



Kapit, Yakap, Tindig:

How UP Diliman Took on the Challenge of COVID-19



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How UP Diliman Took on the Challenge of COVID-19

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Quezon Hall bridge. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Foreword

The COVID-19 virus gave me a most unusual welcome at the start of my term as Chancellor. Within a week of my appointment in March 2020, I had to create the UP Diliman (UPD) COVID-19 Task Force, composed of UPD vice chancellors, faculty members, staff, and students. It was a multidisciplinary group that brought together experts from medicine, genomics, public health, the social and natural sciences, information technology, data science, engineering, law, and community development. They have planned and carried out our university's response to the pandemic.

Our training as scholars, however, has made us too aware of our limitations, and this group was honest about what it understood about the pandemic and what it did not. This orientation pushed Task Force (TF) members to study and learn from each other's fields while trying to keep up with the pressing needs of our community.

It has been more than two years of consistent weekly TF meetings. We were able to experiment and try different methods to ease the health risks and social burden on our constituents. This involved trial and error until a more comprehensive strategy slowly emerged. Our response to the pandemic has been anchored on minimizing the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on our community. To attain this, four objectives were identified: (1) ensure good health and safety, (2) guarantee efficient services of different UPD units, (3) support academic and research functions, and (4) promote effective communication. Through this approach, many initiatives have come to fruition, which is a testament to our resolve to continue with university life despite the pandemic. This e-book documents how the university responded to the public health emergency and consequent quarantine restrictions and alert levels imposed by the national government.

The images in this e-book capture the drastic physical changes that the university likewise saw in the past two years. We missed our faculty and students, the daily buzz from classes, and the jeepneys plying our campus roads. Instead, we were met with deserted streets littered with dried leaves, the closure of service shops, and cancellation of regular campus events. On the bright side, we saw the university turn greener; more migratory birds flocked to rejuvenated grounds and open spaces. We succeeded in adjusting the ways we teach and hold events, which led to institutional gatherings held virtually and in person: commencement exercises, the Linggo ng Parangal, Gawad Tsanselor, and Lantern Parades.

But of course nothing will ever replace these events when they're done face-to-face. While we know that we will not completely return to how it was before, there will be some semblance of pre-pandemic days by the next academic year, beginning August 2022.

I would like to thank all the article contributors to this e-book. They shared their experiences as they relentlessly performed their duties and responsibilities even during the pandemic. They undertook new programs, and adjusted existing initiatives. They took into consideration the mobility restrictions and the new remote work and teaching set-up.

Many thanks as well to the UP System for its support to UP Diliman in the past two years as we traversed the pandemic and decided on crucial and timely policy changes. My gratitude to the UPD COVID-19 Task Force for always providing the bigger picture and deciding on what is best for the community. Finally, special thanks to our frontliners who physically reported to work despite the threats of exposure to the virus.

There are more stories to share. Our collective experience has shown us how pandemics can change lives and shape history. This experience has also offered a glimpse of the possibilities and different ways of doing and working together. May this e-book inspire other units to document their own efforts and initiatives during the past two years. I thank the editors, layout artists, and other members of the editorial team who brought this e-book to life.

Fidel R. Nemenzo, DSc
Chancellor, UP Diliman



Photos and design by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

UP Diliman COVID-19 Response Framework*

The term of Fidel R. Nemenzo, DSc as University of the Philippines Diliman (UPD) Chancellor started in March 2020, a few days before the Luzon-wide Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was imposed. Consequently, he created the UPD COVID-19 Task Force (TF, henceforth The Task Force) to plan and implement the university's response to the pandemic. As the national university, UPD had to continue performing its three-fold mandate of teaching, research, and public service. Because of this, UPD played a critical role amidst the health crisis.

UPD mobilized its faculty, staff, and students across disciplines to produce evidence-based policies, recommendations, and solutions to the crisis. At the same time, the university had to protect its diverse community of stakeholders, including residents, from the impact of the global pandemic.

The UPD COVID-19 Response Framework was developed to consolidate the initiatives of the UPD community, to address the various aspects of the aforementioned mandate, and to ensure continuity and sustainability. While the framework is designed to address immediate and foreseeable challenges, it may be updated to provide a long-



Members of the COVID-19 Task Force. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

term response as UPD moves towards a “better normal.” It consists of four major strategies to minimize the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 to the community: promote good health and safety; support academic and research functions; ensure the adequate and continuous flow of UPD services; and facilitate effective communication.

The succeeded sections will explore the impact of these strategies and how they helped manage the effects of the pandemic from March 2020 to December 2021.

Background

As the country's premier state university, the University of the Philippines (UP System) has the mandate to lead as a public service higher-education institution. It provides various forms of community and volunteer service, as well as scholarly and technical assistance to the government, the private sector, and civil society while maintaining its standards of excellence.

UPD is the flagship campus of the UP System and represents its largest constituent university with the highest number of degree-granting units and the largest student population; it also houses numerous research centers and laboratories. The campus is open to the public as a recreational space.

The UPD community was not spared from the adverse effects of COVID-19 pandemic. The Luzon-wide Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), announced in mid-March 2020, restricted mobility and shut down public transportation, leaving students stranded on campus, unable to return to their families in the provinces. During this time, the university ensured their health and safety and made arrangements to bring them home.

Even during the quarantine and the shift to remote work and learning, offices had to continue to operate. Despite the risks involved, essential and priority services were identified, with each office providing a skeleton workforce. This proved to be a challenge since there was no public transportation within and around the campus. Even residents on campus had to adjust to source their food and basic necessities.

By 7 December 2020, the UPD community already had recorded 453 confirmed COVID-19 cases among its constituents and residents, 29 of which were active cases. Hence, the university needed to mitigate the risks of continuing its operations, and to support the personnel who tested positive.

The UPD Covid Task Force

The Task Force consists of faculty, staff, and students who come from different disciplines: public health, medical sciences, sciences, law, social sciences, and the humanities. This multidisciplinary background certainly contributes to the inclusive and holistic formulation of ideas and guidelines.

The Task Force meets weekly to discuss updates on the COVID-19 situation on campus, deliberate on appropriate measures, and agree on various guidelines that are disseminated to the

community and to the public, along with other COVID-19 related information. The Task Force posts weekly status report in the UPD website (<https://upd.edu.ph/tatag-up/bulletin/>) and social media accounts.

Policies, guidelines and procedures are harmonized across the different levels of university governance—from the UP Board of Regents (BOR) to the UP System to the Constituent University (CU) to the colleges, to the departments and units/offices. This helps avoid confusion and miscommunication even if this may entail longer processing time. The guidelines are updated based on post-implementation evaluation.

The Task Force (TF) also address urgent concerns of the community. Other committees meet regularly to discuss and propose solutions which are put forward in TF meetings. In addition, regular meetings and consultations with Health Liaison Officers (HeLOs) and Post-ECQ Teams (PETs) of all UPD units were held. Through these mechanisms, Task Force guidelines were coursed to all its units and offices, which offered feedback that in turn helped revise or refine policies and guidelines. This helped UPD steadily institutionalize its pandemic response practices, and capacitated and guided the units in implementing health and safety guidelines.

Figure 1
UPD COVID-19 Response Framework

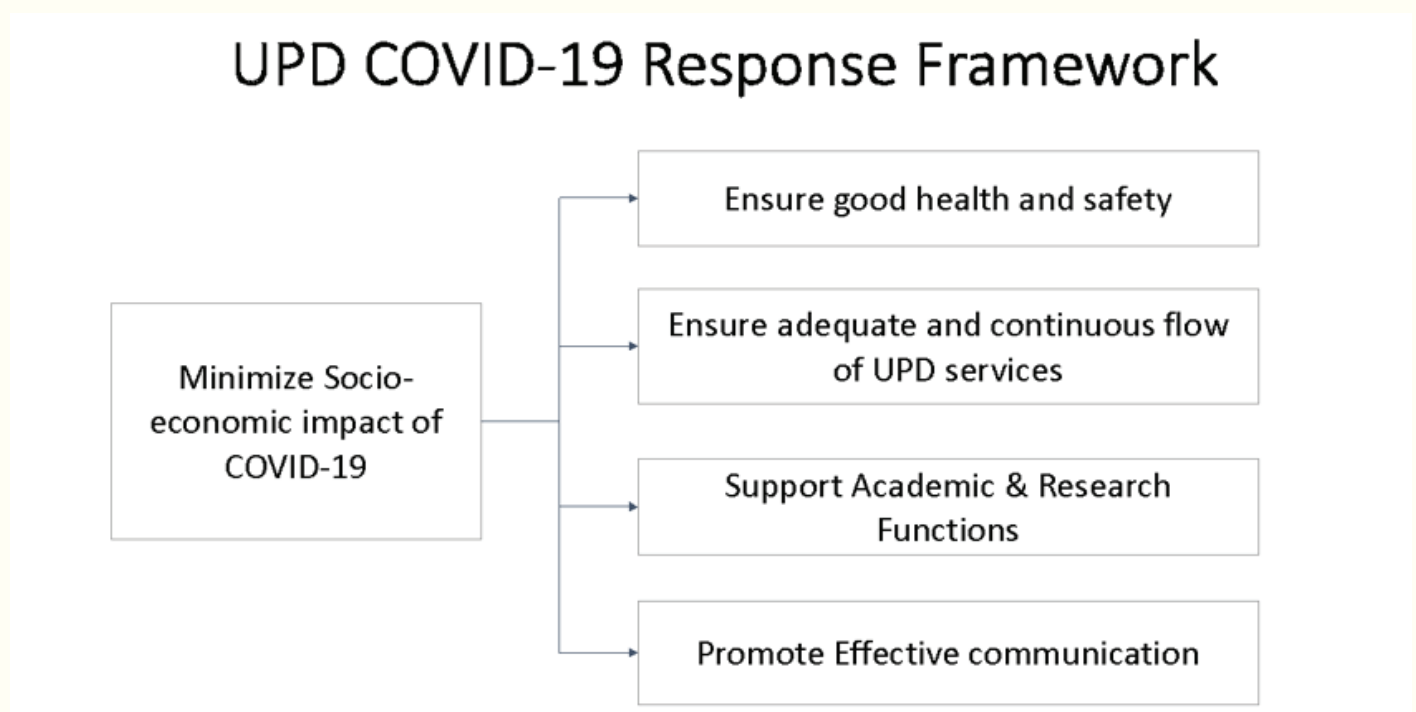
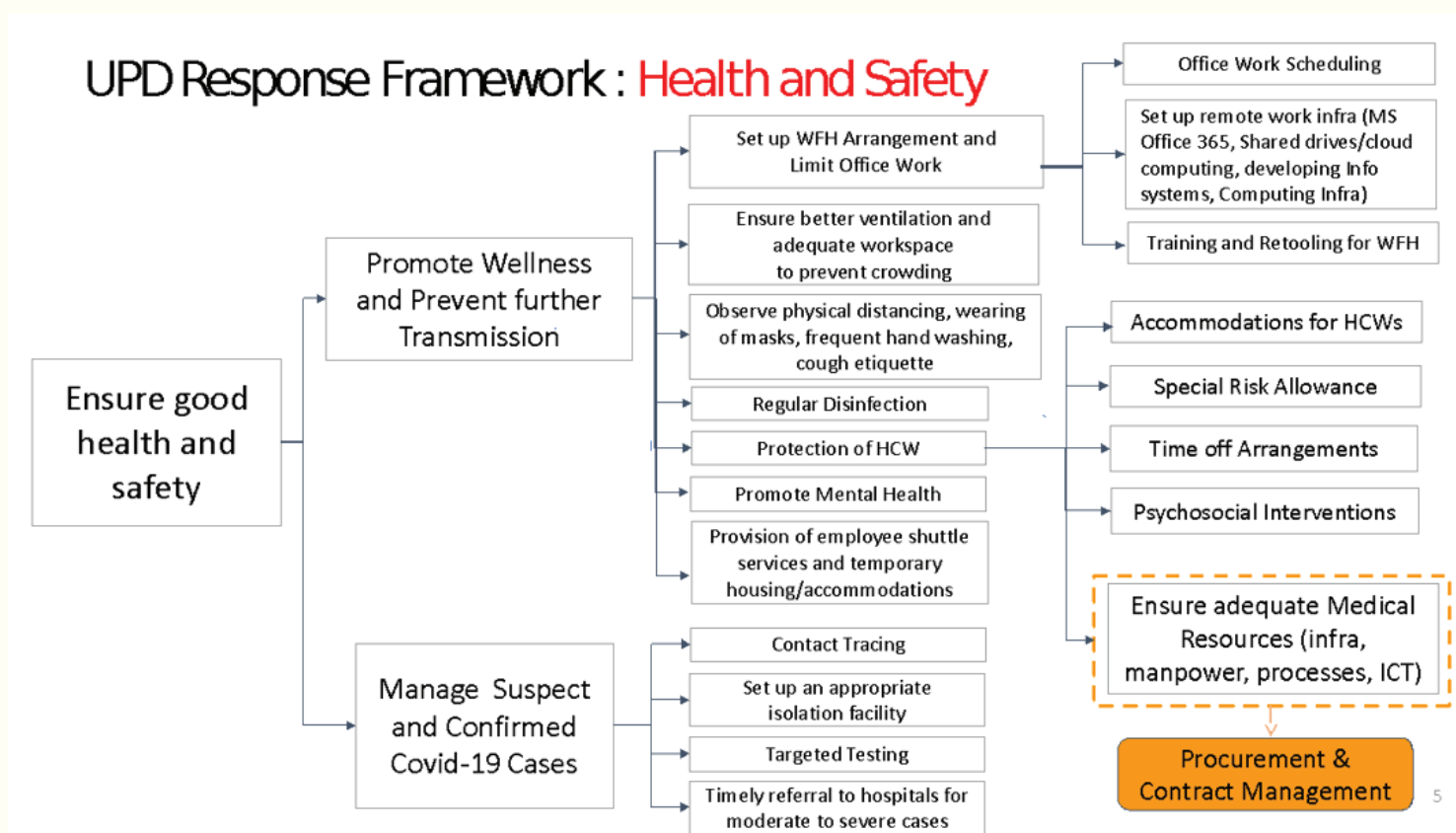


Figure 2
UPD COVID-19 Response Framework on Health and Safety



Response Framework

UPD implemented a community-based response to the pandemic. This entailed the following:

- Understanding and monitoring the emerging needs of its constituents as the pandemic unfolded;
- Tapping various expertise available in the community; and
- Capacitating the pandemic response through self-learning, collaboration, and piloting.

Community engagement was one of the key strategies to minimize the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This involved Health and Safety, Academic and Research Activities, Administrative Support Services, and Effective Communications. These are reflected in the UPD COVID-19 Response Framework above.

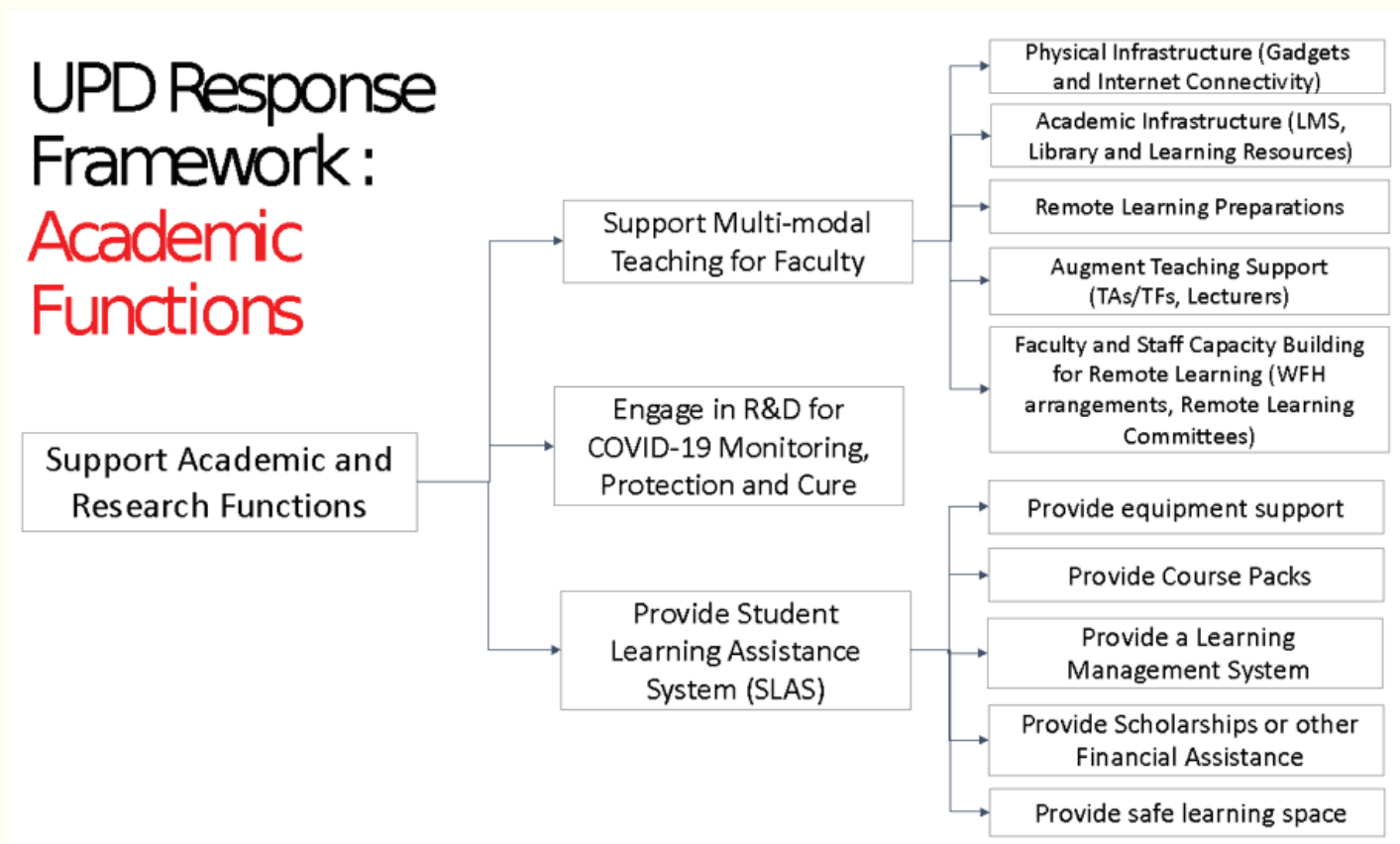
To ensure the health and safety of the community, UPD used the public health approach of early detection, testing, quarantine, and isolating and contact-tracing. A Risk Matrix was developed as a basis for the targeted testing of very high- and high-risk personnel who physically report for

work and interact with the community and clients regularly. These include health staff, security guards, and custodial workers. Testing was carried out by the UP Health Service (UPHS) in partnership with the Philippine Genome Center and the Philippine General Hospital.

UPD opened Kanlungang Palma and Silungang Molave as community isolation facilities to serve its constituents, barangay residents, and Quezon City residents with suspected or confirmed mild cases. A contact tracing team, headed by the UPHS Public Health Unit (UPHS-PHU) and supported by volunteers, was formed. Health Liaison Officers (HeLOs) and Post-ECQ Teams (PETs) implemented and monitored health and safety protocols, and coordinated with the UPHS-PHU.

To support academic and research functions, UPD conducted capacity-building sessions (webinars and tutorials) on remote learning for faculty and staff; provided financial support to develop course packs, training materials; facilitated the transition to a remote work environment for enrollment, library services, and learning management; and supplied guidelines for the safe use of dormitories and laboratories.

Figure 3
UPD COVID-19 Response Framework on Academic Functions



To ensure the adequate and continuous operation of essential services, UPD also provided guidelines and technical/financial support for work-from-home (WFH) arrangements; set up the infrastructure for remote work; determine general principles in rearranging the workspace for a safe office environment; re-configured manual processes and shifted to digital transactions; and provided shuttle services and temporary accommodations for staff.

To communicate with its constituents and the general public, UPD provided weekly updates regarding COVID-19 cases on campus through various online platforms, and prepared information, education and communication (IEC) materials.

