%, over the FY2023 closing balance of \$1,774,053. This growth reflects the institution's sound stewardship of its investment portfolio and its sustained commitment to strengthening its long-term financial foundation.

SEPR has implemented a series of strategic actions designed to strengthen and diversify its institutional financial base. These initiatives reflect the institution's proactive approach to resource development and its commitment to long-term fiscal sustainability.

- **Office of Institutional Development — Fundraising Coordination** — In March 2024, the SEPR established the Office of Institutional Development and appointed Mrs. Brenda Toledo as its Coordinator, with primary responsibility for institutional fundraising operations. Since its inception, the Office has undertaken a comprehensive update of the institution's donor database and has systematically expanded outreach to prospective new donors. Through a series of targeted fundraising campaigns, the Office has demonstrated measurable early results. As of October 2025, these efforts have generated a total of \$94,216 in new contributions, distributed as follows:
 - Student Scholarship Funds: \$26,956
 - General Institutional Fund: \$67,260
- **External Grant Proposals** — Over the past three years, SEPR has achieved a significant milestone in external funding by securing a cumulative total of \$4,101,092 through competitive grant proposals submitted to Lilly Endowment, Inc. These awards have

provided critical financial support for enhancing academic programs, educational resources, faculty development, and community outreach initiatives. The institution's sustained success in securing this level of external funding reflects both the strength of its programmatic vision and its demonstrated commitment to advancing its mission and creating meaningful impact within its constituent communities.

- **Federal Recovery and Resiliency Funding** — The SEPR has received a total of \$924,968.72 in federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), designated for the reimbursement of repair, recovery, and reconstruction costs incurred as a direct result of the damage sustained during Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. These funds have supported the restoration of institutional infrastructure and have contributed to the Seminary's ongoing physical recovery and long-term campus resilience.

Annual Independent Audits and Management Letters: FY2020–FY2024

SEPR has maintained a sustained commitment to financial transparency and accountability by completing a Board-level review of its independent audit reports for fiscal years 2020 through 2024. The following summary presents the audit findings and key financial outcomes for each fiscal year under review.

- ***FY2020 Audit*** — The independent auditor's report for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020, was completed and formally received by the Board of Directors on August 24, 2023. The auditing firm Medero Roldán, LLC, issued an unqualified opinion, confirming that the financial statements fairly present the institution's financial position in all material respects, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) in the United States of America (Appendix 20).
- ***FY2021 Audit*** — The independent auditor's report for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2021, was completed and formally received by the Board of Directors on December 19, 2023. Medero Roldán, LLC, issued an unqualified opinion, affirming that the financial statements fairly present the institution's financial position in all material respects, in accordance with U.S. GAAP (Appendix 21).
- ***FY2022 Audit*** — The independent auditor's report for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022, was completed and formally received by the Board of Directors on February 7, 2024. Medero Roldán, LLC, again issued an unqualified opinion, confirming that the financial statements fairly present the institution's financial position in all material respects, in accordance with U.S. GAAP (Appendix 22).
- ***FY2023 Audit*** — The independent auditor's report for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, was received and approved by the Board of Directors on December 23, 2024. The financial statements audit reflects a net change in assets of \$901,219, representing a significant indicator of the institution's progress toward long-term financial sustainability (Appendix 23). This outcome is directly attributable to the fiscal policies, management procedures, and administrative practices established to ensure efficient and effective stewardship of institutional resources. The strong net asset performance recorded in FY2023 affirms that the strategic measures implemented by institutional leadership have yielded substantive and measurable financial results.

- ***FY2024 Audit*** — The independent auditor's report for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024, was conducted by CPA David Figueroa Armaiz and approved by the Board of Directors on October 10, 2025 (Appendix 24). The financial statements audited reflect a net decrease in assets of \$54,527 for the fiscal year. While this represents a departure from the exceptional performance recorded in FY2023, it is appropriately contextualized within the institution's strategic capital investment activities undertaken during the same period. The Seminary maintains a solid and stable net asset position of \$3,642,863 and generated total revenues of \$1,780,111 through tuition and fees, private donations, grant awards, and other institutional sources. The FY2024 financial statements confirm that the SEPR continues to operate within its established framework of fiscal policies and management procedures, sustaining its institutional commitment to long-term economic viability amid the structural challenges inherent in nonprofit theological education.

