



University of Puerto Rico
Carolina Campus

Institutional Assessment System

Submitted to:

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The University of Puerto Rico at Carolina (UPRCA) acknowledges that the effectiveness of a higher education institution is the result of careful analysis and planning, rather than a spontaneous process or isolated efforts. Therefore, assessment at UPRCA is characterized as an integrated, holistic, and systematic process. To implement such process, UPRCA has developed an Institutional Assessment System (IAS). The IAS is an integrated system of assessment that constitutes the foundation of every assessment process at the Institution. Its purpose is to assure that assessment is an articulated process, focused in gathering data that is important for the accomplishment of our mission. At the same time, the IAS avoids the investment of resources in efforts not related to UPRCA's mission. In summary, the purpose of the IAS is to serve as a guide to administrative and academic units to contribute to the achievement of the mission, vision, and goals of the institution.

In the following sections, this document will provide specific guidelines to administrative and academic units for the implementation of assessment plans. The first section provides the foundations for assessment processes at UPRCA, aligning institutional goals with areas of assessment emphasis for the next five years. Then, the second section explains the Longitudinal Model for Assessment to be implemented at the Institution. As part of this section of the IAS, general assessment plans for general education and other academic programs are presented. The third section describes the implementation tasks, logistics, timeframe, and resources are specified. Finally, this document provides guidelines to assess the implementation of the IAS and individual assessment plans.

Assessment at UPRCA

The University of Puerto Rico at Carolina has developed an assessment system that is aligned with institutional goals and the systemic strategic plan, *Diez para la Década*. The purpose of this alignment is to ensure that every assessment effort will serve as a pathway to the accomplishment of UPRCA's goals as related to the 10 Key Areas of *Diez para la Década*. The assessment system hereby presented has been stratified in five areas named *Assessment Emphasis*; each responding to one or more of the Key Areas. Table 1 shows the relationship between Key Areas, Institutional Goals, and Assessment Areas of Emphasis.

Table 1. Key Areas, Institutional Goals, and Assessment Areas of Emphasis.

Assessment Emphasis	Institutional Goal	Key Area (Diez para la Década)
Outstanding Academic Experience	1. To recruit the best students primarily from the northeastern area of Puerto Rico, offering them an education of excellence and services that strengthen their institutional commitment and belonging.	Sustained Ties to the Student Body.
	2. To guarantee academic offerings of excellence integrated to general and specialized education. These offerings will provide students with the tools they need to achieve professional success.	An Academic Culture of Currency, Experimentation, and Renewal.
Research, Creative Work, and Faculty Development	3. To promote an environment of competitive research and creative endeavor within the academic community that leads to the acquisition of knowledge and the solution of problems.	Competitive Research, Investigation, and Creative Work.
Assessment, Evaluation, and Planning	4. To promote cultures of assessment and planning in order to strengthen teaching-learning processes, administrative efficiency, and institutional data/research-centered decision-making procedures.	A Culture of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation.
State of the Art Administrative Functions and Facilities	5. To provide a state-of-the-art computer network that integrates and accelerates the effective output of all academic, service, administrative, research, and scholarly processes.	Technological Currency.
	8. To maintain and preserve existing physical spaces to encourage study, research, and a better quality of life for the university community.	Efficiency and Beauty in both Natural and Built Spaces.
	9. To promote the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of institutional services by reviewing and simplifying the administrative processes.	Administrative and Managerial Optimization.
Leadership in Community and Global Setting	6. To foster ties with different community sectors to contribute to their well-being and a better quality of life.	Leadership in Community Investment and Cultural Initiatives.
	7. To promote the Institution internationally within a framework of education and globalization through the establishment of consortia and exchange programs that make the University stand out as a research and learning center.	Dedication to the Integration of the University into the World at Large.
	10. To promote UPRCA as a center of learning and culture by disseminating its contributions to the community while strengthening institutional commitment, allegiance, and collaborative ties between all university components and alumni.	Strengthened Institutional Identity.

A. The Assessment System

Assessment is a systematic activity used to gather information regarding the accomplishment of specific outcomes and to produce recommendations that can be used by decision-makers to improve the achievement of such outcomes. Because the ultimate purpose of assessment is improvement, this process is often identified as a cycle in which new outcomes are

identified every time the loop is closed (decisions are made to improve the outcome accomplishment). Figure 1 identifies each step in the assessment cycle.



Figure 1. Cycle of Assessment Implemented at UPRCA (UPRCA Self Study, 2011)

Assessment at higher education institutions is typically categorized as assessment of student learning and institutional assessment (institutional effectiveness). As the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2006) states, institutional assessment refers to institutions' self-evaluation of their overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals. According to Astin (1993), the degree to which an institution has helped its students to develop the skills, knowledge, and behaviors that form part of its mission can only be measured when those cases are examined in a particular context. In other words, in order to say that the institution is accomplishing its mission, it is important to consider the characteristics of prospective students (Inputs), the interactions that take place as part of their academic experience (Processes and Context), and the short- and long-term results (Outcomes). For that reason, the IAS' plan for assessing student learning is characterized for being holistic, systematized and longitudinal (see Figure 2).

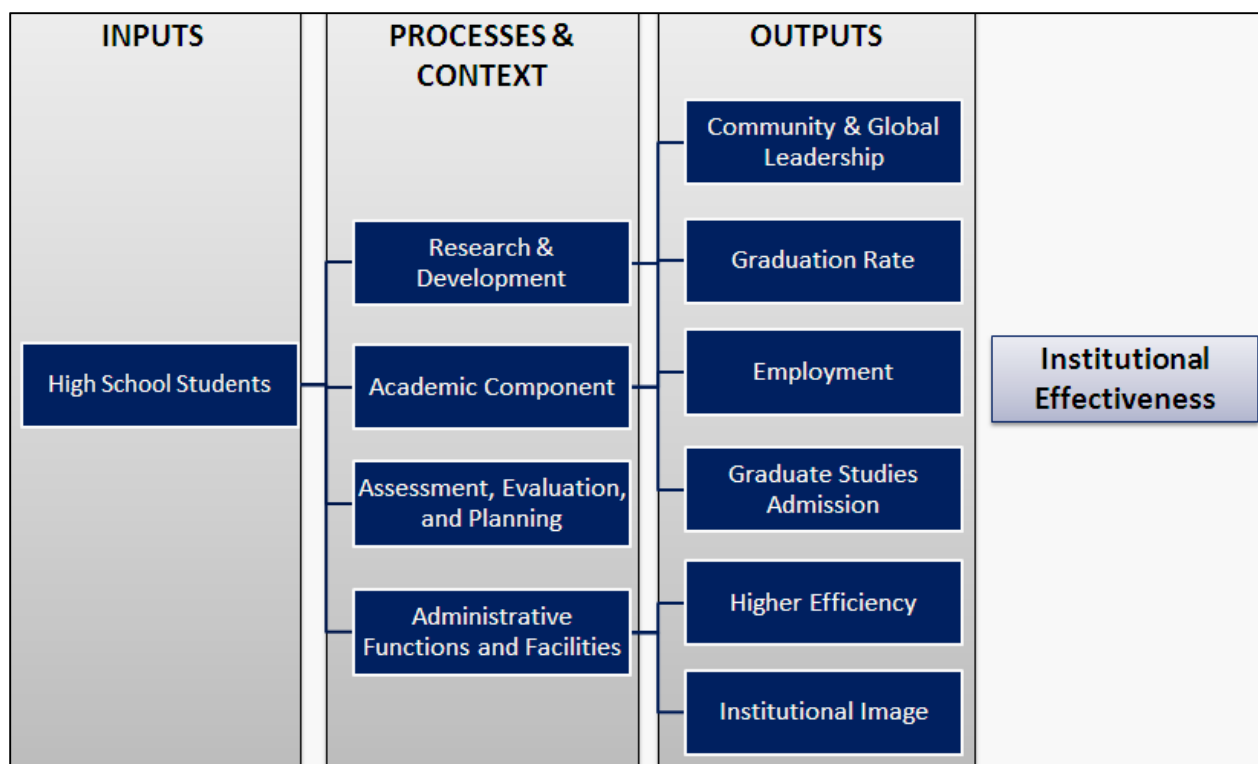


Figure 2. Longitudinal Model of Assessment at UPRCA.

A.1 Inputs

Astin (1993) defines *Inputs* as students' characteristics previous the beginning of their academic experience at a higher education institution. The assessment of inputs is particularly important as it provides the information necessary to improve modify Institution's processes and contexts. Such modifications are key in order to continue providing excellent services at UPRCA and to achieve its mission. For example, assessments of prospective students and environmental scans are important in order to plan ahead and assure that the Institution has the adequate infrastructure to continue serving the population it aims to serve. Therefore, a fundamental part of the IAS is the systematic assessment of multiple inputs. Some of these inputs will be measured through the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPEI, as abbreviated in Spanish), while other assessments will be conducted by other institutional units such as the Admissions Office and the Recruitment Unit (see Figure 3).

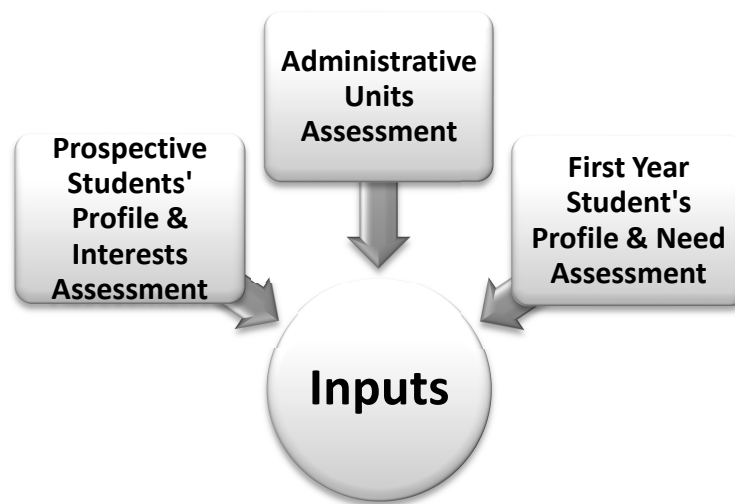


Figure 3. Types of Assessments that Comprise Inputs in the AIS

A.1.a Prospective Students' Profile and Needs Assessment

An important assessment method to determine student's input is the prospective student's profile. UPRCA uses its ties with the community, particularly the K-12 education system, to conduct a needs assessment every four years among high school students. In addition to serving as a base measure, the needs assessment allows the Institution to establish the socio-demographic profile of prospective students, identify their needs and academic interests. The former two allow the institution to develop and improve the existing programs designed to support students' academic development during the first year. The data gathered regarding students' academic interests also provides the Institution with valuable information for reviewing its academic programs, contributing to achieving its goal of having an up to date and relevant academic offer.

A.1.b Admissions Office Assessment

The Admissions Office is another place where important assessment activities take place. This office is responsible for ensuring that each admitted student represents to the population that UPRCA aims to serve. This is the foundation of most services and activities that the Institution provides. Information regarding admitted students has become an effectiveness indicator, as it is part of the first institutional goal in the UPRCA's Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan, 2006). The Admissions Office assessment is important to guarantee that the institution recruits those students whose interests and goals are congruent with the institutional mission (MSCHE, 2006).

A.1.c First Year Student's Profile

The third assessment strategy used to gather information about Inputs is the first year student's survey. This survey is currently conducted by OPEI every five years to develop a profile of incoming classes. This instrument gathers profile information of freshmen students at UPRCA, which is used for improvements at institutional and program levels. This information can also be used for benchmarking purposes.

