

# 2007-2009 Triennial Assessment of the Post-Graduate Programs of the Area 21 by CAPES

## Avaliação Trienal 2007-2009 dos Programas de Pós-graduação da Área 21 pela CAPES

The 2007-2009 Triennial Assessment was recently performed by the Coordination for the improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), which is considered one of the most refined organizations in the extent of the Ministry of Education of Brazil (MEC) and is widely acknowledged among the national and international scientific community. Two thousand seven hundred and eighteen Post-Graduate Programs (PGPs) were assessed, involving forty-six areas of assessment and knowledge. The Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy, together with the Physical Education and Speech Pathology compose one of these areas of evaluation (named Area 21). During the current period of assessment, the amount of scientific output of each area is evaluated, especially it was considered the number of publications as well as the number of new masters and doctoral students completions, who are most likely personnel to be following the academic positions in the Brazilian Universities.

In spite of the actual assessment occurred over the last months, the assessment process of the Area 21 involved several stages and had been initiated in the first semester of 2008. These initial stages included the composition and beginning of the work of the *Qualis Periódicos* Committee, the *Book Evaluation* Committee as well as the occurrence of several monitoring visits, especially to help the new PGPs and those rated as 3 (out of 5). Annual meetings with all the PGPs coordinators were performed, as well as participations in the Area 21 Forums, which lead to discussions and exchange of information about the assessment process, in particular of the criteria and elements that were the object of this assessment. These criteria and elements were based upon the data provided annually by the PGPs (obtained from the *Coleta* CAPES information system) and enabled the development of the five items, with their respective sub items, totalizing 18, as approved by the Scientific and Technical Council of Higher Education (CTC-ES) of CAPES.

In contrast to the previous triennials, this assessment was performed by prioritizing, among the four *quantitative* items of assessment, the ones regarding the *scientific output* of the *strictu sensu* graduate programs such as: 1<sup>st</sup>. – intellectual productivity (40%); 2<sup>nd</sup>. – students, thesis and dissertations (30%) and 3<sup>rd</sup>. – social inclusion (15%), instead of the item about the *process*, such as the 4<sup>th</sup>. – senior academics (i.e. supervisors) (15%). The fifth item, which refers to the program's proposal, received a *qualitative* evaluation, taking into consideration the internal coherence of the PGP. In this manner, the inclusion of scientific output from students are now taken into consideration together with the intellectual productivity of their supervisors in the publication of scientific articles in qualified journals and books. This attribute is now the main factor used to discriminate between the PGPs and is decisive for attributing ratings.

In this scenario, it is extremely important to choose correctly the scientific journal in which the authors (students and supervisors) will publish their scientific findings. This aspect is strongly related to the *Qualis Periódicos*

(Brazilian Scientific Journals classification system) due to the fact that, according to the dynamism in which the impact factors impose on international journals. Several other elements of discriminatory importance in the scientific environment could be used in the future as possible markers for the assessment process, such as the visibility of the intellectual productivity, given by the citations that can be estimated by the “h-factor” of the authors. The quality of intellectual productivity, measured by impact, has never been so important in the scientific environment, particularly in the assessment of PGPs performed by CAPES.

On one hand, the intellectual productivity gains strength in this process of *strictu sensu* post-graduate assessment. On the other hand, the reduced number of specialized international journals of strong impact factor in this area is concerning, especially in the process of arranging a *Qualis Periódicos* that addresses satisfactorily and integrally its four professional areas (Physical Education, Physical Therapy, Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy). In addition, this multidisciplinary nature of Area 21 attributes to it different areas of concentration and a large amount of research lines, which results in a diversification of its publications and affects the complexity of journal classification. There is a large amount of work to be done involving all segments of this assessment area so that, in a short period of time, improvements in the identification of scientific journals can be made.