Findings

- The SEPR's institutional planning processes, financial resources, and organizational structures are comprehensively aligned and demonstrably sufficient to fulfill the Seminary's mission and strategic goals. The evidence presented throughout this standard confirms that the institution has established and sustained the fiscal infrastructure necessary to continuously assess and improve its academic programs and student support services, and to respond effectively to both emerging opportunities and evolving challenges in the higher education environment.
- The SEPR's financial position has shown consistent and measurable improvement over the past five years. The institution has maintained full compliance with all financial obligations, including debt service commitments, operational expenditures, and grant stewardship requirements, while simultaneously strengthening its net asset base, expanding its cash reserves, and diversifying its revenue streams. The successful completion of annual independent audits, each resulting in unqualified opinions, further affirms the integrity, transparency, and soundness of the institution's financial management practices. Taken together, the data presented in this standard demonstrate that the SEPR has achieved a level of financial resilience and operational stability that positions it favorably to advance its mission of integral theological formation and to sustain its commitment to academic excellence in the years ahead.

Recommendations

Based on the findings presented in this standard, the following recommendations are offered to further strengthen the institution's financial sustainability and long-term institutional development:

- ***Strengthen and Expand Fundraising Capacity*** — The SEPR should continue to build upon the early successes of the Office of Institutional Development by systematically identifying, cultivating, and engaging new individual, corporate, and philanthropic donors. Efforts should include developing a comprehensive donor stewardship program, expanding alumni giving initiatives, and implementing multi-year fundraising campaigns aligned with the institution's strategic priorities as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2024–2029.

- ***Pursue Continued External Grant Funding*** — The institution should sustain and expand its strategy of seeking external funding through the development and submission of competitive grant proposals to foundations, government agencies, denominational mission boards, and other grant-making entities. Building on the significant success of its partnership with Lilly Endowment, Inc., SEPR should actively identify new funding opportunities that align with its academic, programmatic, and infrastructural priorities, while investing in the institutional grant-writing capacity needed to support this effort.
- ***Expand Online Academic Offerings*** — The institution should continue to broaden its online and distance education academic offerings, with particular emphasis on reaching prospective students in Puerto Rico, Hispanic communities across the United States, and theological formation constituencies throughout Latin America. This expansion should be pursued in direct alignment with the institution's mission and the objectives established in the Strategic Plan 2024–2029, ensuring that growth in enrollment and program delivery is accompanied by the corresponding investment in faculty, technology, and student support infrastructure.

STANDARD VII

Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with a related entity, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Introduction

The SEPR is an ecumenical institution of higher education with 107 years of service to churches and to the country. The institution is dedicated to the formation and development of ecclesial and pastoral leadership in Puerto Rico, in Hispanic communities in the United States, and in Latin America. The following narrative demonstrates how the structures that define governance, institutional leadership, and administrative efforts are centered on fulfilling the institutional mission, vision, and values, and how they benefit students, faculty, administrative staff, and the broader community.

In 1919, the Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Puerto Rico, the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico, the Boriquén Presbyterian Synod of Puerto Rico, and the United Evangelical Church of Puerto Rico merged their institutes to give rise to the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico. Subsequently, the Synod of the Caribbean Evangelical Lutheran Church joined the project as a sponsoring church. Currently, these six denominations comprise the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors is the governing body of the institution. It is currently chaired by Rev. Dr. Lizzette Gabriel Montalvo, bishop of the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico. In the summer of 2019, Rev. Dr. Juan Ramón Mejías Ortiz was appointed interim president following the departure of Dr. Doris García Rivera, who served as president for five years. The Board of Directors appointed a Presidential Search Committee with representation and participation from all institutional sectors: board members, faculty, students, alumni, and staff. After a process of consultation, evaluation, and prayer, Dr. Mejías Ortiz was appointed and installed as the twelfth president of SEPR.