UPD also undertook the following initiatives:

1. Accommodation facilities for health care workers from the Lung Center of the Philippines;
2. Coordinated with relevant government agencies to allow stranded students to return to their provinces (Hatid Probinsiya Program);
3. Provided material support to construction workers stranded on campus;
4. Opened recreational and public spaces for exercise and fitness activities
5. Coordinated with the LTFRB to allow UP PUJs to re-operate in their routes; and
6. Supported organizations of students and staff to help fellow students and other community members.

The UPD COVID-19 Response Framework integrates varying strategies from the National Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF), the Quezon City IATF, and the UPD COVID-19 Task Force. In doing so, it helps UPD address the unique needs, concerns, and circumstances of an institution that is at once a state university and a community.

**The framework was conceptualized and drafted by Vice Chancellor Adeline A. Pacia and further developed by the UPD COVID-19 Task Force.*

Figure 4A
UPD COVID-19 Response Framework on Communication

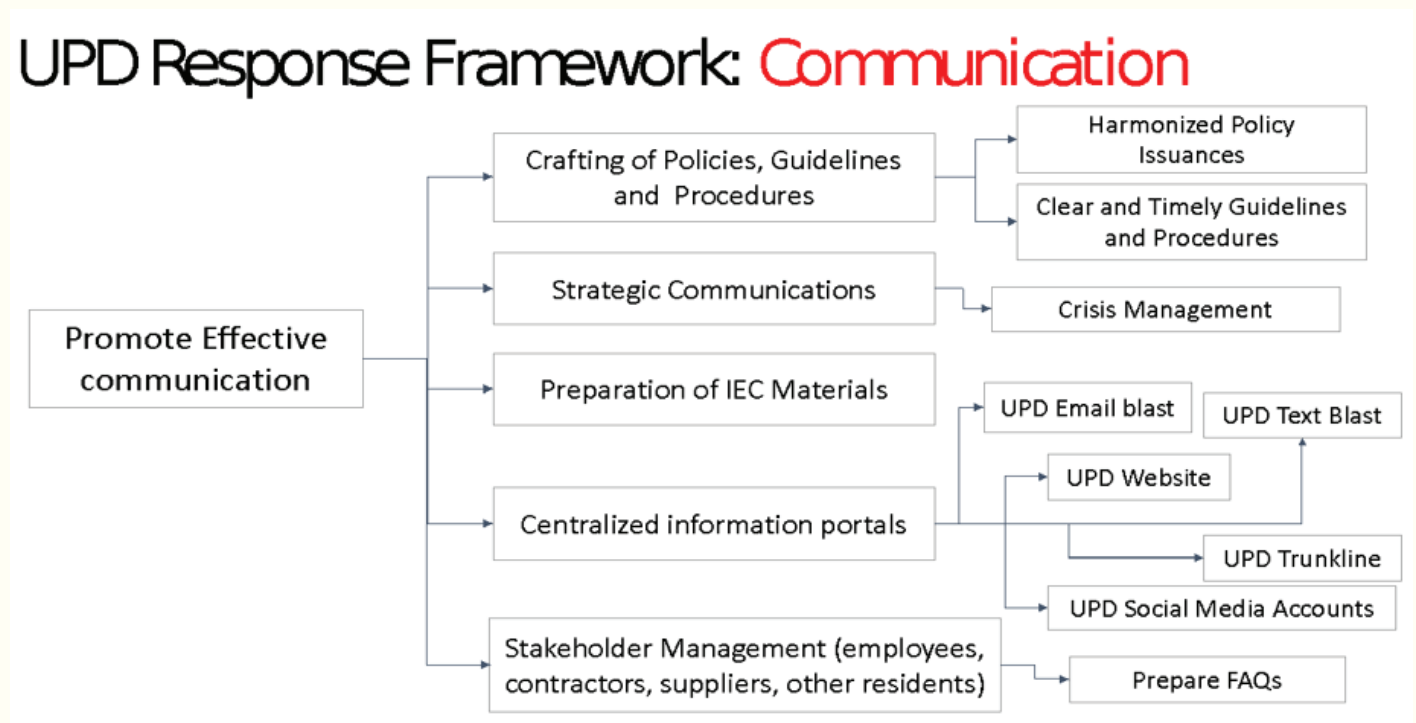
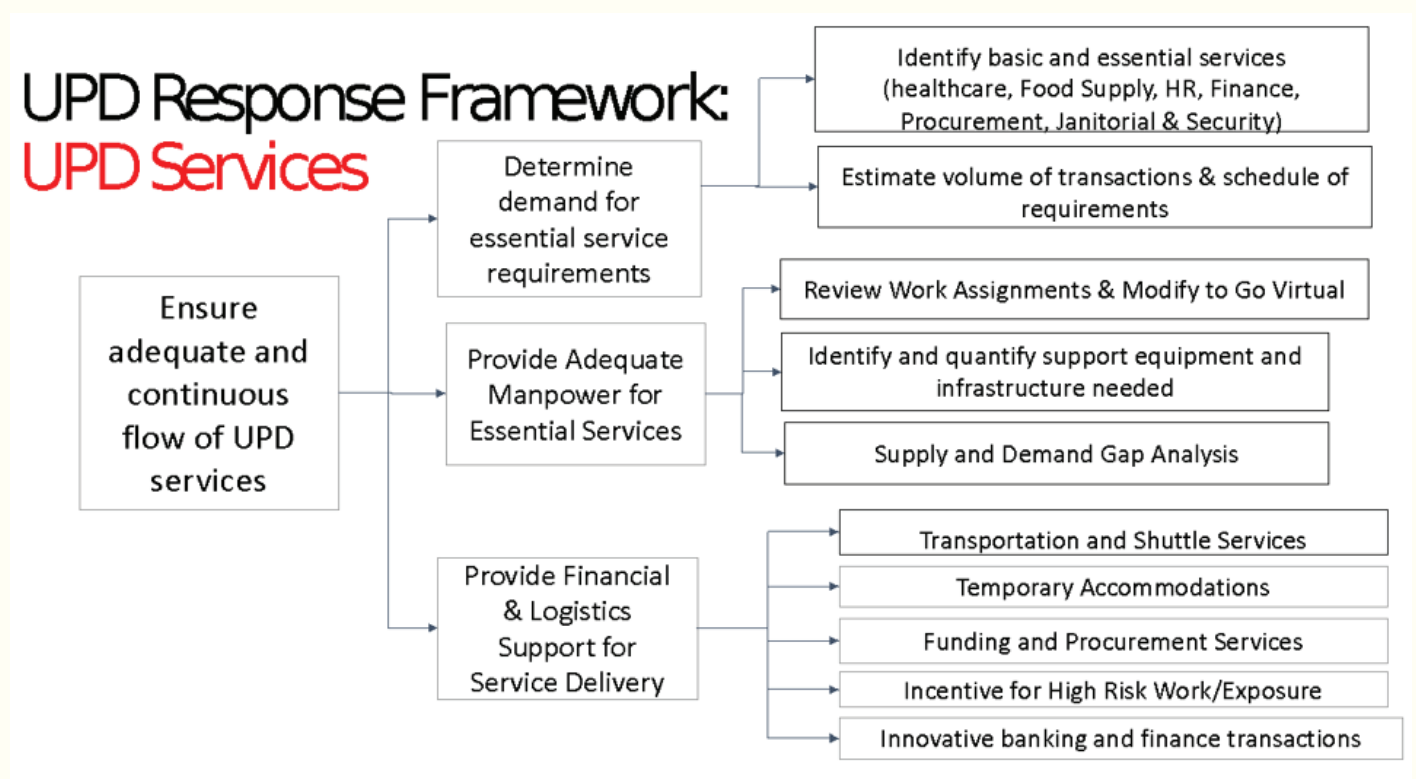


Figure 4B
UPD COVID-19 Response Framework on UPD Services



Kapit-Bisig Laban sa COVID-19



Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Health and Safety Initiatives*



Former UP president Alfredo E. Pascual receiving his vaccine dose at the Bakunahan sa UP Diliman vaccination site. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

The UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force sought to (1) ensure the physical and mental well-being of UPD constituents and residents of nearby areas, (2) prevent the transmission of the virus, and (3) minimize the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. To achieve these goals, the Task Force sought to:

1. Help community members (i.e., health liaison officers, post-ECQ unit teams, purok residents) learn about the virus, how it is transmitted, and the basic minimum health and safety protocols they should follow at home, at work, and in other spaces
2. Provide shelter and isolation facilities to UPD constituents and barangay residents (especially those who cannot safely isolate in their houses) who tested positive for the virus or is a suspected case.
3. Administer RT-PCR testing among individuals who show COVID-19 symptoms and personnel whose regular tasks increase their likelihood of getting infected.
4. Advise the close contacts of those who tested positive about the next steps that they should take to avoid or minimize contracting the virus (e.g., going on self-isolation or quarantine, getting tested); and
5. Vaccinate UPD constituents and residents of Districts 3, 4, and 5 of Quezon City through the Bakunahan sa Diliman project.

Table 1**UPD COVID-19 Task Force's Public Service Projects Since March 2020**

Projects	Beneficiaries and Stakeholders
Contact tracing efforts since March 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. COVID-19 patients who were contacted to identify the people they had contact with 2. Close contacts of COVID-19 patients (who may or may not be UPD constituents) and were advised to isolate or take the RT-PCR test
Information campaigns such as webinars, flyer distribution, etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purok coordinators and residents of Barangay UP Campus 2. Health liaison officers (HeLOs) and members of post-ECQ teams (PETs) of all academic and administrative units 3. UPD constituents and residents of Barangay UP Campus (weekly report of COVID-19 cases and active COVID-19 cases area map) <p>Note: Information campaigns started in April 2020.</p>
Community isolation facilities: Kanlungang Palma and Silungang Molave	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Those who tested positive and those who have pending RT-PCR test results 2. Residents of certain barangays who could not be accommodated in other isolation or quarantine facilities <p>Note: Kanlungang Palma operated from April to June 2020, while Silungang Molave was open from August 2020 to December 2021.</p>
RT-PCR testing facility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UP Diliman constituents (faculty, staff, students) who show symptoms of COVID-19 or were close contacts of COVID-19 patients 2. UPD personnel whose functions expose them to high risks of getting infected <p>Note: RT-PCR testing started in May 2020.</p>
Vaccination facility (Bakunahan sa Diliman)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UPD constituents (faculty, staff, vaccination volunteers) 2. Residents of Districts 3, 4 and 5 of Quezon City <p>Note: The College of Human Kinetics gym served as the vaccination site of the QC LGU-UPD joint vaccination program, which operated from April 2021 to December 2021.</p>

The UP Diliman administration funded the abovementioned projects. Due to the surge of COVID-19 cases in April 2021, a donation drive was launched for the isolation facility, Silungang Molave. UPD also partnered with the Philippine Red Cross to set up another isolation facility on campus, Kamia residence dormitory became one in the same month.

The Bakunahan sa Diliman vaccination site was initially slated to run for only three months, from April to June 2021. However, the QC LGU requested that operations continue to help the local government achieve its vaccination targets. After considering the capacity of volunteers to work and the necessary logistics, UPD decided to extend its operations until December of the same

year. Bakunahan sa Diliman likewise partnered with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to administer vaccines to the homeless and at-risk populations.

Accomplishments

Contact tracing efforts

The Public Health Unit (PHU) of the University Health Service

(UHS) supervised contact tracing efforts, and hired five contact tracers for this purpose. They traced suspect, probable, and confirmed COVID-19 through SMS and phone calls, and monitored confirmed cases and close contacts—both in their household and in the workplace—for 14 days or more.

Patients who could observe proper home isolation were referred to Kanlungang Palma or Silungang Molave (or other appropriate facilities depending on the case). Patients who needed tertiary care were referred to hospitals. Contact tracers coordinated with the Barangay Health Emergency

Response Team (BHERT), DILG contact tracers, and Quezon City Epidemiology Surveillance Unit (QC ESU) for the patients' social support needs. They also scheduled the RT-PCR tests of all close contacts in the workplace. At the end of the isolation period, contact tracers facilitated the issuance of the medical clearance of confirmed cases and the quarantine clearance of close contacts. From March 2020 to December 2021, they traced 5,954 contacts of 2,515 COVID-19 positive individuals.

Community information campaigns

The COVID-19 Task Force organized webinars for health liaison officers (HeLOs) and members of the post-ECQ teams (PETs) per unit. These webinars (Table 2) aimed to provide the following information:

1. Nature of the virus
2. Modes of transmission
3. Health and safety protocols
4. What to do when a staff member develops symptoms
5. Reporting mechanisms
6. How to conduct risk assessment
7. Targeted and mass testing, and

Table 2
Webinars Organized by the UPD COVID-19 Task Force for HeLOs and PETs

Dates	Topics
12 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 transmission, case detection, isolation/quarantine, testing, mitigation, and control measures Proposed post-ECQ guidelines
17 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Dinah Nadera's lecture ("Pagtuon sa Lusog Isip") on how to address the mental health and psychological well-being of an individual during the pandemic
18 August 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UP Revised Guidelines and Protocols on COVID-19
7 & 11 September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pandemic across history, covering different diseases that have caused widespread infections Grassroots-response to pandemics Mitigation strategies for different infectious diseases
2 October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk assessments, protocols, and schedules of targeted testing
11 December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation on mass testing (Part 1)
10 January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation on mass testing (Part 2)
26 February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact tracing
12 March, 15 May, 29 June, 17 July, 5 & 26 August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar-orientation on contact tracing
31 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of new HeLOs and PET members Functions of HeLOs Updates on UPHS renovation Telemedicine and face-to-face consultations Swab testing policies Updates on Bakunahan sa Diliman

8. COVID-19 vaccination.

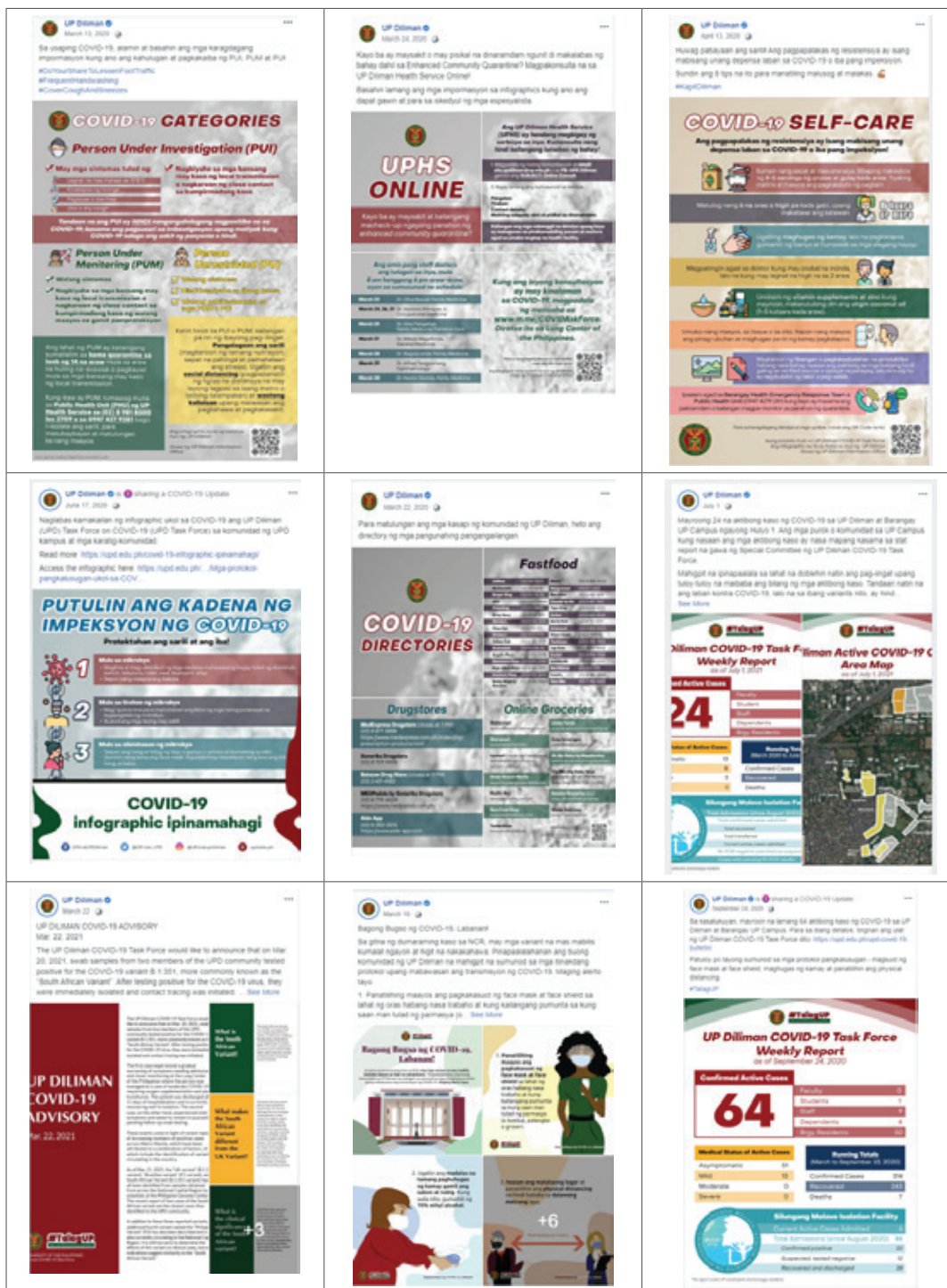
The Task Force also provides updates on the COVID-19 situation in UPD and Barangay UP campus. These include weekly reports of cases and the active cases area map. Both are posted on the UPD website and social media platforms. The Task Force also releases infographics on the evolving

nature of the virus and the ways to prevent its transmission.

Figure 1 below presents some examples of these infographics. All the other COVID-19-related materials created by the Task Force are posted on the microsite, which can be found in the UPD website: <https://upd.edu.ph/upd-covid-19-bulletin/>.

Figure 1

Sample materials released by the UPD COVID-19 Task Force for Information Dissemination



The Task Force also formulated guidelines to ensure safety on campus, posted advisories to help the general public understand the evolving COVID-19 situation in the country, and provided reports on COVID-19 projects deemed relevant to the public (Table 3).

Community Isolation Facilities

The Silungang Molave is a DOH-accredited temporary treatment and monitoring facility established by the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force in August 2020. Its mandate was to identify and isolate suspect, probable, or confirmed COVID-19 cases on campus and in barangays contiguous with the UP Diliman area. Silungang Molave admitted UPD faculty, staff, students, employees' dependents, non-UP personnel working on campus (e.g., workers in construction projects), nearby barangay residents, and Quezon City residents from Districts 1, 2, and 3. This facility was designed to help those whose home environment may not be optimal for self-quarantine because of crowded living conditions and the presence of vulnerable persons (e.g., senior citizens, immunocompromised family member).

Silungang Molave offered the following services:

1. RT-PCR testing for patients with symptoms or those who have been close contacts of confirmed positive patient
2. Basic room and board. The amenities include one bed with pillow, bed sheet and blanket, hygiene kit, electric fan, desk and chair, trash bin, wash cloth, surgical masks, shower and toilet cubicle, and three meals a day.

The occupants' health status and symptoms were constantly monitored, and they were promptly referred to a hospital or a more comprehensive healthcare facility at the first sign of deterioration. Upon completion of their required quarantine period and before discharge, they were given instructions for continued home care and follow-up care; they were also given quarantine clearance.

By 31 December 2021, Silungang Molave had accommodated 753 patients. Table 4 presents the categories of patients.