The Inputs measures at UPRCA consist of profiling prospective and first year students, the assessment of the effectiveness of the Admissions Office, and information collected through recruitment activities.

A.2 Processes and Context

The assessment of processes and contexts is another fundamental aspect of the IAS. An optimized context increases the effectiveness of the institution and yields improved outcomes. As stated by Astin (1993), interactions with the environment are determinant in the outcomes of student learning. According to Astin, an environment is defined as “everything that happens to students during the course of an educational program that might conceivably influence the outcomes under consideration” (1993, p. 235); therefore, this definition includes the university's contexts and the processes that take place within it. While it is true that a considerable part of the assessment of processes has to do with student learning, this section of the model includes a wide variety of other processes and contexts issues. For that reason, this component of the Longitudinal Model of Assessment at UPRCA is the one most related to MSCHE standards. From institutional policies and retention practices to leadership and governance issues, all of them have a direct or indirect effect on students' experiences during their academic life and affect institutional effectiveness (see Figure 4).

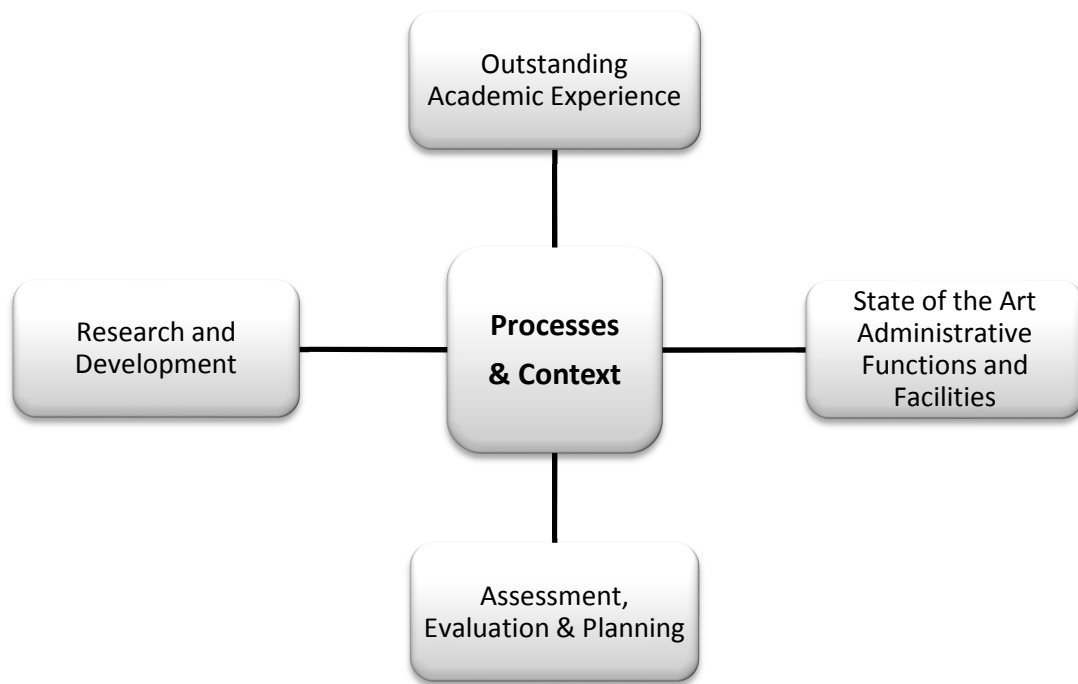


Figure 4. Assessment of Institutional Processes and Contexts

A.2.a Outstanding Academic Experience and Assessment of Student Learning

Participation in higher education impacts many aspects of students' life. It offers opportunities that go beyond developing the necessary knowledge to perform job-related tasks. As demonstrated in related literature, colleges and universities play an important role in fostering students' cognitive, social, self-authorship, ethical, and moral development, among others (Evans, Fooney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). It is important for higher education institutions to plan experiences that integrate all aspects of students' development and to promote the achievement of the learning outcomes established as part of the institutional mission.

The ultimate challenge of a higher education institution is to successfully demonstrate that students have learned what they were supposed to during their academic experience. This is evidenced through the assessment of student learning. The IAS considers all three levels of assessment of student learning (course, program, and institutional) and places the data within a solid theoretical framework of longitudinal assessment that has been adapted to fit the Institution's available data and resources. The theoretical framework places assessment of student learning and outstanding academic experiences as part of the processes and contexts that students experience during their academic life.

UPRCA's assessment of student learning is conducted at the classroom, program, and institutional levels in a complementary way. As Figure 5 shows, the data gathered in one level is added to data gathered in the next level in order to draw conclusions about student learning. This interactive and integrated approach to assessment is feasible with the Institution's available resources, while being a useful process where the results at each level provide information for decision-making at the institutional level.

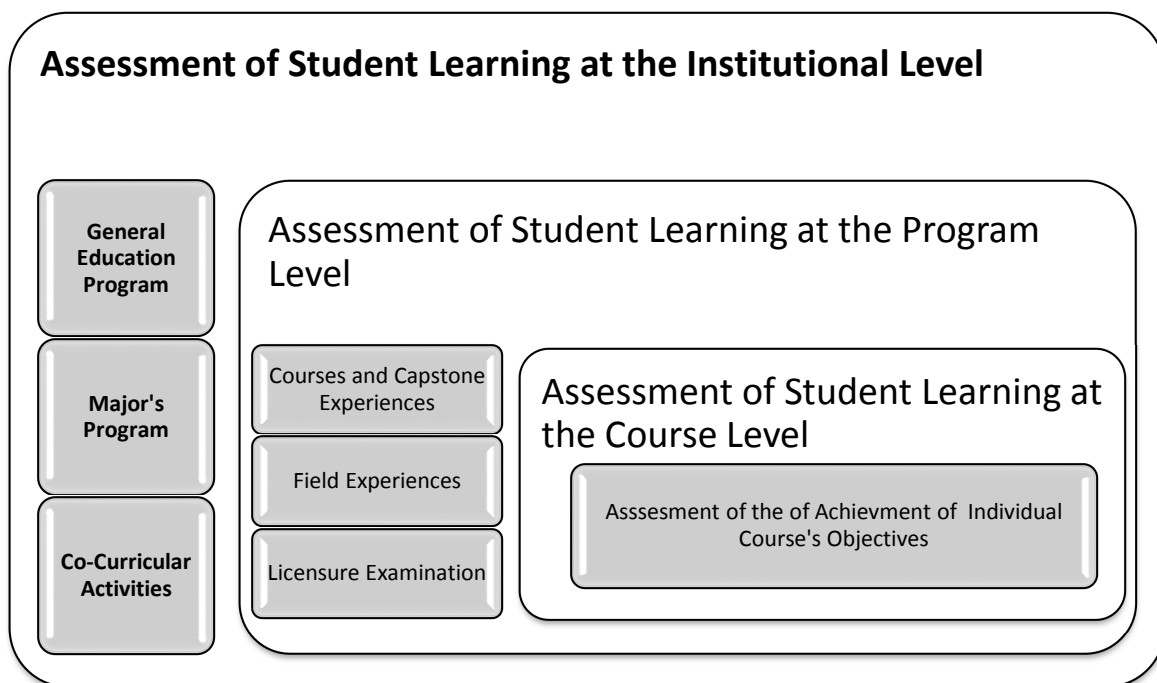


Figure 5. Levels of Assessment of Student Learning

In order to implement the plan for the assessment of student learning successfully, this assessment model of student learning requires great collaboration and coordination between General Education, Major Programs, and Co-Curricular Activities. At the program level, the assessment process requires coordination between faculty members in order to integrate the data gathered at individual courses in a single, coherent and useful report that answers the question: Are students in this major learning what they are expected to learn?

General Education Assessment Plan

The implementation of a revised and systematic General Education Assessment Plan (GEAP) started in fall 2011. The GEAP proposes the assessment of the 12 goals of the General Education Program within 3 years. Because the plan proposes the assessment of approximately four goals per year, it provides the required time for the development of an assessment plan in the academic departments that have not yet implemented an assessment plan.

During the academic years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 assessment activities using direct measures are scheduled for the following academic units: Information and Technologies Literacy Program, Natural Sciences, English, and Spanish. While these academic departments are conducting activities to assess student-learning outcomes, other departments will be developing or reviewing their own assessment plans. During the third year of the implementation of the GEAP (2013-2014), eight academic departments will be conducting activities in order to assess additional goals of the General Education Program. By academic year 2013-2014, all general education departments will have implemented assessment plans

In addition to the direct measures described above, the GEAP established the use of indirect means of assessment (see Table 2). The GEAP utilizes two types of indirect measurements: the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and a locally developed student surveys. While locally developed student surveys will be administered yearly by each academic department that offers general education courses, a global satisfaction survey with the General Education Program will be administered to a sample of second year students every two years. Funds are being identified to conduct the NSSE every five years. Data from the NSSE and other assessment results would be used by academic majors for the periodical review required by Certification #43 (2006-2007) (see Appendix A).

In order to collect this information, the General Education program coordinator will meet with the assessment coordinators of each academic department that offer general education courses during year 2012-2013 to schedule a timeline for data gathering procedures for the following academic years. At the end of each academic quarter, assessment coordinators will submit a copy of their assessment results to the General Education coordinator. At the end of every academic year, the general education coordinator will write a comprehensive assessment report to be submitted to the academic dean. This report will unify the information on the direct and indirect assessment results conducted quarterly by assessment coordinators at departmental level. The assessment results presented in this comprehensive report will be shared with the

General Education Committee and other faculty members to discuss recommendations and develop action plans.

The General Education Committee will meet once or more times (as needed) to decide which recommendations are to be implemented and proceed to share the results with the academic community (see section D of this document for a detailed diagram of the process to ensure the communication of assessment results and its use for decision making). Once the assessment cycle described in Table 2 is completed, it will start over again to assess the learning outcomes once improvements resulting from previous assessment have been adopted.

Since institutional learning goals at UPRCA are those for General Education (GenEd) (Suskie & Banta, 2009), they are directly assessed in GenEd courses and activities, and are complemented with the assessment of student learning in the majors where GenEd goals are reinforced (see Figure 5). The accomplishment of student learning outcomes at the institutional level is also indirectly assessed through student surveys; employer's interviews; and other measures described in section A.3.c (page 15).

Table 2. Basic Cycle of Assessment of the General Education Program

General Education Goals Assessment	2010	2011-2012	2012-2013		2013-2014	
	Indirect Measures	Direct Measures	Direct Measures	Indirect Measure	Direct Measures	Indirect Measure
Goal 1: Computer and Information Literacy	National Survey of Student Engagement		Various (Ex. CISO 3227)	ITLP*		Student's Survey
Goal 2: Major Disciplines			Natural Sciences			
Goal 3: Modes of Inquiry						
Goal 4: Quantitative and Statistical Analysis						
Goal 5: Critical Thinking					Various	
Goal 6: Communication		English	English Spanish			
Goal 7: Ethics					Various	
Goal 8: Aesthetics					Humanities	
Goal 9: Interdependence and Diversity			Social Sciences			
Goal 10: Life Skills					Interdisciplinary Seminar	
Goal 11: Collaborative and Responsible Involvement				Social Sciences		
Goal 12: Physical Wellness				Education		

*ITLP = Information and Technology Literacy Program

Notes: Specific information about the courses to be assessed, the person responsible to coordinate the assessment process, and the assessment techniques to be used will be available in the assessment plan of each academic department. This assessment plan is subject to modifications according to the revision of the General Education Program

Assessment of Student Learning in the Majors

Assessment of student learning at the program level is a main component of the IAS. However, the role of the Assessment Office is to provide support and advice to academic programs, as they are the owners of these processes. Assessment procedures are similar across all academic programs. First, the assessment process needs to comply with the full cycle of assessment as described at the beginning of this document (see Figure 1). Second, the curriculum map of each major identifies the learning outcomes addressed by course, and assessment is conducted in those courses that constitute the primary source of information for those particular outcomes. Third, the results of such assessment are shared with the program's faculty; assessment results of outcomes related to General Education are shared with the General Education coordinator. The results of other assessment initiatives follow the standard procedures for the communication of assessment results to ensure the use of results in major programs as shown in Figure 10. Evidence of the use of results at course and program level should be submitted to the Assessment Coordinator using the *Use of Results Report Follow-up Template* available at the Assessment Office (Appendix B).

