

April, 2007  
First Issue



**English Department  
College of General Studies  
University of Puerto Rico  
Rio Piedras, PR**

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The English Department in the College of General Studies has had a literary contest for the last forty-one years. Out of this tradition came the idea to develop a better way to involve basic level students to use English in creative ways. Some of the faculty discussed the possibility of having a newsletter produced by these groups.

**What is happening in General Studies?** 4

The newsletter aims to give students with limited fluency in English an opportunity to develop their skills in a real communication situation. The articles they write in groups report on the life of freshmen and other students at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras, and are of interest to all students and the rest of the university community.

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The purpose of this publication is also to create a sense of togetherness. Students write and read about themselves and the campus, which they are in the process of getting to know. As the writers investigate the university for their articles, they share their discoveries with other students. Through these articles, students begin to realize what about them and their class makes them unique.

In addition, the newsletter will interest students in and keep them informed of upcoming events so that they participate more fully in the university.

Our hope is that this initiative will grow and become a part of the university experience.

We would like to thank the groups that were involved in this first issue.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brenda Camara

Dr. Mark Wekander

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Roof on the fourth floor of General Studies

*“Many of these employees do not care about their jobs...”*



Door on the third floor of General Studies

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## Sick Buildings

by **Jelmarie Guzmán, Wilmarie Meléndez, and Aslin Santiago**

The University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras faces a structural crisis in the General Studies Building. There is severe fungi caused by humidity which produces a terrible smell in the classrooms. Not only that, but it has a bad effect on the health of students and professors.

This situation began a few years ago. Even though complaints were made about the sick General Studies Building, the administration denied these allegations and did not confront the situation. This led the Puerto Rican Association of University Professors (APPU) to unite professors from the building to discuss the situation. According to the professors, there are three known reasons for this situation to have become serious. First of all, the administration does not have the capability due to limited funds. Secondly, there is an accumulation of physical maintenance problems in the buildings. A professor said; *“This is like when you have a house. If you do not maintain it, little by little you let everything pile up and the house begins to deteriorate. When you finally decide to repair it, the cost is going to be higher than it would have been if you had taken care of things little by little.”* In other words, when the situation of the buildings was finally recognized, it was too late. The people had to be relocated and now the professors are dispersed throughout the University. The same professor mentioned that she found herself so ill that she asked to be escorted out of the building. Finally, she mentioned that the cause is the lousy administration and lack of supervision of the maintenance employees. She said that not everyone knows how to clean and that not everyone is responsible. She also said: *“Many of these employees do not care about their jobs. They use it as a trampoline to get other positions in the UPR system. Their wages are minimum, but they stay because of the benefits. Of course, it is not all of them because I know a few that I would stick up for any day.”*

In an interview made to another professor she said that she has been working for ten years and that since she started the problem of the General Studies Building has existed. She said, *“The cosmetic repairs are not going to fix the problems affecting the building, but quite frankly we need a new building and to substitute this one totally.”* Another thing that she said was

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that although she had not been affected by the situation, she knows co-workers who have been, as she says, *“seriously affected.”* We asked her if the situation has affected the learning experiences of the students and she said; *“In essence, the classrooms are not in the proper condition, although you can meet with the students when you’re supposed to.”* This situation affects more professors than students because they spend most of the day there.

About the fungi, one student told us, *“I feel like my health has been affected by the state of the General Studies building. Due to the fungi and the water, I have gotten sick and I have a few rashes on my skin.”* Besides the fungi, you can clearly see the lack of maintenance in the bathrooms. It seems unbelievable that a young lady has to go from bathroom to bathroom in search of bathroom tissue.

On an interview with the Dean of General Studies, we asked him if it was true that the administration was constructing a new building for General Studies, to which he answered affirmatively, and added that this will be finished by March 2008. The construction of this new building is being done quickly and noiselessly. The present building will be rehabilitated. It will not be demolished as rumored, and the process will take around 5 years, changing all the electrical wiring and air-conditioning system. The new building will be the same or better than the present one. He said, *“It should not be a problem for the students to take classes in other buildings. They would not be affected by the situation.”*

Our point of view is that this building is a hazard to people’s health and students should not take classes under such conditions. We know that this is the opinion of most of the students in the University. We hope that this situation ends and that everything that has been said about the changes to solve the problem is true. We also hope that the changes bring positive results.



