

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100002695

Date Listed: 7/23/2018

Property Name: Residencia de Senioritas, Universidad de Puerto Rico

County: San Juan

State: PR

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

7.23.2018

Date of Action

Section 2: "Not for Publication" was inadvertently checked on the form. It is hereby "unchecked."

The Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION: National Register property file; Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Residencia de Señoritas Universidad de Puerto Rico; Río Piedras

Other names/site number: Dormitorio de Señoritas / RESI- Campus

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

2. Location

Street & number: Río Piedras Campus, University of Puerto Rico

City or town: San Juan State: Puerto Rico County: San Juan

Not For Publication: x Vicinity: x

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

		<u>May 29, 2018</u>
Carlos A. Rubio-Cancela/ State Historic Preservation Officer		
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.		
Signature of commenting official:		Date
_____		_____
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
_____	_____	

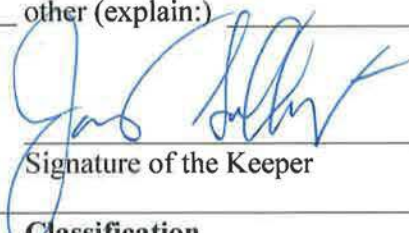
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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain: _____)



Signature of the Keeper

7.23.2018

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions

EDUCATION / Education related

Current Functions

EDUCATION / Education related

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT / International Style / Bauhaus

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete, Stucco

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The 1960 *Residencia de Señoritas* (women's dormitories) sits near the south-east corner of the University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras Campus; near the intersection of Gándara and Barbosa avenues. Up to this date, this on-campus building continues to serve its original purpose as student dormitory, though no longer restricted to female students. With overall dimensions of 288'-0" x 56'-3", the building is a nine-story slab, completely built in reinforced concrete. The structure comprises 104 dwelling units (each equipped for three residents, for a total of 312 occupants) paired to share support facilities such as restrooms and living spaces. The structure shows the expected wear and tear signs, expected after 57 years of continued use. Although some building components are deteriorated or missing, the property has not been subject to major interventions, hence substantially maintaining its original aspect and character. All changes inflicted upon the original design could be easily reverted. To this day, the *Residencia de Señoritas* remains as one of the best examples of mid-century modern architecture in Puerto Rico.

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Narrative Description

The *Residencia de Señoritas* (women's dormitories) is part of a substantial expansion master plan developed by the University of Puerto Rico during the 1950's. At the time, the university, as the topmost educative institution on the island, came to be fundamental part of a social reform program infused by both local and federal government at the time. As an essential promoter of social reform, the university had to expand to accommodate a much broader population, no longer a privileged few. Architect Henry Klumb was appointed by Chancellor Jaime Benítez to design over 25 new structures for the Rio Piedras Campus. The Ladies Residence tended a strategic need of that plan, as most of the new students were to come from far regions of the island.

Since its residential purpose was ultimately, non-academic, the Ladies' Dormitory was built – near the building it came to substitute- along the southernmost edge of the University campus, neighboring the city of Rio Piedras, across José M. Gándara Avenue. Now enclosed by a gated fence, the physical boundaries of the University are firmly set over the avenue, and the building's site remains rather marginal to most activities on campus.

The building is set within a legally registered plot of land covering 26.8190 acres (10.8533 hectares), comprised within the greater property limits of the University Campus. The property is zoned as (DE) *Dotacional Equipamento* which corresponds to its particular use as public (educational) installations. The immediate surroundings of the building (the area that affects), and at the same time is affected by its presence, is much smaller, as it can be determined by physical boundaries set by sidewalks, parking lots, roadways and landscaped areas.

Since its construction in 1960, several other buildings have been built near the *Residencia de Señoritas* (the Education, Plastic Arts and Architecture buildings, as well as other miscellaneous buildings of secondary importance. However, all these surrounding buildings maintain sufficient distance from the Ladies' Dormitory, so much as to elude any spatial/compositional inflection on the building. Thus, the original intention (so characteristic of modern/tropical architecture and urbanism) which conceived the building as a sculptural object set in the campus garden is safeguarded.

Regarding recognized building types, the *Residencia de Señoritas* was designed and originally built to serve as student (institutional) housing; that is, transitory housing of particularly high density. Morphologically speaking, the building mass can be regarded as a *slab building* (long and narrow buildings, where the height exceeds the width). The particularities of this specific design solution demonstrate the designer's unique sensibility as the building attains modern architecture industrial hyper-efficiency, while respecting the conditions of its tropical location. (*see figure No. 1*).

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Figure No. 1: Exterior façade of complete building looking west (2017). Volumetric composition of building denotes independent dormitory volumes with intermediate gaps allowing light and ventilation on to circulation corridor (protected by operable louvers windows at East façade). Note vertical pre-fab components signaling the presence of vertical circulation (staircases) on either end of slab building.

The student dormitory building is a nine-story high slab volume, organized along a double-loaded center corridor, with main access and vertical circulation at the center of the slab, while providing fire escape stairwells on either end. Dwelling units are organized in pairs, conforming dormitory modules sharing a central service area (bathrooms, kitchens and balconies). Separation between all areas within the unit is attained by means of built-in furniture in the form of tall cabinet closets, allowing for free-flowing space throughout. The dormitory modules are separated from each other allowing room for cross ventilation and natural light into the public circulation corridor. While the dormitory modules are repeated on both sides of the central corridor, these are staggered in such a way that the center of a module finds the gap between the modules at the opposite side of the corridor. This arrangement provides uniform distribution of natural light along the corridor, while allowing for direct cross ventilation into all units, which find an open balcony across their doorway. The resulting layout proves particularly clever as the floor plan has the efficiency of a double-loaded corridor with the advantages of a single-loaded arrangement. (*see figure No. 2*).

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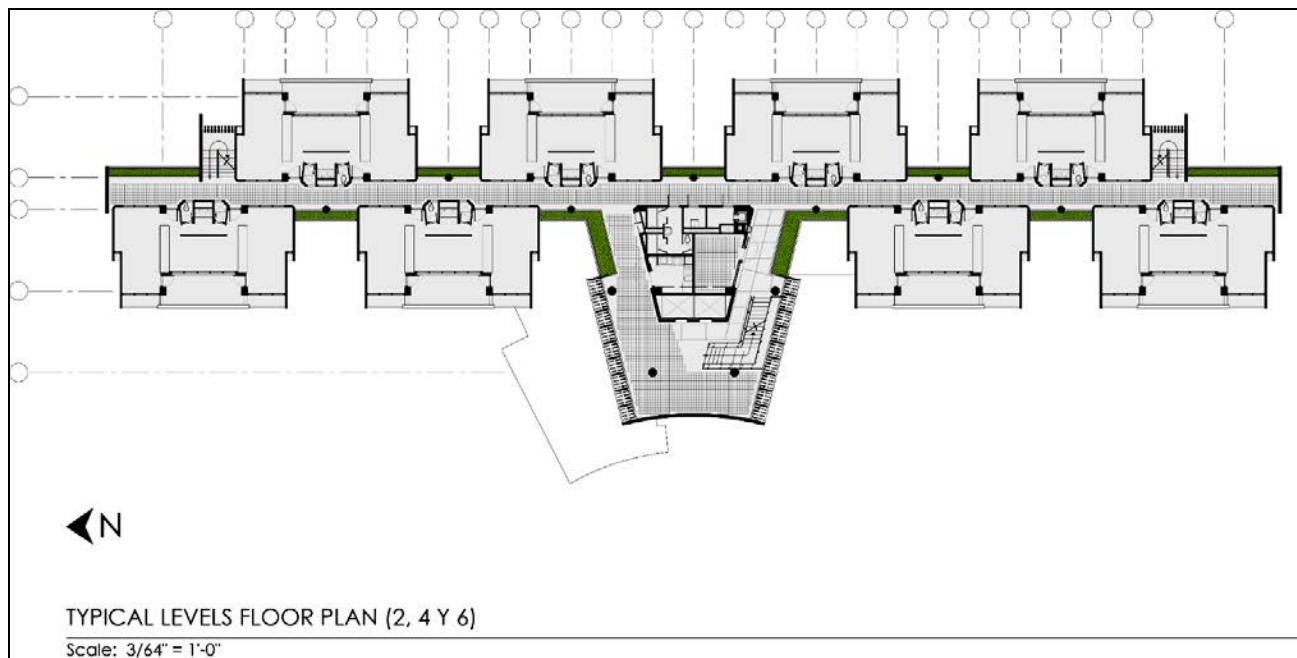


Figure No. 2: Typical level floor plan (2, 4 y 6). The calibrated handling of the geometric figures provides a consistent compositional argument in Henry Klumb's work. Klumb supports his plan in the compositional procedures derived from the geometry itself: repetition, rhythm, direction and symmetry (being locally applied or compound). *Nominación del Dormitorio de Señoritas, Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras* (2017).