As previously mentioned, assessment plans are developed by assessment coordinators in collaboration with faculty members within each academic program. For that reason, the academic programs at UPRCA are not in the same stage in the development of a culture of assessment. While some programs are ahead in this process, others are in earlier stages. Consequently, the schedules for implementation of assessment plans vary by academic programs as described in the Appendix C of this document. For example, some academic programs are currently implementing assessment activities or reviewing the program's goals or expected learning outcomes, while others has not set yet specific dates to implement their plans. Therefore, the schedule in Appendix C proposes an adapted schedule that takes into consideration such differences. The schedule for assessment activities is based on the results of *Self-Assessment of Program Learning* (2009), document analysis, and interviews with assessment coordinators conducted by the Assessment Coordinator (2011).

Table 2. Preliminary Schedule for Assessment Activities in the Majors

Major Academic Program	2011-2012		2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015	
	Direct Measures including Pre-Test/Post-Test and Student's Work Sample					Indirect Measures	
Business Administration	-		Employer's, Exit or Alumni Surveys****	D	G, A, R	Exit Survey	
Hotel and Restaurant Administration	G, A, R			G, A, R	G, A, R		
Design	D			G, A, R	G, A, R		
Natural Sciences	D			G, A, R	G, A, R		CPR
Criminal Justice (Forensic Psychology & Law and Society)	D	G, A, R		G, A, R	G, A, R		G, A, R
Education	-			D	G, A, R		CPR
Office Systems	D	G, A, R		G, A, R	G, A, R		G, A, R
Automotive Technology	G, A, R			G, A, R	G, A, R		G, A, R
Mechanical Engineering	G, A, R			G, A, R	G, A, R		G, A, R
Instrumentation Engineering and Control Systems Technology	-			-	G, A, R		G, A, R

Legend:

A = Data Analysis

D = Assessment Design

G = Data Gathering

Notes:

*Denotes the implementation of a new assessment plan at departmental level.

**Specific information about the courses to be assessed, the person responsible to coordinate the assessment process, and the assessment techniques to be used will be available in the assessment plan of each academic department.

***Self-Studies for professional accreditation will be added to this schedule.

****Some of this information is collected by OPEI

R = Implementation of Recommendations

CPR = Comprehensive Program Review

A.2.b State of the Art Administrative Functions and Facilities

A large amount of attention has been placed in the efficiency of administrative functions in order to avoid waste of resources. UPRCA is committed to finding ways to reduce operational expenses without sacrificing the quality of its services. For that reason, the IAS integrates multiple assessment processes to help the administrative offices systematically examine the quality of services and processes they perform and to find ways to improve such activities in

order to increase efficiency. Some of these assessments are conducted by internal personnel, while others are not. Some internally conducted assessments include (will include): satisfaction surveys, needs assessments within the administrative units and productivity studies. Additionally, administrative units may select performance indicators to monitor constantly in order to determine the achievement of particular institutional goals.

In order to assure that sufficient support is available from the Assessment Office, the previously mentioned assessment will not be conducted by all units all the time. Depending on the type of unit and its relationship with institutional goals, particular assessment activities will be conducted at a particular time. The individual units assessments results will be used for three main purposes: increase of productivity, allocation of resources, and determination of the degree of achievement with institutional goals.

A.2.c Assessment, Evaluation & Planning

An important component of both, *Diez para la Década* and UPRCA goals, is the development of a culture of planning, assessment and evaluation. This is important in order to ensure that decision-making is an informed process. Nevertheless, assessment and evaluation is more than having a plan to examine the extent to which institutional goals are achieved. It also requires an evaluation of the extent to which assessment processes have been useful and cost-efficient and to identify ways to improve such assessment processes. For this reason, the new Assessment Office includes constant training to university constituencies in a wide variety of topics in its work plan. Furthermore, a new practice is introduced in this IAS: every assessment report should include a section on the analysis of the assessment process and recommendations for its improvement.

Another important practice that is emphasized in the IAS is planning. Planning within higher education is considered an ongoing process. At UPRCA, planning takes place in different ways: as administrative and academic unit strategic plans, annual work plans, and the institutional strategic plan, among others. At the individual unit level, planning is conducted by the unit's chair (and in case of academic units, it is designed with the feedback of faculty members) and plans should be aligned with the unit's mission and goals, and with institutional goals (as established in the institutional strategic plan). Based on the long-term plans of individual units, each unit is responsible to develop an annual work plan that is used to justify

budget requests. Units are expected to develop annual plans and budget requests based on the results of assessment processes. At the end of each fiscal year, units are responsible for submitting new annual plans, a report of previous year accomplishments, and a review of the status of their five-year strategic plan to the deans (see Figure 6).

On the other hand, summative evaluations of the degree of accomplishment with the Institutional strategic plan are conducted by OPEI every year. After such analyses, a report should be submitted to the chancellor who shares it with deans and other unit's directors. Once the results are shared, recommendations are made to improve the strategies of those objectives that are not reaching expected levels of achievement. In the fifth year of the strategic plan, a summative evaluation will be conducted and a comprehensive report will be submitted to the academic constituencies previously mentioned. At this moment, procedures such as SWOT analysis, reviews of the institutional mission and vision, and environmental scans are conducted in order to get information about possible strategic directions of UPRCA during the next five years. At this point the current strategic plan is modified or a new one is developed.

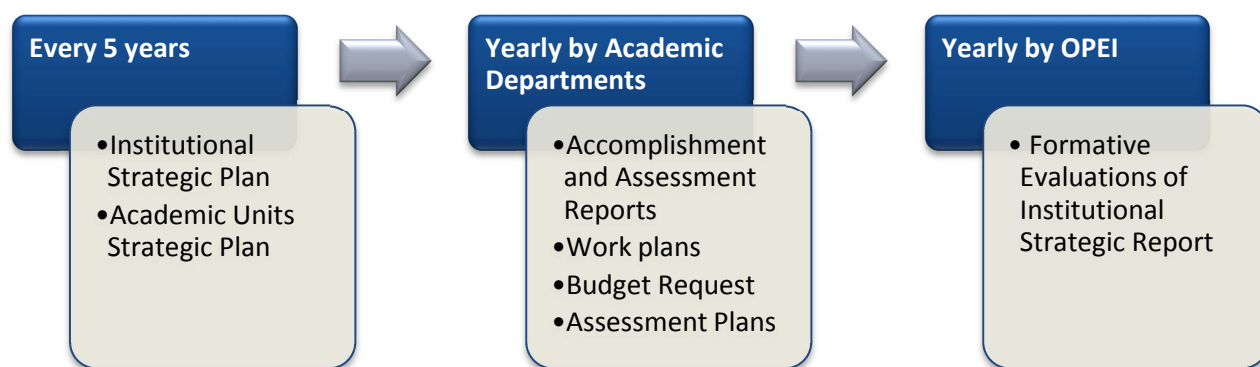


Figure 6. Summary of Planning Processes at UPRCA

A.3 Outcomes

The IAS uses short and long-term results as the best indicators of institutional effectiveness. These results are mostly related to students' achievements. On one hand, the IAS short-term outcomes provide information about best practices and early interventions that impact student development of learning outcomes. On the other hand, students' medium- and long-term

outcomes (i.e. graduation rates and job placement) serve as indicators of institutional effectiveness. The data gathered through this assessment process offers the institution a holistic perspective about the educational experience of the students at UPRCA. More specifically, it provides evidence of the achievement of institutional mission. This feedback is extremely important, as it provides information about aspects that can be improved in order to foster student learning, support decision-making processes, and promote institutional renewal.

While it is true that a variety of indicators and strategies can be used to assess student learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness, in order to develop an IAS that is feasible, cost-effective, and useful, assessment methods were established for specific areas of assessment emphasis. The selected areas are directly related to the achievement of the institutional mission and vision. Additionally, specific outcomes related to student success were included as indicators of institutional effectiveness (see Figure 7).

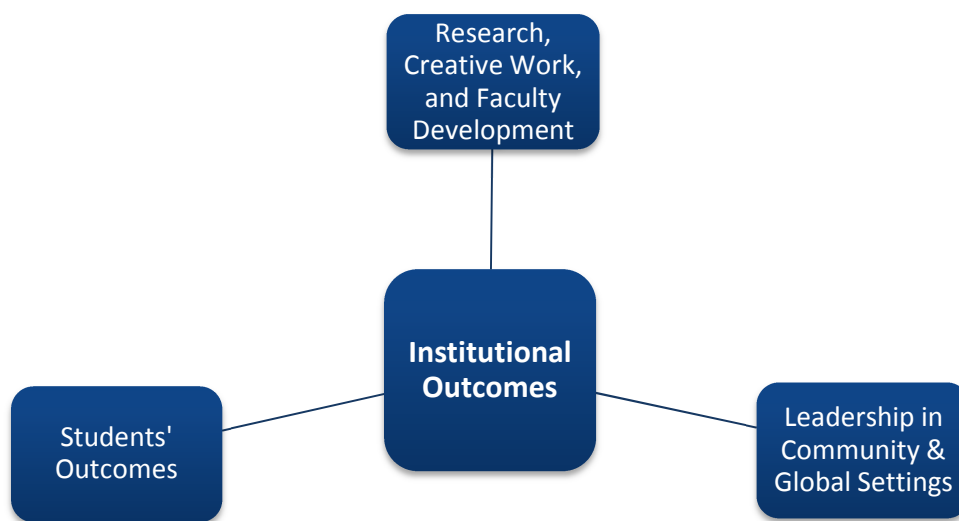


Figure 7. UPRCA's Summary of Institutional Outcomes

A.3.a Research, Creative Work, and Faculty Development

Traditionally, universities have been seen as places that produce research and creative work. The University of Puerto Rico considers research a priority area in its 10-year strategic plan, *Diez para la Década*. UPRCA currently promotes a culture of research and creative work

to the extent that it has been considered one of their ten strategic goals. As stated in the Strategic Plan, UPRCA aims “to promote an environment of competitive research and creative endeavor within the academic community that leads to the acquisition of knowledge and the solution of problems” (UPRCA Strategic Plan, 2006). For this reason, it constitutes an important part in the assessment of institutional effectiveness.

By the 2011-2012 academic year, UPRCA has developed multiple initiatives to promote research and creative work in the campus. It includes faculty development activities and support and the development of a center for faculty research and a center to support student research, among others. Because of the importance of this goal and the amount of resources invested, it is important to assess its achievement. The means identified to assess this area of emphasis are student and personnel surveys and interviews, and performance indicators, such as:

- Frequency of use of the research support center
- Number and percentage of faculty members conducting a doctorate
- Number and percentage of faculty members and students serving as presenters in professional conferences
- Number and percentage of faculty members serving as mentors to undergraduate students
- Publications (professional journals, books, etc.)
- Research collaboration

This area of assessment emphasis will require an assessment plan developed in coordination with the Deanship of Academic Affairs. This information will inform the achievement of this goal and will serve as a point of reference to compare UPRCA progress in creative work and research activity with itself.

