Integración de la Universidad de Guantánamo. Novedades y perspectivas

About the integration of the University of Guantánamo

Manuel Lozano Diéguez
Jorge Olivares Boada
Ada Tamayo Monagas
Universidad de Guantánamo, Cuba
mlozanod@cug.co.cu,
jorgeob@cug.co.cu
adita@cug.co.cu

Recibido: 25 de enero de 2017
Aceptado: 14 de marzo de 2017

Resumen: La integración de la Educación Superior en la provincia más oriental de Cuba ha planteado nuevos retos, ¿cuál es la respuesta de la Universidad de Guantánamo a este proceso?, ¿cuáles son las novedades que la identifican?, ¿y sus perspectivas? A estas preguntas brinda respuesta este trabajo.

Palabras clave: Integración universitaria; Enfoque prospectivo; Misión y visión de la Universidad de Guantánamo; Educación Superior

Abstract: The integration of Higher Education in the easternmost province of Cuba has posed new challenges. What is the response of the University of Guantánamo to this process? What are the novelties that identify the process? What are the perspectives? These questions are answered in this paper.

Keywords: University integration; Prospective approach; Mission and vision of Guantánamo University; Higher education.

Introduction

The updating of the Cuban economic model tends to the enhancement of human capital and rational use of resources for the prosperous and sustainable socialism that is being built. In this, higher education plays a significant role for the training and post-training of professionals, the management and dissemination of knowledge resulting from science and technology, relevant to prospective local development, enhancing the growth of production and services which demand the society.

In this direction we require a university that integrates in an organic system the possibility of preserving, developing and fostering the culture of scientific knowledge to a society that demands ever higher levels in correspondence with the needs of its integral development.
Let us overview integration as "... the action and effect of integrating or integrating (forming a whole, completing a whole with missing parts or making someone or something become part of a whole)." (Pérez and Merino, 2011)

In the case of the integration of the three centers of Higher Education at Guantánamo, it can be understood as the process of strengthening the role of the new University by uniting all academic, scientific and technological potentialities in a common system whose essential property results in a greater rationality, relevance and quality of the mission of Higher Education in the territory.

Taking into account the above, the objective of this work is to argue the transition to the new university of Guantánamo from a strategic conception and an innovative approach. To achieve that purpose the paper discusses its perspectives, in terms of its continuous improvement, in tune with the prospective development of the Guantánamo province.

**Development**

The integration of Higher Education is part of the process of continuous improvement that takes place at this level and has taken as its basis the Economic and Social Policy Guidelines of the Communist Party and the Revolution.

These decisions of the highest level in the country were experienced in the territories of Mayabeque, Artemisa and in the special municipality of Isla de la Juventud, with a systematic follow-up and a timely accompaniment that favored positive results, later extending to the rest of the provinces of the country, so Guantánamo, the easternmost province of Cuba, initiated the process in September 2014.

1. **Process of integration of the centers of Higher Education in Guantánamo from the strategic prospective**

To develop the process, different procedures were applied with the purpose of assuming it with a scientific character, from the management of the integration processes, among them, the most significantly applied: Paretto analysis, to identify the associated problems, and the Ishikawa’s for the analysis of causes and effects, and the contextualization of the management model.

In Guantánamo province, the University work was projected towards the different Key Results Areas, and the Management Model for the Integration of Higher Education Centers was designed.
Strategic diagnosis for the integration of higher education in Guantánamo province.


Its implementation is based on a prospective approach: strategic planning tool of the integrated university, highlighting the analysis of strategic factors (mission-vision), strategic diagnosis, internal and external variables, possible scenarios, as well as the problem and strategic solution.
This analysis is based on the principle of participation, as a guiding principle of the prospective approach with which it was assumed. But foresight and strategy are united although they are not the same. They converge in:

1) the time of anticipation, i.e. the prospective of possible and desirable changes
2) the time of preparation of the action: that is, the preparation and evaluation of the possible strategic options to prepare for the expected changes (preactivity) and to bring about the desired changes (proactivity).

Godet (2000) also points out that "prospective, when it goes alone, focuses on what? It can become strategic when an organization wonders about what can they do? Once both issues have been addressed, the strategy starts with what can be done? To ask the other two questions: what
are we going to do? And how are we going to do it? Hence the overlap between the prospective and the strategy " (p .16).