The central vertical circulation revolves around a main (open) stair which runs the full height of the building, as it connects the vestibules following an alternating sequence of main vestibule (at even-numbered floors) and smaller overlooking balcony vestibules (at odd-numbered floors). So instead of nine identical and repetitive vestibules, the alternation of large and small vestibules accounts for a paired combination of double-height vestibules, every two floors. This peculiarity of the building section is clearly expressed on the *brise-soleils* covering the façade of the vestibules. Just as the double-height vestibules conforms a single space, each *brise-soleil* is inserted as a single element spanning the height of the two levels; yet the upper portion projects forward (becoming deeper), while the lower portion recedes, thus feeling more open at the levels where the vestibules can be occupied, thus allowing for better views, light and ventilation.

The syncopated rhythm observed at the floor plans finds a direct expression in the building's volume. Each of the paired dormitory modules are extruded into individual volumes, much like small towers, separated from each other by small tracts of the center corridor, which is expressed as open balconies at the back ground. Each of the dormitory modules boasts a symmetrical arrangement with the sleeping quarters on either side of a central shared area, expressed in the façade by an open balcony. The volumetric composition of these towers is set in a telescopic fashion as the dwelling units stem from the service/restrooms immediate to the corridors. Small slits between the solid side walls allow for necessary windows into the service areas. Privacy is

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guaranteed, as all openings are set facing out to the façade rather than sideways on to the neighboring modules. (see figure No. 3).

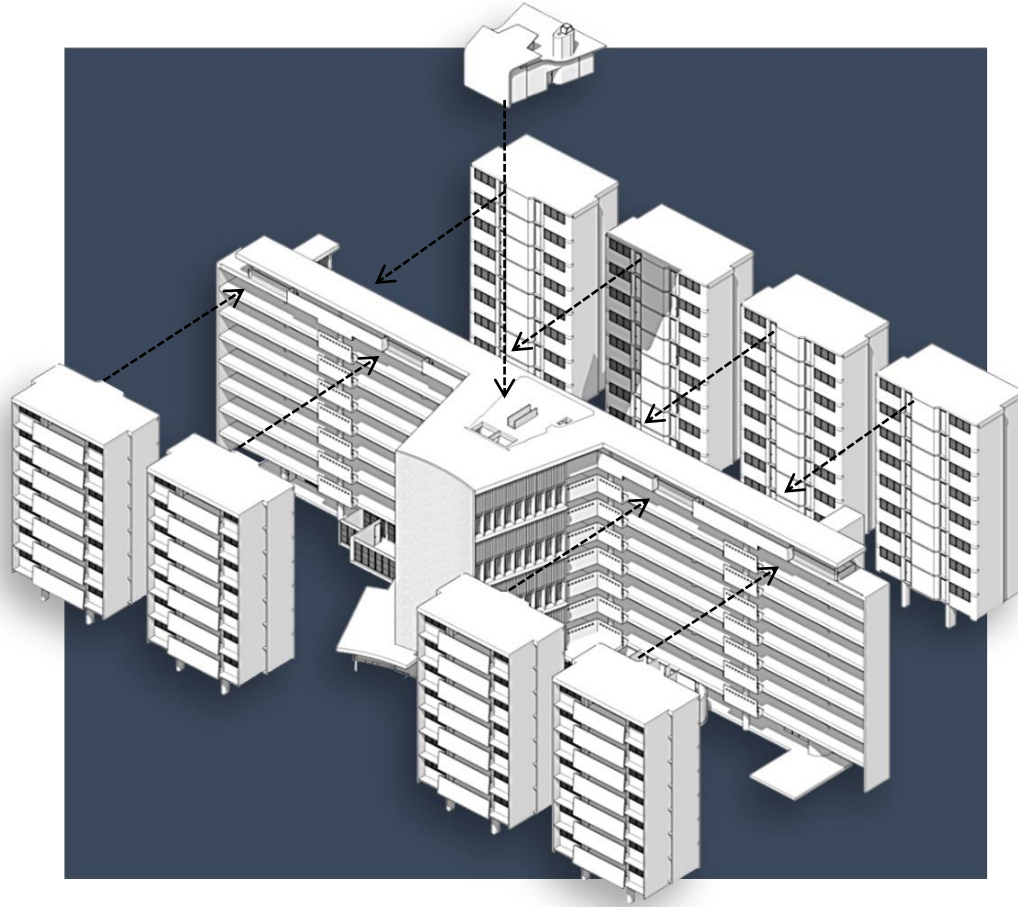


Figure No. 3: Entire building exploded axonometric. Klumb's architecture stands out for the explicit denotation of the architectural elements, assembled to incorporate the different parts of the building. The structural elements (micro scale) define the pieces of the building, which results in an ensemble composition. The vanes are expressed as intermediary spaces between the main volumes. *Nominación del Dormitorio de Señoritas, Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras (2017).*

On the East façade four of these repetitive towers are flanked by the corridors extensions into the emergency stairwells, which are noted –as it is customary in Klumb's buildings- by the use of continuous vertical fins, allowing once again for the ventilation and natural illumination inside. The East façade is perceived as much larger and taller (the West façade is actually only seven stories high), as it expresses the full length of the building slab. In contrast, the West façade is perceived as of much smaller scale, due to the interruption imposed by the central tower, of exceptional expression, which houses the vestibules at each level. This way, although comprised of five tower volumes, this façade is perceived as two pairs of dwelling towers, separated by the central circulation tower.

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The exceptional composition of the central vestibule tower serves well to establish the main entrance into the building. Instead of the typical symmetrical telescopic arrangement, this module presents an integral curved wall surface (spanning the full height of the building), following the curve of the vehicular roundabout drop off, right in front.

On either side of the curved wall, the vertical-fins *brise-soleils* are set covering paired floors, with regard to the double-height vestibules right behind them. The alternating distinction between the upper (denser) and the lower (lighter) portion of the *brise-soleil* panels, resemble a guillotine with two immediately adjacent planes, much consistent with the telescopic theme found elsewhere in the volumetric composition of this building. (see figure No. 4).



Figure No. 4: Portion of the exterior façade looking south, and detail of vestibules brise-soleils. The vertical-fins *brise-soleils* are set covering paired floors, with regard to the double-height vestibules right behind them. Photo to the right c. 1960-1970. Photo on the right is partial view of west elevation of the building looking south-east (2017)

With regard to the interior space, the building follows modern architecture's spatial paradigm of the *free-plan*, as its handling of architectural space eludes being definite, static, enclosed and concrete-shaped in favor of being more suggestive, dynamic, free-flowing and ambiguous. Most spaces found in this building will not recognize a precise/specific geometric shape, and definition and enclosure seems continuously challenged in conditions where openings are established as the space mediating between architectural elements, and walls and corners find their continuity denied. Space is conceived as an undifferentiated continuum flowing from the outside, through object walls and columns, throughout the interior rooms, and on to the outside again.