Table 3

Guidelines, Advisories, and Reports Released by the UPD COVID-19 Task Force

Guidelines, Advisories, and Reports	Links
Revised Guidelines for Responding to COVID-19 Cases among Staff and Faculty for UP Diliman Offices and Units	https://upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Guidelines-with-Appendices.pdf
Post-ECQ Guidelines	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FJSBALBc4N9v-G25-E8nStrylyDsZsuu/view
MECQ Guidelines	https://upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/UPD-Guidelines-MECQ-08042020-1.png
COVID-19 Advisory on the Delta Variant	https://upd.edu.ph/up-diliman-covid-19-advisory-2/
Ulat sa Komunidad: Bakunahan sa Diliman	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AEqxXZaKIheivjz764NEZS_zUslolQCP/view
Sputnik V Second Dose Advisory	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YuYJPrx3V9KSpcqk1tP5dqiWRL-kVD/view
Instructions for Sputnik V recipients	https://sites.google.com/up.edu.ph/bakunahansadiliman/advisories?authuser=0
Rondakumusta sa Panahon ng COVID-19	https://upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/RK1-apr27.png

Table 4
Categories and Number of Patients Accommodated in Silungang Molave

Patient Category	Number of Patients
UP Student	73
UP Faculty	18
UP Employee	292
UP Dependent	29
Non-UP Bgy UP Campus Resident	162
Non-UP Working in Campus	99
Non-UP QC Resident	41
Non-UP Special Case	39
Total	753

RT-PCR Testing Facility

Samples for Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) testing were taken at Kanlungang Palma and at Silungang Molave for members of the UPD community showing symptoms of COVID-19 or their close contacts. The samples were sent to the Philippine Genome Center (PGC) or the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) for the test proper. Table 5 features the number of RT-PCR tests conducted since May 2020 and the breakdown of the testing data.

Vaccination Facility (Bakunahan sa UP Diliman)

Bakunahan sa Diliman had its first day of operations on 26 April 2021. The project followed the prioritization set by the Department of Health (i.e., A1: frontline personnel, A2: senior citizens, and A3: persons with comorbidities). Bakunahan sa Diliman administered four vaccine brands: (1) Sinovac, (2) Astra Zeneca, (3) Moderna, and (4) Sputnik V. Tables 6, 7, 8, and 10 below present the number of individuals who were vaccinated until 15 December 2020.

Table 5
Number of RT-PCR tests facilitated by Kanlungang Palma and Silungang Molave from May 2020 to December 2021

2020	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Positive	2	31	27	108	65	66	15	30
Negative	32	94	90	182	230	362	379	599
Total	34	125	117	290	295	428	394	629

From May to December 2020, Out of 2,312 samples, 344 (14.88%) were positive and 1,968 (85.12%) were negative.

2021	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Positive	48	42	108	212	95	34	60	117	156	39	4	5	920
Negative	1897	1296	576	481	325	257	411	348	360	178	143	71	6343
Total	1945	1338	684	693	420	291	471	465	516	217	147	76	7263

From January to December 2021, out of 7,263 samples, 920 (12.66%) were positive and 6,343 (87.33%) were negative.

Table 6
Number of Administered Vaccines By Month

BY MONTH	First Dose	Second Dose	Booster	Grand Total
April	346			346
May	1,591	472		2,063
June	2,671	1,347		4,018
July	2,193	3,925		6,118
August	7,397	975		8,372
September	775	6,463		7,238
October	327	1,108		1,435
November	894	543	2,428	3,865
December	60	953	2,604	3,617
Grand Total	16,254	15,786	5,032	37,072

Table 7
Number of Administered Vaccines by Vaccination Group

BY VACCINATION GROUP	First Dose	Second Dose	Booster	Grand Total
UP Vaccination	6,268	6,369	2,386	15,023
Community Vaccination	9,986	9,417	2,646	22,049
Grand Total	16,254	15,786	5,032	37,072

Table 8
Number of Administered Vaccines by Category

BY CATEGORY	First Dose	Second Dose	Booster	Grand Total
A1: Medical Frontliners	163	152	176	491
A2: Senior Citizens	1,504	1,515	1,265	4,284
A3: Persons with Comorbidity	4,367	4,187	2,542	11,096
A4: Economic Frontliners	5,534	5,301	968	11,803
A5: Indigent	3,649	3,685	38	7,372
Rest of Adult Population (ROAP)	474	428	43	945
Pediatric A3	26	32		58
Rest of Pediatric Population	537	486		1,023
Grand Total	16,254	15,786	5,032	37,072

Table 9
Number of Administered Vaccines by Vaccine Brand

BY VACCINE BRAND	First Dose	Second Dose	Booster	Grand Total
AstraZeneca	831	764	3,089	4,684
Gamelaya	4,074	4,010		8,084
Moderna	5,675	5,477	1,938	13,090
Sinovac	5,674	5,535	5	11,214
Grand Total	16,254	15,786	5,032	37,072

Table 10
Number of Administered Vaccines by Vaccinee's Residence

BY RESIDENCE	First Dose	Second Dose	Booster	Grand Total
Within QC	14,196	13,765	4,380	32,341
Lives in UP Campus	4,900	4,737	1,252	10,889
Lives in another barangay	9,296	9,028	3,128	21,452
Outside QC	2,058	2,021	652	4,731
Grand Total	16,254	15,786	5,032	37,072

Table 11
Remarks from Vaccinees in Bakunahan sa Diliman.

“Silungang Molave is highly recommended as isolation facility. Malinis, maaliwalas, magaling, at mababait po ang nurses at iba pang nagwowork dito.”
“Everyday, you make a commitment to serve. You are one of the best and bravest. Your tireless efforts are not going unnoticed. Being on the frontline isn't easy, but it is very much appreciated. Our community is better because you are a part of it. Sending thanks and warm thoughts to all of you who are working through these challenging times. Stay safe po! I am totally happy and thankful with the care of Molave isolation facility.”
“Anxious ako sa pagpasok sa isang isolation facility. Pero dito sa SiM, pinagsumikapan talagang maging maayos at komportable ang pananatili ng pasyente, hanggang hindi ko na nga namalayang lumipas ding mabilis ang araw (bagaman at nakatulong din sa akin ang pagtatrabaho pa ring parang ‘WFH’ dahil may WiFi naman sa room bagaman at medyo mahina). Salamat sa lahat ng doktor, nars, food attendant, janitors, at lahat ng naglilingkod sa SiM! Mabuhay kayo!”
“Sobrang ganda po ng sistema sa Molave isolation facility. At sobrang babait at mahuhusay po ang ating nurses and doctors. Wala po akong naging problema sa maikling pananatili ko rito.”
“The nurse, doctors, and utilities are kind; they always smile; they are kind to treat patients; they are always positive when I face them.”

Recognitions received

Both Kanlungang Palma and Silungang Molave community isolation facilities were accredited by the Department of Health (DOH). Perhaps the more important recognition and measure of success were the positive comments of individuals who underwent quarantine in these facilities, and appreciated the services (Table 11).

Furthermore, the Bakunahan sa Diliman vaccination facility was recognized by the Quezon City government and the World Health Organization Philippines in a webinar, “CommUNITY for Immunity: Partnerships for COVID-19 Vaccination Programs” held on 17 June 2021. The webinar was organized by the University of the Philippines and the International Training Center for Authorities and Leaders (also known as UP-Centre International de Formation des Autorités et Leaders; UP-CIFAL).

Speaking at the webinar were Mr. Joseph Juico, co-chairperson of the Quezon City COVID-19 Task Force; Dr. Rabindra Abeyasinghe, the World Health Organization’s representative to the Philippines; and Dr. Aleli B. Bawagan, UP Diliman Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs. Articles about this activity are available at <https://cifal.up.edu.ph/up-cifal-philippines-holds-webinar-on-partnerships-to-support-vaccination-programs/> and <https://up.edu.ph/up-webinar-explores-institutional-partnerships-in-vaccination-programs-vs-covid-19/>. The recording may be viewed at <https://youtu.be/xEM1BrT3qZU>.

On 24 June 2021, the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force was one of the recipients of the 2020 Special COVID Response Award given by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration. The recognition was bestowed during the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) ceremonies held on the same day. The citation reads, “Bilang pagpapahalaga sa mga tanggapan o unit mula sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas Diliman para sa agarang pag responde at pagbibigay ng serbisyo sa mga mag-aaral, kawani, apektadong sektor, at komunidad ng UP, higit sa mga nangangailangan ng tulong dulot ng pandemyang COVID-19 noong taong 2020. Para sa patuloy na pakikipag-usap sa iba’t ibang mga sektor sa kampus upang magbahagi ng mga impormasyon hingil sa COVID -19 at mapanatiling ligtas ang komunidad ng UP Diliman.” (To recognize offices from the University of the Philippines Diliman for their immediate response and services to students,

staff, affected sectors and the UP community, especially those who needed assistance due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. To continue engaging different sectors of the campus in order to share COVID-19-related information, and maintain the safety of the UP Diliman community).

In December 2021, these public service projects were given 4th Gawad Pangulo: Award for Excellence in Public Service.

**This report (with contributions from the UPD COVID-19 Task Force) was submitted by Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs Aleli B. Bawagan.*



Queue at the Bakunahan sa UP Diliman vaccination site. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Contact Tracing ng UP Health Service Public Health Unit sa Panahon ng COVID-19 Pandemic

Aliza M. Pangaibat

Panimula

Disyembre 2019 nang magsimula ang hamon ng pandemya mula sa mga kaso ng pulmonya sa Wuhan, Tsina. Unang tinawag na 2019-NCOV ang bagong uri ng coronavirus na nakitang pinagmulan ng sakit na sa ngayon ay tinaguriang COVID-19.

Noong 7 Marso 2020, kinumpirma ng Department of Health (DOH) na ang ikalimang kaso ng COVID-19 na naitala sa bansa ay ang unang kaso ng *local community transmission*. Ang Enhanced Community Quarantine ay ipinatupad noong 16 Marso 2020.

Ang unang mga kaso ng pinaghihinalaang COVID-19 na naiulat sa UP Health Service (UPHS) Public Health Unit (PHU) ay mga empleyado kamakailang naglakbay sa mga bansang apektado ng COVID-19.

Noong panahong iyon, ang mga pinaghihinalaang kaso ay isinasangguni sa mga ospital ng DOH para mag-isolate at mag-quarantine. Inililipat sila sa mga pasilidad sa pamamagitan ng ambulansya na sinasamahan pa ng pulisya upang matiyak ang maayos na paglilipat ng pasyente.

Dahil sa limitadong RT-PCR kits at kakulangan ng bilang ng laboratoryong nagsasagawa ng pagsusuri, ang mga resulta ng RT-PCR test ay dumarating pagkaraan ng limang araw. Nagdudulot ito ng pangamba at pagkabalisa hindi lamang sa mga pasyente kundi na rin sa komunidad, lalo na sa mga nakasalimuha ng mga pinaghihinalaang may COVID-19.

Contact Tracing sa UP Diliman

Ang PHU ay nagsasagawa ng sariling *contact tracing* upang mabilis matukoy ang mga posibleng *exposed* na indibidwal na nangangailangan ng agarang quarantine. Ginagawa ito sa pakikipag-ugnayan sa Quezon City Epidemiology Surveillance Unit (QCESU), DILG contact tracers, at Barangay Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT).

Sa mga unang buwan, mababa pa ang kaso sa loob ng komunidad ng UP Diliman (UPD) at nakakaya pa ng dalawang PHU nurses ang contact tracing sa mga PUI (Person Under Investigation). Pinapayuhan sila na mag-quarantine sa loob ng 14 na araw kasama ang kanilang mga close contact. Sa panahong ito, wala pang mga pasilidad para sa quarantine at isolation,

kaya naka-isolate ang mga PUI sa sarili nilang mga tahanan. Nasasabay pa ng dalawang public health nurses ang contact tracing at ang pag cover sa emergency room ng UPHS noong mga panahong iyon.

Noong kalagitnaan ng 2020, nagkaroon na rin ng RT-PCR testing sa UPD sa tulong ng Philippine Genome Center. At sa pamamagitan ng pagbubukas ng Kanlungan Palma Isolation Facility, ang pagkakakilanlan ng mga kaso ng COVID-19 sa UPD ay nagsimulang tumaas kasabay ng pagpapahusay ng kapasidad sa pag-test.

Sa pagtaas ng bilang ng mga kaso, kailangan nang mas mahusay na pakikipag-ugnayan sa iba't ibang ahensya ng lokal na pamahalaan at mga opisina sa loob ng UPD. Nagdagdag ng limang contact tracers ang UPD dahil hindi na sapat ang mga nagboluntaryong mga kawani ng PHU. Ang pagsubaybay sa pagdami ng mga kaso ay nangailangan ng matinding dedikasyon upang agarang masagawa ang isolation at quarantine.

Ang mga Contact Tracer

Ano nga ba ang gawain ng mga contact tracer?



Mga kawani ng UP Health Service. Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Sila'y sumusubaybay sa kalusugan ng pasyente at mga *close contacts* nito. Nakikipag-ugnayan din sila sa mga pasilidad para sa *admission* at quarantine. Nagbibigay rin sila ng sikolohikal na suporta at koordinasyon sa mga *social worker* para sa mga pamilyang apektado.

Ang contact tracing ay umaabot sa mga *close contact* ng kumpirmadong kaso. Kasama rito ang mga kasama sa bahay at sa trabaho. At minsan, ang isang empleyado na nagpositibo ay kadalasang may mga kapamilya na nagtatrabaho rin sa iba't ibang yunit sa loob ng UPD. Kung kaya, nagiging mas komplikado ang gawaing contact tracing sa UPD. Umaabot din sa **mga close contact ng mga close contact**, lalung-lalo na noong bumulusok ang bilang ng mga kaso dahil sa **Delta variant**.

Ang komunikasyon ng contact tracing ay walang pinipiling oras. Ang lahat ay nakaantabay sa mga kritikal na daloy ng mga mensahe sa buong araw.

Pasasalamat sa Contact Tracers

Pinupuri at pinasasalamatan ko ang ating mga contact tracer **at** mga volunteer sa UPD sa kanilang dedikasyon sa paglaban sa pandemyang ito. Dahil sa tulong nila, naging matagumpay ang pagsubaybay sa mga *close contact*. Nagpapasalamat din ako sa kabuuan ng UPD community sa responsableng pag-uulat ng mga kaso at pagiging mapagmatyag sa aspekto ng kalusugan at kaligtasan ng bawat isa.

Narito ang ilang pagmumuni-muni ng mga contact tracer tungkol sa kanilang gawain:

Mula kay Grace G. Santos, Public Health Nurse

Isang malaking karangalang makapagsilbi sa UP community bilang isang Team Leader ng mga Contact Tracer. Ito ay isang malaking hamon sa aming kakayanang umunawa, magmalasakit nang lubos, maghatid ng tulong sa abot ng aming makakaya at magbigay ng pag-asa sa mga empleyado at mga pasyente at kanilang mga pamilya sa oras ng matinding pangangailangan. Kahit may takot at pag-aalala sa aming mga dibdib, hindi dapat ito mahalata. Masusi rin naming pinag-aaralan ang mga pasikot-sikot ng contact tracing, monitoring, referral, at higit sa lahat, ang paghahanda upang masagot nang tama ang mga katanungan mula sa mga pasyente. May mga araw

na tuloy-tuloy ang pakikipag-usap sa iba't ibang tao, minsan kakilala, kadalasan ay hindi. Lakasan ng loob sa pakikipag-usap, kahit hindi kakilala, upang agarang matugunan ang mga kahilingan at pangangailangan ng aming mga pasyente. May mga gabi na walang tulugan dahil sa ginagawang koordinasyon na nangangailan ng agarang aksyon dahil buhay ang aming hinahabol at ang nakataya rito.

Maraming naengkwentrong iba't ibang tugon ng mga pasyente at ng kanilang pamilya. May natutuwa at appreciative na may natatanungan at natutulungan sila, at naasikaso. May naiinis dahil naabala, pakiramdam na na-invade ang kanilang privacy, at nakukulitan sa maraming tanong ng contact tracer. Mayroong hindi nagsasabi ng totoo dahil natatakot silang masisi. Mayroon ding nagagalit dahil paano raw namin nalaman ang kanilang mga numero, bakit kailangan daw silang i-quarantine, at sino raw ang magpapakain sa kanilang pamilya. Lahat ng ito ay aming buong pusong hinaharap at hinahanapan ng mga kasagutan at solusyon.

Madalas, bukod sa laway at oras na ginugugol ay mayroon ding iba pang paraan ng pagmamalasakit ng contact tracer. May mga pasyenteng humingi ng load at binigyan ng contact tracer para makasagot sa mga itinatanong. May mga nagpabili ng pagkain, nagpa-withdraw ng pera sa ATM, may mga nagpahatid ng pagkain at mga bagay-bagay, nagpa-grocery, at nagpahanap ng ambulansiya at iba pang masasakyan. Pero ang pinakamabigat ay kapag ang pasyente ay nawawalan ng pag-asa, umiiyak sa kabilang linya, nagko-confide ng kanilang mga heartache at frustration

sa kanilang asawa, mga anak, mga magulang, sa gobyerno, at sa kung makakayanan ba nilang makaligtas sa sakit na ito. Lahat ng ito ay kailangan mong pakinggan at unawain.

Ang buong team ay nagtutulungan sa koordinasyon at pangangasiwa ng mga kaso ng mga pasyente. Walang katapat ang tuwang aming nadarama kapag natatapos ang monitoring at ang quarantine period ng pamilya at close contacts. Higit sa lahat, hindi magkamayaw ang aming saya sa mga na-contact trace na mga pasyenteng nag-agaw buhay ngunit nakaligtas, at nakabalik sa kanilang mga pamilya. Ito ay isang experience na kakaiba na hindi namin malilimutan kailanman. Tunay na walang katapat, dalisay ang wagas na pagsisilbi para sa bayan.

Mula kay Aileen Joy Sanico

Ang contact tracing ay isang serbisyo na ibinibigay ng UPHS bilang tugon sa pandemya. Isang pagpapala sa akin na maging bahagi ng contact tracing team ng Public Health Unit. Ang simpleng pangungumusta sa mga nagpositibo na mga pasyente ay malaking bagay, lalo na sa mga puno ng takot at pangamba. Maliban sa pangungumusta ay malaking bagay din ang pag-abisong mag-isolate ang mga nakasalimuha ng isang taong nagpositibo upang matigil ang pagkalat ng sakit. Malaki ang nagagawa ng simpleng text lalo na't matindi ang pangangailangan ng pagbibigay ng kaalaman, at pagtaas ng kamalayan sa basic health protocol sa pag-iwas ng sakit.

Ang challenge naman para sa akin sa contact tracing ay ang pakikipag-usap sa iba't ibang uri ng personalidad. May ilang tao talaga minsan na nakakaubos

ng pasensya at lakas kapag iyong nakakausap, kaya dito ko natutunan na malaking bagay ang pangangalaga sa sarili. Ang pangangalaga natin sa sarili ay repleksyon ng pangangalaga din natin sa ating kapaligiran at kapuwa.

Mula kay Joanne Lagumbay, RN

Bago naging contact tracer, ako ay nurse sa Silungang Molave. Naalala ko ang mga pasyente na may kaba, lungkot, at panganib kung ano ang mangyayari sa sampung araw nilang pamamalagi sa Molave. Ako mismo ay nagpositibo sa COVID-19 at naranasan ko ang malalang ubo at lagnat. Akala ko na hanggang doon na lang ang aking "journey" pero sa biyaya ng Panginoon, nadugtungan ang aking buhay. Ngayon, ako ay nasa PHU at masayang naglilingkod nang buong puso bilang contact tracer. Kami ay tumatawag at kinukumusta ang mga pasyente para gumaan man lang ang kanilang pakiramdam. Kinukumusta rin ang kanilang mga kapamilya. Hindi madaling maging isang contact tracer. Minsan ay nahahamon ang iyong pasensya, lawak ng pag-iisip, at higit sa lahat, uunawain mo rin ang kanilang nararamdaman. Sa lahat ng ito, alam kong kayang lampasan ito ng bawat Filipino kung tayo ay susunod sa health protocols laban sa COVID-19.