New Organizational Design and New Board of Directors Bylaws

Beginning in August 2019, the Board of Directors assumed leadership of the institutional reorganization to fulfill the institutional mission and address financial, sociocultural, and administrative challenges more effectively. On August 3, 2019, following an analysis and decision-making process, the Board of Directors approved a new organizational design to make institutional governance more representative and participatory. The governance structure of SEPR includes the Board of Directors as the governing body, the executive president and his areas of work, the Office of the Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, and the service offices. One of the most significant changes was the reorganization of the intermediate organizational structure to include four units: Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, Finance, General Services, and Information Systems. These bodies are subject to the norms and guidelines established in the regulations, manuals, and institutional policies approved by the Board of Directors and the executive president, in accordance with internal laws and regulations as well as applicable local and federal regulations, and with the

recommendations and directives of the agencies that accredit and license the institution. The organizational structure, duties, and prerogatives of institutional officers are described in the following sections of this chapter.

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors conducted a comprehensive review of the Bylaws to evaluate the effectiveness of its procedures and responsibilities. After months of conversations, deliberations, legal counsel, and document review, the Board of Directors approved the new Bylaws on April 23, 2021 (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual Rev. April 23, 2021). This document currently serves as the governing instrument that establishes the duties and responsibilities of the members of the Board of Directors, as well as the functions of the Executive President, the Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, the faculty, administrative employees, and students. In addition, the document addresses general norms and regulations, which are further detailed in the institutional policies and operations manuals of the various units, such as the Employee Manual (Appendix 7.2-Employee Manual), the Faculty Manual (Appendix 7.3-Faculty Manual), the Student Manual (Appendix 7.4- Student Manual), and the Finance Manual (Appendix 7.5-Finance Manual), among others.

The revision of the Bylaws represents more than a simple update of a document. For the Seminary, it implies a new perspective and a thorough analysis of the role of the Board, aligned with the institutional Statutes (Bylaws), the fulfillment of the mission, vision, objectives, and institutional values, and above all, it represents a conscious, direct, and intentional response to the challenges and difficulties facing the Seminary in these times. For SEPR, the adoption of new Bylaws required an in-depth analysis of all administrative areas: institutional development (planning), financial management, and human infrastructure (administrative, academic, and student personnel), as well as the role and functions of Board members. The most significant changes in the new Bylaws are:

- **Equitable representation of mission boards in Puerto Rico and the United States** — The previous Bylaws established a model of unequal representation between the five founding mission boards and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The new Bylaws correct this deficiency to guarantee equitable representation of the cooperating denominations.
- **Reduction in the composition of the Board** — The composition of the Board was reduced from twenty-seven (27) members to twenty-two (22), of which eighteen (18) have voting rights and four (4) have a voice without a vote. This decision does not alter equitable representation. This action seeks to promote more productive, efficient, and streamlined meetings.
- **Implementation of the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct** — The Board establishes new ethical guidelines and provisions to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure confidentiality. The Bylaws state:

"Those who belong to the Board of Directors must avoid any conflict of interest regarding their fiduciary responsibility. Accordingly, no personal dealings or other private business should be conducted, nor should personal services be provided, between any director and the Board, except where the Board's procedures are controlled to ensure transparency, the opportunity for competition, and equitable access to what would otherwise be 'internal' information." (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual, Sec. II, Art. E, 4 and 5, pp. 4–6, 2021).

Each Board member must demonstrate their commitment to the ethical guidelines by signing the documents "Code of Ethics and Conduct", "Letter of Commitment to Confidentiality," and "Conflict of Interest Statement and Policy," included as Annexes in the Operations Manual Bylaws 2021 (Appendix C) (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual, 2023, Appendix C).

- **Expansion of the Board's roles and responsibilities in fundraising efforts** — Regarding the fundraising function, the previous Bylaws were limited to stating: "*[To] Make provision for the financial support of the institution*" (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual, Art. II, B, 6, p. 3, 2007). The Board agreed to add new functions to ensure an active role in fundraising efforts. The new Bylaws stipulate:

"To actively assume responsibility for fundraising on a personal basis, to solicit donations, and to share connections that may benefit the institution economically or otherwise, such as human resources and exchanges of goods and services (exchange in-kind)." (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual, Sec. III, Art. B, 1, p. 8, 2021).

- **Revision of the Executive President selection process** — The duties, procedures, and criteria for the selection of members of the Presidential Search Committee are specified. In addition, the provision stating that "*the interim President cannot be considered for permanent president*" is eliminated (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual, Sec. XI, A, 3, p. 10, 2007).