The spatial sequence is based on a carefully orchestrated gradation of public into private space. Starting on the outside of the building, as the user approaches the entrance, the full-height wall underlining the drop-off curve, offers a one-story high flat-roof canopy, supported by tubular

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columns set between pivot doors. The low roof combines with the door planes to form an intimate transition portico into the main lobby, where a service counter greets the visitor, while controlling the entry. The diagonal direction of the lobby –stressed by the floor pattern- suggest a flowing movement to the elevator/stairway lobby to the right. The arrangement between the elevator shafts, the service cluster, and the administrative facilities, conform a control valve hiding the large common areas at the back of the lower floor. (see figure No. 5).

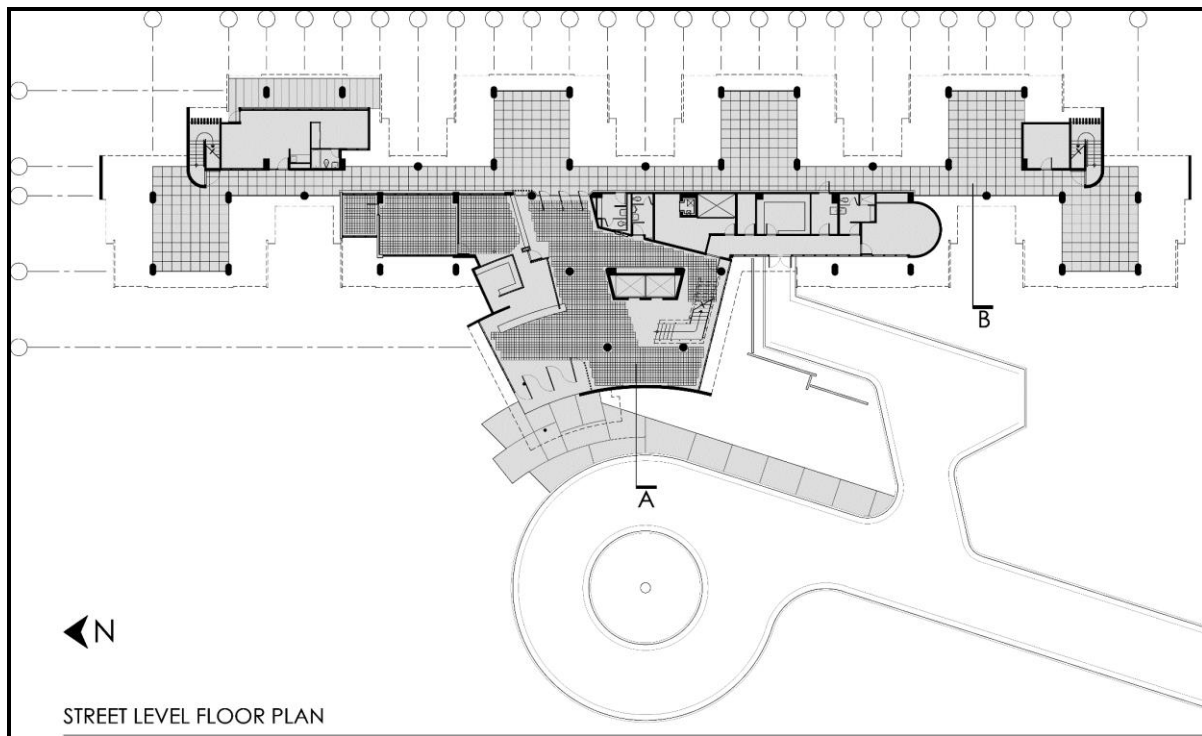


Figure No. 5: Ground level floor plan. The public space gradation at the main vestibule is combined with modern architecture conception of free-flowing space. Rather than formally defined rooms, space is conceived as a free-flowing continuum amidst several objects (columns, service space clusters). *Nominación del Dormitorio de Señoritas, Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras (2017).*

As the user moves on to the upper levels, both elevator and stairs will lead on to the double-height vestibules (originally serving as study lounges) which connect the upper floors in pairs. From each floor vestibule, short, transverse corridors –set on both sides of a central shared service area- provide an interstitial valve to control privacy as it leads on to the main circulation corridor which runs the full length of the building. The short transverse corridors are open on both sides, much like balconies on to the gaps separating the vestibule tower with the neighboring dormitory towers on either side. Planting strips along the balcony verandahs further enhance the tropical ambiance of this open plan.

The main circulation corridor, in turn, is articulated by the presence of the alternating openings (gaps between the dormitory towers), which alternately open left and right, always signaling the

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entrance into each dormitory cluster. Each of the corridor balconies –letting natural light into the circulation alley- is once again enhanced by a planting strip set within the floor pattern.

Privacy is graded based upon the hierarchy of the public space. From the main building vestibule, accessible to all dwellers, on to the double-height vestibules/study halls, shared by two floors, on to the corridors, common to each floor, yet divided in half, so these are common to only four pairs of units per floor (two on either side of the corridor).

Access into the dormitory units is attained directly on to the bedroom areas, accessing these next to a continuous desk surface set along the corridor wall. At the opposite end of the bedroom, wall-to-wall windows open on to the outside, and a corner doorway leads into an exterior balcony, which connect to the other (paired) bedroom symmetrically opposed. Immediately opposed to the dormitory entrance is the access point to the bathroom and service area (also shared). Thus, all circulation is concentrated along the corridor wall. (see figure No. 6).

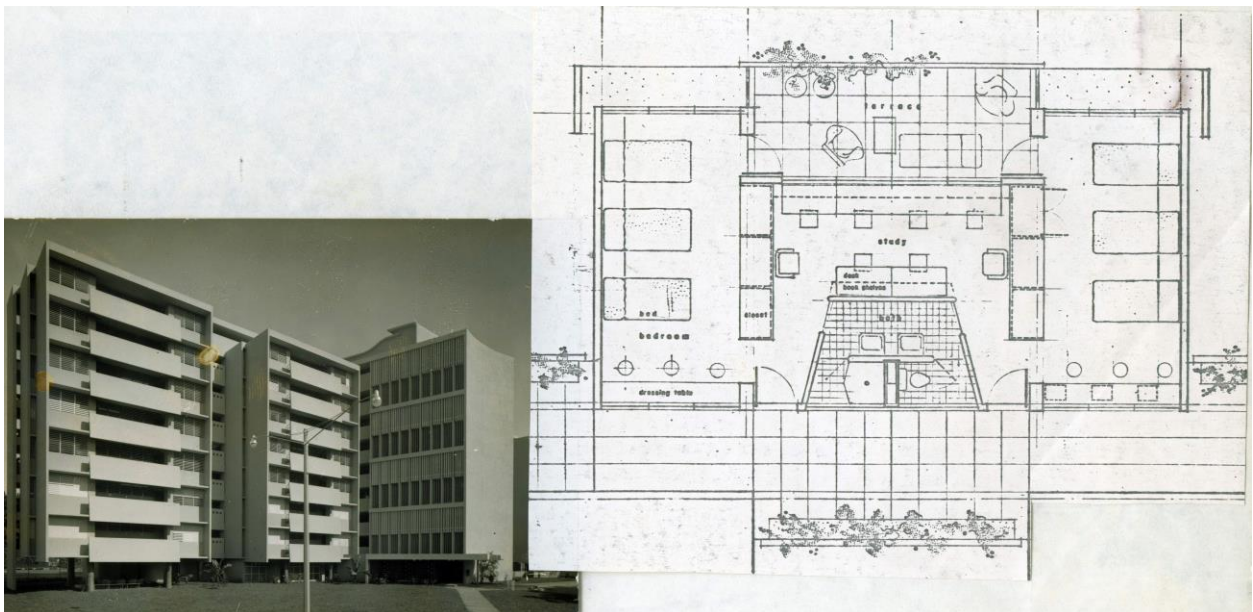


Figure No. 6: Portion of the exterior façade looking east (c. 1960-1970) & unit's typical plan. The dormitory units are handled as individual pavilions (modules) each of which houses two bedrooms, sharing common facilities, for a total of six dwellers. *Nominación del Dormitorio de Señoritas, Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras* (2017).