Mula kay Marilou Brusola

Kung noon na hindi pa pandemic makulit na ako sa pagpapaalala sa aking pamilya patungkol sa kahalagahan ng kalusugan, mas doble pa ngayon dahil hindi mo alam kung saan o sino ang may 'virus'. At dahil may pusong 'volunteerism', tumulong ako sa pagbigay ng ayuda kahit umuwi pa ng hatinggabi para maramdaman ang pagkalinga sa mga naka-lockdown. Nag-anunsyo ng mga

health protocols, nakitulong sa Bakunahan sa Diliman at iba pa, at naging contact tracer na nagpatibay ng pananampalataya sa Diyos at nagpahaba pa lalo ng pasensiya at pag-unawa sa iba't ibang uri ng ugali ng mga tao.

Mula kay Conrad

Noong ako ay naging contact tracer, kinabahan ako dahil hindi naman ako medical graduate. Kapag may tinatanong ang mga pasyente ay hindi agad ako makasagot, pero malaking pasasalamat ko sa aming doktor at nurses sa PHU sa kanilang pag-alalay at paggabay sa amin. Masaya ako sa karanasan ko bilang contact tracer, dahil masaya at magaan katrabaho ang mga kasamahan ko. Minsan nagkakaroon ng ilang miscommunication o di pagkakaintindihan sa mga pasyente, pero dahil na rin sa mga paalala at coaching sa amin—na maging mapagkumbaba at maging maayos ang pakikitungo sa mga pasyente—ito naman ay naaayos.

Masasabi ko pong isang malaking karangalang maging bahagi ng PHU. Para sa akin, isa itong karanasang nakatulong sa aking maunawaan kung paano ang buhay ng isang tao na nagseserbisyo sa larangan ng medisina. Nakita ko na hindi ito madali, maraming demands, pero masaya pa rin ang lahat, at buo ang loob para sa paglilingkod para sa bayan.



Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Daluyong ng COVID-19

Myrissa Melinda Myrna Alip

Mapagbiro ang tadhana. Ika-28 ng Pebrero 2021 nang ako ay iniluklok bilang direktor ng University of the Philippines Health Service (UHS). Kasagsagan ng COVID-19 noon.

Ika-17 ng Marso nang ako ay nakalaya mula sa Hope 1 Isolation Facility. Patuloy ang “pagkabartolina” nang dalawa pang linggo sa sariling kuwarto sa aming bahay para sa kaligtasan ng aking pamilya. Hindi pa kasi masyadong malinaw ang pagkakilanlan sa COVID-19 noon. Mabuti na ang maging maingat kasi wala pa ring humpay ang aking pag-ubo, wala pa rin akong pang-amoy, at masakit pa rin ang buong katawan. Malaking pasasalamat ko sa Panginoon kasi nasa bahay na ako, dalawang linggo ring hindi ko nakapiling ang aking mag-ama at mamatay-matay ako sa pag-aalala kung makikita ko pa ba sila.

Ang aking panganay na anak ay nagtungo sa Korea noong Agosto 2020 para magpakadalubhasa sa *robotic urologic surgery*, at ang kabilin-bilinan niya na magingat kami sa COVID at hindi siya makakauwi sakaling magka-COVID kami (sarado ang *borders* noon). Lahat ng pag-iingat ay ginagawa, lahat na ng parte ng katawan ay halos matuyo sa kakahugas, kakaligo, paulit-ulit na



Nanalong parol (Parada ng mga Parol 2021) mula sa Kolehiyo ng Arte at Literatura. Larawan mula kay John Carlo Pagunaling

pag-aalkohol, paggamit ng *antiseptic*, at iba pa. Hindi lamang iyon, lahat na ng barnis ng kasangkapan ay namuti sa kakawisik ng alcohol, pero kinapitan pa rin ng COVID. Mataas talaga ang panganib sa isang doktor na halos nakatira na sa ospital at nagtatrabaho sa iisang bubong kasama ng ibang mga *health care worker* (HCW).

Katatapos lang ng aking 24-hour duty nang ako ay magtungo sa Philippine General Hospital (PGH) noong ika-2 ng Marso para magpa-RT-PCR. Wala pa akong nararamdaman ngunit kinailangan ko itong gawin sapagkat ako ay isang *close contact* ng isang may sintomas na kapuwa ko *health care worker*. Ako ay dumalo sa *Task Force meeting* habang hinihintay ko ang resulta ng nasabing eksaminasyon. Hindi naman ako nababahala sapagkat wala akong nararamdaman. Alas-kuwatro na, wala pang resulta. Pagdating ko sa bahay ay minabuti kong

magkulong sa isang silid na may sariling banyo. Alas-singko ng hapon nang ibinalita sa akin na POSITIVE ang resulta ng aking RT-PCR.

Lungkot ang aking nadama nang mga oras na iyon. Ito ang mga katanungang pumasok sa isip ko: Paano na ang mag-ama ko, ako ang inaasahan sa paghahanda ng pagkain, at iba pang gawaing bahay? Paano na ang mga gawaing ospital, ngayon pa na kaluluklok ko pa lang bilang direktor? Dali-dali akong nag-empake ng mga gamit para maaga pa lang kinabukasan ay makapunta na sa *Isolation Facility*.

Huwebes, ika-4 ng Marso, alas-otso ng umaga, ako'y nasa bakuran na ng UHS para hintayin ang ambulansiya ng DRMMO para dalhin kami sa Quezon City General Hospital (QCGH) kasama ang isa ko pang kapuwa HCW. Matagal na paghihintay habang nasa kotse lang ako. Alas-tres na ng hapon nang masundo kami't tumuloy sa nasabing ospital. Ini-X-ray, at binigyan ng *order* para madala sa Hope 1 *Isolation Facility*.

Uy! Hotel pala ang *isolation facility* na ito na *designated* para sa mga *healthcare worker* at opisyal ng gobyerno. Maayos, may sariling banyo, may libreng pagkain, at tubig. Maalwan naman ang pakiramdam ko sa unang araw, maganang kumain, walang ubo at sipon. Balisa lang dahil iniisip ko ang aking mag-ama.

Biyernes, ikalawang araw: nawalan ako ng pang-amoy, anumang pasak sa ilong ko ng dala kong sabong panlaba na Ajax ay hindi ko maamoy. Ang halimuyak ng shampoo, sabong pankatawan, at pabango ay mistulang butata ang dating sa ilong ko. Magana pa rin akong kumain, inuubos ko ang aking rasyon na pagkain. Ang ipinagtataka ko, hindi naman ako antukin pero nang mga panahong iyon ay gusto kong laging humiga at matulog na animo'y patabaing baboy.

Kinukumusta ko ang aking pamilya sa pamamagitan ng video call at text messages. Ang aking ikinababahala nang lubos ay ang aking kasama sa kuwarto, na matalik kong kaibigan. Lagi siyang tulog, hindi niya nauubos ang kaniyang rasyon at tamad kumilos. Nauna siyang magkasintomas at naisip ko ganito rin ba ang mararamdaman ko sa mga susunod na araw?

Lumipas ang araw at naisip ko na ang hirap palang mabartolina. Bawal lumabas ng kuwarto, may bintana pero nakasara, maaari lang hawiin ang kortina para makatanaw ka ng araw at makakita ng mga kalapit na gusali.

Sabado, may ubo na akong panaka-naka. Naisip ko, hika ito. Mabuti't dala ko ang inhaler ko, kaya

inumpisahan kong humithit na nito. Hindi ko naman ito maibahagi sa kasama ko sa kuwarto na mula noong napasok kami rito ay mayroon nang ubo. Minamasdan ko siya sa buong magdamag kasi tila bumibilis ang kaniyang paghinga, at lumala ang hindi niya pagkain at pirmi siyang tulog. Kapag tumatawag naman ang doktor ng facility, ayos lang daw siya, tipikal sa kapuwa doktor na kampante sa pag-inda ng karamdaman.

Linggo, dumating na ang kinatatakutan ko, kinailangang mailipat ang kasama ko sa kuwarto sa mas malaking ospital. Nang nailipat ko na siya, nakakapagtaka: ang maysakit ang nakipag-*coordinate* para maidala siya roon sa ospital. Nagpalipat ako ng kuwarto sa takot na baka maraming *viral load* sa kuwartong kinaroroonan namin. Noong gabing iyon, hindi ako makatulog sa kadahilanang nag-aalala para sa kaibigan ko at nag-aalala rin ako dahil mag-isa ako sa kuwarto. Hiindi naman ako takot sa multo, at bagaman naiintindihan ko ang espesyal na kondisyon ng sakit na COVID, hindi ko lubusang maalis na maawa sa sarili ko dahil sa panahong may sakit ako ay walang nag-aalaga sa akin.

Lunes, lumabas na ang lahat ng sintomas, naramdaman ko na. Iniihit ako ng ubo at parang iluluwa ko na ang baga ko. Mayroon ding matinding sakit ng ulo, walang ganang kumain, at parang laging puno ang tiyan, at nag-umpisang tumaas ang temperatura na ang dating laging 36°C ay naging 37°C. Matinding pag-aalala ang naramdaman ko, humingi ng dasal mula sa mga kapamilya, kamag-anak, kamag-aral, at mga kaibigan. Araw-araw ay nagsisimba nang birtuwal, walang humpay na nagdadasal. Ayaw kong mag-alala ang aking anak na nasa Korea, kaya ang sabi ko, okey lang ako. Hindi naman bumaba ang *oxygen saturation* ko pero hindi ito tumaas nang higit pa sa 96.

Sa sobrang sumpung ng aking ubo, nag-aalala ako na baka kailanganin kong maospital, kaya tinawagan ko ang aking dating kaklase sa *medical school* na pulmonary specialist na siya ring nag-asikaso sa aking kaibigan, at ang tugon niya ay katulad ng tugon ng lahat: "Wala nang bakante, kambal na ang mga nasa kama, husayan mo ang paggamit ng iyong inhaler."

Lumipas ang Lunes at sumunod na mga araw, kada apat na oras na Paracetamol, pinatulan pati Melatonin, Vitamin C with Zinc, at Vitamin D. Pilit isubo lahat ng padalang pagkain ng mga kaibigan, rasyon ng ospital, juice na padala ng mga mahal sa buhay, at sa awa ng Poong Maykapal, unti-unting bumuti ang aking pakiramdam.

Isolation Facility

Sa isolation facility, tatlong beses lang umaakyat ang staff. Ito ay upang magdala ng almusal, tanghalian, at hapunan. Kaya kapag may padala (galing sa kaibigan o kamag-anak) sa mga katulad namin, iaakyat lamang iyon sa mga oras na iyon. Kapag may ipapadalang pagkain sa iyo, dapat ay itiyempo sa mga oras na iyon para makarating sa iyo na mainit pa o kung ice cream man ay hindi pa ito tunaw.

Kung sa tingin mo ay hindi mo mauubos ang padala at nais mong ibahagi sa staff, sa ibaba pa lang, bago iakyat, ay sabihan mo nang bawasan nila ito kasi hindi na nila ito tatanggapin kapag nakapasok na sa kuwarto mo.

Huwag ka rin magtatampo kung bawal kang lumabas sa pasilyo at mamasyal, o kung ang pagkain mong rasyon ay ipinapatong sa silya sa labas at batingting ng doorbell ang magsasabing nariyan na ang pagkain mo.

Saludo ako sa mga tauhan ng isolation facility.

Pagninilay

Isang malaking pasasalamat sa mga nagdasal ng mga panahong ako ay may COVID. Maraming beses na akong nagkasakit at nagkaroon ng karamdaman ngunit bukod-tanging COVID-19 lamang ang nagdulot ng matinding takot at pag-aalala. Hindi ka maaaring alagaan ng iyong mga mahal sa buhay dahil ito ay lubos na nakahahawa at nakamamatay.

Noong mga panahong iyon ay wala pang tiyak na gamot at wala ring katiyakan kung ano ang kahihinatnan mo dala ng komplikasyon nito. Hindi din alam kung makikita mo pa ang mga mahal mo sa buhay. At kung ang isang nagka-COVID ay hindi palarang gumaling, walang pagkakataon na mayakap sila bago mahimlay o makita ang kanilang labí dahil agad na dapat i-cremate.

Malaking bagay ang pagkakadiskubre ng bakuna, nasa isolation ako nang mag-umpisang mamigay nito. Makalipas ang ilang araw, nang nawala na ang aking ubo, bakuna agad ang hinarap ko.



Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

The Philippine Genome Center

Marc Edsel C. Ayes

In 2008, the Philippines played host to the Human Genome Organization Conference in Asia and the Pacific. Then University of the Philippines (UP) President Emerlinda R. Roman—together with a contingent composed of then UP Vice President for Academic Affairs, Ameila Guevarra, Dr. Gisela Concepcion of the Marine Sciences Institute, Dr. Carmencita Padilla of the UP College of Medicine, and Dr. Cynthia Saloma of the National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology—proposed the feasibility of setting up a genome center in the country. This came during a time of heightened concern over events such as the SARS outbreak of 2003 in Hong Kong, and later on, the H1N1 “swine flu” pandemic of 2009. Convinced more than ever of the importance of such a center, an audience with then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was requested in July 2009, about a month into the H1N1 outbreak. This ultimately culminated in the formalization of the Philippine Genome Center (PGC), a unit tasked to employ genomic technologies in the service of the Filipino people. Fast forward to 2020, the PGC now found itself faced, once again, with its *raison d’être* in the form of the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic.

At the time, I was an internist who had just completed a three-year research fellowship in molecular medicine. As a clinician-scientist, I was deployed to the PGC to head its then in-development clinical genomics laboratory. Although the laboratory had yet to offer any clinical services, this completely changed at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Before, I had only been mulling over the challenge of generating public awareness regarding the existence of the PGC. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the pandemic thrust the PGC into the spotlight, demanding my growing laboratory to step up and expand to respond to the needs of the country.

This involved expediting the accreditation of the center as a certified COVID-19 testing facility, which was completed within a then-unprecedented time frame of just under three weeks. Prior to our accreditation, there were only five subnational laboratories carrying the



Cynthia P. Saloma, PhD, executive director of the Philippine Genome Center. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

testing burden for most of the country. By the time our accreditation was approved, there were at least 24 laboratories that were ready to take on the testing burden, with another 50 or so in the process of training and accreditation. Although the national response was rapid, there were still many challenges in setting up the laboratory and accommodating the demands for testing.

For one, many units within the PGC were displaced. Plans for sections had to be set aside to provide a space for the COVID-19 testing facility. It had to meet biosafety standards and protocols recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and approved by the Department of Health (DOH) and the sub-national laboratory network. Mass hiring and training was also done, which involved close coordination with the UP system and the DOH to provide both salaries and temporary housing to protect both staff and community. The amount of support and dedication from the UP community cannot be overstated. From testing kits and personal protective equipment to PCR machines and other automated processing tools, there was also assistance in the



RT-PCR test kits. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

form of food deliveries, bicycles for staff, and home and kitchen appliances for those staying within or near the UP campus.

By 2021, the PGC had been working with over 40 different healthcare units, ranging from private and government hospitals to local city and rural healthcare units. It was processing over 600 samples a day, with a total contribution of over 30,000 tests. However, with the introduction of new variants such as the Alpha and Beta variants, the Philippine Genome Center stepped up once again to provide whole genome sequencing services to aid in genomic biosurveillance. This involved another shift for the laboratory. Additional

staff training had to be conducted for, among others, sequencing quality control protocols and biobanking procedures to accommodate thousands of samples that would be sent to the PGC. These samples came not just from the National Capital Region, but from across the entire archipelago. The logistical challenges paved the way for the development of an in-house sequencing database solution by the PGC's core facility for bioinformatics. This linked sample submissions and reports between the PGC database and the DOH Epidemiology bureau database. It also allowed for a smoother flow of information that increased processing capacities from just 24 samples a week to over 700 samples a week by the end of 2021.

At present, the Philippine Genome Center clinical genomics laboratory is now focused on transitioning its training and services towards the application of genomics technologies for human health. For instance, it aims to provide clinical omics services in the fields of cancer and pharmacogenomics. Indeed, much of the needed heavy lifting in setting up a center like this was provided by the experience of the pandemic. Despite many hardships endured throughout the health crisis, the PGC has come out stronger as a result and is ready to meet the challenge of providing affordable genomic services to the Filipino people.



Philippine Genome Center. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO



RT-PCR test kits. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Molave: Isang Dakilang Karanasan

Oliva Basuel

Idineklara ng World Health Organization (WHO) ang *coronavirus* bilang isang pandemya noong 11 Marso 2020. Agad itinatag ni Chancellor Fidel R. Nemenzo ang UP COVID-19 Task Force upang pagplanuhan ang mga estratehiya kung paano agarang matutugunan ang mga pangangailangan ng mga nasasakupan nito kapag sila ay nagkaroon ng COVID-19. Natukoy na ang apat na mga pangunahing estratehiyang ito ay:

1. Contact Tracing o ang pagtunton ng mga taong nakasalamuha ng taong nagpositibo sa COVID-19
2. COVID-19 Testing sa pamamagitan ng pag-swab
3. Isolation o ang paghihiwalay ng taong nagpositibo sa COVID-19; at
4. Pagbabakuna ng mga UP constituents at dependents at iba pang mga residente sa Brgy. UP Campus at mga kalapit barangay nito.

Nagpasiya ang pamunuan ng UP at ang UP COVID-19 Task Force na magtayo ng isang

Temporary Treatment and Monitoring Facility (TTMF) sa loob ng UP Diliman Campus. Ang Palma Hall ay ang napiling lugar para sa unang *community isolation facility* at ito ay tinawag na “Kanlungang Palma sa Panahon ng Pandemya.” Naitayo ito sa pakikipagtulungan ng UP COVID-19 Task Force sa College of Social Sciences and Philosophy at sa Act as One, isang grupo ng mga UP alumni at tagasuporta. Matapos bisitahin at aprobahan ng Department of Health (DOH), ang Kanlungang Palma ay opisyal na nagbukas noong 13 Mayo 2020. Mayroon itong itinalagang 20 kuwarto para sa kumpirmadong kaso at 19 na kwarto para sa mga *suspected cases*.

Nagsimula ring magkaroon ng swab testing sa Kanlungang Palma, matapos magsanay ang mga *med tech* at dentista ng University Health Service sa pagkolekta ng *specimen* sa pamamagitan ng *nasopharyngeal swab*. Nagsanay rin sila sa tamang paraan ng pagsusuot at pag-aalis ng Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Dahil kinakailangan bilang requirement ng DOH, nagsulat na rin



Mga kawani ng UP Health Service sa Silungang Molave. Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

kami ng *House Manual*, kung saan nakasaad ang mga *Admission Protocols*, *Swabbing Protocols*, *House Rules*, *Safety Guidelines*, *Infection Control Guidelines*, at *Discharge Protocols*.

Sa loob ng halos dalawang buwang operasyon nito, ang mga nagsilbi sa Kanlungang Palma ay nakaranas ng iba't ibang emosyon. Nariyan ang kaba at takot, pag-aalinlangan, di-mawaring lungkot, at minsang pagkalito sa kung ano ang dapat gawin. Ngunit dala ng matatag na pangako sa sinumpaang tungkulin ay nagpatuloy pa rin ang pagsisilbi at paggawa, at isinantabi muna ang mga pag-aalinlangang ito.

Hindi man namin gustuhin na matamaan ng sakit, isa-isang nagkahawahan ang mismong mga staff ng pasilidad kung kaya kinailangan ding mag-isolate ang mga nagpositibo at mag-quarantine ang mga kasamahang *close contact*. Katulad ng mga dinanas ng iba't ibang isolation facility sa bansa, ang Kanlungang Palma ay nagsara noong 12 Hulyo 2020. Habang ito ay nakasara, nagpatuloy pa rin ang swabbing sa University Health Service (UHS). Ang mga pasyenteng nagpopositibo ay isinasangguni muna ng mga doktor ng UP Health Service sa ibang isolation facility o ospital. Hindi madali ang paghanap ng mapaglilipatang pasilidad o ospital dahil sa dumaraming bilang ng mga kaso ng COVID-19. Dito nakita na sadyang may pangangailangan pa rin para sa isang isolation facility sa loob ng UP Campus.