These represent the most significant amendments to the manual. Other changes address minor procedural matters. Overall, the new Bylaws constitute a significant step forward for the institution, as the approved provisions affect the entire organizational, administrative, and academic structure, creating new spaces to effectively address the economic, operational, and curricular challenges across all service areas.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the highest governing and legislative body of SEPR. It is composed of eighteen (18) members with decision-making authority and four (4) members with the right to voice but without voting rights. The Bylaws establish the composition of the Board:

1. The person serving as the head of each cooperating denomination in Puerto Rico.
2. One person from each mission board of the churches in the United States.
3. One person representing each sponsoring denomination of SEPR.
4. One person elected by the Board for their special knowledge and abilities.
5. Ex officio members, with voice but without voting rights:
 - Representative of the SEPR Alumni Association.
 - Representative of the student body.
 - Representative of the faculty.
 - Executive President.

Members of the Board of Directors shall serve for three years, with a limit of two consecutive terms. This provision does not apply to denominational executives who serve as members of the SEPR Board of Directors. The representative of the SEPR Alumni Association shall remain a Board member until their designation by that organization ceases. Faculty and students may elect their representative annually.

Given the interest in avoiding conflicts of interest among Board members, the Bylaws establish:

"Those who belong to the Board of Directors must not have conflicts of loyalty with respect to the interests of the organization. That responsibility must be superior to any other conflicting loyalty, such as membership in other interest groups, boards of directors, or personnel lists. Those who belong to the Board of Directors must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility." (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual, Sec. II, Art. E, 1, 2, 4, p. 6, 2021).

In Section II, Article B of the Board of Directors Bylaws, the duties and responsibilities of this legislative body are specified, among which are:

1. To establish the educational, administrative, financial, and development policy of the institution and to oversee its compliance. To appoint the committees necessary for its functioning.
2. To appoint or dismiss the person serving as President of the Seminary and full-time Faculty members, and to ratify the appointment of the person serving as Academic Dean, the person serving as Library Director, and the person serving as Director of Administration.
3. To approve the fiscal and financial policy of the Seminary, including but not limited to the acquisition, preservation, and administration of funds, fundraising activities, investment policy, and the annual budget, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee.
4. To approve the statutes and internal operating regulations of all institutional bodies created under the Board Bylaws.
5. To approve academic programs and the conditions for admission and graduation.
6. To make provision for the financial sustainability of the institution.

The Board of Directors meets twice a year in regular session: in March or April and in September. When in recess, it is represented by the Executive Committee. This body comprises seven members of the Board. The Executive Committee must include representation from at least three of the sponsoring denominations. The Executive President is an ex officio member, with voice but without voting rights. These members are elected annually. The functions and responsibilities of this Committee are detailed in the Board of Directors Bylaws, Section VIII, Article A.

The Board of Directors has the authority to appoint working committees such as Finance and Property, Nominations and Regulations, Institutional Assessment, and Dialogue with the Faculty. The functions and duties of these committees are included in the Bylaws (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual, Sec. VIII, Art. B–D).

Finally, the Board of Directors is responsible for approving the Strategic Plan, the Development Plan, the Campus Master Plan, and other institutional plans. The Board's Finance Committee and the Director of Finance are responsible for preparing the budget and financial reports.

Executive President

The President is the chief academic and administrative executive of SEPR. Their selection, appointment, and evaluation are the responsibility of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors, through its Bylaws, ensures that none of its members interfere in the daily operations of the institution. The administration of the institution is the responsibility of its Executive President.

Beginning in June 2019, Rev. Dr. Juan R. Mejías Ortiz served as interim president until his official designation two years later. The Board of Directors Bylaws establish that the candidate for the presidency must be a member in full communion with one of the sponsoring denominations and must hold a written recommendation from the denomination to which they belong (Appendix 7.1-Board of Directors Operations Manual, Section XIV, Article A.2). President Mejías Ortiz is an ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Puerto Rico.

The appointment of the President is indefinite and is subject to evaluation by the Board of Directors. The evaluation period at SEPR is typically every two years. The Executive Committee has evaluated the current President's performance in 2021, 2023, and 2026. The prerogatives and functions of the President are detailed in Section XIV, Article B of the Board of Directors Bylaws.