Innovations achieved by this triennial assessment include not only the valorization of the publication of articles but also of the publication of books and book chapters. The Area 21 evaluated 420 products, which resulted in 65 book collections, 134 books and 1393 book chapters. This data demonstrated the existence of a peculiar potential of certain PGPs, areas of concentration or research lines, which have proper characteristics and vocation for this type of publication that is yet not fully explored. Associated to this aspect of valorization of new and important post-graduate elements is the social inclusion. This factor allows the valorization of elements such as: regional and/or national inclusion and impact; integration and cooperation with other PGPs and research centers, other than professional development related to its area of knowledge, aiming post-graduate and research development; transparency of resources, selection criteria, and the availability of dissertations and thesis in their respective websites.

Another important discriminatory element introduced in this triennial assessment, especially among the supervisors and particularly in the Great Health Area, was the capacity of attract financial resources to subsidize research, following the example of great research centers in developed countries. This aspect, according to the Great Health Area, contributes to the scientific and technological development of the PGPs and also of the area of knowledge involved in the process. In agreement with the national funding body agencies, it was chosen to value also the natural acknowledgement that the scientific community attributes to illustrious researchers who have shown scientific leadership in their specific areas. This is a way of giving credit to the teaching body that received awards for research productivity (*Bolsa-PQ*) from the *CNPq*.

In this triennial assessment, the Area 21 had a good performance, noticed by oscillations of predominantly high ratings. Of the total number of assessed PGPs, 52% remained unaltered, 28% had their rating improved and only 8% had their rating lowered. The table below demonstrates the PGPs’ rating distribution before and after the current assessment.

Ratings Triennials	3	4	5	6	Total
2004-2006	16 (46%)	10 (28%)	8 (23%)	1 (3%)	35
2007-2009	16 (40%)	15 (37%)	6 (15%)	3 (8%)	40

The Area 21 had 35 PGPs until the end of the last triennial. Five new PGPs were approved along this triennial, starting in 2010, aside from two new doctoral degrees created in already existent PGPs. Thus, the area has now 40 GPs with a total of 56 degrees.

It is worth highlight that two PGPs were considered as excellence rating (6) in this triennial: the PGP in Human Movement of UNESP-RC and the PGP in Physical Therapy of UFSCar.

According to current stage of development of Area 21, the best-established PGPs start to stand out due to their positive quantitative and qualitative performance, especially of their productivity (qualified human resources and intellectual scientific output).

In addition, a fair percentage of the GPs with ratings 3 and 4 have consolidated and improved, as observed by the rating changes in this assessment.

It was also noticed that the intellectual productivity, registered by the publications during both triennials (2004/2006 and 2007/2009), has improved substantially. Such statement can be demonstrated by the amount of articles published in journal levels A1 and A2 (821), with impact factor correspondent to the former journal levels IA and IB (299). This represents an increase of 247% of highly qualified products in Area 21.

Area 21 had an expressive production of 4654 scientific articles between 2007 and 2009, distributed in journal levels, as shown in the following table:

A1	A2	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
337	484	1587	1024	325	528	369
(7.3%)	(10.4%)	(34.1%)	(22.0%)	(7.0%)	(11.3%)	(7.9%)

Aside from these important data about intellectual scientific output, it is worth mentioning that the PGPs of Area 21 produced 212 new doctors and 1599 new masters during the 2007-2009 triennial. This represents a substantial contribution to the qualitative improvement in the level of the undergraduate academics in the professional areas involved.

It is also worth pointing out that, in this triennial, the first program exclusively in Occupational Therapy was created, the PGP-TO of UFSCar.

For the current triennial (2010-2012), the expectations from Area 21 are high, especially due to its current stage of development. The organization of the PGPs and the progressive understanding, by the people of the area, of the assessment mechanisms (their criteria, process and dynamics) stimulates these expectations. However, a constant reflection about the PGPs' areas of concentration and their respective research lines is needed, especially among professorial staff. This assures a constant contribution to the establishment and consolidation of the new PGPs, without allowing that the older ones accommodate themselves and become outdated. In this manner, the noble mission of promoting technological advances and scientific development in Area 21 is set.

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