Ang UP COVID-19 Task Force ay hindi nagdalawang-isip na muling maghanda para sa pagtatayo ng panibagong isolation facility. Ang Molave Residence Hall ang siya namang napiling lugar—mas malaki, mas maayos, mas maganda, at mas naaayon. Naaakma lamang na tawagin itong

Silungang Molave. Báon ang mga natutuhang aral sa Kanlungang Palma, mas naging masusi at maingat ang paggawa ng mga bagong protocols at patnubayan. Upang maging mas kompleto ang *staff complement* nito, nagpapasok na ng mga JOs (Job Orders) at COS (Contract of Service) na mga doktor, *nurse*, *med tech*, *food attendant*, at mga tagalinis. Ito'y upang matutukan ang mas maayos na pag-aalaga sa mga pasyente at pagpapanatili ng kaayusan at kalinisan ng buong pasilidad. Bumuhos din ang mga donasyon na mga gamit mula sa mga pribadong grupo. Nang naihanda na ang mga kuwarto, binisita ng isang PGH *Infectious Disease Specialist* na si Dra. Nina Berba ang Silungang Molave upang magsiyasat at magbigay ng mga karagdagang rekomendasyon. Ang mga kinatawan ng Department of Health (DOH) ay pumunta rin upang magbigay ng pahintulot at gawaran ito ng sertipikasyon bilang isang lehitimong isolation facility na pumasa sa kanilang mga pamantayan.

Kasama ang mga opisyal ng Quezon City Local Government at ng Quezon City Health Department bilang mga panauhin, pormal na pinamunuan ni Chancellor Fidel R. Nemenzo at ng UP COVID-19 Task Force ang pagbubukas ng Silungang Molave noong 15 Agosto 2020. Sa pagbubukas nito, mayroon itong 59 *bed capacity*, 40 para sa mga kumpirmadong kaso at 19 para sa mga suspected cases. Nasa East Male Wing ang mga lalaki at nasa East Female Wing ang mga babae. Ang mga suspected cases naman ay itinakda sa West Wing.

Sa loob ng isang taon at limang buwang operasyon, ang Silungang Molave ay nakapagpapasok ng 753 pasyente mula sa mga sumusunod na kategorya:

Nagtuloy-tuloy din ang Swab Testing Operations sa Molave. Mula Mayo 2020 hanggang Disyembre

Table 1
Bilang at kategorya ng kaso sa Silungang Molave.

Patient Category	Number of Cases
UP Student	73
UP Faculty	18
UP Employee #1	292
UP Staff Dependent	29
Non-UP Brgy. UP Campus Resident #2	162
Non-UP Working in Campus #3	99
Non-UP QC Resident	41
Non-UP Special Case	39

2021, ang bilang ng mga nagawang RT-PCR test ay nasa talaan sa ibaba.

Napakalaki ang naging papel ng Silungang Molave Isolation Facility sa pagpigil ng paglaganap ng COVID-19 sa UP Campus at sa pagbaba ng mga kaso rito. Malaki ang naging tulong nito sa mga kawani ng UP at iba pang nasasakupan nito. Sa gitna ng pangamba at takot na dulot ng pandemya, ang Silungang Molave ay naging ilaw sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng lunas at kaginhawahan na nagmula sa pag-aalaga ng mga doktor, nurse, swabber, food server, tagalinis, at tagabantay ng seguridad. Sa paglabas ng bawat pasyenteng gumaling, ang dala ay bagong pag-asa sa pagharap muli sa mga hamon ng panahon, at kaligayahan na makasama muli ang kanilang mga mahal sa buhay.

Hindi rin magiging ganap ang tagumpay ng Silungang Molave kung wala ang walang-humpay na pagsuporta at tulong mula sa iba't ibang ahensiya, grupo, at sektor. Abot-abot ang ating pasasalamat sa kanila: UP President Danilo Concepcion at ang Administrasyon ng Unibersidad ng Pilipinas, Chancellor Fidel Nemenzo at UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force, UP Health Service, Department of Health, Quezon City Health Department, Quezon City Local Government, Barangay UP Campus, Act As One, Philippine Genome Center, at Philippine General Hospital.

May ilang mga kawani at mga pasyente ng Silungang Molave na nagbahagi ng kanilang mga pahayag at kuwento sa mga karanasan nila at mga aral na natutuhan. Tunghayan natin ang kanilang mga salaysay...

Dr. Rogelio Morales Junior Consultant

Ninais kong tumulong sa Kanlungang Palma at Silungang Molave dahil as a doctor, may obligasyon tayong tumulong kung kinakailangan, kaya kahit maraming uncertainty, at kahit against ang family ko, ay tumulong pa rin ako, dahil para sa akin kailangan natin tulungan ang ating kapuwa Filipino. Dahil kailangan naming iwan ang aming mga pamilya, mataas po ang anxiety naming mga staff.

Bilang doktor, masasabi ko pong naging challenging ito dahil sa mga pangangailangan ng mga pasyente at ng kanilang pamilya. May mga pasyenteng nagiging malala ang kanilang kondisyon at kailangang ilipat nang agaran sa ibang pasilidad. Minsan po ay nahirapan ang pasyenteng intindihin kung bakit sila kailangang ilipat. Minsan po ito ay nagdudulot ng kaunting gusot lalo noong surge dahil puno na po ang mga ospital. Kung minsan ay hindi agad nasusundo ang mga pasyente dahil busy din ang mga ambulance ng barangay dahil maraming pasyente. Ginawa na lang namin ang aming makakaya kahit na noong una ay kulang ang mga gamit at gamot.

Para sa mga aral na natutuhan ko, ang top 3 po ay ang mga sumusunod:

1. Mahalaga ang isang maayos na referral system at coordination sa mga referral hospital;
2. Importante na magkaroon ng detalyadong manual or standardized instructions para efficient; at
3. Importante rin na maging handa and facility, kompleto ang mga gamit, mga PPE (personal protective equipment), lalo na kung magiging komplikado ang mga kaso.

Table 2
RT-PCR Tests Mula Mayo–Disyembre 2020

	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	Total
Positive	2	31	27	108	65	66	15	30	344
Negative	32	94	90	182	230	362	379	599	1968
Total	34	125	117	290	295	428	394	629	2312

Table 3
RT-PCR Tests Noong 2021

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Positive	48	42	108	212	95	34	60	117	156	39	4	5	920
Negative	1897	1296	576	481	325	257	411	348	360	178	143	71	6343
Total	1945	1338	684	693	420	291	471	465	516	217	147	76	7263

Miss Imelda Mauhay Nurse

Noong ako ay in-approach ni Dra. Catabui at sinabing ako ay ma-a-assign sa Kanlungang Palma, ang unang sabi ko ay, “Naku, bakit ako?” Ngunit naisip ko na ring pumayag dahil ito ay magiging isang kabanata sa aking buhay. Isang challenge sa akin na humarap sa kakaibang laban na ito. Pumayag akong mag-volunteer kahit alam ko na iiwan ko ang aking dalawang anak at ang aking ina. Pinaunawa ko sa kanila at sila ay nagtiwala.

Sa pagkaka-deploy ko sa Kanlungang Palma at Silungang Molave, dalawang beses po akong na-COVID (+), pero nagtiwala lang ako sa Itaas at sabi ko, siguro pagkakataon rin ito para magpahinga habang naka-isolate. Doon ko naintindihan na malungkot pala dahil mag-isa ka lang 24/7. Unan lang ang kayakap mo. Kahit gusto mong lumabas ay di puwede at tatanaw ka lang sa bintana. Kaya pasalamat na lang sa Itaas na heto pa rin ako.

Isang karanasan ko ay naka-Level 4 PPE ako, at pagkagaling ko sa pasyente, pagka-doffing namin, basang-basa kami ng pawis, pero diretso sa gripong may malamig na tubig. Ngunit hindi namin ito ininda ng mga kasamahan kong nurses.

Angelito Firme Food Attendant

May halong kaba, takot, at lungkot dahil nahiwalay po ako sa anak ko, sa pamilya ko dahil solo po ankong nakatira diyan sa SOLAIR at mag-isa lang kumain. Pinagbawalan po ako na lumapit sa anak ko dahil nga po ang trabaho ko ay sa isolation facility, at takot sila na mahawahan ko ang anak ko.

Ngunit naka-adapt na rin po ako at napaglabanan rin ang takot para makatulong sa UP community. Ang hirap po nang simula dahil mula umaga hanggang hapon ay naka-PPE po kami. Tapos, pagkababa po, maliligo, mga 3–4 na beses sa isang araw maliligo, kaya mahirap po talaga. Nung nagtagal po ay nasanay na rin po dahil naka-adapt na po kami’t naging komportable na din. Sa totoo lang po, dalawang beses din po akong nag-positive at nakakakaba po dahil inaabangan mo ang sintomas. Pero nagpapasalamat pa rin po ako sa lahat ng mga naging kasama ko sa Silungang Molave.

Dhan Tabuñar Cleaner

Bago po ako nag-volunteer, ako po ang unang naging pasyente ng Silungang Molave. Nakita ko po sa aking ama na isa ring frontliner, at ito ang nag-udyok sa akin na tumulong din. Ang mga naging karanasan ko po rito ay puwede kong ikuwento at maipasa ko sa aking mga anak. Napakahirap din pong maging cleaner dahil ang dami pong lilinisin. Bawat sulok ay kailangang malinis.

Dr. Aliza Pangaibat Head, Public Health Unit and Contact Tracing Team

Ang laki po ng tulong nang magkaroon tayo ng sarili nating isolation facility. Mas madali po ang referral system, lalo na sa mga pasyenteng agarang dapat mailipat sa isolation facility. Sa tulong po ng UPHS ambulance service at ng ating EMT (Emergency Medical Technician), naging madali po ito. Hindi lang po mga confirmed cases ngunit kahit mga suspected case pa lang, naa-admit na namin sila. Yung mga suspect at mga close contact, malaking bagay na na-isolate na namin sila agad.

Malaking tulong din po ito sa contact tracing. Napakahalaga po na na-quarantine agad ang mga close contact dahil doon pa lang, naputol na agad ang transmission at ang risk na maka-expose pa sa iba. Nung nagpositibo sila, at least na isolate na agad sila.

Challenges...dahil may mga polisiya po ang Molave, hindi lahat ay puwede nating ipasok sa facility lalo na kung may diabetes at iba pang co-morbid condition. Kaya yun po ang naging challenge ko, ang pagpapaliwanag sa mga pasyente kung bakit hindi sila puwede ma-admit sa Molave, na mayroon talagang ibang isolation facility na naka-designate para sa kanila.

Rose Ann Oriño Medical technologist/Head Swabber

Heto po ang tatlong naging emosyon ko bilang swabber sa Silungang Molave:

1. Doubt – first po kasi ay may training sa PGH at kailangang naka-Level 4 PPE, naka-N95 mask, at naroon kami sa initan. So, parang nasu-suffocate po kami. Naisip ko po kung kaya koba yun. Tatagal kaya ako?
2. Fear – nung kami po ay unang beses na nagpa-mandatory testing, ako po ang pinakaunang nag-positive. Ako po ay natakot para sa lahat ng mga nakasalamuha ko.
3. Hope – ito po ay ang positive emotion we feel when we envision a brighter future. Kagaya po ngayon, mayroon na tayong vaccine.

Ang lesson po na natutuhan ko ay ang YOLO—You only live once, so I have to make the most out of it. Sabi nga ni Chancellor, kahit anong sakuna, kayang-kaya basta’t sama-sama.

Chelet Gaspe Nurse

Dalawang taon ang lumipas nang ang buong mundo'y humarap sa isang pandemya na walang sinuman ang naging handa, ikaw man ay nagmula sa mataas o mababa. Bawat isa ay may kani-kaniyang agam-agam at pangamba sa isang sakit na tinawag na COVID-19.

Lahat ng tao sa mundo ay nagkaisa, sama-samang inalam kung papaano masosolusyunan at maiwasan ang isang sakit na naging dahilan ng pagkawala ng ating minamahal, kaibigan, kasamahan, at kapuwa.

Isa ako, ikaw, at ang buong frontliner na humarap sa mga apektadong pasyente upang matugunan ang kanilang pangangailangang medikal, mental, at espiritual. Sapagkat bawat isa ay nagiging lakas at sandigan ng sinumang nangangailangan.

Bilang isang frontliner, masaya akong naglingkod at nag-alay ng aking serbisyo sa Silungang Molave Isolation Facility sa panahon ng pandemya. Napakasarap isipin na kahit gaano man ka hirap ang pinagdadaan ng bawat isa, at takot para sa sarili maging sa pamilya, nagawa mo pa ring maglingkod sa kapuwa sa tulong ng iyong mga kasamahan, kaibigan, katrabaho sa isang institution, at maging sa mga taong di mo kakilala na handang mag-abot ng kamay makapaglingkod lang nang tunay.

Sa huli tayo pa rin ang nanaig laban sa pandemya sapagkat ikaw ay nariyan para sa iyong kapuwa. Tulong-tulong, Sama-sama, Nagkakaisa!

Winston Verzosa Nurse

Working at Silungang Molave COVID19 Isolation Unit as a Junior Nursing Associate for a year and 3 months has been a once-in-a-life-time privilege of mine. During my first week of duty, since this was my first experience working in a COVID-19 facility, as expected, I felt slightly nervous. Mid-way that week, my anxiousness was replaced by enthusiasm, thanks to my senior nurses, Ma'am Jen and Ma'am Yvone, who really took the time and effort to orient me, as well as the rest of the very welcoming staff. On my second week, my eagerness was accompanied by confidence because of the knowledge and techniques shared by my superiors. There was a time that I requested my senior nurse that I do the rounds by myself, so that I could be independent and ready when the time comes when doing the rounds alone is the only option. From then on, I felt comfortable working even while wearing a Level 4 PPE. Most of my free time was spent resting within the comforts of Yakal dorm. Along with my co-workers, we co-existed like a family, with Ma'am Imee as our mother (I miss you Ma'am). I could humbly say that I never felt homesick because of the camaraderie we had during those trying times. I would like to thank ALL of my co-workers (hoy miss ko na kayo), especially my superiors who taught me so well that up to now I haven't had the experience of becoming infected.

Mr. Jun Orbile NISMED Former patient at Silungang Molave

Nung ako ay nag-positive at sa Molave rin ako nagpa-test, tumawag ako sa UPHS. At dahil mag-isa lang ako sa bahay,

nag-request ako na doon na lang ako mag-stay. Ngunit dahil bumababa ang oxygen saturation ko, pinayuhan ako na dapat ay dalhin ako sa QCGH o sa PGH, pero sabi ko mas gusto ko kung sa UP na lang ako.

Nang pumasok ako sa Silungang Molave, very quiet, very clean, at naaasikaso agad ako. Si Dra. Benipayo ang unang tumingin sa akin, at ako ay dinala na sa kuwarto ko sa second floor. Kinabukasan si Dr. Morales ang pumunta sa kuwarto ko at sabi niya, kailangan talagang mailipat ako. Sabi ko ay ayoko sana dahil baka ako ay makakuha ng pneumonia doon. Ngunit sabi ni Dr. Morales, "Aba! Hindi ka na makakakuha dahil may pneumonia ka na!" Di ko alam kung nagbibiro ba siya? At sabi sa akin ni Dr. Morales ay maligo daw ako. Ngunit sabi ko ay ayoko dahil baka lagnatin ako. Ngunit sabi nya, "Ay naku, lumang paniniwala na ,yan! Maligo na po kayo!"

Ang nakakatuwa doon sa Molave ay mayroon kaming viber group kasama ang doktor at ibang mga pasyente kung saan kinakamusta nila kami. Nagvi-video call din kami ng doktor at tinitingnan kung tama ang pagkuha namin ng oxygen saturation at BP. So I felt secure. I felt that I was in capable hands in Molave because they are always checking up on you. Mataas ang morale at positive sila lagi, at maganda yun dahil contagious yun sa mga pasyente.

I would like to thank Dr. Benipayo, Dr. Morales, Dra. Monzon, Dra. Batangan, nurse Jen, Joanne, Winston, and Chel. Everyday, they were trying na malipat ako sa isang tamang ospital, pero wala talaga. Until finally, after three days, naging successful sila sa QCGH. This is the problem with COVID. You don't know that you're in a

serious condition, you can go to the comfort room, take a bath, but apparently your oxygen level is going down. The day na nililipat na nila ako ay hinihinala na ako. From the second floor ay nilipat nila ako sa first floor and monitored me closely. And I appreciated that because I felt I was taken care of. For that, I am very grateful. That's why I would say that Silungang Molave has been successful in taking care not only of UP people but also of non-UP people. I may not be able to name everybody, but I give my deep gratitude to all for giving me my second life, and I thank you very much from the bottom of my heart.

Beth Perez
Accounting Office
Former patient at Silungang Molave

Ako po ay five days na na-isolate sa Molave. Nung ako po ay nag-positive, ayaw ko sana po mag-isolate sa Molave ngunit sinabihan po ako baka mahawa ko ang aking anak at mga kasama sa bahay. Ini-arrange po ni Dra. Pangaibat na pumunta ako sa UPHS at ang ambulance ng UPHS ang naghatid sa akin sa Molave. Mayroon naman po akong narinig na experience ng mga kasama ko. Pero pagdating ko po doon, nagulat po ako kasi ang ganda po ng facility—you have a big room, ang ganda ng CR, pero yun pong bed, dapat dahan-dahan ka lang, kasi ganun po pala, parang collapsible siya. Masuwerte po ako dahil napunta po ako sa first room, so, sa umaga, pinapanood ko yung mga nagsa-swab. Hindi rin po ako nainip kahit four corners of the room ka lang talaga kasi dala-dala ko yung mga trabaho ko. Yung kama ko po ay puro papeles kaya nag-enjoy po ako. Naisip ko ang suwerte-suwerte namin dahil ang ganda-ganda ng facility namin kung ikompara po sa iba. Kaya salamat po sa

lahat ng nasa Molave. In general po, ok na ok yung experience ko. Mababait ang mga nurse. Tsine-check up ng doctor tuwing tanghali. Yun nga lang po, wala palang pino-provide na vitamins kaya mabuti pala na may dala ako. Pero maraming salamat pa rin po.

Jerome Belison
UP Health Service
Former patient at Silungang Molave

Nung nagkaroon po ako ng ubo at sipon, di ko masyado pinansin pero nung nagpatingin ako sa UPHS, pina-isolate na ako sa Molave. Kinabukasan ay pina-swab na ako at nag-positive na nga ako, kaya itinuloy ko na ang stay ko sa Molave. Maganda po yung place kompara sa napapanood mo sa TV na ibang isolation facilities—yung may bed lang, yun na yun. Pero doon sa Molave, malaki ang room mo, mag-isa ka nga lang pero may wi-fi so kumpleto naman lahat. Masarap ang pagkain. Ang problem lang, sa sama ng pakiramdam ko, di ko na ma-appreciate. Gusto ko lang matulog at gumanda sana ang pakiramdam ko. Mababait ang mga nurse. Pag nag request ka sa kanila, ibibigay naman nila. At isang message lang sa viber, may pupunta na agad na nurse, titingnan ka at bibigyan ka ng medications na need mo. On the fifth day, lumala na yung kondisyon ko. Pinalipat na ako sa first floor at throughout the night, naghanap na sila ng mapaglilipatan sa akin. Sa PGH po ako nailipat sa tulong ng mga doktor, nurse, EMT, at ambulance driver. Nakita ko rin ang hirap nila, ang init-init, naka-PPE sila. Lahat po ng pangangailangan ko ay na-fulfill sa Molave sa pagtulong nila na mapabuti ang pakiramdam ko nang husto.



Isang silid sa Silungang Molave. Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Personal Reflections of Health Liaison Officers

Bernadette D. Escoto, Camille Lucille A. Bello, and Chitty C. Macatangay



A unit at UPD observing physical distancing. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Three of the health liaison officers (HELOs) from the University of the Philippines reflect on their personal journey as HELOs.