**Stairs on the fourth floor of General Studies**

*“...my health has been affected by the state of the General Studies building.”*



**Bathroom wall on the third floor of General Studies**



Roof on the fourth floor of General Studies

*"Everything goes, that is to say that of the building, only the beams will be left."*



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## What is Happening in General Studies? by Salatiel Cruz, Dayna Rodriguez & Bretnetselle Rodriguez

Does anyone really know what's being remodeled or constructed in the General Studies building? Countless questions like this one have occurred in the minds of the students and staff. We have had many experiences like constant puddles, recurring allergies caused by the mold surrounding us, and the search for chairs to be able to sit down in the classroom. The problems in General Studies are the students' problems and for that reason they have to know what is happening in their college.

We have all heard the rumors of the "supposed" remodeling and construction. Professors always say, "soon we're moving", but the real questions are, "when and where?." A survey of students about how much they know about what is being remodeled or constructed revealed that 55% of those surveyed had heard the rumor but they really didn't know any facts. Another 24% said that they knew at least something and 17% said that they knew nothing whatsoever. Others in the same survey protested about the poor conditions of bathrooms, air conditioners and the terrible problems with mold in the classrooms. This lack of knowledge is troubling, especially when we see workers painting walls over the mold.

At the same time, professors suffer from these poor conditions. We interviewed professor C. Perez Herranz who told us that now she has problems with sinus caused by the mold in the classrooms and in her office. The small space in the professors' offices are another problem. Professors explained to us that sometimes they don't have space for students' homework and their own personal objects, so they sometimes have to take their students' homework home because. In addition, some professors do not have a personal office because they have to share it.

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Even with all the bad things that occur in our building, the desire to focus on the hope of a new building exists. So in an interview with the Dean of General Studies, Dr. Jorge Rodriguez Beruff, a new angle on what they are doing was obtained. Dr. Rodriguez Beruff further increased our understanding by showing us the plans of the new building of General Studies compared with the present building. Many of the details were so vague before. For example, the building that will face Barbosa Avenue has 12 new classrooms.

*"Dr. Rodriguez, what is being remodeled right now?"* we asked him, *"Right now nothing"*, he answered. He explained a lot to us, for example, why we see hallways closed, thinking that it is part of the reconstruction when really they have been closed because of the contamination. He explained that it is expected that between December and February they will begin to tear down the building to remodel, but it all depends on the bids they receive. We also asked him what he was going to do about the problems with air conditioning, the small size of the professor's offices, restrooms, the floods in the library, the big problem with mold, and the leaks, among many others. To all of these questions Dr. Rodriguez answered us with a simple, *"Everything goes, that is to say that of the building, only the beams will be left"*. He told us that the origin of the mold is the condensation of water, which is caused by the hot humid air coming from the hall into the cool air from the classrooms. He thinks that they should put a central air conditioning system so the halls and the classrooms will be cool, and thus mold formation will be prevented. Another concern is the lack of natural light in the classrooms and hallways, which is caused by the bars on the windows. These will be substituted by some larger windows to light to come in. We asked him if the professors' offices would be bigger, and his words were: *"just a bit"*. But, in the reconstruction plans, they will construct a new system of offices that will have more natural light and a little more space. In short, the reconstruction plans of the building are going to provide new classrooms, seven amphitheatres, greater accessibility for people with physical disabilities, a complete new system of central air conditioning, more comfortable offices for the professors, a new and complete building in the subsequent part of the College, and new restrooms, among others.

How long then will the students have to wait to be able to enjoy those facilities?, When will we move? These are two key questions of our investigation, and to them he answered that it is expected to be finalized in three to five years. Where will students be moved to while they do the reconstruction? Dr. Rodriguez, showed us a book with the name "Plan de Mitigación", which was created to indicate where they are going to relocate each group and each department, while the building is reconstructed. The "Plan de Mitigación" provides a deep analysis of each group, section, department and everything that they have to do.