A.3.b Leadership in Community & Global Settings

Another goal in the UPRCA Strategic Plan is related to increase the impact of UPRCA in the community and to internationalize the representation of the Institution. These goals include the participation of students in community service and exchange programs, the participation of university personnel in community service, and faculty participation in collaborative agreement with United States and foreign universities. The means identified to assess this area of emphasis

are: student and personnel surveys and interviews, and performance indicators such as number of collaborative agreements made and number of students that participated in exchange activities.

A.3.c Students' Related Outcomes

Student outcomes at the institutional level are one of the most important indicators of institutional effectiveness. For this reason, a description of the use of indirect evidence for assessment of student learning at the institutional level is included in this section. The following section focuses on describing each of the performance indicators that are incorporated to the IAS to measure institutional effectiveness related to student short-term and long-term outcomes (see Figure 8).

The first of these assessment methods is the indirect measure of student learning outcomes. Through the use of surveys, UPRCA collects data about student experiences during their academic life, their perception about developed knowledge, and the extent to which the university achieved its mission. One of these indirect means for assessment of student learning is the Exit Survey (Suskie & Banta, 2009). This instrument is currently administered to students just before the graduation ceremony. The survey is administered at UPRCA every four years and usually has a high response rate (C.L. Cruz, personal communication, July 2011). Another indirect mean for assessment is the Alumni Survey (Suskie & Banta, 2009). This instrument is administered by the OPEI every three years to students approximately a year after their graduation. This survey explores aspects related to their satisfaction with the education received, job placement, the impact of the educational experience in job opportunities, and how the educational experience could be improved.

The student related outcomes assessment also considers two important performance indicators: Graduation Rates and Job Placement. The first of these measures, Graduation Rates, is an important indicator because, when rigorous grading practices are implemented within a higher education institution, it provides indirect information that suggests the accomplishment of the institutional mission: “to form professionals with a reflective and creative capacity, a desire for innovation and continuous learning, a regard for aesthetic values, an appreciation for the merits of team work, and a high sense of responsibility and social commitment” (UPRCA’s Mission, 2011). Graduation rates are measured and reported yearly to the IPEDS and to institutional community through the use of bulletins and the institutional webpage (C.L. Cruz, personal communication, July 2011). Studies conducted by the OPEI regarding graduation rates

have already yielded important institutional improvements (UPRCA's Self-Study, 2011) and are used regularly to inform planning, budget allocation, and other decisions.

Job placement rates constitute important information for decision-making, particularly when used in combination with employer's interviews. UPRCA normally collects information about job placement about a year after graduation, when students come to the university to get their diploma. The information related to job placement includes: type of employment, name of the employee, whether or not it is related to student's area of study and if the job requires supervising personnel. As with the Alumni Survey, this information is collected every three years. Indirect evidence of student learning is also collected through employer's interview (Suskie & Banta, 2009). As suggested by Nichols and Nichols (2005), very specific, field-related information regarding employer satisfaction with students that have graduated from UPRCA (only collective information) is collected. This information is gathered through interviews every four years by the OPEI (C.L. Cruz, personal communication, July 2011). In addition to job placement rates, another important measure of student outcomes is admission to graduate schools. This measure is not currently employed at UPRCA, but a plan is being developed to implement it within two years.

Finally, another important indicator of institutional effectiveness at UPRCA is student contribution to scholarship. This indirect assessment of student learning (Suskie & Banta, 2009) is of particular interest to UPRCA because the Multidisciplinary Research Center for Students was established in the Institution in 2011 in response to the fourth goal in the UPRCA Strategic Plan: *"to promote an environment of competitive research and creative endeavor within the academic community that leads to the acquisition of knowledge and the solution of problems"* (UPRCA's Strategic Plan, 2011). Some of the indicators used to assess this outcome will include publication rates, participation in research, and presentation of original work in scholarly forums and conferences.



Figure 8. Summary of Student Related Outcomes

B. The Assessment Plans

Through the analysis of successful assessment initiatives conducted at UPRCA, it has been possible to identify local best practices to be included in this assessment system. Faculty members who have worked hard on the development of an assessment culture in our campus have developed planning templates that have been very useful to some of UPRCA schools and academic departments that have experienced professional accreditation processes. These templates were based on Nichols and Nichols's (2005) model for assessment of student learning. These templates, in conjunction with this guide, serve as the basis for the development of individual assessment plans of administrative units, academic programs, courses and other co-curricular activities.

An assessment plan at any level should include the following elements: (a) intended educational outcomes, (b) program and/or institutional goal(s) to which the outcome relates, (c) person responsible for the assessment, (d) description of the assessment, (e) expected results, (f) timeframe, and (g) resources needed. Guiding questions are presented in Appendix C for the development of each part of an assessment plan.

C. Means for assessment

Means for assessment refer to the methods used to gather information concerning the accomplishment of objectives. In administrative and service units, assessment is simpler because it relies almost completely on the analysis of records and completed projects, and on the use of locally developed attitudinal assessment (Nichols & Nichols, 2005). In student learning, however, the literature shows that there is no one-size-fits-all assessment means (Middaugh, 2011). Multiplicity of means exists to support the collection of different types of data. The type of data to be collected is determined by the outcomes to be measured. The types of assessment means are classified as direct and indirect measurements. Each of these types of measurements has advantages and disadvantages. This assessment system requires the use of at least one direct and one indirect mean to assess learning outcomes.

Direct means of assessment are defined as methods that allow the collection of evidence that demonstrate learning has occurred within a course, program, or institutional level (MSCHE, 2007). Some of these methods include assignment, tests, projects, oral presentations scored by the use of a rubric, artistic performances, participation in class discussion, internship performance, etc. Indirect means of assessment, on the other hand, refer to methods that gather information suggesting learning has occurred (MSCHE, 2007). Surveys are a common example of indirect methods of assessment that identify or explore the perception of students. The results of this type of assessment often provide information about what students “think” they know instead of what they “actually know”. As a result, Nichols and Nichols (2005) recommend indirect assessment to be used only as supporting evidence of the accomplishment of learning outcomes. Multiple means will be used in order to triangulate the assessment of the most salient learning outcomes.

D. The Assessment Report and Procedures to Ensure the Use of its Results

To systematize the use of the assessment results, a report template that facilitates report writing and submission has being designed. This approach aims to keep the report writing process as simple as possible while it ensures that no fundamental elements for the use of assessment results will be missing. Every assessment report should include the following: (a) intended educational outcomes, (b) program and/or institutional goal(s) to which it relates, (c) person responsible for the assessment, (d) description of the assessment, (e) results, (f)

recommendations, (g) notes on the assessment process, (h) additional comments. The components of the assessment reports apply to academic units and administrative units as well. Questions to guide the writing of each part of the report are presented in Appendix E.

Table 3. Comparison between Assessment Plans and Assessment Reports Structure

Component	Assessment Plan	Assessment Report
Intended Educational Outcomes	X	X
Program's and/or Institutional Goal(s) to which it relates	X	X
Person Responsible for the Assessment	X	X
Description of the Assessment	X	X
Timeframe	X	
Resources	X	
Results	X (Expected Results)	X
Recommendations		X
Notes on the Assessment Process		X
Additional comments	X	X

Another critical aspect of assessment is to ensure that results are shared and used for decision-making. As the UPRCA Self-Study (2011) shows, the systematization in the communication of assessment results is the most salient challenge faced by the Institution. This Plan emphasizes the importance of sharing assessment results and has proposed specific lines for the flow of information from individual courses through institution-wide decision-making. Figures 9 and 10 provide details about the assessment system; specifically, they describe the channels for information flow, and assign a particular role to each participant.

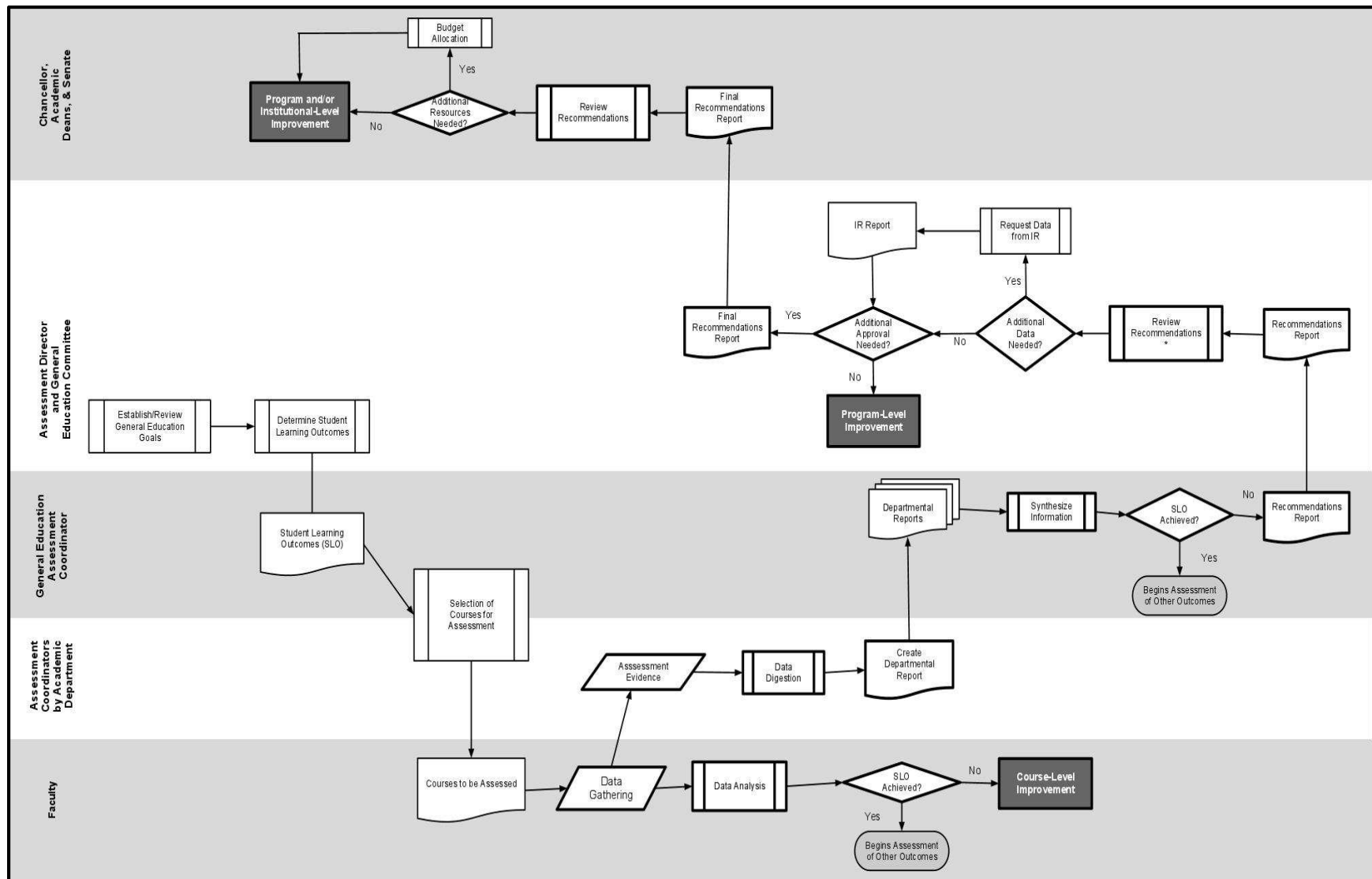


Figure 9. Standard Procedures for the Communication of Assessment Results to Ensure their Use in General Education.