Based on these considerations, the organization and planning of the integration process for the creation of the new University took into account several steps:

- Creation of the provincial commission for the implementation and development of the integration process and approval of the work schedule.
- Adequacy of the work system to make room for compliance with the approved schedule.
- Study of the documents that gave legal and political basis to the integration process.
- Definition of the criteria for the integration of the structure, staff, infrastructure and resources.
- Study of the experiences of the territories in which the experiment of integration of the higher education was developed.
- Decision, through teamwork, of the policies to be followed.
- Diagnostic study of the situation of higher education in Guantánamo.
- Creation of nine working commissions to address the different elements addressed in the integration.
- Design of the decisions for the integration of the three centers.
- Proposal structure, charges, and staff.
- Determination of the use of the premises of the planned venues.
- Projection of the actions for the integration of accounting and migration activity of Versat Sarasola to ASSET, as an automated accounting system.

2. Before and after the new University of Guantánamo

The new University of Guantánamo integrates three of the four centers of Higher Education that existed, because the policy outlined did not contemplate integrating the centers attached to the Ministry of Public Health (Minsap). These are: University of Guantánamo, University of Pedagogical Sciences "Raúl Gómez García", Faculty of Physical Culture "Manuel Piti Fajardo". The University of Guantánamo (UG), which since 1989 moved from branch to faculty, to University Center in 1997, and University in 2010, was composed of four faculties and 11 careers. The approved general workforce was 839 positions, of which 581 (69.3%) were linked to the core activity, and 30.7% were support activities. Its faculty was made up of 404 teachers, of
whom 30% were in the main category, and 55.4% were in the scientific category - 44 doctors and 180 masters - who attended 4479 students.

The University of Pedagogical Sciences "Raúl Gómez García" (UCP), first center of Higher Education founded in the province, first as a subsidiary of Santiago de Cuba in 1976, later as Higher Pedagogical Institute in 1980, and as University since 2009, was composed by four faculties and 17 pedagogical careers, with a workforce of 794 positions, of which 465 (58.6%) were linked to the fundamental activity and 41.4% to support activities. Its faculty consisted of 465 teachers, 24% with principal category, 357 (79%) with academic category, but only 29 of them doctors, to attend to 7760 students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate.

The Faculty of Physical Culture of Guantánamo (FCF), founded in 1983, had approved a general staff of 340 positions, 274 (80.6%) linked to the fundamental activity, and the rest (19.4%) to support activities. The cloister was formed by 158 teachers to attend 6980 students. Of these, only six (3.8%) were Doctors in Sciences, and 20 (12.7%) Masters in Sciences; 11% had higher teaching categories, and the majority (69%) were assistants.

The new University is made up of three Vice-rectors of eight that existed, two Directors General, nine municipal university centers, seven faculties of ten that existed. Of 49 departments remained 29, 31 majors are maintained, with a registration of 8609 students, of them 1288 in the regular daily course, and 7321 in other types of courses. It has a workforce of 1017 teachers, of which 51.62% are women, and 61.11% are between the ages of 26 and 45. Of this total of teachers, 604 have the academic category of Master and 129 of Doctor in different sciences.

In the teaching category of the senate there is a significant increase according to the following data: full professors: 60, auxiliary: 266, assistant: 637, instructor: 125. Similar growth has taken place in the staffs of the political and mass organizations of the new institution.

The committee that led the strategic design of the new University interacted with the rest of the commissions, and with the directors and workers of the three centers, favoring their participation in the integration process.

This design was worked on the basis of the indications given by the Ministry of Higher Education for the 2014-15 school year, extending its scope until 2021 taking into account the particularities
of the three integrated higher education centers, the social object of each and their majors, with an approach that attends to the expressed in the following figure.

![Figure 1. Esquema de cambio fundamental de la Universidad unificada](https://example.com/figure1.png)

This made possible to determine their mission: to train revolutionary, competent and humanistic professionals, in accordance with the level of exigency of the economy and the services, based on science and technology, through the quality management of the university processes in Guantánamo and providing services abroad.

And its vision: we are an innovative University, committed to building a prosperous and sustainable socialism, recognized for its high impact in the development of Guantánamo, distinguished by the following traits: we have prepared and motivated directives based on the successful achievement of the objectives, the improvement of the quality of life, and the enhancement and dignity of its workers. We have a senate of excellence that has a solid political-ideological preparation capable of achieving the education with quality and efficiency of integral revolutionary professionals, bearers of our values. We intend to meet the needs and demands of training and improvement of graduates and directors, as well as other professional services, prioritizing academic and scientific training in Cuba and abroad.

In the same way, the broad and participative work developed, allowed the identification of shared values, which were defined by specialists and approved by the collective.
A fruitful exchange was achieved in the decision of the four Key Result Areas, objectives, measurement criteria and indicators, as well as the norms for their evaluation. Its implementation is based on the prospective approach, highlighting the analysis of the strategic factors (mission-vision), as well as the problem and the strategic solution, all aligned with the province's development program.