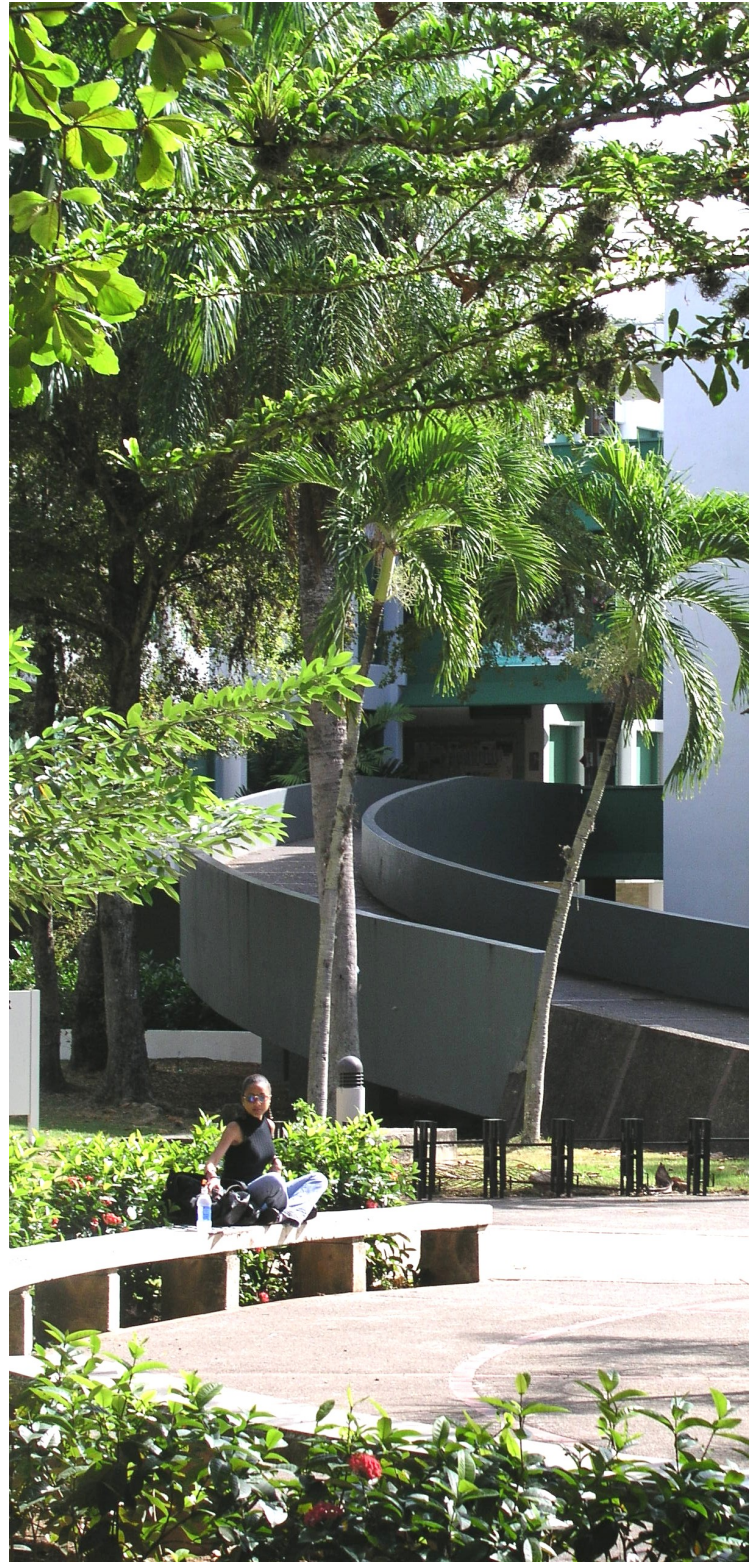
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To have an idea of where the reconstruction is going to begin, the dean indicated that officially they will start with the amphitheaters and then would move toward the hallways.