*Note: Faculty will participate in determining the achievement of the SLO and will provide recommendations for improvement.

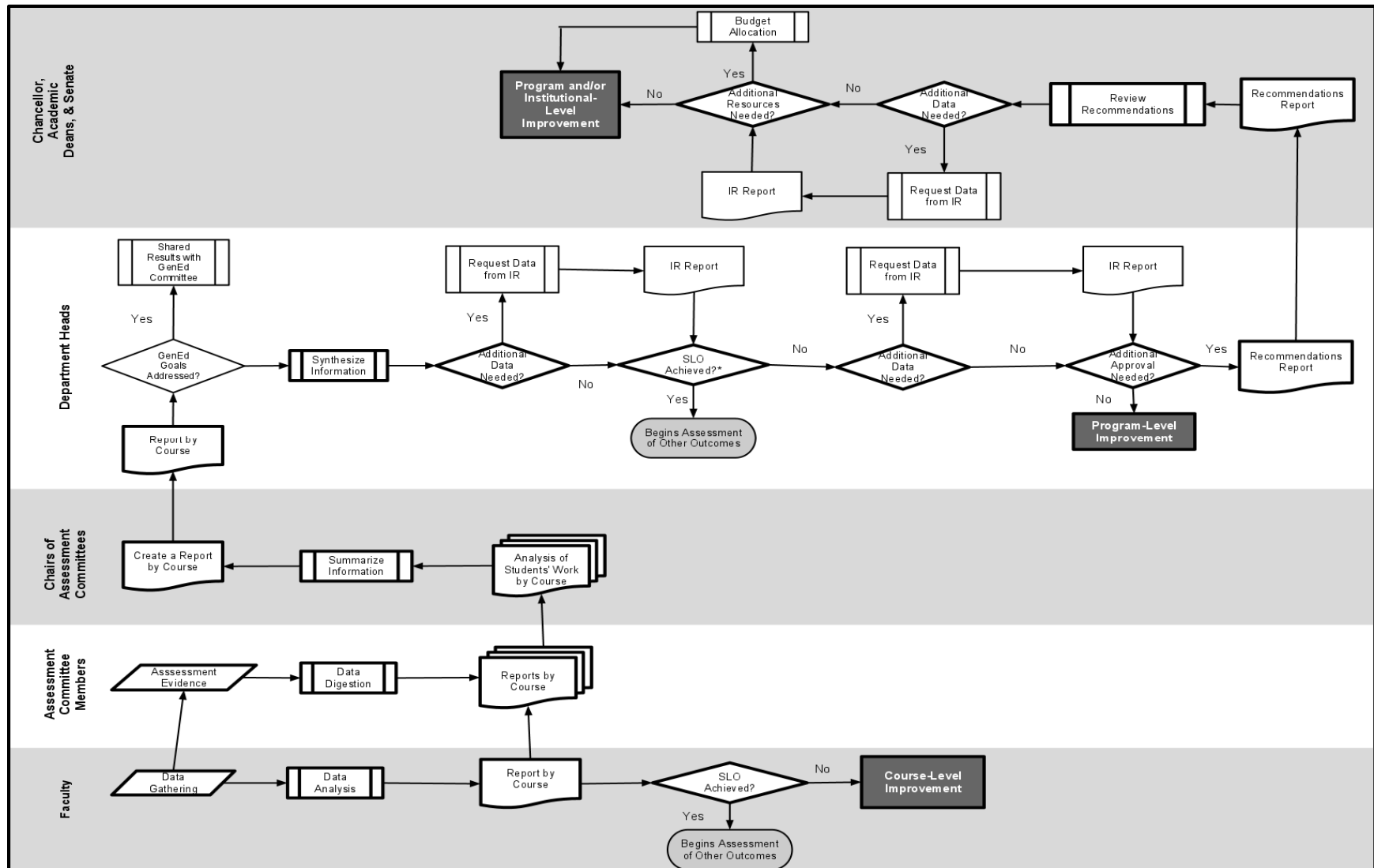


Figure 10. Standard Procedures for the Communication of Assessment Results to Ensure their Use in the Majors

E. Implementation Tasks and Logistics

The IAS proposes assessment processes that involve multiple people on campus. The following sections describe the participation that is required from different groups in order to successfully implement the IAS.

E.1 Role of the faculty in the design and implementation of assessment processes

As student learning is central to the accomplishment of our institutional mission, faculty members are at the heart of our assessment system. At UPRCA, faculty members are not only seen as responsible for gathering assessment information. They are expected, and constantly encouraged and motivated to actively participate in the assessment processes. Faculty members participate and chair assessment committees at each of our programs of study. They also serve as academic program directors that, in coordination with the assessment committee and other faculty members, are responsible for generating written recommendations and action plans to the Dean of Academic Affairs to implement the necessary changes to improve student learning throughout curricular and co-curricular experiences. At this level of participation, expertise of our faculty benefits the assessment processes at the Institution.

E.2 Administration responsibilities and commitment

The development of a culture of assessment is an institution-wide commitment. At UPRCA, people at all levels are engaged in making assessment a distinguishing characteristic of our campus. Consequently, the implementation of this assessment system benefits from a support network that includes personnel at administrative positions. Assessment is increasingly important for those in leadership positions, which include academic and administrative directors, assessment coordinators, institutional research personnel, deans, and the Chancellor. Each of these representatives has an important role as described below.

E.2.a Institutional Assessment Coordinator

The Institutional Assessment Coordinator (IAC) will provide ongoing support to faculty members conducting assessment of student learning at classroom level by providing training in assessment and action research, offering advice in the design of assessment activities and the development of assessment reports. The IAC will also support assessment coordinators in

designing and reviewing yearly assessment plans, analyzing the data and organizing assessment reports. Furthermore, the IAC will support academic and administrative directors by helping them prioritize areas for improvement based on institutional goals and identify ways to share assessment results with the community and decision-makers.

E.2.b Assessment Coordinators

Assessment coordinators are central to assessment processes at UPRCA. They, as faculty members, bridge academic and administrative decisions as to what happens in the classroom. They meet with faculty members to plan all assessments at classroom and program levels. They coordinate direct measures of assessment with other faculty members who serve as reviewers of student work. Additionally, assessment coordinators serve as informants to academic department chairs and academic deans about the results of assessment. Assessment coordinators are crucial to the support and continuity of assessment processes at our Institution.

E.2.c Institutional Research Personnel

Institutional Research (IR) personnel will be available to support assessment coordinators, academic department chairs, and other decision-makers to design and collect the data for studies related to program and institutional level assessment. IR is responsible for gathering information needed to conduct studies regarding institutional effectiveness.

E.2.d Academic and Administrative Directors

Academic department chairs and administrative unit directors support assessment processes in several ways. First, they act as decision-makers at unit and department level. They model and encourage personnel within their departments to participate in assessment. Administrative directors are also responsible for the design and implementation of assessment plans, while academic department chairs appoint faculty members that serve as assessment coordinators and frequently meet with them to assure the continuity of processes. Both directors are responsible for the submission of assessment reports to the deans and for the use of assessment reports at the program and administrative-unit level.

E.2.e Deans and Chancellor

The most important way to support assessment is through the use of its results for decision-making. This, impacts the continuity of assessment processes and the level of engagement of faculty members. Decision-makers at UPRCA are committed to the use of assessment results in decision-making processes. Deans will meet twice a year with assessment coordinators and unit directors in order to discuss results and future work on the design and implementation of plans to address those aspects. Similarly, the Chancellor will meet once a year with Institutional Assessment Coordinator and Deans, and other members of the Institutional Committee of Accreditation, Assessment, Budget, and Planning (CIAAPP, as abbreviated in Spanish) to discuss assessment results and their impact on the achievement of institutional goals. The results of this meeting are presented to the institutional committee for strategic planning. Consequently, this is a crucial step for the annual revision of the strategic plan and for budget allocation.

F. Implementation timeline

Some academic departments have been conducting assessment for approximately 10 years; however, not all academic departments are at the same stage of the assessment process (design, gathering information, analysis, recommendations, decision-making, and implementation). For that reason, this document has been adapted to show those particularities. Appendix C shows a detailed timeline for the implementation of assessment plans within the next years. However, time spent in each step of the assessment cycle will depend on the status and complexity of individual assessment plans and the objectives or learning outcomes measured.

G. Resources and Support

The literature consistently shows that in order to develop a culture of assessment it is important to base decision-making on assessment results. In order to get adequate results from assessment it is necessary to have resources and support. The literature has also identified a lack of resources and support as one of the principal reasons for the failure of assessment initiatives. Table 4 describes the support and resources that will be assigned to assessment processes described in this document.

Table 4. Support and Resources for Assessment

Process	Users / Beneficiaries	Resources and Source of Support
Training	Academic and Administrative Personnel	Academic Affairs Dean
		Assessment Coordinator serves as Facilitator
		Title V
Development of Assessment Instruments	Faculty and Institution	Assessment Office
		OPEI
Review of Students Works	Chairs of the Assessment Committees	Faculty will serve as reviewers dedicating time to this task Ad Honorem
Report Writing	Chairs of Assessment Committees, Administrative and Academic Departments Directors, Deans, and Chancellor	Academic department chairs and Assessment Committee chairs will write assessment reports
Development of an Assessment Repository	All Community	Title V acquired the license of WeaveOnline which will be administered by the Assessment Coordinator
Studies to Support Recommendations and/or Changes Proposals	Administrative and Academic Department Chairs and Deans	OPEI and Assessment Coordinator will collaborate in the development of institutional studies to complement/expand assessment results.
Communication of Assessment Results	All Community	OSI will collaborate in the adoption of the <i>NILOA Transparency Framework</i> through the development of a Webpage to inform the community about our assessment initiatives and results.
	All Community	The Assessment Office will work in collaboration with the Design Department to develop an Assessment Bulletin
Use of Assessment Results for Decision-Making	Institutional Committee of Strategic Planning , Directors, Deans, and Chancellor	Assessment Office
		Assessment Coordinators of the Academic and Administrative Units

H. Implementation Assessment

This document has a two-fold purpose. First, it aims to serve as a framework to the development of specific plans for academic and administrative units. Secondly, this document provides specific guidelines for implementation and evaluation of assessment plans. A set of guiding questions provided by the MSCHE (2011) is presented below (not all questions will apply to all academic and administrative units).

1. ***Do institutional leaders support and value a culture of assessment?*** Are there adequate, ongoing guidance, resources, coordination, and support for assessment? (This may include administrative support, technical support, financial support, professional development, policies and procedures, and governance structures that ensure appropriate collaboration and ownership.) Are assessment *efforts* recognized and valued? Are efforts to *improve teaching* recognized and valued?
2. ***Are goals, including learning outcomes, clearly articulated at every level:*** institutional, unit-level, program-level, and course-level? Do they have appropriate correlation? Do undergraduate curriculums and requirements address institutional learning outcomes and the competencies listed in Middle States' Standard 12 (General Education)? Are all learning outcomes of sufficient rigor for a higher education institution?
3. ***Have appropriate assessment processes been implemented*** for an appropriate proportion of goals? (Expectations for an "appropriate proportion" are increasing as time elapses since the adoption of the new *Characteristics of Excellence in 2002*.) Do they meet Middle States expectations, as characterized above?
4. Where assessment processes have not yet been implemented, ***have appropriate assessment processes been planned?*** Are plans feasible? Are they simple, practical, and sufficiently detailed to engender confidence that they will be implemented as planned? Do they have clear ownership? Are timelines appropriate, or are they either overly ambitious or stretched out too far?