Bernadette D. Escoto recounts experiences and struggles

I still remember when I first joined the team of the health liaison officers or HeLOs. I got acquainted with one of the nurses of the Public Health Unit (PHU) of the University of the Philippines Health Service (UPHS). She explained that there would be meetings where we could get updates on health-related information which could then be shared with the staff in our units. It was something new I looked forward to, especially since it also

matched one of my new roles in the office at that time, which was related to employee wellness. We had meetings in different venues in UP, so I got a chance to explore the campus. There was even a time when we participated in an exercise led by one PHU nurse, and I remember people were just moving to the music, smiling and laughing. When I started sharing details regarding flu shot schedules and free medicines in the PHU, I learned that some staff members had already obtained them and benefitted from the services and medicine offered by the PHU. It was comforting to realize that though we could not personally offer much, we could still help by helping people have accessible healthcare.

The role of the HeLOs drastically changed at the onset of the pandemic. We took on more responsibilities, and sometimes, it felt like we were part of the health care providers' group. HELOs were requested to assist not only with the reporting of individuals with symptoms, but also with contact tracing and dealing with staff health concerns at any time.

With the shift to work-from-home (WFH) arrangements, certain adjustments needed to be made and coordination became more critical than ever. Meetings—attended by HeLOs and attended by Post-ECQ Team (PET) members—were held online, which took a lot of time. Numerous matters and concerns had to be discussed and addressed. Additional details were given to the HELOs and PET members to ensure task assignments and instructions were clear. Attending these meetings gave me an idea of the roles and responsibilities of other HeLOs and PET members, which were dependent on the nature of their respective units.

The HELO and the PET members in the institute worked closely together to make sure the UP Diliman's COVID-19 Guidelines related were (and are) implemented. The HeLOs (or the PET) became a contact personnel, liaising between the PHU and the staff of different units and offices. There were instances when we needed to do extra research before answering questions and making recommendations. To be more equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfil our roles and responsibilities, we attended webinars that featured, as speakers, experts in medical fields.

Since our work involved collecting personal and/or sensitive information, another important concern that had to be addressed was data privacy. The availability of people we could consult—such as the information officer who could contact the UP Diliman Data Protection Office—was critical to our performance. Likewise, the support of PET and non-PET members such as the guards-on-duty and other staff was crucial to the success of the actions and practices we had to implement. Collaboration and cooperation among individuals from different fields and units made it easier to accomplish our duties.

Certain moments proved to be very difficult. As we attended to our duties, we also had to deal with the impact of the pandemic in our own lives. We also feared getting infected and possibly bringing the virus home to loved ones if we had to report physically to the office to accomplish certain tasks that could not be done online. There was also the challenge of finding

solutions with limited resources, and of dealing with unprecedented concerns. One could hope that the recommendations would be beneficial to everyone concerned.

All of these things took an emotional, mental, and sometimes physical toll on me. Sometimes, I would even find myself asking, who takes care of those taking care of others? Eventually, I came to realize that there is a need to balance helping others and helping one's self. After all, we can take care of others better if we take good care of ourselves first.

Camille Lucille A. Bello, Administrative Officer III, writes about her own experiences and challenges as she juggled roles

What most of us thought would be a week-long lockdown due to the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic turned out to be two long years of community quarantine. I can still vividly remember how anxious I was. Aside from the fear of contracting the virus, I also dreaded the thought of my workload piling up. Since two of my colleagues—one promoted and one retired—had just left the Institute of Islamic Studies (IIS), I was left with no choice but to take over the administrative responsibilities at the office until a new administrative officer (AO) was hired. What made it more challenging was that I also served as a health liaison officer (HeLO). It was overwhelming. I felt that I had too many irons in the fire. With all the responsibilities, there were times that my body could no longer take the stress.

As the HeLO in our unit, I needed to understand every bit of information before disseminating it to my colleagues. But as someone without any medical background, I found it challenging to comprehend health-related information. The role was not easy, but the creation of the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force provided opportunities to learn. Through its efforts, I was able to attend several webinars, meetings, and consultations, which made me more committed and passionate to fulfill my role. I realized that being a HeLO is not just about disseminating important health information or organizing health-related activities; it was a role that empowered me to protect co-workers and contribute to UP's vision of providing effective extension and public services.

The UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force also made me feel that I was not alone in this health crisis; that we had a reliable support system. I realized this when one of my officemates was exposed directly to someone who tested positive for

COVID-19. Members of the Task Force constantly coordinated with us, from taking the RT-PCR test to getting the results. While it happened at the onset of the pandemic when the conditions and circumstances were more precarious, the Task Force journeyed with us to surpass the challenge. They were available for consultation even during weekends. Their presence made me feel less afraid because we knew they would come to help.

Another significant contribution of the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force was the development of the UP Diliman Post-ECQ Guidelines. I recommended the alternative work arrangement to my unit head, and the guidelines were helpful in communicating protocols about working-from-home, skeleton workforce arrangements, and health and safety measures, among many others. The Post-ECQ Guidelines proved the Task Force's fulfillment of its mandate to ensure the effective implementation of protocols and mechanisms to combat the threat of the coronavirus in the UP community. It also served as a reminder to the UP community to be compassionate, especially to those struggling because of the pandemic.

Bakunahan sa Diliman was also one of the most notable projects of the UPD COVID-19 Task Force. In partnership with the local government unit (LGU), the Task Force made sure that the vaccination procedures were efficiently implemented and monitored. Since there were limited vaccines in the early months of the roll-out, Bakunahan sa Diliman prioritized the UP community, especially the vulnerable ones. As the HeLO of IIS, I informed my colleagues of the vaccination schedule and encouraged them



Office disinfection. Photo by Loreny G. Sotto Jr

to get their shots. Signing up through the Bakunahan sa Diliman online registration system was easy and hassle-free. In fact, it allowed me to avail of slots on behalf of faculty members who were senior citizens and/or with comorbidities. By developing systems that work and having a pool of compassionate and dedicated staff and volunteers, the UPD COVID-19 Task Force protected and saved the lives of many.

Serving as a HeLO during the COVID-19 pandemic was a valuable learning experience. The tasks were challenging, but equally fulfilling. I feel grateful and fortunate to have had the opportunity to serve and protect the UP community, and fulfill

UP's vision of rendering effective and sincere public service.

Chitty C. Macatangay, HRDO, shares her encounters and concerns

When I was informed about having to be a one of the HeLOs of the Human Resource Development Office, I did not understand how the unit arrived at that decision. I was always absent because I was sickly, and I was not the type who participated in health-related activities. But since I was told that I will only act as stand-in if the original HeLO could not fulfil the duty, I accepted the assignment.

As part of the HeLO team, I disseminated information about

the UHS's Health awareness programs, engaged in activities I could physically participate in, attended meetings, and coordinated with other units and offices.

When the pandemic broke out, the role of the HeLOs changed. I was tasked to reach out to our office members who were accessible through Facebook Messenger and other means so that I could check up on them. Communication and coordination with the UHS and the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force became intense. We needed to share correct information about the schedules of swabbing and encourage people to get swabbed. When we heard news about someone contracting the virus, I made sure to message the person, "*Kumusta ka?*" Some would reply and talk about their concerns at the time; others complained about not receiving assistance from their LGU; some would simply say, "*Okay pa. Ikaw?*". A few would not (or could not) respond at all.

There were times I received messages that seemed like cries for help, and I found myself asking: What can one HeLO do for people probably experiencing the scariest moment of their lives? While there was a feeling of desperation and helplessness, I knew that my job of coordinating the needs of the patients with the UHS could make a difference. I found that researching for ways to help ease their anxiety could also help. Most importantly, I knew that assuring them that help is coming—though we could not tell when—would somehow comfort them.

My work as a HeLO during the pandemic involved scheduling swab tests, monitoring the condition of patients and people in the office, ensuring that health protocols were observed, and updating databases on vaccine statistics and compliance. Our job dealt mostly with managing information—making sure we get it, record it, and submit it. By doing so, we were able to strengthen bonds among individuals in the office.

Being a HeLO was a big responsibility, but it was also a privilege—a privilege to connect to people and comfort them, a privilege to learn about others' conditions and share their anxiety pain, a privilege to empower and be empowered, knowing that you are helping people believe that there is hope and we can survive the pandemic together.



A volunteer assisting someone at the Bakunahan sa UP Diliman vaccination site.
Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO



*Ilan sa mga tagapamahala ng Bakunahan sa UP Diliman.
Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO*

Ang Pagboboluntaryo para Bakunahan sa UP Diliman

Rose Angelie Hernandez

Hindi lingid sa kaalaman ng marami ang iba't ibang inisyatiba ng mga indibidwal, mga pribadong grupo, at mga institusyon sa pagsugpo sa pandemyang COVID-19 sa bansa. Hindi bago sa atin ang mga kuwento ng bayanihan na nagpapatibay sa lubid ng pagkakabuklod-buklod ng mga Pilipino. Ngunit mayroong malaking kaibahan ang pandemya sa iba pang karaniwang sakuna at kalamidad na nararanasan ng mamamayang Pilipino. Mayroon di pangkaraniwang tagal, lawak, at lalim ang epekto ng pandemya

sa lahat at sa kabuuang lipunan. Magkagayunman, nakita sa maraming pagkakataon ang kapasyahang tumulong ng mga indibidwal, grupo, at institusyon para maproteksyunan ang kapuwa laban sa COVID-19 at iba pang epekto nito sa kabuhayan ng mga Pilipino. Manipestasyon ng tulong na ito ang paglaganap ng libu-libong community pantry sa Pilipinas, ang UP Diliman (UPD) COVID-19 Response Volunteers na nagprioritisa sa mga bulnerableng sektor at komunidad sa UP Campus, at ang pagboboluntaryo ng mga

indibidwal sa mga inisyatiba tulad ng Bakunahan sa Diliman. Nais isadokumento ng maikling papel na ito ang karanasan at katangian ng pagboboluntaryo sa Bakunahan sa Diliman. Gagamitin ang mga nakalap na pahayag mula sa ilang mga boluntir tulad ko. Nararapat na isadokumento ang mga karanasang ito upang mapaghalawan ito ng mga aral at mareplika sa mga susunod pang programang pampamayanan ng unibersidad.



*Pagsisiguro ng kalinisan sa Bakunahan sa UP Diliman vaccination site.
Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO*

Ang mga Boluntir sa Bakunahan sa Diliman

Matapos mapagdesisyon ng UPD COVID-19 Task Force na magbuo ng inisyatibang bakunahan para sa mga kawani, estudyante, at miyembro ng komunidad ng UPD, itinakda nito ang grupong ubod na mangunguna para sa proyektong ito. Ang grupong ubod ay nag-imbiba ng iba pang mga indibidwal na makatutulong. Nagsagawa ng serye ng pagpupulong noong Abril 2021 hinggil sa pagtatakda ng mga polisiya sa pagbabakuna, health protocol, pisikal na disenyo, at iba pang lohistikal na pangangailangan. Kasabay nito ay sinimulan na rin ang pagpapalista—online man o hindi—ng mga boluntir sa mga kakilala.

Kinatuwang ang UPD COVID-19 Response Volunteers para hikayatin ang mga nais magboluntir para sa Bakunahan. Kasabay rin nito an pagpapaskil ng panawagan sa social media ng Office of the Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs. Mayroong higit isanlibo (1,000) ang tumugon. Karamihan sa mga nagboluntir ay mga kawani, alumni, guro, at estudyante ng UPD, ibang CUs at UP

System. Ang iba ay miyembro ng komunidad ng UP campus tulad ng mga residente at mga manininda. May ilan din na mula sa ibang unibersidad o hindi affiliated sa UP (UPD COVID-19 Task Force 6).

Mayroong tatlong katagorya ng boluntir sa Bakunahan—ang Medical Volunteer, Community Volunteers, at IT Volunteers. Sa buwan ng Abril din nagkaroon ng pinakaunang oryentasyon ng mga boluntir kung saan inilinaw ang mga tungkulin ng mga boluntir. Dito rin inilinaw ang tungkulin ng bawat estasyon na dadaanan ng bawat vaccinee.

May kanya-kanyang estasyong pinapakatan ang mga boluntir. Tinitiyak hangga't maaari na sa isang estasyon lamang pumakat ang mga boluntir upang masubaybayan nila ang praktika sa estasyon at makatutulong sa pag-unlad ng proseso rito. Kaya naman nagkaroon ng antas ng masteri sa mga gawain ang mga regular na boluntir sa bawat estasyon.

Bahagi naman ng proteksyon ng mga boluntir ang pagbabakuna sa kanila bago sila magsilbi sa bakunahan. Hinihikayat rin sila na pitong araw lamang maaaring magboluntir sa nang sa ganoon ay limitado ang kanilang

eskposyur sa maraming tao. Ngunit marami sa mga boluntir ang lumalampas sa pitong araw at naging regular na sa Bakunahan dahil ikinatuwa na nila ang pagseserbisyo. Ang mga regular na ito ang katuwang ng pagsasanay sa tuwing mayroong bagong boluntir sa Bakunahan. Mas epektibo ito dahil ang mga regular na boluntir ay may mga proseso't pamamaraan para patakbuhin nang mahusay ang kanilang mga estasyon, kaalamang naibabahagi nila sa mga bagong boluntir. Makikita rito “ang proseso ng pag-oorganisa ng pamayanan ay proseso ng pag-angkin ng mga tao sa samahang kanilang itinatag” at “napakahalagang madama ng bawat nahihikayat na may tungkulin siyang makilahok sa proseso ng tuloy-

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS
BAKUNAHAN SA DILIMAN
THE QUEZON CITY-UP DILIMAN COVID-19 VACCINATION SITE

The Quezon City government has enlisted the University of the Philippines Diliman Campus in the effort to vaccinate citizens against COVID-19.

Before the end of April 2021, the **UP-CHK Gym Vaccination Site** will open to serve the UP Diliman community and implement the national government's priority scheme. The QC-UP Diliman vaccination initiative needs to mobilize from 300 to as many as 500 volunteers in the next three months.

WE NEED:

A. MEDICAL AND HEALTH STAFF (URGENT!)

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Midwives
- Dentists
- Physical Therapists
- Pharmacists
- Veterinarians
- Emergency Medical Technicians
- Barangay Health Workers

B. UP COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

- Health educators
- IT personnel/encoders
- Help Desk staff
- Logistics staff
- Marshalls

✓ All volunteers will be vaccinated before rendering service.
✓ The vaccination site will observe strict COVID-19 health and safety protocols to ensure every volunteer's welfare and protection. Masks and face shields to be supplied.
✓ Organizations may also volunteer.

MINIMUM COMMITMENT

- For UP community volunteers, at least seven (7) days of service (consecutive or staggered)
- At least three (3) days of service for medical staff

For questions, please email covid19.taskforce@upd.edu.ph

Sign up: bit.ly/ivolunteer4up

UP Diliman
COVID-19
TASK FORCE

Poster para manghikayat ng mga boluntir para sa Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Imahe mula kay Rose Angelie Hernandez

tuloy na panghihikayat ng iba pang makakasapi sa samahan” (Manalili 87)

Higit walumpu (80) ang bilang ng mga taong nagpapatakbo ng Bakunahan tuwing operasyon nito.

- Tatlo hanggang lima (3–5) mula sa grupong ubod na nagto-trobolsyut sa mga suliranin
- Labing-tatlong (13) SSB (Special Service Battalion).
- Dalawang (2) pulis para sa seguridad/trapik
- Lima hanggang anim (5–6) para tugunan ang lohistikal na mga pangangailangan.
- Mayroong apat hanggang anim (4–6) sa Helpdesk
- Sampung (10) IT boluntir at dalawang (2) marsyal sa IT/Registration.
- Lima hanggang pitong (7–10) medical personnel at isang (1) marsyal para sa Screening.
- Anim hanggang pitong (7–10) vaccinators at apat (4) na marsyal para sa mismong pagbabakuna.
- Pito hanggang sampung (7–10) medical personnel, dalawang (2) IT/Discharge at limang (5) marsyal para sa Monitoring.
- Anim (6) na cleaners sa Bakunahan para magtiyak ng kalinisan at nadi-disinfect ang Bakunahan.

Kaya naman idiniin ng lahat ng kasapi ng Bakunahan na pinatatakbo ito ng mga boluntir. Ika nga ng isan, “...saludo ako sa lahat ng volunteers ng Bakunahan sa lahat ng oras, pasensya at, pagmamahal na ibinigay nila upang magtulong-tulong upang matupad ang mga layuning ito. Napakalaking bagay ng partisipasyon ng mga volunteer sa Bakunahan dahil kung wala sila ay hindi rin maisasakatuparan ang mga layunin ng Bakunahan.”

Kinikilala rin ng UPD ang puntong ito. Ayon nga kay Bise Tsanselor Aleli Bawagan ng Opisina ng Bise Tsanselor para sa Gawaing Pangkomunidad, ang lahat ng bagay sa Bakunahan ay mahalaga para makagana ito at makapagserbisyo nang maayos. Ngunit kinikilala ng kapuwa ng unibersidad at ng grupong ubod nito na hindi tatakbo ang bakunahan kung wala ang mga boluntir. At masasalamatin naman ang pagtanggap sa gawain sa tinuran ng isang boluntir, “Sa aking pag volunteer, naramdaman kong may naitutulong ako, kahit kaunti, sa paglutas ng pandemic. Kahit may pangamba’t takot, inisip ko, kung di ako tutulong, sino pa? Kaya’t natutuwa akong nabigyan ako ng pagkakataong makapaglingkod. Kahit nakakapagod, di ko ito nararamdaman dahil masaya ako sa ginagawa ko.”
Sistema ng Pagtatasa



Pagkuha ng ilang datos bilang bahagi ng prosesong ipinatutupad sa Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Ang Bakunahan ay may dalawang pormal na pagkakataon para marinig ang mga kritikal na pagtingin at obserbasyon ng mga boluntir. Ang una ay bago magsimula ang pagbabakuna sa umaga at ang ikalawa ay pagkatapos ng pagbabakuna sa hapon. Sa mga pagkakataong ito nakakapagbigay ng obserbasyon, pagtingin, at mungkahi ang mga boluntir para mas mapabuti ang serbisyo. Ika nga ni Manalili (92), mahalaga ang pagkakaroon ng sistema ng pagtatasa upang mapaunlad ang praktika ng pag-oorganisa.

Nagtitipon ng ika-7 umaga ang mga boluntir sa Bakunahan para sa briefing. Pinangungunahan ng grupong ubod ang briefing sessions kung saan ipinapaabot kung sino-sino ang vaccinees sa araw na iyon. Isa-isa ring tinatawag ang mga boluntir na nakatalaga sa bawat estasyon upang malaman kung kumpleto na ang papakat sa estasyon. Nagkakaroon din ng trobolsyuting sakaling may mga boluntir na hindi makakadalo dahil sa mga hindi inaasahang mga bagay. Handa naman ang mga boluntir na maitalaga sa iba’t ibang estasyon dahil alam nilang bahagi ito ng pagiging pleksible para sa pagsisilbi. Ang kalakhan sa mga regular na mga boluntir sa Bakunahan ay maalam na sa proseso ng iba’t ibang estasyon dahil naranasan na nilang tumao sa mga ito.

Tuwing ala-5 ng hapon naman ang debriefing session. Dito isinasagawa ang pagtatasa ng mga nagawa sa buong araw. Pinagpupugayan ang lahat dahil sa matagumpay na araw ng pagseserbisyo. Binabanggit kung ilan ang nabakunahan. Pinagpupugayan din ang mga inisyatiba ng mga boluntir para mas maging maayos ang operasyon at tinutukoy ang mga kahinaang maaari pang paunlarin sa mga susunod na araw. Nagbabatuhan ng opinyon at suhestiyon ang lahat kung paano mapapaunlad ang mga natukoy na mga kahinaan at suliranin. Sa proseso ng pagtatasa, napanatiling maayos ang pagseserbisyo sa komunidad. Pinakikita



Mga boluntir para sa Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

ng ganitong proseso ang pagbibigay-halaga sa tinig ng bawat isang kalahok ng Bakunahan mula sa iba't ibang sektor at kasanayan. Ayon kay Chancellor Nemenzo, ito ri'y batay sa paniniwalang multi-disiplinari dapat ang pakitunguhan sa pandemya. Kinilala rin ng grupong ubod ng proyekto na nagsasabing maraming inobasyon sa Bakunahan ang nagmula sa mga boluntir.

