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Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

14 April 2020

Memorandum No. OVPAA 2020-48

For: Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors for Academic Affairs, Deans/Directors,
Department Chairpersons, Institute Directors and Faculty

From: Maria Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista
Vice-President for Academic Affairs

**Re: PROPOSED UP SYSTEM POLICY ON THE SECOND SEMESTER AY
2019-2020 AND THE MID-YEAR IN THE TIME OF COVID-19
(corrected)**

Background

In light of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), the CU Executive Committees (EXECOM) met for several weeks and, in consultation with relevant officials and stakeholders, decided to propose—independently of the other CUs—the extension of the Second Semester AY 2019-2020 and the resumption of learning activities in line with revised syllabi, adjusted requirements and flexible modes of delivery appropriate to the situation of students in the class. The CUs differed on when to resume learning activities, with some CUs deciding to commence around 20 April 2020 with a soft start this week while others resolved to do so once the lockdown in their respective areas is lifted.

In its 7 April 2020 meeting, the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC)—chaired by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs with the Vice-Chancellors for Academic Affairs, Vice-Chancellors for Research and Extension/Development and Assistant Vice-Presidents for Academic Affairs as members—agreed to recommend to the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC)—chaired by the UP President, with the Executive Vice-President, the UP System Vice-President

“Deferred Grade” due to issues of access to learning platforms, arrangements (e.g., via Facebook, Messenger, Viber, email) or involvement in COVID-related responses.

In its 13 April 2020 meeting, the PAC, after a long deliberation, modified the AAC recommendation because of the high level of anxiety among students and some faculty members due to the pandemic, its consequent impact on everyday life and uncertainty even in the immediate future (See Annex A). Instead of obliging students to complete the semester, the PAC is proposing to end the semester on 30 April 2020 with a “Deferred Grade” for students but with a pathway for graduating students as well as those who would like to continue fulfilling the requirements of the course on the deadline set by their respective CUs. The PAC pr

delivery and assessment of learning if a faculty member is unable to function academically due to the crisis;

Set up a system of tracking students with the assistance of disciplinary/college-based student organizations;

Devise a creative way of helping faculty members with big classes, especially those handling more than one such class, track their students;

Finalize alternatives or adjustments that need to be done (e.g. number of hours of clinical rotation) for laboratory work, field work,

ANNEX A

PROPOSED UP SYSTEM POLICY ON THE SECOND SEMESTER 2019-2020 IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

**Submitted by the Presidential Advisory Committee to the Secretary of the UP Board of Regents
14 April 2020**

We are now living in extremely challenging times. The extension of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and the rapid COVID-19 escalation have caused profound human suffering especially among Filipinos at the margins of Philippine society. Epidemiological projections of exponential growth in the number of COVID-19 cases and recent news of a second wave of infections in China have further exacerbated the anxiety of our people.

The COVID-19 pandemic demands that UP as the country's national university step up and carry out its mandate both as Research and Public Service University for the Filipino people. We have deployed various experts from different branches of knowledge and campuses of the UP System in search of solutions to mitigate the impact of the crisis. Since the start of the pandemic, our teams have engaged in projecting the spread of the disease, using big data to study mobility under ECQ, developing a local COVID-19 test, validating testing kits, determining the source of the virus through genetic sequencing, conducting clinical trials on new treatment modalities, preparing ethics guidelines for COVID-19 crisis-level hospital care, designing disinfection tents and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) i.e. overalls, gowns and masks, developing locally designed breathing machines i.e. ventilator, ascertaining supply chains for food, health-related and other inputs to economic and trade policies, and developing apps for Local Government Units to facilitate their work, to name a few COVID-related researches. Multi-disciplinary teams from the humanities, natural and social sciences are producing more effective ways of communicating the various dimensions of the pandemic to help our people understand COVID-19 and are creating art and music to help them cope with stress in these difficult times. The UP Philippine General Hospital and all our Constituent Universities have also been directly involved in preventing the spread of COVID in their own communities and regions, offering the services of their laboratories, experts and trainers in biosecurity and biosafety.

Even as UP has heeded the urgent call to fulfill its research and public service functions vis-à-vis the nation, it has also focused its attention to ensuring the provision of learning opportunities for our students in this crisis situation. Since 10 March 2020, faculty members have calibrate

other low technology-supported modes (e.g. emails, Facebook, Viber, Messenger etc.). Moreover, several surveys reveal the difficulty of pursuing academic work for a significant number of students and faculty in the face of basic survival concerns.

Under the circumstances, the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC)—composed of the UP System Executive Committee and the Chancellors of Constituent Universities—resolved to modify the option presented to it in its 13 April 2020 meeting—i.e. to extend the semester while paying closer attention to the needs of students who will be disadvantaged by their lack of access to various learning platforms. Guided by the principles of honor and excellence as operationalized in adherence to academic standards--albeit adjusted to the context of the pandemic--

succeeding semester to begin earning for their families, those applying for graduate admissions, those on scholarships, etc. may opt to complete the requirements of the semester following the adjusted syllabus and the deadlines set by his or her Constituent University.

- < The University is also waiving academic rules as well as policies on scholastic standing and student financial assistance.

DROPPING OF SUBJECTS

The deadline for dropping of subjects for the Second Semester AY 2019-2020 is lifted.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The deadline for filing of Leave of Absence for the Second Semester AY 2019