5. *Do assessment results provide convincing evidence* that the institution is achieving its mission and goals, including key learning outcomes?

6. *Have assessment results been shared* in useful forms and discussed widely with appropriate constituents?

7. *Have results led to appropriate decisions* and improvements about curricula and pedagogy, programs and services, resource allocation, and institutional goals and plans?

8. *Have assessment processes been reviewed regularly?* Have reviews led to appropriate decisions and improvements in assessment processes and support for them?

9. *Where does the institution appear to be going with assessment?* Does it have sufficient engagement and momentum to sustain its assessment processes? Or does it appear to slow down? Are there any significant gaps in assessment processes, such as key areas where no assessment plans have been developed?

Meta-Assessment

Meta-assessment refers to the process of assessing the assessment in order to assure that the process is being effective. In addition to the guiding questions presented above, a formal process is desirable. In this regard, it is recommended to adopt the process implemented by Loyola University at Maryland to assess the processes of assessment of student learning (Scher, 2012). The process consisted of using a rubric at the end of each academic year to determine the stage in the assessment cycle (see figure 1) at which each academic program is. This assessment is conducted with the participation of at least two faculty members who volunteer to review the yearly assessment reports submitted by the academic departments. The average of the review is then used to describe the stage in the assessment process and to provide feedback to academic departments. Finally, a summary of the ratings is submitted to the Academic Senate and aggregates by college/schools are provided. This process is very useful because provide the institution a general understanding of where the academic programs (and the institution) is conducting assessment. This information will be valuable for the periodic report to be submitted

to MSCHE in 2016 and for reports submitted to other accreditation agencies by academic departments.

Conclusion

The IAS has been carefully designed considering current assessment practices and needs at UPRCA in order to make its implementation feasible. Since most of the assessment described in this plan is already in effect, the most important steps to successfully implement the IAS are to share it with the academic community. The integration of all assessment initiatives taking place at UPRCA with the new assessment practices described in this document will dramatically increase the use of information for decision-making and improvements during the next few years.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Certification 43 (2006-2007)

**REGLAMENTO
PARA LA EVALUACIÓN PERIÓDICA DE PROGRAMAS ACADÉMICOS
EN LA UNIVERSIDAD DE PUERTO RICO**

Artículo 1 — Título

El presente Reglamento se conocerá y podrá citarse como “Reglamento para la Evaluación Periódica de Programas Académicos en la Universidad de Puerto Rico”.

Artículo 2 — Base Legal

Este Reglamento se adopta en virtud de lo dispuesto en la Ley de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Ley Núm. 1 del 20 de enero de 1966, según enmendada, y del Reglamento General de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.

Artículo 3 — Propósito y Aplicación

- A. Establecer las reglas de aplicación general en la evaluación uniforme y periódica de los programas académicos vigentes en todas las unidades institucionales y dependencias de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, así como para el trámite y consideración de los informes periódicos en las instancias institucionales y sistémicas correspondientes.
- B. Integrar las disposiciones vigentes en la reglamentación y normativa universitaria y los requerimientos de las entidades de licencia y acreditación institucional y profesional. El mismo sustituye la Certificación Número 43 93-113 del antiguo Consejo de Educación Superior (CES).
- C. Requerir que todo proceso de evaluación de programas académicos, así como el informe que resulte del mismo, debe estar en armonía con este Reglamento y con las guías para la evaluación de programas académicos de la Universidad de Puerto Rico dispuestas en virtud del mismo.

Artículo 4 — Objetivos

La promulgación del presente Reglamento tiene el fin de adelantar los siguientes objetivos:

- A. Responder a la misión institucional de garantizar ofrecimientos de la más alta calidad mediante la evaluación de programas académicos en una base continua.
- B. Reafirmar la cultura de evaluación en el Sistema de la Universidad de Puerto Rico al establecer un mecanismo que permite evidenciar el progreso en la consecución de las metas trazadas en DIEZ PARA LA DÉCADA.
- C. Evidenciar y mejorar la calidad de la enseñanza, la investigación y el servicio mediante la revisión periódica de los resultados alcanzados por el programa, tanto de sus fortalezas como de las áreas a mejorar y de la forma de atender esas áreas, y estableciendo prioridades para la acción a corto y a mediano plazo.

- D. Articular los procesos de evaluación de programas a las estructuras de planificación académica, de asignación de recursos y de toma de decisiones con trascendencia dentro y fuera de la Universidad.
- E. Uniformar los procedimientos en torno a la evaluación de los programas académicos vigentes y la preparación y trámite de los informes correspondientes.
- F. Establecer procesos de evaluaciones quinquenales de los programas académicos de las unidades para agilizarlos, de manera eficiente y efectiva, y viabilizar los procesos relacionados con la presentación, la consideración y el trámite de los informes de evaluación.
- G. Orientar a los organismos y representantes de las distintas unidades del Sistema Universitario a cargo de la evaluación de programas académicos.
- H. Propiciar una mejor comunicación y colaboración entre los funcionarios e instancias que participan en la evaluación periódica de los programas académicos.

Artículo 5 — Definiciones

Para fines de este Reglamento se establecen las siguientes definiciones:

- A. *Programa académico*: Conjunto de asignaturas, materias u ofrecimientos educativos, organizado por disciplinas o interdisciplinario, de tal forma que da derecho a quien lo completa satisfactoriamente a recibir de la institución que lo ofrece el reconocimiento oficial, producto del estudio formal, ya sea de nivel subgraduado, graduado o profesional.
- B. *Evaluación de programa*: La evaluación de programas es un proceso que da seguimiento al estado de situación, la efectividad y el progreso de los programas académicos, reconociendo y respondiendo a las fortalezas y las limitaciones, identificando direcciones importantes en las disciplinas y las profesiones que necesiten ser atendidas, evaluando la relación y la contribución entre programas y la relación con la misión y los planes de desarrollo y agendas de planificación de la unidad y de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.

Artículo 6 — Evaluaciones requeridas

- A. **EVALUACIÓN INTERNA**. Todos los programas académicos del Sistema de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, tanto subgraduados como graduados, serán evaluados en ciclos de cinco años para reafirmar su excelencia y pertinencia, determinar su efectividad, justificar su continuación o revisión, de ser necesario. Este requisito deberá satisfacerse independientemente de los métodos de financiamiento (fondos institucionales, auto financiación, fondos externos u otros), la unidad o unidades académicas que son directamente responsables de su administración (departamentos, facultades, colegios, escuelas, División de Educación Continua y Estudios Profesionales (DECEP), u otros), los medios educativos y cualesquiera otras dimensiones no contempladas o mencionadas antes.

- B. **EVALUACIÓN DE ACREDITACIÓN.** Todos los programas académicos del Sistema de la Universidad de Puerto Rico que sean evaluados periódicamente por agencias acreditadoras o agencias de evaluación externa similares, estarán eximidos de un proceso evaluativo adicional, siempre y cuando se evidencie y la Vicepresidencia de Asuntos Académicos verifique que el proceso de evaluación para acreditación satisface los propósitos de este Reglamento. El decano de la facultad, colegio o escuela y el funcionario responsable del programa deberán mantener informado regularmente al decano de asuntos académicos de la unidad sobre el estado de la acreditación del programa y le remitirán la copia del informe más reciente que haya tramitado a la agencia acreditadora y la respuesta de ésta, con el fin de atender los trámites de este Reglamento que sean pertinentes a la evaluación de acreditación.

Artículo 7 — Áreas de evaluación

- A. La evaluación de un programa académico vigente y la preparación del informe de evaluación del mismo se regirá por lo aquí dispuesto y por las guías para la evaluación de programas académicos de la Universidad de Puerto Rico y disposiciones sobre contenido y formato, que establecerá el Presidente de la Universidad de Puerto Rico o su representante autorizado. Las guías se publicarán y divulgarán ampliamente y estarán disponibles para todos los miembros de la comunidad académica, tanto en forma impresa como electrónica, no más tarde de noventa (90) días calendarios a partir de la fecha de aprobación de esta Certificación.
- B. El informe de evaluación deberá incluir la información pertinente sobre el estado actual del programa, sus proyecciones y plan de desarrollo, la demanda por el mismo, los recursos tanto financieros como físicos y de aprendizaje, la facultad, la investigación y labor creativa, la acreditación y, particularmente, la evaluación estudiantil. La referidas guías dispondrán sobre la forma y contenido de los informes de evaluación, tomado en cuenta las necesidades de y las diferencias entre las evaluaciones internas y las de acreditación, con el fin de asegurarse de que contengan la información mínima necesaria en las áreas de evaluación incluidas sobre las siguientes categorías:
1. Título, grados que otorga, fechas de comienzo y duración del mismo, acreditaciones, autorizaciones y licencias, administración y toda otra información pertinente.
 2. Misión, metas y objetivos.
 3. Necesidad y justificación del programa.
 4. Evidencia de la pertinencia del programa, incluyendo sus características únicas, existencia de otros programas similares, relación con otros programas, demanda y otras razones.
 5. Currículo, perfil del egresado, secuencia curricular u otra información similar.
 6. Avalúo de resultados.

7. Estudiantes, políticas y prácticas de reclutamiento y de admisión, matrícula y cupo, características académicas del estudiantado, tasas de aprobación de cursos, grados conferidos, tasas de retención y de graduación, empleo de los egresados y otra información similar.
 8. Personal Docente, su perfil, reclutamiento, permanencia y ascenso, investigación y labor creativa.
 9. Servicio y personal de apoyo administrativo y asesoría académica.
 10. Recursos del aprendizaje, bibliográficos, informáticos y tecnológicos.
 11. Divulgación y servicio.
 12. Operación del programa y efectividad.
 13. Aspectos fiscales, incluyendo ingresos, gastos, costos, presupuesto y necesidades.
 14. Instalaciones, laboratorios y equipos auxiliares a la docencia.
 15. Fortalezas y limitaciones.
 16. Plan de desarrollo.
 17. Otra información relevante al estado actual del programa y sus proyecciones.
- C. En el caso de programas académicos que incluyan la utilización de medios educativos no convencionales, tales como centros de extensión, teleconferencia, a distancia y otras modalidades que surgirán en el futuro, las guías requerirán información adicional, conforme a los estándares que gobiernen las mejores prácticas relacionadas a dichos medios educativos.
- D. El Presidente¹ o su representante autorizado, revisarán periódicamente las guías para la evaluación de programas académicos de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, para atender los elementos que puedan incidir en los procesos de evaluación. Toda revisión se publicará igual que se hizo con la versión original conforme a lo dispuesto en el inciso A. de este artículo.

Artículo 8 — Trámite de la Evaluación de Programas Académicos vigentes y consideración del informe correspondiente.

La evaluación interna de los programas académicos vigentes se tramitarán y los informes correspondientes se considerarán a través de las estructuras y funcionarios que se indican a continuación y dentro de la normativa y ámbito de autoridad de cada una. *Disponiéndose, sin embargo*, que las evaluaciones de acreditación seguirán los trámites aquí dispuestos en tanto y en cuanto sean compatibles con los procedimientos de acreditación establecidos por las agencias acreditadoras y promuevan obtener o mantener la acreditación.

¹ A lo largo del documento se utilizan los nombres de los funcionarios en género masculino como lenguaje inclusivo de todos los géneros.