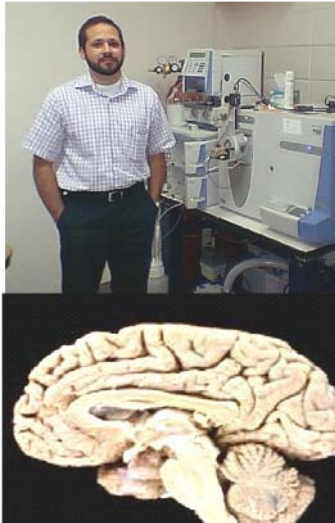
The final issue of our investigation is the fact that there are students smoking in the hallways and study areas. The Dean indicated that this practice is not prohibited, but comments on his desire to create a designated area for smokers outside the building. The survey that we did with the students revealed that 96% of them were not smokers. So *“the administration should put some areas out of the building designed only for smoking”* said the students. In an interview with professor C. Campos, we asked her the same question that we asked the students and she answered that smoking *“should be prohibited.”* We can see that this topic is not dealt with effectively. The majority of those interviewed agreed but, asking themselves: Why doesn't the administration do anything about it?

We encourage you as students to express your feelings about topics like this. This is our College, and we have to fight for the welfare of all students and staff members. How can we study in conditions like these? As human beings we need an environment that is friendly to our necessities. We hope that this report will answer your questions about “what is happening in General Studies.”



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## **A Disease of Vital Impact to the Hispanic Community** **by Gabriela Medina, Shayranisse Pagan & Kristian Poventud**



Did you know that Alzheimer's disease is the fifth largest cause of death among Puerto Ricans? This disease is known by every one, but few people pay attention to it. Alzheimer's disease, also called dementia, is a neurodegenerative disease characterized by its irreversible impairment of intellect and memory. This is a disease whose cause is unknown and several investigations regarding it have been made for decades. Here in Puerto Rico there are very few doctors that have laboratories in which they investigate this disease.

One of those is Dr. Irvin Vega, who is trying to understand better the molecular mechanisms by which a protein known as tau works and how it could be altered to produce the neurodegeneration in the cerebral cortex and subcortical structures. Dr. Irvin Vega received his doctorate degree in neurosciences at Rutgers University, N.J. and came to the University of Puerto Rico in 2002. The goal of studying this disease in Puerto Rico became his concern because of the lack of investigation of a disease which affects the Hispanic community here on the island. In his laboratory he is being helped by Dr. Edwin Traverso, who is doing a post-doctorate in molecular genetics, and also by three undergraduate students: Veronica Beyley, Frances Rodriguez, and Nicole Delgado. They are studying the human protein in transgenic rats. In other words, they are researching mutated rats that have Alzheimers so they could then extract their nervous systems to homogenize them and extract the protein that they are hoping is the one that is causing the neurodegeneration in the brain. One of the benefits that he would like to obtain from his investigation is a better understanding of the molecular process that dictates the aggregation of the protein tau. With this design, better drugs can be created to block this disease in the future. He is also creating the first bank of cerebrums in Puerto Rico in collaboration with the Mayo Clinic to help him study the disease in other ethnic groups and as well as the Hispanic community. The results of his investigations are posted as long term, but in the future this will help us detect with anticipation the disease and also help us treat it with drugs that are going to put on hold the neurodegenerative process.

If you're wondering how this can be detected with anticipation when the symptoms are not present, well, get prepared to be amazed. If his investigation goes in the right direction in the future, this disease could be detected by taking a small sample of the cerebrospinal fluid located in the spinal cord or even by the simple process of taking a mere blood sample. Then that sample will pass through a machine sensitive to the protein that causes this disease to detect it at an earlier stage.

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## New Medical Discoveries

by Jennifer Pagan, Katia Peña, Omar Perez, and Silgma Valle



The Comprehensive Cancer Center of the University of P.R. discovered a natural substance that fights cancer cells, tuberculosis, and malaria. According to the director of the experiment, Abimael Rodriguez, the substance was found in invertebrate organisms such as sponges, corals, and seaweed collected on the coasts of Mona Island. These organisms produce a chemical substance that can be used in treatments against human diseases. The substance is called Acetate of Eupalmerine. Its compounds are atoms and carbon, hydrogen and oxygen molecules said Rodriguez. This white solid substance is subtracted from the Caribbean Sea Gorgonian Soft (Gordonii) Coral and it kills the cancerous cells through a process called apoptosis.

