

UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

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The Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL) wants to instruct productive and competitive human resources with quality education in order to become the integral development leader institution in Ecuador. The strategic plan for the 2003-2007 term covers the “Design, implementation, and maintenance of a quality management system that meets with ISO 9001:2000 standards and to constantly improve its efficiency”. This system’s primary goal is to ensure quality on teaching, investigation, collective relationship creation, and administrative-financial management processes. All of these processes must emphasize on management by process, costumer satisfaction and constant improvement.

A second fundamental objective is to achieve national recognition. An institutional auto evaluation project, started March 2005 and finally approved August 30, 2005, was this objective’s first step.

METHODOLOGY

This system’s implementation has been developed in three steps. Different faculties, administrative units, and centers were chosen for each phase. Three categories were identified: management, production, and supportive; with over than 100 indicators evaluating each of the 54 incorporated processes’ capacity.

The institutional auto evaluation process started October 12, 2005 with the signature of Consejo Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación, CONEA, and Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral, ESPOL, cooperation agreement. Auto evaluation with its recognition purposes focuses on: teaching, investigation, collective relationship creation, all in which administrative management is included in a supportive role. Meeting with all the requirements for national and advance towards international recognition was this objective’s main challenge. These requirements are necessary for ESPOL’s internationalization process consolidation.

Between November 2005 and May 2006, ESPOL performed an extensive and systematic procedures and activities analysis. This task involved a large intervention of ESPOL’s community and allies. Institutional auto evaluation’s report exposes our strengths and weaknesses. All the weaknesses found were used in improvement plans. This report was handed to CONEA on July 30, 2006 and served as a guide for Comité de Evaluación Externa verifications on ESPOL’s work done on November 2006.

Among our strengths, efficient strategic plans management, investigation development through projects, centers and foundations, and updates on all the teachers’ curriculum, which included fourth level titles, are included. Advances in information and communication technologies, agreements of understanding with private and public internationally recognized institutions and auto management are also worth mentioning.

The improvement plans formulated by the administrative management where divided in two categories:

Human resources management, which characterizes for the functions description manual revision and modification. Performance evaluation rules and service and administrative personnel selection procedures design are also under their supervision.

An integral training plan elaboration. Currently, the human resources unit is receiving training for focused management execution and improvement that involves directing the institution’s human resources. In terms of infrastructure, security improvement, road signalizing, and contingency plans, classroom and laboratories conditioning have been given priority.

A group of consultants was hired in order to have specialized technical support for these processes. Their responsibilities varied from leading processes, and maintenance and improvement of ESPOL’s quality management system to involving activities monitoring. This was done in order to meet the CONEA and ISO 9001:2000 requirements. Worth mentioning activities carried on by this group of professionals were to: train a group of teachers and administrative personnel in topics related with both methodologies. The objective was to train them in order to be able to guide and control their respective units, long and short term activities planning, achieve certifications and maintain both methodologies active.

RESULTS

The first phase units –Environmental Studies Center, Unit of Finances and the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering- and second phase –Department of Marine Sciences, Department of Humanistics and Economics Sciences, Department of Mechanical Engineering and Production Sciences, Institute of Mathematics Sciences, Center of Technology Transference, Graduate School of Business Administration, Center of Information Technologies- achieved ISO:9001-2000 in February 2005 and July 2006 respectively, as a result of the actions taken. We expect

the third phase units to obtain the certification in august this year.

ESPOL is committed to the constant quest of quality management system improvement in all of its processes. It will be pursued through constant step by step activities or long term strategic plans.

CONEA awarded ESPOL with Acreditación Institucional a la Calidad on January 11 of the current year. ESPOL set up these objectives in its permanent quest for academic excellence:

Start the elaboration process of the quality referring standards and characteristics for evaluation and recognition on technology and engineering level with help from CONEA.

Internationalize our institution by strengthening our relations with other highly recognized superior education institutions around the world.

CONCLUSIONS

The commitment and support of all the polytechnic community and authorities was fundamental to promote and execute activities to achieve our goals.

There must be financial resources to perform all the projects scheduled.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is worth mentioning that principal authorities must led and support continuously and efficiently these processes in order to motivate the people involved. They must also encourage cooperation of all the institution's community.

Communication, though a network, is important to inform of improvement activities, similar processes advances, and pointing out which benefits we are eager to obtain to our internal and external clients.