

Quality Assurance in Curriculum and Instruction: The Case of the University of Eastern Philippines¹

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¹ A Paper to be submitted to Malaysia for international paper presentation.

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Abstract

Quality education stems from good management. Good management is not solely confined within the parameters of the managerial task, but also in renewed dimensions in knowledge, techniques, and skills required of educational leaders and administrators. A definitive instructional focus alongside a strengthened curriculum comprises strong attributes for an institution to thrive in rapidly-increasing societal demands and at its best meet local and international standardizations procedures. A comprehensive curricular review vis-à-vis renewed instructional supervision is integral in realizing the long-range plans of the University. Effective supervision entails that the foregoing shall work hand in hand to serve the interest of the respective constituents.

Keywords: Quality assurance; curriculum, and instruction.

Introduction

In response to the pressing need for manpower development necessary for the upliftment of the socio-economic condition of the service area, House Bill 4050, sponsored by Congressman Eladio T. Balite, was signed by President Diosdado Macapagal on June 20, 1964 converting SIT into the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP). This was on top of the many changes in the name and nature of the school before it finally became a state university. UEP is mandated to "primarily give technical and professional training, advanced instruction in literature, philosophy, the sciences and the arts, besides providing for the promotion of scientific and technological researches." The elevation of the school to a university status has, in fact, paved the way towards dramatic increase in its academic, research, and extension programs as

well as the creation of additional colleges, institutes, centres, and offices.

While the University has fairly succeeded in meeting its goals and objectives for the past years, via its existing programs, projects, and activities, it shall remain a potent partner not only in human resource development but also in bringing about better living conditions among the underprivileged sector of society. Legal basis Section 2, Republic Act No. 4126 of the Philippine Constitution provides that "the University shall primarily give technical and professional training, advanced instruction in literature, philosophy, the sciences and the arts, besides providing for the promotion of scientific and technological researches and democratic access to education to poor but deserving students, not only in Northern Samar, but also in other parts of the country."

The Problem

Quality assurance can be guaranteed under certain conditions, one of which is the institution's teaching force's efficiency in carrying out a well-enhanced curriculum that conforms to the best practices of local, regional, national and educational international institutions. There is also the need to revisit and redefine policies and operational guidelines to provide varied relevant courses for the student clientele to choose from in order to develop multi-faceted, quality individual and competitive graduates. Hence, the University enjoins other SUCs in the continuous task to attain global education. For starters, courses can be realigned to address the basic needs of student learners. An integrated management supervision should look into the implementation of administrative policies while not doing away with the basic function of supervision. This will help in coming up with renewed methods of curricular and instructional management supervision that is by nature, participatory (Hunt and Pierce: 1958). In the case of the University of Eastern Philippines, what are the support programs in attaining excellence in the management of curriculum and

instruction? Further, how did the pedagogical performance in positioning faculty members by area of specialization in line with the vertical articulation program of the University is being enhanced?

Significant Insights

It is important to note that the relationships between management supervision of curriculum development process alongside quality of instruction are mutually relevant. The famous African adage saying ‘it takes a whole village to raise a child’ may be an ‘Herculean task’ but the art of being pro-active in such a way that an institution like UEP predicts the future by inventing seems more close to reality. While UEP envisions itself into being a world-class University, taking the initial concrete steps by each element that comprises the system in an act of synergism puts us on the path to such a future. That future is certainly a vital factor in realizing the transformation of the educational landscape of the higher education system in the country.

All these have been pushed by the strengths of the University like meeting the ideal standard for higher education with excellent teachers; the University has a broad set of programs, i.e., comprehensive or general; the University is small enough to offer a friendly, personal environment for students, faculty and staff, but large enough to offer the range of programs that the local constituents require; the University has struggled to build a strong institution despite a very dwindling and limited fund; the University has a competitive advantage with its rich biodiversity and a strong identity whose leaders realize that the local economy depends on highly educated citizens. Its strategic location also provides a quality of life and a natural setting that affords the campus advantages in biodiversity; the University anticipates rising enrollments; and ventures into income-generating projects that provides support and incentive program to its constituents.

Side by side with these strengths are the challenges like the dwindling of funding from the national government; hence, the need to adopt cost-efficient operation, as the university did. A history of limited funding priorities had restricted the investment in facilities,

technology, and communications (external and internal), student information, student support, research, and extension and production support.

This analysis, as well as the goals and programs provided the groundwork for the development of the Strategic Goals and associated objectives of the UEP’s Academic Plan.

The nature of competence and development of expertise in content areas or tool subjects like mathematics, science, and language is in need of serious reshaping. Curricular goals, instructional processes and modes of assessment shall observe consistent linkage and reciprocation. Doing so requires renewed management perspectives of educational administrators; this is a move away from the confined traditions of leadership. Embarking on ‘adoptive expertise’ (Pellegrino: 2006) rather than meeting standards in the three key aspects of educational process-curriculum, instruction and assessment provides better solutions, creativity, and innovation to competencies. Requiring such from educators ensures better pedagogy. Expert knowledge in classroom teaching results in a more productive teaching-learning process that brings more fun to lifelong learning.

The following five functions illustrate curricular-instructional supervision (Krug, 1992:432-433, Parker & Day, 1997:87) which were and will always be part of UEP’s actions; defining and communicating a clear mission, goals and objectives; managing curriculum and instruction in ways that respond to global needs; supervising teaching through an established support systems for teacher-training and development; ensuring sustainable support systems from relevant internal and external stakeholders; **monitoring processing assessment and evaluation** among all groups involved.

All these form part of the functions of the highest University Officials, e.g., VPAA, Finance Administrator, College Deans, Curriculum Planners, Technical Liaison Officer, Instruction Coordinators, Research and Extension Coordinators and other stakeholders (HEIS, CHED, DLE, LGU, Consortia) who are held responsible to approve and fine tune the proper conduct and implementation.

Conclusions

State Universities and Colleges provide an overwhelming number of benefits to the growth and development of a nation. The University of Eastern Philippines, with its four-fold functions provides a strong knowledge base and productivity potential. While the country is struggling to cope with the difficult times, the University of Eastern Philippines is at-work, performing its responsibility of providing solutions to the country's need for quality professional graduates. This is highly attributed to the University's credible academic programs and systems of instruction. The state, regional, and community leaders worked together with the University on a more sustainable long-term plan in definite attainment of desired objectives.

Recommendations

The following serves as groundwork for the University in the next academic years:

- Provide a comprehensive, personalized, educational experience that prepares students to excel personally, professionally, and as citizens;
- Enhance research, scholarship and creative works on the campus and in the community;
- Use and enhance technology to improve teaching, learning, research, extension and production management;
- Expand and strengthen community partnerships;
- Model the values of diversity in the campus climate and educational programs;
- Enhance the University's human, physical, and fiscal infrastructure.

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