As it is characteristic of the work of Henry Klumb, the building was conceived and designed to be built in reinforced concrete. This consideration is manifest from the typical post-and-lintel structural system of *pilotis*, leading to a particular span between columns which ultimately yields the spatial flexibility boasted in plan, down to the particular design of architectural elements also built in concrete. While reinforced concrete is a material widely recognized and enthusiastically embraced by the expression of modern architecture (international style / Bauhaus), it also happened to be a material much familiar to Puerto Rican society and builders by mid-twentieth

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century. The Residencia de Señoritas is exemplary on how the work of this extraordinary architect marries his preferences for contemporary expression with the priorities and possibilities of the socio-cultural context of mid-century Puerto Rico. The building is a veritable catalog of the many possibilities of concrete as a building material: cast-in-place concrete, pre-cast elements, stamped concrete, coarse and fine plastered surfaces, are mixed with hydraulic cement tiles and terrazzo floors and wall bases, to produce avant-garde architecture atone to the constructive possibilities of a marginal culture and economy.

The Residencia de Señoritas is exemplary of Klumb's work and testifies to his particular sensibility and keen sense of design. Along with its capacity to adapt to the construction culture of the region (by means of the creative use, and exploitation of concrete's plastic possibilities), the design of the building properly adapts to the climatic reality of the region (by insisting on natural ventilation and illumination). Just as important, the design composition is firmly based on an understanding of proportions, perspective and the handling of light and shadows; all of which are important virtues of Architecture. (*see figure No. 7*).

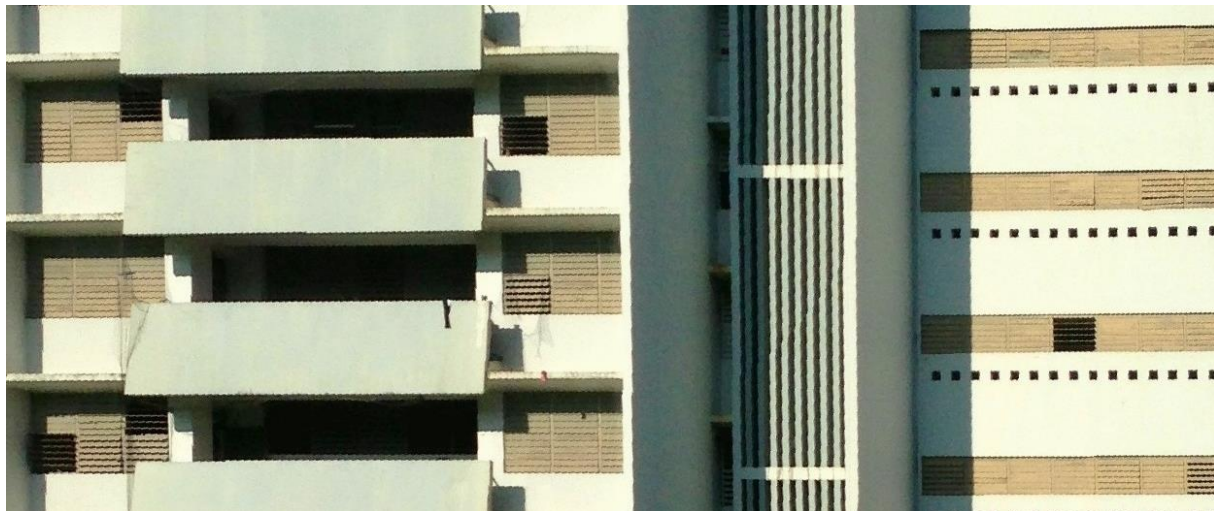


Figure No. 7: Portion of the exterior façade looking west (2017). The volumetric composition of these towers is set in a telescopic fashion as the dwelling units stem from the service/restrooms immediate to the corridors. Small slits between the solid side walls allow for necessary windows into the service areas. Privacy is guaranteed, as all openings are set facing out to the façade rather than sideways on to the neighboring modules.

The building is one of several which were built as part of the UPR expansion master plan. While each of the nineteen structures designed by Klumb for the UPR is unique on itself, they all share a particular compositional coherence on the definition and handling of architectural elements: ornamental iron grilles, pivoting solid Wood panels, pre-fab *brise-soleil* units, combined wooden awning/louvered windows, angled steps, rounded edges, cylindrical columns, and the dissolution of the building mass into the surrounding landscape, is common description to any of Klumb's buildings on campus. The Residencia de Señoritas is no exception to the rule.

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At the same time, the Residencia de Señoritas is, on its own right, an exemplary sample of the architectural expression of post-war modernism. To that regard, its design is distinguished by:

- Its efficient use of materials and resources
- Its elementary clarity in its volumetric proposal
- Its concise declaration of building components and architectural elements
- The simplicity of its surface articulation and texture
- Its proposal of free-flowing space (uncontained) on a free plan supported by *pilotis*.

The impact of time

Up to this time, the *Residencia de Señoritas* maintains the original design proposal. Despite some minor/miscellaneous interventions at the vestibules, and along the exterior walls around the base level of the building (all of which, easily reversible), the building is found in a good state (about 95%) of conservation.

The overall plan layout, as well as the building volumes, façade composition, (voids/solids and proportions) are pretty much intact, so that this building effectively conveys the design sensibility characteristics of its time and its author. The integrity exhibited by the building with regard to design, ambience, materials and crafts (all of them substantially present and well preserved) succeeds in establishing the characteristic feeling of an epoch when design (no so dependent upon technology) was proposed upon a fundamental understanding of the building materials, components and efficient use of natural light and ventilation.

Some interventions of questionable sensibility (all miscellaneous and reversible) have been imposed, always depleting the initial virtues of the design. Mechanical ventilation and air conditioning systems, access control devices, some poor millwork interventions are found throughout the building; yet the sense of amplitude and openness, characteristic of the tropical examples of modern architecture is still alive and well, everywhere in the building. Fortunately, all structural components are in top condition.

Besides the ordinary matters of decay and lack of maintenance, which are expected on a building of almost 60 years of age, maintained with public funds, several risk factors weight against the building integrity and conservation at this time.

The precarious economic situation of Puerto Rico, has a severe effect on the operational funds available to the University of Puerto Rico. The current fiscal emergency will surely displace all maintenance matters to a secondary or tertiary priority level. This entails that corrections to the building's natural tear and wear, weathering and decay will be postponed and/or poorly addressed.

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Substantial changes on applicable building codes ruling over accessibility, means of egress, and minimum standards, approved after many years of operation, will ultimately render the building inadequate and obsolete for its purpose. While many of these regulatory standards can be waived by means of grandfather clauses, many others (pertaining the safe occupation of the premises) will soon need to be addressed.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

ARCHITECTURE .
COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT.
SOCIAL HISTORY .
EDUCATION .