To know if the substance was medicinal, Dr. Fernando Gonzalez, a colleague of Rodriguez, put the substance of the corals in cancer cells and then he noticed that the substance killed them. Additionally, Dr. Yasuko Kondo, from MD Anderson Cancer Center in Texas inserted cancerous tumors in mice. After the tumors were fully developed, the coral's substance was injected and it reduced the tumor by 80%.

After doing the experiment they concluded that some benefits of this substance are the decrease of the size and shape of the tumor, like it did with the mice. The substance works with these diseases as an anti-inflammatory. If the Food and Drug Administration of the United States (FDA) approves it, it could help in the treatment of different diseases such as brain cancer.

Other persons that helped in the investigation were students trained by Rodriguez, Jan Vicente (in charge of classification of the corals by scientific name), Melvin Rivera, Nydea Aviles, Karinel Nieves, and Daneli Lopez who made the experiments possible. *"I feel proud to be part of that innovative experiment and obtain something potentially active and exciting"*, said Lopez, an undergraduate student who has been working with Rodriguez for two years, and is in charge of isolating the organic compound from the marine substance.

The process of discovering a new drug could last 12 years but it starts with a research such as this one. Abimael Rodriguez and his group are in the first step of this discovery process, the chemical compound step, which could lead to a new medicine for brain cancer treatment. Actually, they are developing new studies and new derivatives of the same product that could have more potential.

Even though this experiment has not concluded, it will bring a healthier life to patients who suffer from cancer. This investigation group wants the best treatment so they are working on the substance to improve it. Through the years, this substance could be a pill or a vaccine. These researchers show their responsibility and the importance of helping others.





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## Twenty-one Years is Just the Beginning...

by Verónica Díaz, Marleen González, and Xiomara Villanueva



*“The marine world has many things and we still haven’t seen them all”,* a simple yet knowledgeable comment was made by Dr. Nestor Caballeira.

In a conversation with Dr. Nestor Caballeira, a graduate from the University of Wuzburg in Germany, we inquired about his investigation, “Organic Chemistry: isolation and biosynthesis of natural marine products, biochemistry of lipids, and synthesis of natural marine products”. This scientific research started in 1985 in Puerto Rico but he had started with this investigation in 1983 in California. *“We decided to move it to Puerto Rico because our island has water in every corner”,* he expressed.

The purpose of this investigation is to isolate marine products, such as sponges, with the intention of obtaining new products that will benefit the medical world, in terms of antifungals (against fungi), and leukemia or malaria medicine for example. He explained that throughout all these years the investigation has been “dynamic”. Investigators are constantly isolating compounds that they get from the ocean, for example, the sponges that are identified and tested once the compound properties are recognized. They keep improving them using organic synthesis. In the twenty-first year of this investigation they have obtained various compounds that are very active against malaria and others against fungi, but they are still improving the findings. *“It’s a process that never ends. Today you may have something and five years from now there is something better”,* says the doctor. According to Dr. Caballeira, the goal of this investigation is for pharmaceuticals to commercialize some of these products.

Research like this one obviously needs more than one worker. In the lab there are a group of graduate and undergraduate students working. Nashbly Montano is a pleasant chemistry graduate student that interacted with us. She is a laboratory technician, the person in charge of verifying that everything is on time. She buys equipment, solutions, and instruments that are needed to work in the investigation. Montano dedicates six to eight hours daily to this investigation. *“This has been a very good experience, I’ve been in this investigation for two years and besides the interaction with people, you learn more about the matter”,* this twenty-six year old woman told us. Even though participating in this study is a requirement for her to obtain her masters and doctorate degrees, she also has a personal motivation.

We cannot guarantee that this will happen, but after knowing the effort and dedication that has been going on for the past twenty-one years, we can only express the pride and respect we feel in knowing that there are professionals in our University who are devoted to medical innovations. The ocean is a very important fountain of life for humanity. Taking care of the marine world is like taking care of ourselves.