Academic Dean and Student Affairs

The Office of the Academic Dean is the body responsible for academic affairs at SEPR. The Board of Directors Bylaws state that the Academic Dean is responsible for directing the institution's academic affairs. Their appointment is made by the President and ratified by the Board of Directors. Currently, the position is held by Rev. Dr. Lydia Hernández Marcial. The Dean must be a faculty member with administrative functions and shall teach a maximum of six credits. The duties, prerogatives, and functions of the Academic Dean are described in Section XV, Article B. The Dean shall preside over meetings of the Academic Council and the Faculty upon the President's request. The order of succession approved by the Board of Directors establishes that, in the absence of the President, the Dean shall assume institutional leadership on an interim basis.

Academic Divisions

The Office of the Academic Dean comprises the following academic areas: Faculty (Committees and Program Coordinators), Institutional Assessment, Enrollment Management (Registrar, Admissions, and Financial Aid), the Juan de Valdés Library, and the Student Council. The Dean is the direct supervisor of each of these units. Dr. Arlene S. García Jackson and Dr. Marviliz Ávila Rodríguez, faculty members, serve as coordinators of the Master of Arts in Religion and Doctor of Ministry academic programs, respectively. The Office of Institutional Assessment is advised by Dr. Luz C. Valentín Caban. The Juan de Valdés Library has a director, a library assistant, an archivist, library assistants, and volunteers. At this time, Professor Milka T. Vigo Verestin serves as Library Director, and the library is also supported by part-time librarians. Library staff are represented by the director before the organizations to which the library belongs. The Library Director has a voice and a vote in monthly faculty meetings. The Office of the Registrar is directed by Ms. Keina Troncoso Fernández. This officer is responsible for the custody and updating of student records, ensuring the confidentiality of the information they contain. This office is also responsible, together with the Dean, for overseeing compliance with policies related to academic matters, such as Course Validation, Copyright and Intellectual Property Policy, Academic Records

Retention Policy, Class Attendance Policy, Incomplete Procedures, and Grade Changes, among others.

Faculty

The faculty comprises the President, the Academic Dean, the Library Director, and all professors with teaching assignments. Currently, the faculty consists of regular professors (full-time faculty), affiliated professors (part-time professors with some administrative function), adjunct professors (all other professors not belonging to the first two categories), and emeritus professors (Faculty Manual) (Appendix 7.3-Faculty Manual). The appointment of emeritus professor is an honorary rank that recognizes the contribution and legacy of a scholar to the institution. The regular faculty holds monthly meetings convened by the President or the Academic Dean at the request of the former. When the Faculty wishes to convene an unscheduled meeting, a written request must be submitted to the Office of the President. The duties, prerogatives, and functions of the faculty are described in Section XVII, Article B of the Board of Directors Bylaws. The administrative regulations governing the hiring and development of the faculty are established in the Faculty Manual. The regular faculty is composed of:

- Dr. Lydia E. Hernández Marcial (Assistant Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew)
- Prof. Milka T. Vigo Verestin (Librarian)
- Dr. Agustina Luvis Núñez (Professor of Theology)
- Dr. Juan R. Mejías Ortiz (Associate Professor of Practical Theology)
- Prof. Gonzalo Alers Rivera (Instructor in New Testament and Biblical Greek)

Professors Dr. Luis N. Rivera Pagán (Theology), Dr. Guillermo Ramírez Muñoz (Old Testament), and Dr. Ediberto López Rodríguez (New Testament) have been appointed as emeritus professors. In past years, Dr. Juan Caraballo Resto, professor of anthropology of religion, served as an affiliated professor until his resignation in 2025. Adjunct faculty varies by academic offerings each semester, though it typically consists of between 10 and 12 professors.

In general, the faculty meets semi-annually at convocation, convened by the President or the Academic Dean on behalf of the former. Regular and affiliated faculty meet monthly. Currently, this body has four working committees:

- Curricular Review Committee
- Academic Committee
- Documents Committee
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)

(Appendix 7.6-Appointment Letter)

In addition to these committees, both the President and the Academic Dean have the prerogative to appoint special ad hoc committees as needed.

Regular and affiliated faculty participate in decision-making processes in various ways, including the review of academic programs, the development of recommendations for the selection of new faculty members (Appendix 7.3-Faculty Manual, Article 5.1.2), peer evaluation for rank promotion (Appendix 7.3-Faculty Manual, Article 9.3.4, preamble of Article 10), and attendance with voice at Board of Directors meetings.