Period of Significance

1960

Significant Dates

1960

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Klumb, Henry

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The 1960 *Residencia de Señoritas* (women's dormitories) building (Henry Klumb) is of statewide significance under Criterion C, regarding *Architecture*, as it is exemplary of the work of a truly exceptional architect. Its innovative layout and particular program demonstrates a high level of design coherently orchestrated in plan, volume, and facades. The building is exemplary of the creative use of architecture's most fundamental parameters: composition, proportion, perspective perception and the calibrated purposeful use of light and shadow. This piece of architecture is not only a remarkable sample of modern architecture, but most importantly, it boasts a lesson on modern architecture adaptation to the tropical environment, and the possibilities of its application in marginal societies. Just as important, the building enjoys local significance under Criterion A, regarding *Community Planning & Development* as it is representative of a significant physical expansion plan, regarded as a pivotal moment in the development of the University of Puerto Rico, both as an institution and as a community. Besides, the resource has statewide significance under Criterion A, regarding *Social History*, since the extraordinary expansion of the university was reflection of an equally relevant moment in the history of Puerto Rico during the twentieth century, thus the building stands as a tribute to the arrival of the ideals of progress, hygiene, and efficiency into Puerto Rican society. The statewide significance of the resource under Criterion A, regarding *Education*, is also considered since the dormitory building –though accessory to the purpose of the University- is representative of the more inclusive agenda upon which the university was called to serve in the transformation of mid XX Century Puerto Rican society.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The *Residencia de Señoritas* demonstrates fulfillment with **Criterion A**, since it is very much associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The building is representative of the significant socio-economic changes that took place in Puerto Rico immediately after World War II. As part of the economic bonanza characteristic immediately following World War II, in Puerto Rico the so-called *Manos a la Obra* program promoted a statewide sense of general optimism, attached to an overall project of social and economic reform, which included significant advancements in infrastructure projects. The University of Puerto Rico was recognized as an essential key player in this effort. The main educational center on the island was to serve as an engine for social change and development. A new generation of professional Puerto Ricans was intended to drive a new modernized society. University-level education will no longer be the privilege of a few, but a right of all. Housing facilities for students arriving from remote parts of the island was instrumental for the implementation of this reform plan; the *Residencia de Señoritas* was part of an important group of projects tending to physical plant improvements and operational infrastructure, of the reconceived and modernized University of Puerto Rico.

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Commissioned by Chancellor Jaime Benítez, architect Henry Klumb envisioned a physical development master plan, proposing several new buildings, many of them tending to logistics and operations. The nominated property is representative of the many buildings erected on campus during its most significant expansion period. The relevance of this property is directly set on the student community of the Rio Piedras Campus, where it remains as witness and reminder of a historic moment in the development of the institution. Its relevance extends on to a state level, as the university's expansion plans were part of a much broader socio economic reform program that ultimately transformed Puerto Rican society on the twentieth century.

Regarding its compliancy with the parameters of **Criterion C**, the *Residencia de Señoritas* embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction. It is an exemplary piece of the work of architect Henry Klumb, arguably the most skillful and prolific architect in Puerto Rico during the mid XX century. The work of Henry Klumb serves as exemplary sample of mid-century (early post-war) modern architecture in Puerto Rico. Klumb's work enjoys particular relevance, as it consistently displays remarkable sensibility towards the adaptation of the paradigms of modern architecture to the local possibilities. The work of Henry Klumb customarily tends to the challenges of its tropical surroundings with architectural proposals celebrating a firm relationship with nature, natural light and ventilation are consistent trademarks of his work, where buildings are set as sculptural pieces within the lavish tropical surroundings. His ability to insert modern architecture into the local scene is also pursued in the intelligent use of architectural elements, construction methods and materials which are endemic, vernacular or at least familiar to Puerto Rican society and construction trades. The *Residencia de Señoritas* is exemplary work of this exemplary master. (see figure No. 8).



Figure No. 8: Typical double-height vestibule (view from corridor) looking west (c. 1960-1970). Honest expression of tectonic components and constructive materials is enhanced by the efficiency of purpose (natural

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lighting/ventilation) and clarity of circulation. It is an expression of modern architecture tempered to the local reality and possibilities.

In 1942, Mr. Jaime Benítez was appointed Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico. Shortly after World War II was over, the local government, set forth what was known as *Operación Manos a la Obra*, in coordination with the federal government, promoting a series of ambitious economical projects envisioned to evolve Puerto Rico into an industrial and developed nation. The program intended to transform the local economy from agriculture-driven, on to industry-driven, to ensure that Puerto Rico was brought up to speed with the rest of the industrialized world. This political undertaking had an important impact on the social constitution of the island. The University of Puerto Rico, as the first and most important education center on the island, was deemed key to the program, since the production of a local professional class was essential to the success of the program. This meant that the University of Puerto Rico will have to expand and transform to become accessible to a much larger mass (no longer a privileged few). This meant a substantial increment of registered students, coming from all parts of the island. The University of Puerto Rico started a significant expansion master plan in order to tend to its new role as promoter of change in the Puerto Rican society.

By 1957, with 16,753 registered students, the University of Puerto Rico is rated No. 19 between the 25 largest universities in the United States, as noted by the main newspaper on the island¹.

The architect in charge of the University's physical transformation was Henry Klumb. Starting on 1945 and continuing to 1965, Klumb closely collaborated with Chancellor Benitez on the design of the development master plan, as well as in the specific design of some 26 building projects, out of which 19 were ultimately built. The *Residencia de Señoritas* was key among these.

The building was a significant endeavor by all standards. It comprises an area of 101,945 square feet. Its construction cost was \$1,175,000.00, yielding a cost per square foot of \$11.52. This amounts to an equivalent \$9.5 million dollars in 2016 U.S. dollars. Construction started on March 1958, and ended on March 1960².

Previous to the construction of the Residencia de Señoritas, the Women's' Dormitory at the Rio Piedras Campus was the Carlota Matienzo Building (still serving, now as the Students' Deanship, between the Faculty of Education and José M. Gándara avenue, at the campus Southernmost edge. By the mid 50's, the previous women's dormitory was already deemed as inadequate and insufficient. Its Spanish-Revival style, although congruent with the other

¹ United Press International, "UPR entre 25 Universidades Más Grandes EU; Hace Número 19; 16,753 alumnos", *Periódico El Mundo*, Número 14425, Año XXVIII (December 11th 1957): page 1.

² As noted on the project's technical profile sheet: Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico (AACUPR) Colección Henry Klumb HK1: 19.28 Serie Correspondencia, sub-serie Proyectos; *Cost Estimates 55-142 Womens Dormitories UPR, RP.*

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structures of the original quadrangle, was incompatible with Klumb's vision of modern aesthetics, upon which the transformation of the University image was wielded.

The need for additional student housing becomes evident from the early master plans proposed for the University's expansion. As early as 1946, the COBIN Master plan, developed by the Central Government Design Committee (*Comité de Diseño*) boasted several student housing buildings, previously designed by the Committee. Several subsequent master plans for the Rio Piedras Campus, including Klumb final version, consistently included multiple buildings intended for student housing. The Women's Dormitory at Rio Piedras is the only one that got to be built. Two other dormitory buildings (derived from the Rio Piedras model) were built as Men's Dormitories at the Mayaguez Campus; a mostly engineering campus. (see figure No. 9).