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“...the new genre reggaeton is the most preferred by students ...”

**“Most of the time this happens because of influences, but almost no one accepted this.”**



“More than a half of the interviewed students chose the Student Center.”

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## **In or Out: Pop Culture Survey** by **Yelitza Burgos, Nadly Montero, Vianca Maldonado,** **Keila Jorge, Ismael Elias, and Careli Sanchez**

One of the most incredible characteristics of the university is the variety of cultures that exist. The different ways of dressing, the languages, the types of music, hobbies, activities during free time, even the food or the books that we read. Most of the students prefer to call it free style, but we'll try to classify all or at least define many of the styles around the university. In our survey we interviewed 57 students of the University of Puerto Rico between the ages of 17 to 22.. Forty-one percent are first year students and 44% are in their second year. In this survey, 56% of the students were women and most of the students were from the College of Education. This survey was conducted at the Student Center and in the CISO building.

When we asked about music, the new genre reggaeton is the most preferred by students with 23%, followed by rock and ballads with 17% each. Salsa had 12%, hip-hop 10% and merengue 9%. The minority included reggae, opera and country music. When we asked them why they began to listen to this type of music, 45% answered because of their friends, followed very closely by 37% who said that it was because of the family.

One of the things that students like to do is eat. So we interviewed them about their favorite eating place and food. More than half of the interviewed students chose the Student Center. This place is close by and it has four different restaurants. In our survey, 53% of the students like to eat there; the less preferred place is the “merenderos” of CISO with 12%. Remember that the majority of our interviewed students are freshmen and the “merenderos” are very far away from General Studies. Anyway, this place is a good choice for someone who wants healthy and less expensive food. Now, let's find out the food they chose. As expected, most of the students chose hamburgers with 30%, followed by pizza with 29%, and the traditional food in PR, rice, beans and chicken with 28%. The food that students like the least is vegetarian food. In Puerto Rico, we are accustomed to eating American food like hamburgers. That's why we prefer junk food.

Another topic of our survey is clothing. In this part, 23% of the students prefer to wear sportswear and more fashionable clothes. Maybe because they feel very comfortable going to the university with these clothes or because they want to be in fashion all the time. Thirteen percent wear “caco”

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style, which is frequently used by students that listen to reggaeton very often. Another style is surfer with 12%. Usually these are the ones that love being at the beach in their free time. A T-shirt and short pants are the best choice for this style. The last one was rocker with 7%. They frequently use dark clothes, especially black.

It's funny to think that many people do not like to read. It is an irony in the university because what we mostly have to do here for succeeding is reading. Thank God, 63% of the students still like reading. What most of the students prefer to read are mystery books with 21%, next comedy, suspense, fantasy, and drama books. Then come magazines with 10%. Last are the action and history books both with 6%.

In our survey we found that the first language of the students of the University of Puerto Rico is Spanish. At this university we speak Spanish, but not everyone was born here. The university has excellent exchange programs, so not every student is Puerto Rican. For this reason, the survey showed that the first language is Spanish (90%). Our survey pointed to English in second place, with 10% of the interviewed students speaking it as English as their first language.

When we talked about free time, 62% of the students prefer going to the beach more than to a disco. The majority said they like to go two or three times per month. The beach most frequently mentioned was Ocean Park. The thirty-eight percent who chose discos mostly prefer Shannans and Summers as the best places for having a good time dancing. Most of the students use their free time for drinking. Seventy-two percent of the interviewed students accepted that they drink alcohol. Some of the most popular drinks were the "Blue Curacao", "Bacardi Apple", "Long Island", "Don Q Limon and Cranberry juice" or "Whisky Sour". It's surprising to see that only a 28% prefer to have a good time without drinking.

Going to the movies is one of the activities that students like the most. In the survey we found that 25% of the students prefer to watch comedies. They prefer laughing to being scared. However, horror movies received second place in the survey with 18%. The types of movies with less audience were the romance/drama with 14% and the animated movies with 12%. Animated movies are more for kids like our little siblings. Another thing we discovered in our interviews is that students prefer going to movies between



"...most fashionable clothes..."

