Objectives
Seeking practices for organizational improvement—benchmarking—is a core managerial task commonly characterized as a problem solving activity, generally implemented through response actions to business analytics feedback. This task is closely related to management control, which combines performance measurement, reward systems and corrective actions at the divisional- and individual-levels of the organization.

This course provides participants with tools to assess the performance of organizations from different sectors. Participants are prepared for real-life managerial analyses that are based on concepts such as profitability, productivity, price indices and outputs and inputs mix. Furthermore, the performance assessment measures consider issues such as the characteristics of organizational design and the control of processes and employees in decentralized firm divisions. All topics include numerical examples and/or applications with data from actual firms from various industries.

Description
“Benchmarking and Management Control” is a second-term course in the MSc in Management and the MSc in Finance and Banking degrees, at the Barcelona School of Management. It serves as a core course for students specializing in Business Analytics, and as an elective course for students specializing in Finance and Banking, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship.

Contents
Block 1: Introduction to benchmarking measures
1. Definition of performance monitoring and benchmarking in competitive settings
   - Internally oriented assessments: Monitoring
   - Externally oriented assessments: Benchmarking
2. Linking monitoring and benchmarking tools with financial measures of performance
   - Review of financial statements’ (profitability) analysis
   - Decision making for improved profitability and applications in competitive settings
3. Profitability and productivity changes
   - Absolute and relative changes (index numbers) in the presence and absence of prices
   - Multifactor productivity, profit margins, output and input prices, and output-input mix

Block 2: Multidimensional benchmarking and applications
4. Benchmarking in multidimensional settings
   - Output maximization and input minimization, fixed and variable inputs
   - Using productivity and efficiency to set future targets and reform operations
5. Business applications of benchmarking assessments
   - Business firms applications of benchmarking (e.g., acquisitions)
Benchmarking and Management Control

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- Public sector applications of benchmarking (e.g., regional spending)

**Block 3: Organizational architecture and performance control measures**

6. Designing organizational architecture
   - Determinants of the architecture of markets and firms
   - Decision rights: centralization versus decentralization

7. Divisional performance evaluation and control
   - Measuring divisional performance: cost, expense, revenue, profit and investment centers
   - Transfer pricing and trade-offs between decision management and decision control

8. Measuring internal business processes and employee performance
   - Relative, objective and subjective measures
   - Within-firm and across-firms applications

9. Assessing management evaluation across the globe
   - Firm- and institutional-level determinants of performance measures
   - Applications with actual data from international management surveys

**Methodology**

The course comprises twenty 90-minute lectures, which combine lecturing with general debates and applied discussions on business cases and exercises. Participants will also engage in presentations of reports on cases or project assignments. Activities will require both individual and group work.

**Evaluation criteria**

Grading will be done through active class participation (30%), group analyses/presentations of cases (30%) and a final project (40%). Students are required to attend 80% of classes. Failing to do so without justified reason can have consequences in the final grade. As with all courses taught at the UPF Barcelona School of Management, students who fail the course during regular evaluation will be allowed ONE re-take of the examination/evaluation. If the course is again failed after the re-take, students may have to register again for the course the following year.

**Bio of the professor**

Mircea Epure is Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics and Business, Pompeu Fabra University (UPF), and Affiliated Professor at UPF Barcelona School of Management and Barcelona Graduate School of Economics. He has a PhD degree in Business Economics and Administration from the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Prior to joining UPF, he has visited Växjö University in Sweden and IESEG School of Management in France, and has taught at Toulouse Business School. Mircea’s research focuses on management and accounting topics in economic organizations. He has taught Business Economics, Economic Organizations and Markets, and Management Accounting courses at various institutions.