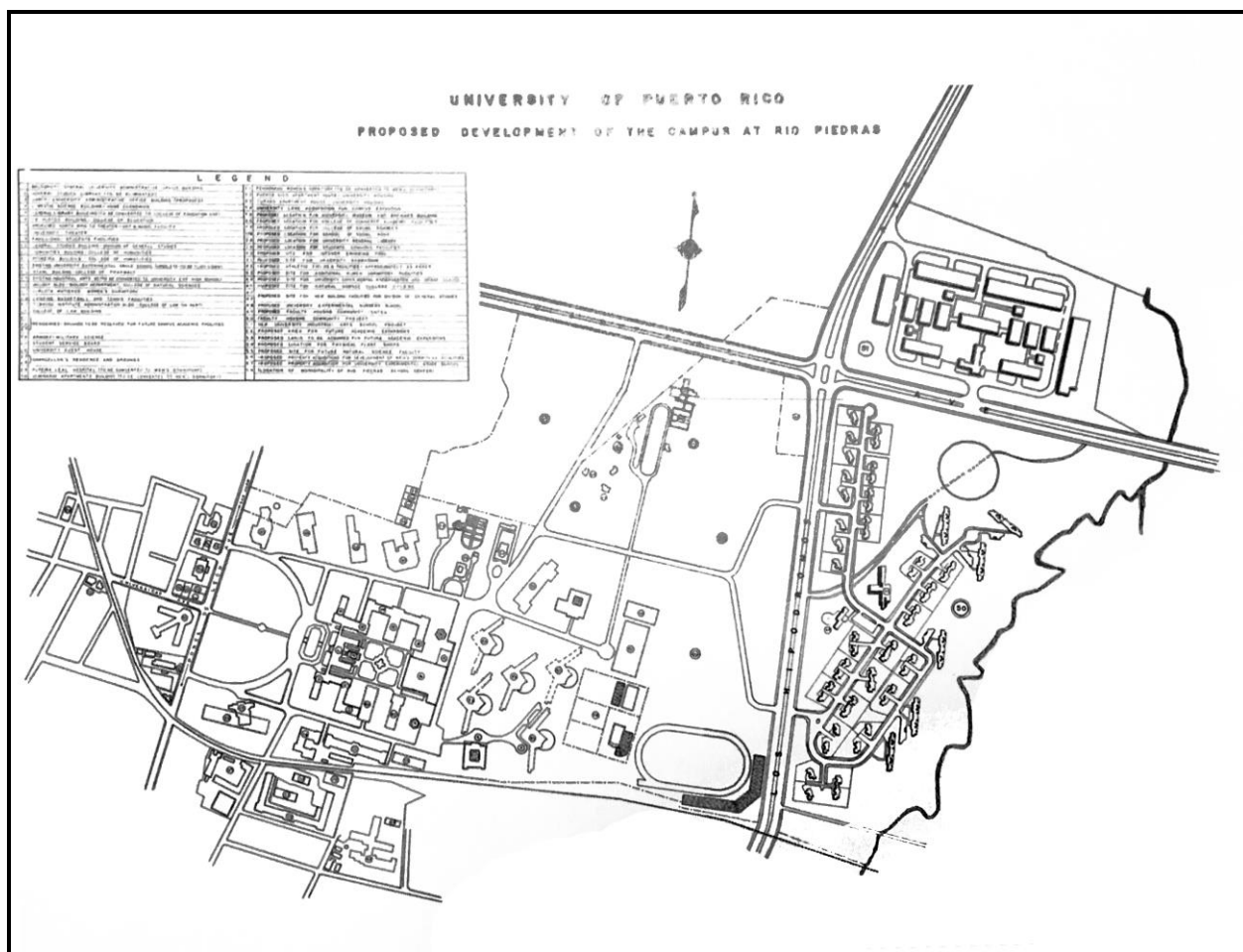


Figure No. 9: Proposal for Physical Development Plan for the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus. Milton Cobin, 1947 (AACUPR: Colección Henry Klumb; HKI/099). From the initial Development master plans, the importance of student housing is evident as these are consistently considered in multiple/repeated buildings.

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Essential as it was for the success of the University expansion, the need for new dormitory facilities (especially for ladies) was recognized as a strategic priority within the Physical Development Plan, prepared by Milton Cobin for the University of Puerto Rico in 1947:

“During the academic year of 1944-45 a survey concerning conditions and problems of student housing was made by the Student Service Board, covering 2020 students or over 56% of the student body.

Data from this survey shows that 46% of these students were residing with their parents or at their own homes while attending the University. Of the remaining 44%, approximately 7% (all women) were accommodated in the two dormitories at the University.

...On the basis of 6,000 regular day student enrollment, it may be assumed that approximately 1,500 women students and 700 men students will have to seek housing accommodation other than with their immediate families or with their relatives. Provision for 200 women students are had in the existent women’s dormitories. It is extremely doubtful that University Dormitory accommodations could ever be provided for so many students.

It is recommended that a dormitory program to house 50% of this group be established, that is, facilities for 700 to 800 women, and 300 to 400 men....

... It is recommended that the women’s dormitories be located on the present site of the Athletic Field, north of the Carlota Matienzo Dormitory³

Years afterward, the final report on Henry Klumb’s Master Development Plan of 1954, further recognizes the critical housing conditions at the Rio Piedras Campus:

“Three areas for student housing are planned. The women students will be housed in dormitories on the main campus east of the Quadrangle adjoining the recreational area. The men students will be housed in dormitories located on the University property, west of Ponce de Leon Avenue...

.... At the present, there are no housing facilities for male students, and only limited housing facilities for female students. The need for student housing is urgent. An analysis of student housing needs and the availability of housing for students was made in 1946-47. Since that time changes have occurred affecting the social and economic situation of the students and also the availability of off-campus housing for non-resident students. In view of changed conditions, it may be possible that the University should and could provide housing for a higher percentage of non-resident students than the indicated in the 1947 report. In order to provide housing for male students it will be necessary first to construct new facilities for

³ As noted on the University of Puerto Rico strategic planning evaluation report of 1947: AACUPR Colección UPR: 3.115 Serie Plan Maestro, sub-serie Proyectos; Physical Development Plan for the UPR, Milton Cobin, 1947.

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female students and then convert the present Isabel Andreu de Aguilar for use by male students⁴.

Despite of the evident need for more and better housing facilities, and the consistent claim for funds from the University's administration, it was not until the mid-1950's that the office of Henry Klumb was commissioned for the design of the Women's' Dormitory.

The book *Klumb, an Architecture of Social Concern*, edited by Dr. Enrique Vivoni Farage, includes an essay by Latin American historian and architect Sylvia Arango on the topic of Klumb's venture with the University of Puerto Rico. In her essay, Arango includes the following note on the particular creative approach towards the design of the new dormitory building:

"Since the student dormitories in Rio Piedras and Mayagüez had the same design but would be located in differing positions and places, favorable environmental conditions had to be resolved independently of the buildings' orientation and siting. In his design for this eight-story prototype, the first floor is free, so as to be adapted to either a flat or sloping site; in the other rooms there is an alternation of living zones and open spaces, which, like floating courtyards, allow not only cross-ventilation but also isolation, so as to produce more privacy for each unit, like duplex units repeated upwards rather than sideways. The open corridors, the elongated proportions of the bedroom, and the studio protected behind a terrace, combine to aid in cooling. Although there were repeated proposals to build a number of these prototypes, only three were finally built: one on the Rio Piedras Campus, for women, and two at Mayaguez, for men.⁵"

An article on *El Mundo* newspaper, on August 5th, 1958, "Inicia UPR Obras Centro Estudiantil", notes the commencement of the construction works. The article states that the initial stake-out works took place for the new Student Center and the Women's Dormitory, which shall be *"eight stories high, comprising some 102,000 square feet and housing 305 ladies."*⁶

Two years later, another article in the same newspaper notes that *"250 Señoritas Ocupan Nueva Residencia UPR:"*

Beginning at three o'clock, the student residents started to arrive at the new building, accompanied by their parents and family, most of which were profoundly content and

⁴AACUPR Colección UPR: 3.115 Serie Plan Maestro, sub-serie Proyectos; Henry Klumb's Master Development Plan Final Report (May 26th of 1954).

⁵ Sylvia Arango, "Henry Klumb and the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus: The Logic of the Results", in *Klumb; An Architecture of Social Concern*, Edited by Enrique Vivoni (San Juan: La Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2006),121.

⁶ Homero Alfaro, "Inician UPR Obras Centro Estudiantil", Periódico *El Mundo*, Número 14662, Año XXIX(August 5th 1958): page 15.

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admired by the new house for the ladies. Most of these ladies were being separated from their parental homes for the first time, which brought some cases of tears and sadness.”⁷

Further on, the article states:

“Two of the nine floors of the new building could not be occupied at the time as the installation of furniture and equipment was not completed. The 250 ladies occupied the dormitories units from the third on to the eight floors. Total capacity of the building is 348 people.”⁸ (see figure No. 10).



Figure No. 10: Exterior façade of complete building looking north-east. Aspect of the women’s dormitories upon initial occupation (circa 1960).