Ang Reward para sa mga Boluntir

Ayon sa karanasan ng mga boluntir, hindi lamang linyar ang proseso ng pagseserbisyo sa kapuwa. Ika nga ng isa, "Isang malaking karangalan ang mabigyan ng pagkakataon na makapaglingkod sa ating komunidad sa gitna ng isa sa pinakamatinding pagsubok na ating kinakaharap. Ito ang pagbibigay na hindi ka nawawalan. Bagkus ay nagkamit ka pa ng mga bagong kakilala, kaibigan, kaalaman, karanasan, at higit sa lahat, ang pagkakataon na makatrabaho ang ibang volunteers na walang alinlangang nagbahagi ng kanilang oras at kaalaman sa gitna ng panganib na dala ng COVID-19." Kinikilala ng mga boluntir na nasusuklian ang kanilang pagbibigay sa kapuwa at sa komunidad.

Ayon naman sa isang medical student na naging boluntir, "Dahil wala kaming face to face class hindi namin naranasan ang Community Health Nursing kaya itong pag volunteer namin sa UP Bakunahan ay nagbigay sa amin ng dagdag karanasan kung paano humarap sa mga tao/pasyente namin. Natutunan namin yung tamang

pakikipag-usap sa iba't-ibang klase ng tao. Itong karanasang ito ay magsisilbing aral sa amin kung kami ay mag du-duty na sa hospital. Maraming salamat po, UP Bakunahan."

Samantala, lalong tumibay ang layuning mapagsilbi sa kapuwa ang nahinuha ng isa pang boluntir na medical student din. "Ang pagvolunteer ko rito ay isa sa mga experience na hindi ko makakalimutan... Mas lalo kong na-realize ang aking purpose and why I always loved public service, para makatulong at makapag-ambag sa pangangailangan ng komunidad. Mas na-motivate ako sa aking journey bilang isang future doctor o physician." Ang lahat ay mayroong natutunan sa karanasan sa pagsisilbi. "Natutuwa ako at nabigyan ng pagkakataong magampanan ang tungkulin bilang isang immunizing pharmacist. Marami ang hindi nakakaalam na ang mga pharmacist sa Pilipinas ay nabigyan na ng responsibilidad ng pagbabakuna. At dahil dito naisulong na rin ang training para sa bagong kaalaman na ito. Nagpapasalamat ako sa Bakunahan dahil binuksan ninyo ang pinto para sa aming lahat."

Ikinatuwa ng mga boluntir ang kanilang karanasang pagseserbisyo. "Very fulfilling ang experience na ito para sa akin kasi alam ko naging malaking parte ako at instrument upang maisakatuparan ang layunin ng pagbabakuna sa lahat. May mga eye-opening experience din ako bilang volunteer kaya marami talaga akong natutunan at alam ko na ang mga ito ay magagamit ko sa mga susunod pang mga volunteer work na aking gagawin or sasalihan."

Kahit ano pa ang panahon ay nagpapakita ang mga boluntir. “...katuwang ang nagsama- samang iba’t ibang indibidwal na naglaan ng kani-kanilang oras. Umulan, umaraw, dumilim man o malamig na panahon ay bumabangon kami para sa kapuwa na naghahangad na makamit ang kaniyang proteksyon laban sa kumakalat na delikadong sakit/pandemya.” Samantala, itinuturing ng isang boluntir ang karanasan sa bakunahan bilang isa sa mga biyaya ng pandemya, “Ito ang pinakamagandang naidulot ng pandemya sa akin bilang isang kasapi ng UP community. Marami akong naging magagandang karanasan na na-experience simula sa unang batch ng volunteers hanggang sa kasalukuyan.”

Samantala, tunay ngang ang pagsisilbi sa kapuwa ay pag-alis sa sariling comfort zone, “Volunteering has been one of the most fulfilling and humbling experiences of my life— to see my fellow volunteers be so positive, brave, and selfless about serving the Bakunahan and the community when their health is also at risk. The experience of meeting so many vaccinees from all walks of life who are all hopeful and trusting made me appreciate my being able to sit behind a desk (leaving my comfort zone) to assist them. I learned to be more respectful, kind, and patient, because you don’t know what these people are going through.”

Ang iba naman ay tila mas lumawak ang pagtanaw sa mga bagay at natutong umangkop sa hinihingi ng sitwasyon para mas makapagsilbi sa kapuwa. “Natutuhan ‘kong habaan ang aking pasensya at naramdaman ko na masaya ang ginagawa ko kahit ito ay nakakapagod. Ang pagpapasalamat din ng mga tao ay nakakapawi ng pagod at nagbigay ng ngiti sa mga labi ng mga volunteer.”

At hindi nawawala ang diwang makabayan ng mga boluntir. “Nakita ang kahalagahan ng presensya ng bawat isang naghandog ng tulong sa kapuwa na nagmula pa sa iba’t ibang larangan. May bonus pa na mas nakilala ang mga kapuwa kawani at miyembro ng iba’t-ibang sektor sa unibersidad.” Naipapakita naman sa komento ng isang maninindang boluntir ang kanyang pagkalinga sa komunidad na kinabibilangan niya. “Kusang loob ang pagboboluntaryo ko sa Bakunahan sa UPD dahil gusto ko kahit sa maliit na pamamaraan na tulong na ito ng pagseserbisyo ko ay makapag-ambag ako sa komunidad ng UP.”

Naipakita ng Bakunahan na buhay ang sama-samang pagkilos bilang isang susing solusyon sa mga suliranin ng bayan. “...Ako po ay nabighani sa lakas ng bawat isa kapag sama-sama. Ito na po siguro ang pinakamakabuluhang Pasko para sa akin...iyung maging parte ng solusyon kahit sa

maliit na bagay.” Dagdag pa ng isang boluntir, “lubos nitong pinatunayan na hanggang ngayon ay buhay na buhay pa rin ang ating kultura ng bayanihan.” Pinatutunayan ng praktika ng Bakunahan sa Diliman na mas magiging mabisa ang mga proyektong pampamayanan kung magiging demokratiko ito at lalahukan ito ng komunidad. Ayon nga kay Tsanselor Nemenzo, “It takes a community to vaccinate a community” (3:52).

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Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO



Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

IT in Bakunahan sa UP Diliman

Jacob Obinguar

The primary goal of Information Technology (IT) in the Bakunahan sa Diliman program was to ensure operational efficiency, and to ascertain that systems and operations can handle the increasing volume of individuals who wanted to get vaccinated. The IT team helped in deciding the best processes to achieve this goal, which included analyses of the turn-around time of each vaccinee in each station, the number of computers and volunteers needed, creating and using the best system available, and providing real-time data for assessment, among others.

Website

The IT team created a website dedicated solely for the Bakunahan sa Diliman. It contained the following information:

- Entire vaccination process
- Location of the vaccination site
- Operation time

- Dos and don'ts in the vaccination site
- The things the vaccinees need to prepare
- Vaccination forms
- Information about the vaccines
- Advisories
- How to volunteer/donate
- Contact information of the Bakunahan team

The website is available at: <https://sites.google.com/up.edu.ph/bakunahansadiliman/home?authuser=0>

Email Blasts and Text Blasts

The link to website was included in the vaccination schedule sent via email to the vaccinees. The vaccination schedule included important reminders, such as the day and time of vaccination, the vaccinee number (unique identifier of the vaccinee), and the instructions on what the vaccinee should do and bring on the site. The

schedule also contained the barcode of the vaccinee, which facilitated the verification process in the vaccination site and helped in data encoding, which greatly reduced the processing time in the registration area.

Other than the email blast, the IT team also made use of automated SMS blasts to ensure that individuals are properly notified about their vaccination schedule. The SMS blast has a much shorter message, which includes only the vaccinee number and the date and time of the vaccination. When necessary, SMS blast was also used for important announcements.

Sign-up Forms and Scheduling

The main tool used for the vaccination sign-up was Google Forms because of its accessibility, ease-of-use, and security. However, due to constraints brought about by vaccine availability and the Inter-Agency Task Force's (IATF) prioritization, an extra layer of processing was needed to follow prioritization and eligibility among vaccinees. The IT team also had to ensure that only those eligible for vaccination at a given period received their vaccination schedule.

Scheduling was also one of the major tasks of the IT team. It involved analyzing how many vaccinees should be scheduled on a specific day and time based on the available resources in the Bakunahan venue, and on the target in a specific day (set at times by the local government unit).

The Bakunahan Data System

The Bakunahan Data System—created by one of the volunteers—speeded up the entire vaccination process, and made it more efficient. It provided real-time data and served as the storehouse of the vaccinees' personal information, vaccination schedules, and important reports, among others. These reports include ensuring that the number of vaccinees and the number of used vaccine vials matched the daily report to the Quezon City government.

In the system, all required data were validated and collected in the prescribed format. This way, the submission of the VIMS-VAS (Vaccine Information Management System – Vaccine Administration System) daily report to the Quezon City government was also made a lot easier. There was no need to back-encode the data. The moment the last vaccinee left the vaccination site, the

VIMS-VAS was immediately ready for submission, regardless of the number of vaccinees for the day.

The IT Team

Running the vaccination site was a complex project that required interdisciplinary collaboration and solutions. Other than the medical component, the IT aspect was just as important as the others. The IT team in the Bakunahan sa Diliman was composed of students, faculty, administrative staff, and community volunteers. Most were tasked to encode data in the registration and discharge stations in the vaccination site. However, there is a core group of volunteers who oversaw the IT operations from start to finish.

The lead IT was Jacob S. Obinguar, an Information Systems Analyst from the Office of the University Registrar (OUR). Whilzar Maquinta, an IT Specialist from the UP Computer Center, created the Bakunahan Data System and the scheduling dashboard for volunteers. Many times, he also performed as Lead Support in the operations. Ranz Adam Mendoza, a programmer from the Office of the University Registrar, supplied back-end support for the preparation and automation of the vaccination schedule, doing most of the email blasts and data cleaning. Finally, Janus Nolasco, a University Researcher from the Asian Center, set up and maintained the Bakunahan website. Overall, this team worked hand-in-hand to ensure the smooth operation of the IT-side of the Bakunahan sa Diliman project.



Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Learning from the Community as a Pandemic Response

Maria Dulce F. Natividad*



Ronda Kumusta. Photo from Rose Angelie Hernandez

UP Diliman is a unique community. While it counts students, faculty, REPS, staff and their dependents as constituents, it also encompasses the barangay and the puroks that surround the core campus. Constituents and barangay residents overlap and form a symbiotic relationship. Many residents earn their livelihood from the campus economy and provide much-needed services to constituents. Taken together, they easily number more than 50,000. As the national university, UP moreover has a mandate to serve the larger community beyond its walls.

Community engagement is an integral part of UP Diliman's pandemic response. In the beginning, however, there was

uncertainty about the feasibility of working with communities during the lockdown. At a time when death was fearfully close and movement was heavily restricted, how to conduct on-the-ground campaigns and dodge the virus was hard to imagine. What was once a regular part of the university's public service, community work became a real dilemma for the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force: between keeping safe indoors while responding to the need to build resilient communities.

Supporting Frontliners

As the Task Force wrestled with the question of how to proceed safely, it received a request from the Lung Center of the Philippines

(LCP): accommodations for its "COVID-19 strike force," a team of its top pathologists, doctors, nurses, and other health workers who were assigned to the critical ward. Given their high exposure to the virus, these frontliners needed a place where they could rest, recharge and quarantine between shifts. We immediately responded and arranged to house them at the NISMED (The National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development) hostel. Soon after, microbiologists and interns from the Philippine Genome Center (PGC) and the

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Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) were also accommodated at the hostel. Converting the hostel into a health worker facility required learning a bit about managing health facilities. As the point person who coordinated between the organizations involved and managed the onsite maintenance staff, I consulted the Public Health Unit of the University Health Service and our LCP counterpart: how could we operate NISMED safely? Dr. Gloanne Adolor, LCP Director of Management Services, was a generous mentor who taught us about setting up red zones, scheduling activities, implementing protocols, and crisis management. These were all designed to prevent virus transmission onsite. A critical lesson was how to respond during a breakout without resorting to a lockdown.

Later, UP would also open the Yakal and Acacia Residence Halls to health workers from the UP Health Service (UPHS) and the PGC. In 2020, a total of 159 health frontliners were housed by UP Diliman, 77 from the Lung Center of the Philippines. An early partner in providing this public service was Act as

One, a group of UP alumni who mobilized resources to ensure that our frontliners had meals, transportation, and six months' worth of supplies.

Public Information: Ronda Kumusta

During the first months of the pandemic, the Task Force noted much misconception about the virus and COVID-19 that resulted in fear and stigma in our communities. To address this, it determined the need for a mobile information campaign. To this end, *Ronda Kumusta* was organized. It developed and recorded a script explaining COVID-19 and how to avoid getting infected. Community solidarity as key in fighting the pandemic was also a message. Following a weekly schedule, our dedicated Special Services Brigade (SSB) went around the puroks in a roving vehicle and played the recording over a public address (PA) system.

When the *Ronda Kumusta* was first piloted, it was during a time when going on a house-to-house campaign did not feel safe. Communicating from a safe distance seemed to be the only available method

to reach the communities. However, residents did not find the recorded messages engaging. They could not hear the messages clearly over the PA system. To be fair, the early *Ronda* worked in certain circumstances. At one point, it featured confident live announcer, for example.

The *Ronda* eventually evolved as community volunteers started adjusting. We developed leaflets written in Filipino, and volunteers distributed them house to house, careful to limit (or avoid) any face-to-face interaction with household members. The *Ronda* later evolved into two teams, composed of volunteers from the All UP Workers Union (AUPWU) and the COVID-19 Response Volunteers (CRV). Both would make stops in strategic areas, deliver information over a PA system, distribute leaflets to houses and, at times, even entertain questions from residents.

Community-Inspired

Before this could happen, however, the Task Force had to agree that the risks could be managed should it decide to call for more volunteers who would then be deployed to the puroks. I think what helped us finally overcome our hesitation was the visit to the barangay, where I met with Kapitana Zenaida Lectura, the purok leaders, barangay health workers and peace and security officers.

At the barangay hall rooftop, about twenty-five people gathered to meet with me. Observing physical distancing, they sat in well-arranged chairs and had their face masks and face shields on. In front of the hall on a table was a ready bottle of alcohol. The mood was one of preparedness—to discuss and to



Ronda Kumusta. Photo from Rose Angelie Hernandez



Ronda Kumusta. Photo from All UP Workers Union

coordination and information-sharing. We also shared services, as when barangay residents were accommodated in the Silungang Molave isolation facility and when UP workers needed free RT-PCR tests in the barangay.

QC-UP Collaboration: Bakunahan sa Diliman

Arguably, a culminating point in UP Diliman's community engagement was its collaboration with the Quezon City local government in running the UP-CHK (College of Human Kinetics) vaccination site. As early as December 2020, Chancellor Fidel R. Nemenzo had approached Mayor Joy Belmonte to explore the possibility of LGU-procured vaccines for UP Diliman employees. In follow-up meetings, QC officials clarified that the LGU would provide free vaccines based on a prioritization scheme. By February 2021, UPD had offered to be a vaccination site for the city, but local officials admitted that they needed partners who can provide personnel and logistical support and run the site independently.

Given the enormity of the task, it took until early April for UP Diliman to finally commit to operating a vaccination site. To set things in motion, on April 8, Dr. Alfred Tengonciang and I met with Dr. Esperanza Arias, Director of the Quezon City Health Department (QCHD), for an orientation and a visit to the Pinyahan Elementary School vaccination site. Immediately after, we headed to the CHK gym to meet with Dean Francis Diaz, who promised to get the facility cleaned and ready in three days' time. We had less than three weeks to prepare everything: organizing a team, setting up the facility

act. What struck me most were the faces that peered through the masks: most of them were either middle-aged or senior citizens. Given their leadership roles in the community, these senior citizens had chosen to ignore the order prohibiting them from going outside their homes. During the meeting, they shared that they were involved in monitoring COVID-19 cases, transporting patients, distributing ayuda, enforcing curfew hours, and coordinating with other local government agencies, among others. It was clear that they were organized and had set up working emergency mechanisms. They also shared that, because of their exposure to those who had been infected, they themselves had been stigmatized by neighbors.

On my part, I talked about the work of the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force and asked how it could assist the community. It was obvious to me, however, that the barangay had risen to the challenge of the public health emergency and had tapped into an existing capacity for pandemic response. This did not mean that their

human resources were not strained. They identified public information and education as an area where the Task Force could assist.

This one afternoon in June 2020 was a turning point. It showed that working on the ground with the community in the middle of a hard lockdown (or enhanced community quarantine) was not only imperative. It was also do-able. If our senior citizens, the most vulnerable members of our community, had found a way to be involved and take charge, how does one not take inspiration from that? If they had found a way to manage the risks and protect themselves, can we not follow their lead and do the same?

I came away from that meeting with renewed confidence and a resolve that community engagement can be done. Since then, we started holding health orientation workshops with volunteer contact tracers, public information teams, and community coordinators in a hybrid format, with some participating onsite and others doing so online. Our work with the barangay was more of

and equipment, mobilizing volunteers, formulating guidelines, developing an information system, conducting time-and-motion dry-runs, and getting DOH (Department of Health) accreditation.

To say that it took a huge collective effort to start and run the Bakunahan sa Diliman is an understatement. The Bakunahan operated from April to December 2021 and mobilized about 500 volunteers from various communities: staff, faculty, students, alumni, barangay residents, medical volunteers from different schools, and those not even affiliated with UP. Nurse Girlie Randall was assigned by the QCHD to train our vaccinators and worked with the team every single day. By the end of its operation, the Bakunahan had vaccinated more than 16,000 individuals and administered about 37,000 doses. It kept true to its goal: making vaccines more accessible to UP constituents and the surrounding communities.

Among those vaccinated are UP personnel, custodial workers,

security guards, construction workers, employees of establishments on campus and UAAP (University Athletic Association of the Philippines) varsity players. The greater number of vaccinees, however, came from the various barangays of Quezon City. An opportunity to vaccinate homeless persons and survivors of gender-based violence came with our collaboration with the UNFPA (United Nations Fund for Population Activities, now known as the UN Population Fund), World Health Organization, Commission on Human Rights, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, Kariton Koalisyon, Samaritana, and other NGOs.

When the Bakunahan opened on April 26, we vaccinated 77 individuals. At the time, relying on projected capacity, our ultimate target was to inoculate a maximum of 250 individuals per day. By August, with encouragement from the QC COVID-19 Task Force, we had scaled up operations to reach 1200 vaccinations a day, even peaking at 1600 at one point. Accommodating

these large numbers took close coordination with the LGU, especially the barangay and district coordinators who oversaw the identification, registration and transporting of residents to the site. Expectedly, this process was not always smooth; in fact, it was challenging, and at times, even chaotic. In the beginning, we had insisted that soft copies of registration lists must be provided at least two days before the vaccination date. This was to ensure that the data was uploaded to the system beforehand, minimizing the transaction time at the site and avoiding long lines. But we soon realized that the context of our communities did not always allow efficiency due to lack of resources and skills, and a cultural preference for certain modes of communication. Failing to understand this would have contributed to communities' unequal access to vaccines. Thus, we adjusted and found other ways to be efficient, such as adding more volunteers in stations to handle transactions, integrating several steps into one or discharging vaccinees by batches instead of individually.

On a final note, our collaborative endeavors during the pandemic rests on the belief that the university is not separate from the larger community. Beyond the commitment to serve, UP Diliman engaged with various communities as an expression of solidarity, recognizing that our connections are vital to our collective survival and thriving.