Faculty Professional Development

The Strategic Plan 2024–2029 (Appendix 7.7-Strategic Plan 2024-2029) establishes the need to:

"Promote the continuous training of the faculty of the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico" (Goal 4)

"(1) Promote faculty participation as attendees or resources in symposia, congresses, conventions, workshops, or any other pertinent forum of national or international recognition. (2) Foster research spaces that support effective teaching, learning, research, assessment, and community service." (Objectives 1 & 2).

In fulfillment of the institutional objectives, the 2025 and 2026 Budgets (Line Item 5116, Faculty Development Workshops; Line Item 5124, Professional Expert Professors; and Line Item 5125, Office Staff Workshops) evidence the allocation of funds for activities related to the training of administrative staff and faculty (Appendix 7.8-Budgets; Appendix 7.9- Faculty Workshops; Appendix 7.10-Staff Workshops). These workshops cover the integration of technology in the classroom, the use of the Populi platform, assessment, accreditation processes, and other relevant topics. Furthermore, at the beginning of each semester, the Office of the Academic Dean convenes all faculty to discuss administrative matters and includes professional improvement activities (Appendix 7.11-Faculty and Administration Meeting PPTs). Likewise, activities developed through special projects and by the Library offer accessible workshops and training sessions for faculty (Appendix 7.12-Special projects activities; Appendix 7.13-Library workshops).

Student Council

SEPR is clear that its primary task is to serve students. As part of these efforts, the organizational chart recognizes the Student Council as an essential element of the organizational structure (Appendix 7.14-Students Council Manual). The Student Council is the body responsible for ensuring the representation and participation of students on institutional committees. The Council is composed of between 7 and 9 students, elected annually by active students during the academic semester in which its members are selected, typically in the second semester of the academic year. Students, like faculty, are represented on all committees and on the Board of Directors. Through this inclusion, SEPR seeks to guarantee student representation on working committees. The positions of this body are: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, representative to the Board of Directors, and members-at-large. Likewise, each election seeks to ensure that the Council is composed of the broadest possible representation across gender, ecclesial traditions, and academic programs. The student leadership and representation for this year are: [to be completed]. The Student Council also collaborates in those areas delegated by the Academic Dean.

Non-Academic Divisions

The institutional organizational chart identifies four non-academic divisions reporting to the presidency: Institutional Development, Continuing Education, Human Resources, and Legal Counsel. The area of Institutional Development is staffed by three persons under the direction of the President: Mr. Pedro Bermúdez, in the area of strategic planning; Ms. Brenda Toledo, responsible for fundraising; and Ms. Raquel López, in charge of promotion. These are appointments and/or hires made in recent years as part of the institutional efforts to improve finances, promote academic offerings, and increase the scholarship fund for students.

The Office of Continuing Education is responsible for the design and programming of SEPR's non-academic programs and is currently coordinated by Ms. Keina Troncoso Fernández.

In response to the new organizational chart approved by the Board of Directors, the Office of Human Resources was incorporated under the advisory services of the Human Capital Company. Human Resources is the institutional body responsible for guaranteeing the labor rights of employees, recruiting and selecting employees, fostering a healthy work environment (including the resolution of labor disputes), enforcing the Employee Manual, coordinating the biannual evaluation of employee productivity and performance, completing documentation required by local and federal Department of Labor agencies, among other functions. This office is currently staffed by Ms. Solimar Martínez López Serrano. Legal counsel is currently provided through professional contracting on an as-needed basis.

The Office of Finance is responsible for all matters related to budgeting and accounting, payroll, disbursements, and collections. It is currently directed by Rev. Dr. Raúl F. Santiago Rivera. The Director of Finance is responsible for conducting the corresponding financial analyses to keep the Executive President and the Treasurer of the Board of Directors informed about cash flows, balances, and budget performance. The Treasurer, representing the Board of Directors, collaborates in formulating financial policies to ensure integrity and sound financial management. Additionally, the Director of Finance, together with his work team, is responsible for the annual audit processes. Final approval of the audited financial statements and/or other documents related to the institution's fiscal viability rests with the Board of Directors. Likewise, the finance team is the entity responsible for preparing the financial analyses and reports required by the agencies that license and accredit SEPR. This office is supported by the professional services of Ms. Ilia Y. Rodríguez Altiery in collections and Mr. Julio A. Marrero Luna as finance officer.