⁷ Homero Alfaro, “250 Señoritas Ocupan Nueva Residencia UPR”, Periódico *El Mundo*, Número 15044, Año XLI (March 27th 1960): page 12.

⁸ Homero Alfaro, “250 Señoritas Ocupan Nueva Residencia UPR”: page 12.

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Figure No. 11 (c. 1960-1970): Typical bed room, looking west.

To this day, the *Residencia de Señoritas* stands with a reasonable degree of conservation. Considering it is 57 years old, the building has aged well, showing no major concerns with regard to structure integrity and stability. The building design is kept in a substantial degree of integrity and originality. Very few interventions have affected the spirit of the original design. Most interventions to the original building are miscellaneous in nature and easily reverted. The most significant challenge for its conservation is the much needed up keeping of building systems, electrical systems and fire detection, alarm and extinction systems which are no longer up to code.

The property is part of a fine collection of modern architecture, at this time emblematic of the Rio Piedras Campus, and very much representative of the optimism, and endorsement to the promise of a better future through knowledge and industry. Its architectural integrity, consistency of appearance and function, all help to instill and maintain an association from users, alumni and visitors in general. The building remains as an example of tropical modern architecture, and part of the fine collection of structures comprising the University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras Campus. Most importantly, the *Residencia de Señoritas* stands out as a well preserved example of the work of Henry Klumb, to this day regarded as Puerto Rico's most consequential designer of the mid-20th century.

Klumb's designs are directly linked to the mainstream discourse of modern architecture through his traditional training as a draftsman in Germany. Influences from Herman Muthesius and the

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English Arts & Crafts, were nurtured by the *Deutsche Werkbund* school of thought, which regarded rational design and machine aesthetics, without dismissing the possibility of a holistic work of art (*Gestamtkunstwerk*). These principles were underlined by modern architecture's international style during the first half of the 20th century; Klumb was evidently aware of all this. His experience as an apprentice at Frank Lloyd Wright Taliesin West, served as a much-needed lab to properly try and review these designs principles in practice. By the time Klumb arrives in Puerto Rico in the mid 1940's, he was a mature designer boasting a profound knowledge on design matters, along with a keen sensibility towards regional design, ranging from environmental concerns to ontological propositions.

Klumb's architecture in Puerto Rico is well known for its adequacy to local climate and contemporary expression, but it is also very well calibrated to the cultural preferences and economic possibilities of Puerto Rican people of the 20th century. As exemplified by the *Residencia de Señoritas*, his proposals were a true exploration on the ample variety of expressions that can be attained with concrete, to this day Puerto Rico's building material *par excellence*. His buildings include different plastering textures, pre-fabricated components, integral terrazzo and hydraulic cement tiles, cast imprints, and curved/fluid forms, but to name a few of the possibilities of this versatile material, masterfully combined by a most sensitive and expert designer. Besides his recognition of the possibilities of local materials and construction traditions, the architecture of Henry Klumb stands out for its masterful handling of what is essential and fundamental in architectural design and composition: perspective, proportions and shades/shadows; all of which are free to use.

The *Residencia de Señoritas* is worthy of recognition as an important cultural resource. It is an outstanding example of the values of modern architecture, and their possibilities of application at tropical conditions within peripheral economy. The building is representative of a pivotal moment in the history of the Island, and its repercussion in the history of the University of Puerto Rico. From the mid20th century on, the University of Puerto Rico has been regarded as the island most important engine to promote change; Klumb buildings came to materialize that endeavor, and the *Residencia de Señoritas*, for reasons regarding form and function, tends to its historic role while it stands out as an exemplary work, of an exemplary master.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Archivo de Arquitectura de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. *Modernidad Tropical: Arquitectura y la fuerza creadora de los años 50*. Oficina Estatal de Conservación Histórica, 2003.

Escuela de Arquitectura, Universidad de Puerto Rico. *Nominación del Dormitorio de Señoritas, Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras, al Registro Nacional de Lugares Históricos*. Oficina Estatal de Conservación Histórica, 2017.

----- . *Reconocimiento General del Recinto de Río Piedras*, Oficina Estatal de Conservación Histórica, 2005.

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Rodríguez, Luz Marie. *Casa Klumb, enmienda de nominación al Registro Nacional de Lugares Históricos*, 2011.

Vivoni, Enrique. KLUMB. *Una arquitectura de impronta social*. Río Piedras; Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2006.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

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Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico (AACUPR)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): M-070

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.884 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 19Q	Easting: 812022	Northing: 2037262
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Legal registry of the property recognizes a large plot of land, covering 26.8190 acres, comprised within the much larger University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras campus, whose boundaries are clearly demarked by a physical gated fence. Immediate boundaries to the Residencia de Señoritas can be established based upon perimeter sidewalks and vehicular access roads as follows:

North: pedestrian sidewalk connecting School of Architecture with Faculty of Education.

South: on-campus vehicular access road parallel to Gándara Avenue.

East: pedestrian sidewalk connecting vehicular access road to Faculty of Natural Sciences.

West: vehicular drop-off roundabout and pedestrian walkway on to Students, Center

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

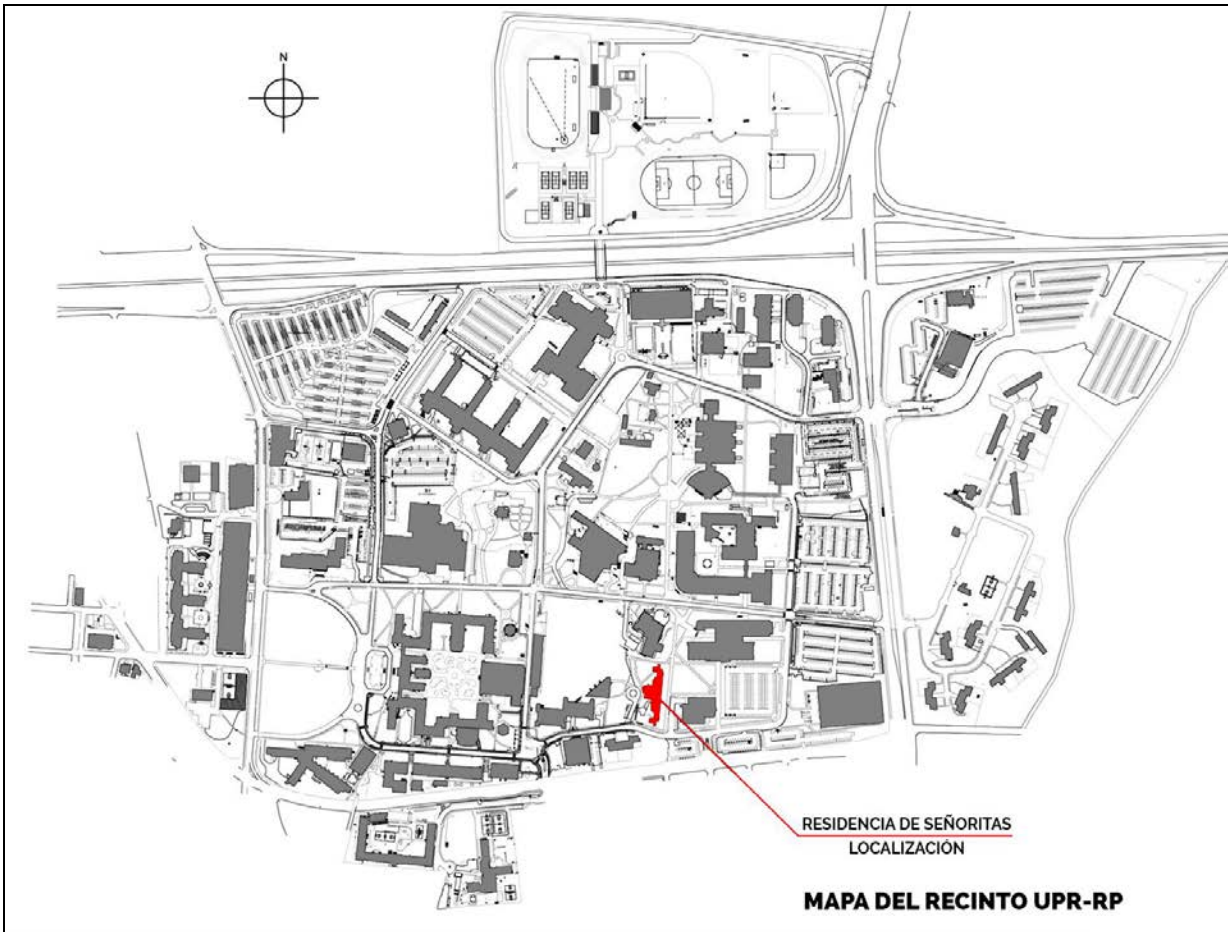
Site boundaries are recognized based on verifiable circulation features that delineate an area immediately affected by the building's presence. This is the area where the presence of the structure is concerned. Although this area is not a legally registered plot, the building's relationship to the broader legal plot of land is more limited. Weaker yet is the building's presence on the overall university campus, since it sits on its margins.