The strategic problem reflects the main gaps to be overcome in order to successfully achieve integration. It is carried out taking as dimensions the elements treated in the definition of integration provided in the work, among them the following stand out:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Breeches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Relevance  | ➢ Results of the scientific production of the university community.  
            | ➢ Project Management.  
            | ➢ Work for the vocational and profesional training |
| Rationale  | ➢ Physical and technological infrastructure.  
            | ➢ Integration of the processes. |
| Quality    | ➢ Doctoral training.  
            | ➢ Certifying majors and sillabi. Certifying the UG |

Chart 1: Relation between breeches and the dimensions of the integration.

Source: The author

The projection of the strategic solution to the problems facilitated the identification of the key results’ areas, where the senate performance is vital for the growth and institutional development, they contain the main results expressed in measurement criteria and indicators that facilitate their measurement and control. The main strategic decisions were as follows:

- Creative application of the integral approach to educational and ideological political work in the university.
- Promotion and implementation of a sustainable development approach in the university and in society.
• Increased participation in international programs and agreements, with the support of professionals of high national and international recognition.

Among the most innovative results of this process of integration of the three centers in the new University can be considered the following:

a) Given the rationality achieved in the approved structure and human resources studies, the process allowed the reduction of 66 directors, and 550 workers, who were reoriented.

b) The presence of heads of the centers immersed in the integration process was achieved in the positions of vice-rectors and general managers, which integrates the cultural process of the organization.

c) The conception of the figure of a First Vice-Rector, from the significant increase of the control section, the complexity and the dispersion of the facilities of the new University.

d) A strategic design of the new University, which integrated the purposes of the three centers, evidenced in the indicators of work and in which the objectives are harmonized by area of key results, the quality standards of the majors, syllabi, organizations and internal control.

e) The design of a unique annual plan of activities, with the budget insured, as well as a new work system that gives unity to the steering system.

f) The creation of the School of Doctoral Training that has enhanced the scope of this scientific degree for the faculty of the University and professionals of the territory.

g) The increase of doctors in the senate to a figure of 129.

h) The presence of the Rector as a member of the Provincial Council ensures the coordination of tasks of territorial scope, and the relationship with other enterprises, institutions and organizations of the territory.

i) The conception and realization of a monthly meeting, as part of the new work system, of the management of the University with provincial entrepreneurs, which ensures closer relations both for the training of professionals and for research and graduate studies with the signing of agreements, among other mutual benefits.

j) A sustained territorial impact highly recognized by social actors through socio-community projects, innovation activities and technology transfer.

k) The integration of the identity symbols of the three centers into a new visual image of the University, a novel communication strategy and a unique information system.
l) The implementation of a quality management system and a strategy for the accreditation of careers and programs, which impact is noticeably visible, achieving the status of certification in 10 majors, maintaining the master's programs and the institution's self-evaluation.

m) The management for the growth of internationalization, which reaches countries in Latin America, Africa and Europe.

n) The creation of new and agile structures, as well as facilities for the attention to the intellectual capital and the expansion of opportunities and possibilities for its development, where the work with young people is strengthened.

o) The design of a strategy of improvement of the physical and technological infrastructure, that has a modern navigation room, providing facilities for the management of the scientific knowledge; its extension to the residence and the growth of other facilities like the Wi-Fi parks.

p) The Technical Scientific Information Center also has internet-connected jobs, and is in transit to become a Center for Learning and Research.

q) The journal EduSol is indexed in databases of international prestige, and the students have access to the publication in the journal Ciencia y Progreso.

r) There is a Languages Center.

In this regard, it is emphasized that the integration process was not only seen as a momentary process of the present, but projected to the future and made to meet the essential needs that emerge from it, with a dose of innovation in several areas of work, which will contribute to the motivation and commitment of the different actors.

As can be understood, in correspondence with the role of the University in territorial development the strategy was formulated, which expresses: the alignment of the energies of the organization in pursuit of its vision of the future and balance between the main activity of the institution and its subsystems. In it, the vision weighs the perspectives that the organization must solve in order of its pertinence, rationality and quality. It is understood as vision: the image of the desired and feasible future constructed by the leaders and actors based on the present reality and the possibilities for the future. The manifestation of a collective desire must be of an organization in the pre-established future, based on what is the organization today and its potential for the future.
3. Perspectives of the University of Guantánamo