A. En la Unidad Institucional:

1. Los decanos de asuntos académicos someterán al Senado Académico un calendario de evaluación de diez años sobre los departamentos y programas a los que les corresponde la evaluación quinquenal. Además informarán sobre los programas que serán objeto de evaluación de acreditación en dicho periodo.
2. El decano de facultad, colegio o escuela, o director de departamento, de así determinarlo el decano, designará un Comité de Evaluación interdisciplinario para cada programa sujeto a evaluación interna. El Comité deberá incluir al director del programa o su coordinador, a miembros de la facultad familiarizados e involucrados con el currículo, a estudiantes activos y egresados, así como a representantes de los diversos sectores de la comunidad universitaria incluyendo, entre otros, consejeros, bibliotecarios, técnicos de laboratorio, personal administrativo y coordinadores de avalúo del aprendizaje.
3. Los productos del proceso de evaluación, entiéndase, datos y evidencias, serán validados y recopilados por las oficinas de Planificación Académica o de Investigación Institucional y deberán someterse al decano de facultad o director del programa según aplique en cada unidad. El análisis de los mismos no se limita a lo estipulado por este Reglamento, sino que debe considerar elementos de efectividad institucional en armonía con la Política de la Universidad de Puerto Rico sobre la evaluación de la efectividad institucional, Certificación Núm. 136 (2003-2004), de la Junta de Síndicos, cualquier otra política o reglamentación que se desarrolle a esos fines y los requerimientos de licencia o acreditación aplicables al programa.
4. Fundamentado en el análisis de los hallazgos del proceso de evaluación, el Comité de Evaluación de cada programa preparará un informe escrito de conformidad con las disposiciones de este Reglamento y las guías antes mencionadas. El informe debe incluir los datos más relevantes relacionados a indicadores de su eficiencia y efectividad, así como las acciones de la unidad para atender aquellas áreas que requieren atención.
5. El Comité de Evaluación de cada programa entregará su informe escrito durante el mes de abril del año académico en que le corresponde su evaluación.
6. El decano de facultad, colegio o escuela y el director de departamento, así como la facultad del programa, endosarán el informe preparado por el Comité de Evaluación y lo someterán al decano de asuntos académicos de la unidad.
7. El decano de asuntos académicos analizará el informe sometido por los diferentes comités de evaluación e identificará las fortalezas y las limitaciones de cada programa, así como las acciones necesarias para asegurar la excelencia del ofrecimiento. Presentará su informe ante el rector.

8. El rector enviará al Senado Académico un informe ejecutivo sobre los programas que han completado su evaluación.
9. El Senado Académico considerará el informe ejecutivo y emitirá sus sugerencias y recomendaciones.
10. El Senado Académico enviará a la Junta Administrativa el informe ejecutivo con sus sugerencias y recomendaciones.
11. Si el informe identifica la necesidad de cambios sustanciales al programa, éstos se atenderán siguiendo las políticas y procedimientos institucionales establecidos, incluyendo los contenidos en las guías de evaluación de programas académicos.
12. El rector presentará a la Junta Universitaria un Informe que incluya las fortalezas y las limitaciones o debilidades de cada programa. Estas se identificarán conforme a las áreas contenidas en las guías para la evaluación de programas académicos de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.
13. El periodo a transcurrir desde que se somete el informe de evaluación al decano hasta el momento en que el rector presenta el informe a la Junta Universitaria se extenderá hasta marzo del siguiente año.
14. El rector informará a la Junta Universitaria lo siguiente por programa: Fortalezas, limitaciones o debilidades y un plan para enmendar las situaciones particulares identificadas que incluya: (a) acciones a tomar, (b) nombre y título de la persona responsable de cada acción, (c) recursos necesarios y cómo la unidad los proveerá, (d) fecha en que se espera la corrección de la limitación o debilidad y (d) acciones sobre el programa como resultado de la evaluación.

B. En la Junta Universitaria:

1. El Comité Permanente de Asuntos Académicos considerará el informe ejecutivo de cada unidad y presentará los informes y sus recomendaciones a la consideración del pleno de la Junta Universitaria.
 - a. De ser necesario referir algún informe a los senados académicos, éstos tendrán hasta 60 días calendarios para reaccionar a cualquier informe del Comité de Asuntos Académicos de la Junta Universitaria.
2. La Junta Universitaria someterá sus recomendaciones a la Junta de Síndicos habiendo considerado las reacciones de cada senado académico, en caso de que los haya recibido.

C. En la Junta de Síndicos:

1. El Presidente de la Universidad presentará un Informe sobre las Evaluaciones Internas y de Acreditación de los Programas Académicos de cada unidad a la consideración de la Junta de Síndicos, con sus recomendaciones.

2. La Junta de Síndicos considerará las recomendaciones del Presidente y emitirá sus determinaciones, si alguna.
3. La Junta de Síndicos notificará sus decisiones al Presidente, al Rector, a la Junta Universitaria y al Senado Académico de la unidad correspondiente.

Artículo 9 — Informes sobre la Evaluación de Programas Académicos Vigentes

- A. EL PRESIDENTE DE LA UNIVERSIDAD o su representante autorizado, rendirá cada año académico un informe a la Junta Universitaria y a la Junta de Síndicos sobre el estado de los programas evaluados de conformidad con este Reglamento.
- B. GUÍAS: El Presidente de la Universidad o su representante autorizado, preparará las guías para la evaluación de programas académicos de la Universidad de Puerto Rico de forma consecuente con lo aquí dispuesto.
- C. PUBLICACIÓN. El Presidente de la Universidad velará porque se publique periódicamente, inclusive en medios electrónicos accesibles para toda la comunidad, información sobre el estado de las evaluaciones y acreditaciones de los programas académicos de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.

Artículo 10 — Normas; Interpretación; Separabilidad

- A. El Presidente de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, o su representante autorizado, podrá emitir las disposiciones normativas o los procedimientos necesarios o enmendar aquellos vigentes para implantar lo dispuesto en este Reglamento, facilitar el cumplimiento con sus disposiciones y asegurar la implantación y administración uniforme de las mismas.
- B. Corresponderá al Presidente de la Universidad de Puerto Rico interpretar las disposiciones de este Reglamento y decidir cualquier controversia en relación con sus disposiciones o con situaciones no previstas en el mismo.
- C. Las disposiciones de este Reglamento son separables entre sí, y la nulidad de uno o más artículos o secciones no afectará, a los otros que puedan ser aplicados independientemente de los declarados nulos.

Artículo 11 — Enmiendas, Derogación y Vigencia

- A. Este Reglamento podrá ser enmendado únicamente por la Junta de Síndicos, *motu proprio* o a petición del Presidente de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.
- B. Se deja sin efecto en la fecha de vigencia de este Reglamento el resto de las disposiciones de la Certificación Núm. 93-113, del antiguo Consejo de Educación Superior, que habían permanecido en vigor en virtud de la Certificación Núm. 80 (2005-2006); disponiéndose que quedan derogadas la referida Certificación Núm. 93-113, la Certificación Núm. 126 (1980-1981), así como cualquier otra certificación, norma, procedimiento, circular o disposición que esté en contravención con el presente Reglamento.

- C. Este Reglamento entrará en vigor en la fecha en que el Presidente de la Universidad de Puerto Rico de aviso a la Junta de Síndicos de la publicación de las guías para la evaluación de programas académicos de la Universidad de Puerto Rico y, en ningún caso, más tarde de noventa (90) días calendarios después de su aprobación por la Junta de Síndicos.

Appendix B: Use of Result Report Follow-Up Template



Oficina de Avalúo

Hoja de Seguimiento

Uso de los Resultados del Avalúo para Mejoramiento y Toma de Decisiones

Instrucciones: Favor de llenar y devolver esta hoja a la Oficina de Avalúo Institucional, localizada en el 3er piso del edificio administrativo o mediante correo electrónico a: cristina.martinezlebron@upr.edu. Los espacios provistos para escribir las respuestas se expanden automáticamente para acomodar el texto.

Título del informe: Enter text.

Curso en el que se realizó el avalúo: Enter text.

Cuatrimestre en que se realizó el avalúo : Enter text.

Persona que preparó el informe: Enter text.

1. ¿Se han utilizado los resultados del informe para la toma de decisiones?
☐ Sí (pase al ítem #6) ☐ No, explique _____ (pase al ítem #6)
2. Como parte de la decisión tomada...
☐ se proyecta realizar un cambio (pase al ítem # 3) ☐ se realizó un cambio (pase al ítem # 4)
3. Por favor, describa el cambio que se proyecta realizar. Especifique si requiere de algún recurso en particular para la implantación del cambio y cuál sería ese recurso (Ejemplo: recursos bibliográficos, coordinación de actividades, adiestramiento, etc.).
_____ (pase al ítem # 5)
4. Por favor, describa el cambio realizado (Por favor especifique la fecha en la que se implantó el cambio usando el formato “mes/año”)

5. ¿Cuál es el resultado específico que espera obtener al introducir el cambio antes mencionado? (Ejemplo: aumentar la satisfacción o motivación del estudiante, mejorar el compromiso del estudiantado, etc.)

6. ¿Cómo se podría mejorar el informe, o qué información adicional necesitaría para que los resultados de este avalúo sean de utilidad para usted y/o para el departamento académico?

Información de Contacto

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Puesto: _____

Email: _____

Departamento Académico: _____

Appendix C: General Assessment Plan for Academic and Administrative Units

I. Implementation of Part A of the UPRCA Assessment System: Development of Academic Departments Plans for Assessing Student Learning				
Process	Timeframe			
	2011-2013	1 st Quarter 2013-2014	2 nd Quarter 2013-2014	3 rd Quarter 2013-2014
1. Activate/Establish Assessment Committees at departmental level. a. An appointment with Department's directors will be scheduled in order to get more information about the faculty and possible members of the Assessment Committee.	X			
2. Meet with all committees to identify their needs and address their concerns regarding the establishment or revision of their assessment plans.	X			
3. The Departmental Assessment Coordinators (supported by Department's Directors) will provide orientation to the faculty regarding the implementation or revision of assessment practices and will share the training calendar with them.	X			
4. Each assessment committee will meet to determine whether they need to review the departments' goals, the new student's profile, and/or the student learning outcomes (SLO) ¹ , align them with the most recent version of UPRCA's mission and vision ² , or update their assessment plan.	X			
a. Development or revision of the curricular map.	X			
b. Design or update departmental's assessment plans including student learning assessment at course and program level.	X			
5. Before the implementation of the assessment plan and the	X			

¹ Reviewed SLO should be submitted to Faculty and Department's Directors to discuss the proposed changes before submitting it to the Academic Dean

² The departments that need to conduct research in order to review the student's profile or department mission should meet with the Director of the Assessment Office and the Director of the OPEI in order to receive all the help needed to design the study.