The Office of General Services is responsible for the maintenance of property and physical facilities, health and safety, insurance, procurement, and rental services. It is currently directed by Ms. Myrna E. Pérez López. This office is supported by two full-time employees and oversees the cleaning service provided by a contracted company.

Professional Development of Non-Teaching Staff

Both the Strategic Plan 2024–2029 and the 2025 and 2026 Budgets (Budget Line 5125, Office Staff Workshops) focus on implementing and executing training programs for administrative staff and faculty. Through the Office of Human Resources, the institution ensures that non-teaching employees receive the training required by governmental regulations and applicable local and federal laws. On occasion, maintenance staff have received training through collaborative agreements with other educational institutions and/or ecclesial organizations.

Evaluation of Governance, Leadership, and Administration

For SEPR, evaluation is essential for improving the curricular offering, establishing a culture of service, and applying best educational practices. The institution conducts a continuous evaluation of the efficacy, effectiveness, and quality of leadership, as well as of governance, encompassing all offices and academic and administrative units. The following table summarizes the integration between the Strategic Plan 2024–2029, the Assessment Plan, and Governance, Leadership, and Administration.

GOAL 6: Improve the performance of the SEPR administrative and teaching staff by designing and implementing a training program aimed at best educational practices, evaluation, and fostering a culture of service as an academic and faith institution. (Strategic Plan 2024-2029)		
Area	Evaluator	Frequency
Teaching, research and service (Appendix I, Teachers' Manual)	Students	At the end of each course.
	Other faculty	When necessary for promotion in rank and/or contract renewal.
	Academic Dean	When necessary for promotion in rank and/or contract renewal.
Juan de Valdés Library	Students and community	Annually
Offices of Academic Services (Deanery, Admissions, Registrar's Office)	Students Visitors	Annually
Administrative offices (Presidency, Finance, General Services)	Students	Annually
Student and Community Services (Academic Advising, Chapels, Student Counseling)	Students and community	Annually
Board of Directors Meetings	Members of the Board of Directors	At the end of each meeting
Continuing Education and Special Activities	Participants	At the end of the activity

Governance, leadership, and administration are focused on achieving the institutional mission, vision, objectives, and values, including: (1) the needs and claims of the sponsoring denominations, the community, and Puerto Rico; (2) the needs of students, faculty, and employees; and (3) compliance with the standards and requirements of the agencies that license and accredit SEPR and its academic programs.

Communication Across All Departments

Improving communication channels to promote services, provide general information, and facilitate decision-making is a challenge that must be addressed. Efforts to disseminate information to the SEPR community are achieved through the initiative of various offices. These efforts aim to share information through channels such as the institutional website, the Populi platform, social media, email, and bulletin boards. Through the resources available on the Populi platform, SEPR maintains clear, systematic, and direct communication with students. Populi allows text messages to be sent to students' mobile devices, facilitating immediate communication. One area for improvement is the dissemination of academic offerings, co-curricular activities, and the various services continuously provided to the community. The institution has currently contracted the services of the company Like Interactive for digital marketing consulting and digital strategy. This has resulted in better management of leads collected through social media, with the goal of following up with individuals interested in academic and continuing education offerings. As a result, the number of auditing students has increased in recent semesters. SEPR is currently exploring new avenues to improve promotion and outreach, including podcasts, webinars, and open classes.

Information regarding Board of Directors decisions is communicated directly to the faculty through the reports of their representative and through the Office of the President at monthly meetings. The student representative to the Board of Directors is responsible for communicating

decisions to both the Student Council and the broader student body. Additionally, the Executive President presents an annual report at the Conventions and Assemblies of the sponsoring denominations, communicating to the ecclesial community the institution's achievements and new areas of service. In general terms, there are currently four channels for the dissemination of information:

- Digital resources such as the SEPR website www.se-pr.edu, social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram), streaming platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo, and text messages and/or WhatsApp.
- The use of bulletin boards is located in the classroom area and in the library.
- Person-to-person communication, especially with employees from the various service areas and with representatives of the sponsoring churches, faculty, students, and alumni.
- Official communications from the Office of the Executive President.