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The selected boundaries were selected as these conform an enclosed perimeter of circulation (whether pedestrian or vehicular) thus defining a concise and distinct plot of land on which the property is set.

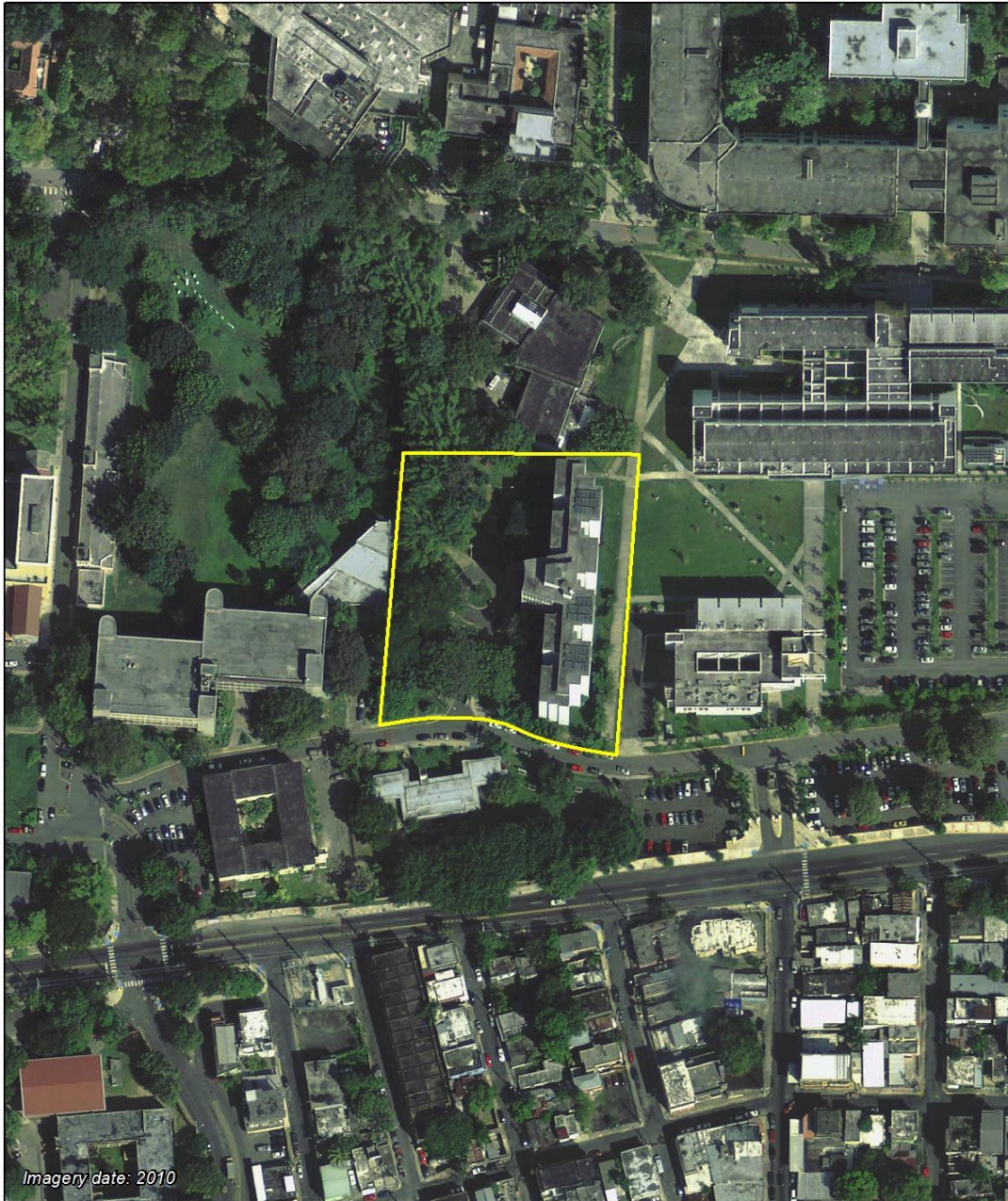
10.1 University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras Campus Map. Resource map generated HPF reconnaissance survey *Reconocimiento General del Recinto de Río Piedras (2005)*.



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10.2 Boundaries of *Residencia de Señoritas*, University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras Campus.



Residencia de Señoritas Universidad de Puerto Rico;
Río Piedras
San Juan, Puerto Rico
19Q 812022 2037262 UTM

1:1,800 N
0 50 100 Feet

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10.3 Location map of the Residencia de Señoritas UPR Río Piedras Campus. Google earth maps.



11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Arch. Juan C. Penabad-Sánchez / Main researcher
organization: University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus / School of Architecture
street & number: Ponce de León Avenue
city or town: San Juan state: Puerto Rico zip code: 00925
e-mail: juan.penabad1@uprrp.edu
telephone: (787)306-3588
date: 06/23/2017

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

All photographs of the *Residencia de Señoritas* UPR Río Campus, San Juan, Puerto Rico, taken by Juan Penabad, October 24, 2015.

Photo No. 1; Exterior east façade, looking south-west.

Photo No. 2; Exterior west façade, looking south-east.

Photo No. 3; Exterior west façade, looking east.

Photo No. 4; Main entrance (lobby), looking north.

Photo No. 5; First floor's lunch area, looking south.

Photo No. 6; Typical corridor per floor, looking south.

Photo No. 7; Typical corridor and stairs per floor, looking south-east.

Photo No. 8; Typical corridor per floor, looking south.

Photo No. 9; Typical corridor per floor, looking north.

Photo No. 10; Ninth level corridor, looking north.

Photo No. 11; Main stair's architectural detail, looking south.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.







EXIT







<EXIT











UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 6/6/2018 Date of Pending List: 7/9/2018 Date of 16th Day: 7/24/2018 Date of 45th Day: 7/23/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 7/23/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : Yes

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



GOBIERNO DE PUERTO RICO

**Oficina Estatal de Conservación Histórica
State Historic Preservation Office**



May 29, 2018

J. Paul Loether

National Register Chief
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street NW (Mail Stop 2280)
Washington, DC 20005

**SUBMISSION - (Casa Vigil / Residencia de Señoritas Universidad de
Puerto Rico, Río Piedras)**

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disks that contain the true and correct copies of the nominations for Casa Vigil and Residencia de Señoritas Universidad de Puerto Rico; Río Piedras, to the National Register of Historic Places. Both properties are located in the municipality of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Should you have any questions on the nomination, please contact Elba Díaz, Executive Assistant, at 787-721-3737, ext. 2003 or ediaz@prshpo.pr.gov.

Sincerely,

Carlos A. Rubio-Cancela
State Historic Preservation Officer

CARC/GMO/BRS/JLS/JEM