I. Implementation of Part A of the UPRCA Assessment System: Development of Academic Departments Plans for Assessing Student Learning				
Process	Timeframe			
	2011-2013	1 st Quarter 2013-2014	2 nd Quarter 2013-2014	3 rd Quarter 2013-2014
beginning of the assessment cycle (yearly), the Departmental Assessment Coordinators will meet with the faculty members to explain the assessment plan for that term and to motivate them to participate in the assessment process.				
6. Once the academic term has started, faculty members are responsible to assess the achievement of course objectives.		X	X	X
7. At the end of the academic term, Departmental Assessment Coordinators will be responsible to gather assessment data from assessed courses and develop a short report to be submitted to the department directors and institutional assessment coordinator.		X	X	X
8. Sharing information. a. Academic Department Directors discuss the report with the faculty in meetings that take place at least, twice a year. The purpose of these meeting is to discuss the findings of current assessment and provide recommendations and to discuss the results of newly implemented actions that resulted from previous assessment.	X	X	X	X
9. Academic department chairs submit a yearly report to the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Chancellor that will be used to inform decision making process particularly, budget allocation, program and/or institutional level improvement, and strategic planning.	X			X

II: Implementation the UPRCA Assessment System by Administrative Units				
Process	Timeframe			
	2011-2013	1 st Quarter 2013-2014	2 nd Quarter 2013-2014	3 rd Quarter 2013-2014
1. Activate Assessment Coordinator in every administrative unit.	X			
2. Meet with all coordinators to identify their needs and address their concerns regarding the establishment or revision of their assessment plans.	X			
3. The Unit Assessment Coordinators (supported by Unit's Directors) will provide orientation to the staff regarding the implementation or revision of assessment practices and will share the training calendar with them.	X			
4. Each assessment coordinator will meet to determine whether they need to review the unit's goals, align them with the most recent version of UPRCA's mission and vision, or update their assessment plan.	X			
a. Design or update unit's assessment plans.	X			
5. Before the implementation of the assessment plan and the beginning of the assessment cycle (yearly), the Dean Administrative Affairs will meet with the unit assessment coordinators to explain the assessment plan for that term and to motivate them to participate in the assessment process.	X			
6. Once the academic term has started, Directors Administrative Units are responsible to assess the achievement of unit objectives.		X	X	X

II: Implementation the UPRCA Assessment System by Administrative Units				
Process	Timeframe			
	2011-2013	1 st Quarter 2013-2014	2 nd Quarter 2013-2014	3 rd Quarter 2013-2014
7. At the end of the academic term, Units Assessment Coordinators will be responsible to gather assessment data from assessed office and develop a short report to be submitted to the administrative office directors.		X	X	X
8. Sharing information. a. Administrative Unit Directors discuss the report with the staff in meetings that take place at least, twice a year. The purpose of these meeting is to discuss the findings of current assessment and provide recommendations and to discuss the results of newly implemented actions that resulted from previous assessment.		X	X	X
9. The administrative unit submit a yearly report to the Dean of Administrative Affairs and the Chancellor that will be used to inform decision making process particularly, budget allocation, program and/or institutional level improvement, and strategic planning.				X

Appendix D: Structure and Guiding Questions for the Development of Assessment Plans

Structure of an Assessment Plan

A. Intended Educational Outcomes

1. This plan aims to assess the outcomes of an administrative unit or student learning outcomes (i.e. institutional, program-level, course-level?)
2. What student learning outcomes or unit's goals will be measured?
3. How that outcome impacts student development and/or the Institution?

B. Program's and/or Institutional Goal(s) to What the Outcome Relates

1. To what program or institutional goal(s) does that outcome relate?

C. Person Responsible for the Assessment

1. Who will carry-out the assessment?

D. Description of the Assessment

1. Name of the course(s) where the assessment will be conducted?
2. Through what processes or activities will the assessment take place?
3. Will the evidence be collected through a direct or indirect mean for assessment?
4. How will the data be collected? (Specify the strategies and instruments to be used)
5. How will the data be analyzed?.

E. Expected Results

1. What will the criteria for success be?

F. Timeframe

1. What will the assessment timeframe be?

G. Resources

1. What resources will you need to conduct this assessment?

H. Additional Comments

Appendix E: Structure and Guiding Questions for Assessment Reports

Structure of an Assessment Report

A. *Intended Educational Outcomes*

1. Is this a report from administrative units or is a report of student learning outcomes (i.e. institutional, program-level, course-level)?
2. What student learning outcomes or goals were measured?
3. How that outcome impacts student development and/or the Institution?

B. *Program's and/or Institutional Goal(s) to What it Relates*

1. To what program or institutional goal(s) does that outcome relate?

C. *Person responsible for the Assessment*

1. Who carried out the assessment?

D. *Description of the Assessment*

1. Name of the course(s) in which the assessment was conducted?
2. In what processes or activities did the assessment take place?
3. Did the mean for assessment constitute a direct or an indirect method?
4. How was the data collected?
5. How was the data analyzed?

E. *Results*

1. What were the results of your assessment?
2. Were the criteria of success achieved?
3. What aspects or skills need more emphasis?

F. *Recommendations*

1. Based on the results, what processes can be improved in order to achieve the intended outcome?
2. What changes are needed?
3. Is more information needed in order to identify the changes to be implemented?

G. *Notes on the Assessment Process*

1. Were you able to gather the information needed?
2. Was the assessment instrument adequate?
3. Was the timing for assessment adequate?
4. What challenges did you face?
5. Are the results useful?
6. How can this assessment be improved?

H. *Additional Comments*

Appendix E: Preliminary Schedule of Assessment Workshops

Preliminary Schedule of Assessment Workshops From Spring 2011-2012 to Fall 2012-2013

Training	Estimated Date	Duration	Facilitator
An Introduction to Assessment	2011-2012	1 hour	Assessment Coordinator
“More than Words and Numbers: Making Assessment Data Useful”	Dec 2012	3 hours	To be determined
“Assessment as a Process + Rubrics as Tools = Improved Learning”	Mar 2013	2 hours	To be determined
“The Right Choice: Selecting the Appropriate Strategies to Get Most of Assessment within my Discipline”	Jun 2013	2 hours	Assessment Coordinator
“Demystifying the Writing of an Assessment Report: What to Include?”	Dic 2013	1 hour	Assessment Coordinator

Appendix F: Glossary of Terms

GLOSSARY

A

Alignment: How well two systems two systems converge for a common purpose; for example, how well the curriculum corresponds with program learning outcomes (Allen, 2006, p. 226).

Assessment: Process of gathering, organizing, summarizing and interpreting the information obtained from multiple sources with the main purpose of taking the necessary actions in the instructional process and improve instruction. (Medina & Verdejo,1999); The process for obtaining information that is used for making decisions about students, curricula and programs, and educational policy (Brookhart & Nitko, 2008, p. 301).

Assessment Plan: An explicit identification of who, what, when, where, and how often each outcome will be assessed (Allen, 2006, p. 226). Initial document describing the assessment strategy to be implemented by academic or administrative units or the Institution (Nichols & Nichols, 2005).

C

Curriculum Map: A matrix (table) that shows the relationship between courses in the curriculum and program learning outcomes (Allen, 2006, p.226).

D

Department: An academic and administrative division within a faculty (University of Puerto Rico, 2006).

Direct evidence of student learning: Tangible, visible, self-explanatory, and compelling evidence of exactly what students have and have not learned. Examples of direct measures may include: field experiences evaluation forms, research projects, pass ratse on certification exams, portfolios, test scores, think aloud, and observation of students behavior among others (Suskie, 2009, p. 20).

Discussion: A course or part of a course that uses a continuous interaction methodology between group members under the supervision of an instructor. This requires planning, articulation and evaluation of the activity from the course instructor (University of Puerto Rico, 2006).

E

Evaluation: A process of making decisions or judgments based on assessment information. Judgments may focus on determination of whether learning has occurred, and decisions may focus on how to support and improve learning (Driscoll & Wood, 2007); The systemic process of judging the quality or merit of something given certain information (qualitative or quantitative) gathered directly or indirectly and compared to previously established criteria. In the evaluation process, instructional quality is judged and decisions are made considering gathered and analyzed data through the assessment process (Medina & Verdejo, 1999).

F

Formative Assessment: Assessment designed to give feedback to improve what is being assessed, or assessment of student at an intermediate stage of learning (Allen, 2006, p. 230).

Formative Evaluation: The process of judging activity, strategy, procedure or product quality consisting of operational characteristics of a program, through the time period in which it is being implemented (University of Puerto Rico, 2006).

G

General Education: The common component in a Bachelor Degree for all programs that consists of a group of educational, research and curricular activities outside the specialization area in which learners participate. General education courses encourage the development of skills, competencies, attitudes and concepts that all alumni should possess for their full development and in order to perform in an effective and responsible way in a democratic society and in constantly changing processes (University of Puerto Rico, 2006).

Goals: Broad and long-term descriptions of learning expectations. (Driscoll & Wood, 2007); The end result expected from academic activities in general. They are used to describe ample learning concepts such as clear communication, problem solving or ethical conscience. Goals define the results that the institutional mission wishes to attain to satisfy the needs of the academic community. A goal is defined as the long term situation or condition towards which the institution intends to move in a given time period. Goals are logical extensions to the institutional mission. They are aligned towards explicit and concrete goals supported by objectives. It is recommended that educational institutions identify three categories:

- *Goals for Learner Development:* Results obtained from academic experience seeking to assist the intellectual, emotional, moral and physical development of students.
- *Goals for Social Development:* Results obtained from investigation and public service areas.
- *Goals for Institutional Development:* Results related to institutional resources, which facilitate the reaching of goals in the other two areas (social and learner development) (University of Puerto Rico, 2006).

I

Indirect Evidence of Student Learning: Measures that suggest that learning has occurred. Examples of indirect measures includes: grades, retention and graduation rates, admission rates into graduate programs, placement rates of graduates, satisfaction surveys, and student ratings of their own learning among others (Suskie, 2009).

Institutional Effectiveness: How well an institution promotes its mission (Allen, 2006, p. 231).

Institutional-Level Assessment: Assessment of the general education student learning outcomes at the institution-wide level (Allen, 2006).

L

Learning Outcome: A clear, concise statement that describe how students can demonstrate their mastery of a program goal (Allen, 2006, p. 231).

M

Major: Subgroup of courses, materials or educational offerings within a program, organized in such a way that it gives the learner that successfully completes them the right to receive an official academic recognition as a result of formal education at an undergraduate level (University of Puerto Rico, 2006).

Mission: The institutional mission defines the fundamental purpose and the principles that guide institutional behavior. The declaration of the mission is an inclusive exposition that describes the reason for being of the institution and its social compromise. In addition, the mission establishes jurisdiction and authority limits of the institution. It is understood that the mission is fixed unless it is changed or modified by an official action or law. The mission of each organizational component or unit should be framed in the institutional mission. It should describe the reason for being of each unit that forms part of the institution articulating the development in a systematic and coordinated manner (University of Puerto Rico, 2006).

N

Needs Assessment: Needs assessment is the process of determining the things that are necessary or useful for the fulfillment of a defensible purpose (Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkerhoff, & Nelson, 1985, p. 16).

O

Objective: An alternative name for a learning goal or outcome (Allen, 2006, p.232). Usually relatively specific statements of student performance that should be demonstrated (McMillan, 2011, p. 29)

Outcome: A result.

Outcomes Assessment: The way through which an institution uses the data gathered through the assessment process to improve instructional and learning processes and the institution in general. Outcomes assessments should be consistent with planning processes and the distribution of resources. (MSCHE, 1996)

P

Pedagogy: Encompasses the broad range of teaching and learning activities that are directed to student learning in courses and programs. (Driscoll & Wood, 2007)

Portfolio: Compilation of student work. Students are often required to reflect on their achievement of learning outcomes and how the presented evidence supports their conclusions (Allen, 2006, p. 232).

Program-Level Assessment: Assessment conducted within an academic program to determine if program's learning outcomes has been achieved.

R

Rubrics: A coherent set of rules to evaluate the quality of a student's performance (either trait-by-trait or as a whole), usually with descriptions of performance at each level (Brookhart & Nitko, 2008).

S

Strategic Planning: Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. (Bryson, 1995, pp. 4-5)

Summative Evaluation: The process of judging the success degree obtained at a specific time (University of Puerto Rico, 2006).

Summative Assessment: Assessment designed to provide an evaluative summary, or assessment that occurs as students are about to complete the program being assessed (Allen, 2006, p. 234)

V

Vision Statement: A vision clarifies what the organization should look like and how it should behave as it fulfills its mission. (Bryson, 2004, p. 102)

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