**"We are young and we like to go out and have fun ..."**



"...62% of the students like most going to the beach ..."





“...21% like to navigate on their computers...”

**“...popular culture changes constantly and what is “in” with young women is not necessarily “in” with young men”.**



“For women listening to rock, dressing like “fresita”...are ‘in’...”

7 pm to 11 pm. Many of them prefer these hours because it's their free time. Only 5% of the interviewed students chose midday.

All students have a hobby for entertainment in their free time. The hobby that students like most, after skipping classes, is listening to music with 31%. Twenty-one percent like to navigate in their computers. Finally, we have sports with 18% and the videogames lovers that always capture our attention in the corner of the university center with 11%. Thanks to one of these hobbies, many students receive scholarships. Of course, it is sports. Thirty-four percent of the interviewed students said that they practice swimming, followed by basketball (13%), volleyball (8%) and dancing (7%). A few weeks ago, the dance team of the university held two activities in the student center for the enjoyment of the students. However, 14% of the students do not practice any sport.

We are young and we like to go out and have fun with our friends, family or with our partners. For women, their favorite place to hang out is the mall with 26%. Other places university women like to go are: movies (25%), discotheques (23%), bars (14%), beach (7%), and finally bowling alleys (6%). The favorite place for men is movies (35%). The other places men like are: discos (19%), bars (15%), malls (13%), beach (10%), bowling alleys (6%), and others (2%). It is amazing to notice that university women visit discotheques more than university men.

So at UPR-RP what is popular for women? For women listening to rock, dressing like “fresita”, eating in the Student Center and going to the mall are “in” or is part of the pop culture. Men prefer listening to reggaeton, dressing like “cacos”, eating in the Student Center, and going to the movies to have fun.

Pop culture is established by the music, film, television, radio, video games, book publishing, internet, and comic industries. Basically we can say that popular culture changes constantly and what is “in” with young women is not necessarily “in” with young men.

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## Discipline and Dedication: The Key for Success in Sports

### by Armando Barrios, Daisy Gomez, and Ediel Ramos



**University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras** - Puerto Rico has excellent skilled athletes. However, some of these athletes do not have the proper support and the necessary tools to train properly prior to an important competition, but they practice for personal satisfaction.

This is the situation of Adalberto Amador who did an excellent job during the 2006 Justas in the 200 meter run in which he received a gold medal. Adalberto Amador was an outstanding athlete in 2006 Justas due to his discipline and dedication. Adalberto lives in Carolina and has practiced this sport since he was 8 years old. He began to practice this sport because of his parents. *"They motivated me and showed me the importance of this sport"*, said the young athlete who is now 22 years old. He attributes his success in the 2006 Justas to his daily training in the gym, to a balanced diet, and to discipline and dedication. *"Winning the gold medal in the 2006 Justas representing the UPR made me feel very proud since I had never won a gold medal in that competition. I feel that this sacrifice was worth it and I achieved my proposed goal, although no one from the UPR community was supporting me. This doesn't cause a psychological problem because I practice this sport to obtain self-satisfaction. Besides a gold medal in 200 meters, I also won a bronze medal in the 100 meter race and the 4 X400 meter race"*, said Adalberto. Young Amador revealed to us that his goals are: *"Winning the Centro Americano contest in 2010 and graduating with a degree in nutrition from U.P.R.R.P."* In addition, he dreams of running with his favorite athlete Allen Johnson.

Lendford Levy, his trainer attributes Adalberto's success in the 2006 Justas to the discipline and dedication that he demonstrates when he is practicing the sport. Lendford said that if he can improve Amadors's force in the field, he can defend the obtained title and receive more medals in the 2007 Justas."

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Amador's goals are not only the "Justas" competition. Now he wants to obtain international recognition when he participates in the 2010 Centro Americano competition for which he has been preparing for several months. *"The bottom line is that Levy is expecting to achieve a competition at the same level of other athletes worldwide"*, said the trainer that has more than 20 years of experience. In addition, Lendford said that the athletes are not backed by the college community.