In this way, the prospective analysis of the vision reflects that those driving factors of the development of the new University are in accordance with the prospective future of the territorial development, as it reinforces its relevance and impact in that development, at the same time foresees the great challenges and perspectives to which the senate must respond in an integrated effort of the University as the Higher Centre of Science and Progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision of the University</th>
<th>Vision: a prospective analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are an innovative University, committed to building a prosperous and sustainable socialism, recognized for its high impact in the development of Guantánamo, distinguished by the following features: we have prepared and motivated directors based on the successful achievement of the objectives, the improvement of the quality of life and the enhancement and dignity of its workers; we have a senate of excellence that has a solid political-ideological preparation capable of achieving a quality and efficient education of integral revolutionary professionals, bearers of our values; we prepare to meet the needs and demands of training and postgraduate training of graduates and directives, as well as other professional services, giving priority to academic and scientific training in Cuba and abroad.</td>
<td>University innovation activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relevant and qualitative services in the training and improvement of professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High impact on the development of society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strengthening academic and scientific training in Cuba and abroad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The strategic perspectives of the University of Guantánamo were therefore identified based on the strategic objectives of each of the key results areas, with a focus on relevance, rationality and quality that meets the requirements of the Economic and Social Policy Guidelines of the Party
and the Revolution, as well as it tends to the perfection of the Higher Education. Among the most notable perspectives are:

1. To continue promoting the development of the shared values of the organization as part of the priorities of educational and political-ideological work to counter ideological subversion.

2. To permanently diagnose the training needs of professionals, other specialists and technicians to improve admission, curricular design in careers taking full advantage of their flexibility and the design of postgraduate education, more relevant to local development, and an active participation in the improvement of Cuban Higher Education.

3. To develop the continuous training of the senate and the directives in accordance with the requirements of the certification of majors, syllabi, and the institution itself, with the promotion of an innovative spirit for the effective impact on territorial development.

4. Gradually increase the number of doctors in the senate and teaching departments, and teach programs with higher category. Strengthen the base link.

5. To increase the results of the scientific production of the university community and its dissemination in internationally indexed journals.

6. Ensure compliance with the strategy for the physical and technological infrastructure that demands the development of the University, based on the quality of life, work and study for the university community.

7. Encourage strategic alliances in linking the University with the productive sector, services and other institutions of the territory, for the fulfillment of its mission through the management of research-development-innovation projects.

8. To advance in the interdisciplinary and inter-institutional integration of the substantive functions of the University and with the economic-social environment, and to strengthen the relations of the institution.

9. Develop and implement a process-oriented management system based on the gradual integration of the same and on the sustainability of the University.

10. Identify the main areas of international cooperation to enhance the University's participation in them, in accordance with the priorities of the university and the country.

11. To perfect the university cultural process with high impact on the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the territory.
In summary, the perspectives identified for the new University respond to the analysis of the vision using the strategic foresight, which ensures a higher level of reliability of the proposal and, therefore, a greater index of certainty in the possibilities of success, which, coupled with the accelerated professional growth of the senate and the directors, can unfailingly become reality for the fulfillment of its social responsibility as a center of Higher Education.

**Conclusions**

The process of integration of the Higher Education centers in Guantánamo was carried out in accordance with the work program established by the university authorities of the three planned centers, in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Higher Education, based on the Guidelines for Economic and Social Policies of the Party and the Revolution.

For the work, nine commissions were created which took into account the documentation, the results of the experiment carried out in the territories of Mayabeque, Artemisa and Isla de la Juventud, as well as a diagnosis of Higher Education in Guantánamo province, from a strategic prospective approach.

In order to fulfill the intended purpose, the strategic design of the new University was projected until 2021 and it is compatible with the quality standards and the internal control system, which improve the structure, staff training and other aspects necessary for the fulfillment of the structural and organic integration of the new University.

Under Guantánamo conditions, the integration process of the University highlighted novel aspects that distinguished it from that of other provinces, based on considering the three characteristic elements of the process: rationality, pertinence, and quality as key aspects to success. Its results were contextualized to the conditions of the territory and its prospective development.

The prospective-strategic analysis carried out in the evaluation of the vision allowed to distinguish the perspectives of the new University, aligned with the prospect of the long-term development of Guantánamo province.

**Bibliographic References**


Lineamientos de la política Económica y Social del Partido y la Revolución aprobados en el VI Congreso del PCC. Recuperado en http://www.cuba.cu/politica/webpcc/lineamientos de la política económica y social.htm

Ministerio de Educación Superior. (2014). Carta para orientar el cumplimiento de las “Indicaciones para elaborar la propuesta para organizar la implementación de la política aprobada, dirigida a extender el experimento de integración de la Educación Superior a otras provincias”.


Colectivo de autores. Universidad de Mayabeque. (2014). La gestión universitaria en el proceso de unificación de los organismos formadores en la provincia Mayabeque: premisas fundamentales para lograr su socialización eficaz.