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October 28, 2003

DEANS AND DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS
University of Puerto Rico
Mayagüez

The UPRM-MSCHE Institutional Steering Team, which is in charge of preparing for a joint accreditation visit in early 2005 from the *Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)* and the *Puerto Rico Council of Higher Education (PRCHE)*, is pleased to organize a half-day seminar titled **Quality Assurance through Continuous Assessment on Tuesday, November 18, 2003** at the Mayagüez Resort & Casino. The seminar will focus on the following major topics:

- Chancellor's Message
- Quality Assurance in Industry & Academia – Keynote Address by Peter Dersley, Executive Director of Quality Manufacturing, General Motors, North America
- Continuous Improvement Educational Initiative – Looking Beyond Accreditations
- UPRM's Plan for the Assessment of Overall Institutional Effectiveness
- UPRM's Institutional Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning

I have included a set of these two institutional assessment plans as reference for your department/college, which should also be useful in developing an assessment plan for your own respective unit, if none already exists. Unlike in previous years, the thrust of almost all present-day accreditation criteria is on continuous improvement and assessment processes; whether they be the courses that we teach, the programs that departments offer, or the services that an institution provides. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education requires that these assessment plans be fully implemented. The survey questionnaires which you, along with various other offices and personnel on campus, have received are really instruments of assessment, which will help the UPRM-MSCHE Institutional Steering Team to develop self-study reports. But the core of this assessment is a plan for student learning outcomes, which may or may not be in place.

Tels. (787) 832-4040 - Exts. 3504, 3508 – (787) 265-3822 - Fax (787) 833-1190

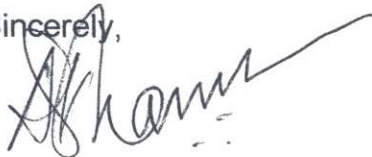
PATRONO CON IGUALDAD DE OPORTUNIDADES EN EL EMPLEO M/F/V/I
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER M/F/V/I

Of special importance at the above seminar, will be the discussion of the two assessment plans. The *Junta Administrativa* approved both of these plans recently, on August 28, 2003. UPRM's Academic Senate also approved the Student Learning Assessment Plan on September 22, 2003.

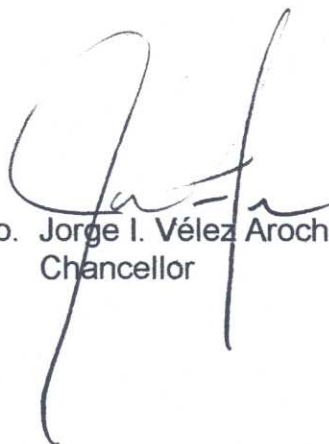
You are cordially invited to participate in the above seminar, along with another faculty member who is currently in charge of, or who will assume the leadership in, developing or enhancing an assessment plan for your unit. **Please read these plans beforehand and bring them with you to the seminar.** This way, if there are any doubts, they could be clarified.

This invitation is being limited to only two members per department. The half-day activity will provide for parking, light breakfast, coffee break, and lunch. **Please confirm your participation by sending an email with your name/s and the department (or unit) name to Ms. Omayra López at omayra@ece.uprm.edu or to me at sharma@centennialpr.net no later than Friday, November 7, 2003.** If you have any questions, give me (or Omayra) a call at 3504, 3508, or 3544.

Sincerely,



Anand D. Sharma, Ph. D.
Coordinator, UPRM-MSCHE Steering Team
Special Assistant to the Dean



Vo. Bo. Jorge I. Vélez Arocho, Ph. D.
Chancellor