Approval of Manuals, Policies, and Other Documents

To ensure compliance with the institutional mission, manuals, policies, and other documents are established to address the needs and concerns of students, faculty, employees, and the general community. Policies and documents are designed to address complaints, incidents, situations affecting educational processes, administrative procedures, and human safety and/or property. The various service areas participate in the drafting of policies according to their areas of expertise. These must be endorsed by the area supervisor and approved by the Executive President. Final approval of a policy rests with the Board of Directors or, as applicable, the Executive Committee, which represents the Board. Institutional policies and documents are distributed primarily to students during New Student Orientation Day, where all students receive digital copies of the policies and documents or are informed of where to access them on the institutional website. The institutional mission, vision, objectives, and values are also discussed during this event. Attendance at Orientation Day is part of the graduation requirements. Additionally, the documents are available on the institution's website at: <https://se-pr.edu/politicas-normas-y-procedimientos>.

Information Technology (IT)

Information technology is a fundamental area for fulfilling the institutional mission, vision, and objectives. IT services are essential to institutional success in daily operations, administrative procedures, and the development of meaningful educational and research experiences. Consultations with students, faculty, and staff have identified technological, information, and connectivity infrastructure as an area in need of strengthening. In response to this need, the Strategic Plan 2024–2029 establishes the urgency of renewing these services:

"Optimize the technological, computing, and connectivity infrastructure that supports teaching and learning processes, research, assessment, and community service." (Goal 7)

This Plan establishes four objectives and their corresponding strategies to improve technological and connectivity infrastructure. Recognizing this as a priority matter, SEPR has improved this service area. First, the consulting services of Mr. Jesús Rodríguez Cortés have been contracted to collaborate in technological optimization processes and provide technical support for operational continuity. Additionally, Mr. Jorge L. Díaz Rivera has been hired as coordinator of the distance

education project, and Mr. Héctor González Santana has been appointed to the educational technology area. As a result of all efforts undertaken in recent years, it has been possible to:

General

- Expand the reach of the wireless network to include all SEPR facilities under the same SSID.
- Optimize Library information systems, integrate Library connectivity with the main SEPR building via fiber optic cable, and increase access to new databases and online bibliographic resources.
- Optimize connectivity by establishing a traffic plan that includes security improvements and increased service speed.
- Achieve connectivity in the six main classrooms, enabling the inclusion of in-person courses with technological support (Zoom).
- Create an interactive preaching laboratory.
- Create a recording and podcast studio.

Library

- Installation of communications equipment and structured cabling.
- Update of technology laboratory equipment and acquisition of laptop computers for use by students and faculty.
- Update and expansion of databases and digital catalogs (e-books, journals, etc.).
- Interconnection of Library services with the Populi platform to ensure greater accessibility.

Administration, Faculty Offices, and Classrooms (Second Floor)

- Installation of structural cabling and fiber optic to improve connectivity.
- Installation of a new telephone switchboard to enable better interactivity and ensure quality customer service.
- Update of the accounting software and integration of services with the Populi platform.
- Migration of the email server to provide an institutional email service for students, faculty, and administrative staff.

Findings

1. Achievements and Strengths

- SEPR demonstrates compliance with Standard VII, "Governance, Leadership, and Administration," presenting a clearly articulated governance structure that defines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for participatory decision-making, which streamlines the delivery of academic and non-academic degree programs, as well as service areas, in accordance with the institutional mission, vision, values, and objectives.
- The institution demonstrates that the governance structure is clearly defined in its bylaws, manuals, policies, and official documents.

- The organizational structure and institutional regulations foster the participation of all sectors (trustees, faculty, students, employees, and alumni) in decision-making within governing bodies, from the Board of Directors to working committees.
- The Board of Directors Bylaws establishes a written conflict of interest policy designed to ensure the impartiality of that body in matters of governance, contractual relationships, employment, and financial or other interests that may arise or be perceived as conflicts of interest.
- The governance structure and the Board of Directors Bylaws demonstrate that the Executive President has the necessary authority and autonomy to fulfill the responsibilities associated with the position, as well as to lead the institution and develop strategic plans that ensure compliance with the institutional mission, vision, objectives, and values.
- SEPR maintains manuals, policies, and procedures that comply with applicable federal and local regulations and laws to systematically guide and evaluate teaching and non-teaching staff.

2. Recommendations

- Recognize the voting rights of the Alumni Representative, as there is no evidence of conflicts of interest, provided no financial relationship with the institution exists.
- Continue improving the technological, computing, and connectivity infrastructure.