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Raising the Bar in Quest of Performance Excellence

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Abstract

The experience gained during a recent ABET Accreditation effort in outcomes assessment and in the development of assessment instruments has been greatly instrumental in driving the institutional accreditation efforts at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez (UPRM). More importantly, the extent to which the culture of assessment and continuous improvement has become routine across all academic and non-academic units at UPRM, is gradually beginning to demonstrate its acceptance. While the development and implementation of academic assessment plans in each academic college was more gradual and individualized, the process was much quicker in the case of administrative assessment plans because it was aided via a common template. To sustain motivation and advance the implementation of assessment across the academic units, it became necessary to develop objective rubrics to provide feedback, targeted assistance, and recognition to academic departments and administrative units on their assessment implementation efforts. Furthermore, earlier this year, UPRM formally indicated its commitment to incorporate the Baldrige National Quality Program’s Education Criteria for Performance Excellence although these efforts are still in their early stages of implementation and training.