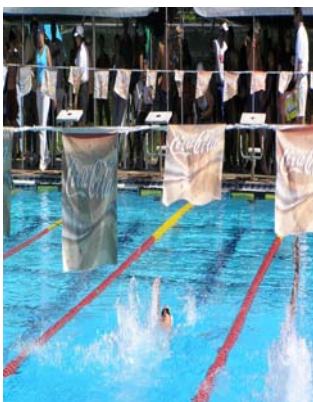
The problem is assigned to the lack of knowledge from the U.P.R.R.P. system. However, this issue does not represent a psychological problem for the athletes, since they practice the sport for their own satisfaction. Besides, the trainer said that he uses different techniques to motivate the athletes in order to obtain better performance, such as varying routines, changing atmosphere, etc.

Additionally, Adalberto's friend Javier Rivera and his twin brother Andres Amador also credit his success to discipline and dedication. Thus, athletes *"should exercise on a daily basis, always maintain a balanced diet, and follow instructions during practice"* said Andres Amador who practices the same sport. *"Adalberto really deserves to be triumphant since he works very hard"* said Javier Rivera, one of Adalberto's friends. The bottom line is that all friends feel very satisfied with the success of the athlete.

How is it that then that the athletes represent the University successfully but they are not given the necessary tools to perform effectively?

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Last year the swimming team of the University of Puerto Rico (Río Piedras) won the female



### **UPR-RP: On the Right Road to the 2007 LAI Tournament by Andrea Torres, Kenny Torres, and Helder González**

championship in the LAI 2006 Tournament. This does not mean that the males did not perform effectively, they just had more competition. This year females and males are on a firm footing to win both championships of the 2007 LAI Tournament. Now, the swimming team has participated in some interuniversity level competitions to know the level of the swimmers. Turabo University and Central University at Bayamón were the places for these last three competitions.

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We cannot disregard that most of these achievements were thanks to the performance and dedication of the swimmers, but especially to Coach Emmanuel I. Lanzo Canales. We had the opportunity to interview him and he was courteous and friendly with us. We asked him how long he has been swimming and he said: *“I have been a swimmer since I was 13 years old and during my breaks, I continue practicing.”* The most interesting part was when he said that his mother was his motivation for swimming. When we asked, “What is your goal with the team?” and he said *“Now my goal is that my swimmers continue breaking their times and my long term goal is to win the two championships of the LAI 2007, and continue doing it for at least five years.”* We were impressed.

With the assurance that he answered this question, he showed us that he will help the team shine in the 25 meter race and especially in the 2007 LAI Tournament to be celebrated at Vasallo’s Pool in Ponce. In the future he wants to participate in the master competition to break his own competition record time.

The U.P.R.R.P. team has excellent swimmers. One of these swimmers is Joel Matos Ortíz. Matos has been swimming for 8 years and last year was his first LAI tournament. At present, Matos studies in the College of Education majoring in Recreation. This young swimmer shared his feelings with us about being part of the swimming team of UPR-RP. His performance has been in swimming the breast stroke. When we asked him what his most memorable experience was, he *said* , *“It was when I represented Puerto Rico in the 5-17 year old category.”* But he also mentioned his bad experience when he was injured and he could not continue swimming. In the short time that we talked with him, the young man showed us his dedication and passion for this sport. His future goal is to become one of the best swimmers of P.R. .

We, as part of the University, need to back these swimmers and the other athletes because they bring the UPR-RP glory and prestige in sports. The swimming team has a great spirit and can continue breaking its own records. The next competition is the short pool (25meters) championship in which UPR-RP is competing for the best three places at the university level. See you there!





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Dear Readers:

It is with great pleasure that I welcome this first issue of “Bridges.” The newsletter is an initiative of Dr. Brenda Ann Camara which received collaboration from several Department professors and CRE personnel. The purpose of the newsletter is to encourage and challenge students to use English in meaningful ways. As more students and professors get involved, I hope it grows into a forum where our students can use the language to share information, express themselves about issues of interest, and publish some of their creative and/or academic English writing. I congratulate the professors and students involved in this project for their effort and contribution to the teaching/learning community of our Department.

Sincerely,  
*Prof. Madeleine Hudders*  
English Department Director  
College of General Studies  
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