Ronda Kumusta. Photo from All UP Workers Union



Ronda Kumusta. Photo from Rose Angelie Hernandez

Mga Hamon, Mga Tugon: Initiatives of the UP Diliman Administration



Across from UP Theater. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

Academic Affairs*

Second Semester of A.Y. 2019–2020

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the second semester of A.Y. 2019–2020 was abruptly cut short. Face-to-face classes were cancelled, and emergency online distance learning had to be facilitated. To guide UP Diliman faculty and students in navigating the remote learning set-up, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (OVCAA) considered the UP System COVID-19 policies and shared Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) through the UP Diliman (UPD) website. <https://ovcaa.upd.edu.ph/frequently-asked-questions/faqs-for-up-diliman/>

Midyear Term 2020

As UPD transitioned to work-from-home arrangements and limited physical reporting, the OVCAA released the [Post-ECQ Guidelines](#) during Mid-Year Term 2020 to inform the academic community about online services and processes rolled out by its various offices, including the following:

- Office of the University Registrar's (OUR) online registration process
- University Library's (UL) online book requests, online reservation, and e-book lending system

- Office for the Advancement of Teaching's (OAT) online processing of MOA/MOU with local academic partners
- Office of International Linkages Diliman's (OILD) online processing of MOA/MOU with international academic partners
- Interactive Learning Center Diliman's (ILCD) free UVLe application
- General Education Center's (GEC) online access to UP System and UPD GE Modules
- National Service Training Program's (NSTP) online common module; and
- Office of Field Activities' (OFA) online processing of MOA/MOU with academic field and industry partners.

First Semester of AY 2020–2021

Starting Academic Year 2020–2021, UP adopted a remote learning set-up. The OVCAA and OUR released another set of Remote Learning and Supplemental FAQs to guide faculty and students during the transition.

In the same academic year, the Interactive Learning Center (ILC) Diliman offered online tutorials on the use of UVLe, the main Learning Management System of UP Diliman, as a preparation for remote teaching. The OAT and ILC Diliman also conducted the following webinars to prepare the faculty for the first semester of remote learning.



Sunset at UPD. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

Table 1: Links to the Remote Learning and Supplemental FAQs Released by OVCAA and OUR

OVCAA FAQs on Remote Learning	https://ovcaa.upd.edu.ph/frequently-asked-questions/upd-faqs-on-remote-learning/
OVCAA Supplemental FAQs	https://ovcaa.upd.edu.ph/frequently-asked-questions/supplemental-faqs-for-up-diliman/
OUR FAQs for Remote Learning	https://our.upd.edu.ph/faqs/ourfaq.pdf
OUR Supplemental FAQs	https://our.upd.edu.ph/faqs/ourfaq2.pdf

Table 2: Online Tutorials on the Use of UVLe

The UVLe	https://ilc.upd.edu.ph/university-virtual-learning-environment/
UVLe Tutorials	https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2t_u-Kjl-ktyr6Q27p-O8ThEojTIEuWYL

- Course Pack Ganern! Where to Start, How to Do it, What to Write
- A sySTEM in the madness: Preparing to Teach STEM Courses Remotely
- True or False or None of the Above: Selecting Appropriate Assessments for Remote Learning
- Kalinga sa mga Tagapagkalinga: Parenting in the time of Remote Learning
- Naitawid! What we Learned about Remote Learning During the Midyear
- Resisting the Rubric: The Arts and Humanities in Remote Learning
- How to be a Lifeline: Supporting Students in a Remote Learning Context

The video recordings of the above webinars are compiled in a playlist, which can be accessed in the [YouTube channel of the ILCD](#):

Remote-learning workshops were also conducted upon the request of different units and colleges, and later uploaded in a Google Drive.

Other remote learning workshops—such as “RemOAT and Interactive Learning Conversations with the Department of Broadcast Communication” and “Maalaala Mo Kaya (kung Online)? UP Law Teaching Methods for Effective Remote Learning”—were also facilitated upon the request the College of Mass Communication and College of Law, respectively.

The OVCAA also prepared the students for the remote learning set-up by producing infographics and videos on study tips.

The University Library also made its resources accessible to faculty and students through the following online services:

- Search of the Online Catalog (<https://ilib.upd.edu.ph>) and other local databases (IPP : <https://ipp.mainlib.upd.edu.ph>, IPN: <https://ipn.mainlib.upd.edu.ph>)
- Access to online resources (e.g., subscribed foreign electronic databases/ journals, open access

e-resources) via remote access login/password or via remote access platform (e.g., EZProxy: <https://ezproxy.upd.edu.ph> and later OpenAthens).

- Access to UP Publications, including electronic theses/ dissertations (through the Institutional Repository: <https://digitalarchives.upd.edu.ph>)
- Access to local digital resources, e.g., rare periodicals (through the Open-Access Digital Repository: <https://repository.mainlib.upd.edu.ph>)

Aside from the preparations and support for remote teaching and learning, both local and international academic linkages were processed and/ or renewed. The list below shows local and international active agreements between UP Diliman and partner academic institutions (Table 4), as well as international faculty and student exchange data during the pandemic (Tables 5, 6, 7).

Table 2
Resources Used in the Remote Learning Workshops

Zoomustahan with DMME	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oGGgjZCLAJidEF8e1gzoirD-VREPJk3vY/view?usp=sharing
OBE with UPDEPP Faculty	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TrxlsP5k3CUGpfxt0iP2eah-vWO-7NZd/view?usp=sharing
UP Tacloban's Office of Student Affairs (OSA) Talk Series 3: Navigating Changed Learning Spaces	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1E2wbe_pwanaDV_Qyu8Q02ez2gRypwG2E/view?usp=sharing
RemOAT Interactive Learning Conversations with the UP Diliman Extension Programs in Pampanga and Olongapo (UPDEPP/O)	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w5WO25b_MHoS1fs50ARC-MyNTEOEqr7kV/view?usp=sharing
Designing Outcomes-Based Syllabus with UPDEPP/O	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zBJisdGhwRntsYdnPzh-l4Li-U9rfBAw7/view?usp=sharing

Table 3
Infographics and Videos on Study Tips Produced by the OVCAA

What is Remote Learning?	https://drive.google.com/file/d/11Mdj_K3MW2ofN1J_WkYg--l43mlAcEal/view?usp=sharing
The Isko/Iska Guide for Remote Learning	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ud-qyWMdjgmgmtRonX-4WhNfBlBp9wTQ3/view?usp=sharing
Surviving Remote Learning: Study Tips	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ng5WFJNgZYCBx5ZuK-K7alu7QD8Vo83p3/view?usp=sharing

OIL Diliman also conducted “Sulong, Layag: Internasyunalisasyon sa Panahon ng Pandemya,” a webinar in support of international and exchange faculty, students, and REPS. Among the topics and messages presented were the following:

- Internationalization and Pandemic: A Survey
- Tuloy pa rin ang Networking at Kolaborasyon
- Pagsubok sa Pananaliksik at Kolaborasyon
- Ginagawang mas Nakakaengganyo ang Virtual Cultural Exchange
- Pagsasalin sa Online ng mga Modyul sa Pagkatuto at Pagsasanay
- Pagtataguyod ng Kultura
- Pinahusay na mga Paraan ng Ugnayan
- Cultural Performance: Wayang
- Programang Birtuwal para sa mga Estudyante, Guro at Kawani
- Pagsasanay ng mga Tagapagsanay Tungo sa Internasyunalisasyon
- Mga Hamon sa Pagkatuto ng Isang Exchange Student
- Makabuluhang Karanasan mula sa Exchange Program
- Pagtugon sa mga Hamon bilang Exchange Student
- Paano Ilulubog ang Sarili Upang Makilala ang Ibang Kultura
- Estratehiya Upang Makayanan ang mga Hamon sa Isang Estudyanteng Banyaga
- Inspirasyon para sa Akademiko
- Mga Hamon sa Remote Learning
- Mga Pakinabang sa Paggamit ng Online Methods sa Pagtuturo
- Mga Hamon sa Pagtuturo ng Wika at Araling Pilipino sa Ibayong Dagat
- Emerging Academic and Research Opportunities
- What is an International Student?
- Kultura at Limitasyon ng Virtual Classroom

- Opportunities for Online Cultural Exchange
- Signing of Academic Agreements

The links to the videos were collated in the following document: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iv8FwAknQKfK8n49-HjqROmJoiUSzIqd/view?usp=sharing>

Infographics and videos to assist faculty and student in exchange programs, as well as those who are about to apply for study leave or special detail, were also released (Table 8).

Since the first semester of Academic Year 2020–2021 was the first semester to be conducted fully online, the OVCAA made sure the experiences of both faculty and students were documented

through the following assessment surveys: Academic policies for the second semester of AY 2020–2021 were based on the survey results and recommendations. Policies that worked were re-implemented, while those that raised issues and concerns were adjusted.

Second Semester of AY 2020–2021

The goal of the university as it entered the second semester AY 2020–2021 was to minimize drastic changes experienced during the second semester of AY 2019–2020, Midyear Term 2020, and the first semester of AY 2020–2021, and to adopt to moment-to-moment developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 4
Active Local Agreements

Partner Institution	Nature of Agreement	Effectivity
St. Paul University	Academic cooperation and promote mutual understanding	2020–2024
Mindanao State University	Academic cooperation and promote mutual understanding	2020–2023
Central Bicol State University	Academic cooperation and promote mutual understanding	2020–2023
Quezon City Science High School	Internship	2020–2022
Polytechnic University of the Philippines	Educational and scientific cooperation	2019–2024
Philippine High School for the Arts	Collaboration and cooperation regarding part-time assignments	2019–2023
Pangasinan State University	Academic cooperation and mutual understanding	2019–2023
Bulacan State University	Academic and research cooperation	2019–2021
Trinity University of Asia	Academic cooperation and promote mutual understanding	2019–2021
Adamson University	Internship	2018–2021
Glades International Corporation	Internship or on-the-job training of the College of Engineering students	2017–2022
Holy Angel University	Academic cooperation and mutual understanding	2017–2022
United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB)	Apprenticeship	2017–2022
United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB)	Internship or on-the-job training of the College of Engineering students	2017–2022
Atlanta Industries, Inc.	Internship or on-the-job training of the College of Engineering students	2017–2021

Table 5
Active International Agreements (2020–2021)

	Number of Active Agreements
Asia	37
Europe	21
North America	5
Oceania	11
Total	74

Table 6
International Faculty Exchange (2020–2021)

	No of Active Agreements
Inbound	54
Outbound	40
Total	94

Table 7
International Student Exchange (2020–2021)

	No of Active Agreements
Inbound	59
Outbound	41
Total	100

The policies and decisions of the university are informed by the following general principles:

- Responsiveness to unequal access to technology of faculty and students
- Inclusivity and consideration for diversity, so that students and faculty with special needs would not be left behind
- Compassion, respect, and mutual care
- Flexibility in light of developments associated with the pandemic, including university, local, and national responses to the pandemic
- Openness to feedback and consultation
- Academic freedom but with utmost consideration of students' well-being
- Honor and Excellence

In preparation for remote teaching and learning for the second semester of AY 2020–2021, the OVCAA released PsycServ's suggested guide to working with students that includes

1. Student advising system for academic program units; and
2. Guide to working with students during the pandemic.

The student advising system is aimed at “checking students’ academic and psychosocial concerns, helping students keep track of their learning and academic progress, and providing a space for students’ mental health and psychosocial needs.” The guide to working with students during the pandemic consists of practical tips on how to advise students from a place of kindness and understanding. The infographics may be accessed through the links provided in Table 10.

In the middle of the semester, UP Diliman slowly pivoted from remote teaching and learning concerns to psychosocial support mechanisms (Table 11). Among the activities launched were

1. VCconsult, an online consultation platform where UP Diliman faculty can have a conversation with the VCAA about academic affairs and concerns
2. Zoomustahan, a virtual reunion among colleagues; and
3. Kalinga sa Tagapagkalinga, a remote learning conversation that covered “Real Parenting of UP Faculty Parents,” “The Five C’s in Parenting

Table 8: Infographics and Videos for Outbound Students and Faculty

Visa Processing	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwSmeKWRCsw&feature=youtu.be
Application for Travel Authority	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umMP5_xvr4w
International Student Exchange Program	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_lTVabm6rXg
Internationalization: Rationale and Metrics	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ph2a_sW4Z2g
Student Mobility Infographics	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZl9zgqx8EQ&feature=youtu.be

Table 9: Assessment Surveys

Initial Report Growing Pains: Remote Learning Experiences of UPD Faculty	https://drive.google.com/file/d/12mMLavt80bGq-g3Uq-FY0__6CZv7tyxGs/view?usp=sharing
Second Report: Am I Doing Well Enough? Preliminary Insights Based on Students' Perceptions of and Experiences with Remote Learning	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iR0osx7mcy-aVHKG-DKCJqBMjgzjBFae6/view?usp=sharing
Updated Report on Faculty Capability for Distance Learning and Other Concerns	https://drive.google.com/file/d/11Anbq2sQTfunx-agxoS2_dnkBilhgrC7/view?usp=sharing
Updated Report on Student Capability for Distance Learning and Other Concerns	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j5X-8fjNSJr1Gow-3Z9YKjfcJ70ecyCQS/view?usp=sharing

Table 10: Infographics about the Student Advising System

Guide to Student Advising	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1h4osP-K0raErDfriLql-vU_vdnaQ_mglN?usp=sharing
Guide to Working with Students During the Pandemic	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GCCQneP2TQi-JoSJgP8l4e5eclm9KmCfo5?usp=sharing

Learners with Disability,” and “Family... Game na ba kayo? Screen Sense: Understanding and Managing Children’s Online Learning”

In 2021, Chancellor Fidel Nemenzo constituted an ad hoc committee for Faculty Psychosocial Support, which aims to conceptualize and implement more programs that address various psychosocial concerns of the faculty such as feelings of loss, isolation, and frustration, and emotional labor and exhaustion from caring for sick family members.

The OVCAA is also in the process of establishing a partnership with Habi Education Lab to design more virtual learning experiences and community-building activities to support the faculty.

Although we can assume that faculty, students, and staff members will be more informed and prepared for the next few semesters, it is important to bear in mind that we are still in the middle of a health crisis. New challenges may emerge, which will make it difficult to immediately return to the way things were pre-pandemic. Thus, it might

Table 11: Activities Launched for Psychosocial Support Mechanisms

VCconsult	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wspWuHQljVRkdagJcKHKM-bYpeUb9modT/view?usp=sharing
Paano Kaya? Tips and Suggestions on How to Conduct Faculty Zoomustahan or Monthly Virtual Reunion with Colleagues	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B1KY5wdA2qZmfacgDgKO5vt-V3Bb_WPZ7/view?usp=sharing
Kalinga sa Tagapagkalinga (Rewind)	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wspWuHQljVRkdagJcKHKM-bYpeUb9modT/view?usp=sharing

be ideal for the stakeholders of the university to work around policies that have been implemented and evaluated, adjusting and developing them for everyone's best interest.

**This report was submitted by Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Ma. Theresa T. Payongayong.*



Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO



Ang UP Street Dance Club sa video shoot ng "Muli."
Larawan mula sa OVCSA

Student Affairs*

Para sa Opisina ng Bise-Tsanselor para sa mga Gawaing Pangmag-aaral (OVCSA), maraming mga hamon ng COVID-19 pandemic at ang kaakibat nitong transisyon sa Remote Teaching and Learning. Kasama rito pagpapatuloy ng mga serbisyong pang-mag-aaral sa remote set-up, ang pagpapalakas at pagpapahusay ng komunikasyon ng OVCSA sa mga mag-aaral, at ang paghahatid ng seguridad at kalinga sa gitna ng mental health crisis at sari-saring isyung pampulitikal at panlipunan na sinalubong ng unibersidad sa panahon ng pandemya.

Mula sa pagtugon sa frontline services hanggang sa pagkalinga sa mga estudyante sa mga makabagong paraan, sinikap ng OVCSA na magampanan ang kanyang mga mandato upang patuloy na lumikha ng espasyong ligtas at mapagkalinga para sa mga mag-aaral, online man o on-site.

Kalinga at Sustansya Para sa Mga Mag-aaral

Nang unang idineklara ang Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) sa Luzon noong Marso 2020, maraming mga mag-aaral ang humabol na makauwi sa kanilang mga probinsya. Marami rin ang piniling manatili sa kanilang mga alternatibong tirahan sa mga dormitoryo, boarding house, at apartment sa loob at labas ng campus. Ngunit naging mahirap ang access nila sa pagkain dahil walang mga pampublikong sasakyan at maraming tindahan ang nagsara. Naging inisyatibo ng opisina, sa pangunguna ni dating Bise Tsanselor Jerwin Agpaoa, na maghatid ng pagkain sa kanila.

Sa inilabas na survey form ay natukoy ang mga estudyante sa Katipunan, Krus na Ligas, Maginhawa, UP Bliss, Pook Ricarte, Pook Palaris, Pook Dagohoy, Area 1 at 2, Village A at B na araw-

araw hinatiran ng OVCSA ng tanghalian at hapunan. Ang mga nakatira naman malapit sa Tandang Sora at ilan pang mas malayo at liblib na bahay ay pinadalhan ng tig-dalawa o higit pang relief packs. Ang University Food Service (UFS) ang nagluto ng mga masusustansyang pagkain mula sa mga kasangkapang donasyon ng mga pribadong indibidwal at organisasyon. Kapag naibalot na't naihanda ay saka naman ito dadalhin ng OVCSA team sa mga nakatalagang istasyon o ihahatid nang door-to-door.

Bukod sa araw-araw na pagkain, binigyan din sila ng relief packs na may lamang grocery items at hygiene kits at maging ng ayuda mula sa Department of Social Work and Development (DSWD). Sa pamamagitan din ng binuong Facebook group para sa koordinasyon sa mga estudyante, nagkaroon sila ng network upang magdamayan, at magtulungan habang malayo sa kanilang mga pamilya. Rumesponde rin sa health emergencies ng mga miyembro ng Facebook group ang OVCSA team.

Mula 1 Abril 2020 hanggang 15 Mayo 2020, araw-araw na paghahatid ng pagkain, kabilang na ang Sabado't Linggo at holiday. Nasa 267 na mga mag-aaral ang naserbisuhan nito. Sila ay binubuo ng mga undergraduate, mga mag-aaral ng master's at PhD, at Juris Doctor, mula sa iba't ibang kolehiyo, at iba't ibang kasarian.

Oplan Hatid

Bukod sa paniniguradong may masusustansyang pagkain ang mga istranded na dormers at boarders ay nagsagawa rin ang OVCSA ng Oplan Hatid. Naglayon itong maihatid ang mga istranded na mag-aaral sa kanilang probinsya nang ligtas at ayon sa mga polisiya ng kanilang

lungsod/munisipyo. Sa kabuuan, 336 na mag-aaral ang nakauwi.

Dahil sa mga quarantine restrictions, nakipag-ugnayan ang OVCSA sa iba't-ibang Local Government Unit (LGU) upang masiguradong alam ang health at quarantine protocols ng mga lugar na uuwian ng mga mag-aaral. Sa pagdaan ng mga buwan at pagbabago ng health restrictions ay nag-iba ang anyo ng implementasyon ng programa.

1. Nakipag-ugnayan ang OVCSA sa Philippine Army upang matulungang makauwi ang mga mag-aaral na ang probinsya ay nasa Isla ng Luzon. Nagkaroon ng limang batches ang Oplan Hatid pauwi sa loob ng National Capital Region at Ilocos Region (Region I), Cordillera Administrative Region, Cagayan Valley (Region II), at Bicol Region (Region V).
2. Nakipag-ugnayan ang OVCSA sa mga LGU ng Baguio City, Tuguegarao City, Occidental at Oriental

Mindoro, at Cavite upang masundo nila ang kanilang mga constituent dito sa UP Diliman.

3. Nakipag-ugnayan ang OVCSA sa mga LGU sa Visayas at Mindanao tulad ng Iloilo, Iloilo City, Cebu, Cebu City, Zamboanga Peninsula (Region IX), General Santos City, at Davao Region. Ang mga mag-aaral ay naihatid sa NAIA kung saan sila ay aasikasuhin ng LGU para makasakay ng eroplano na in-arrange ng kanilang LGU.
4. Nang lumuwag ang restriksyon at pwede na ang pangkomersyal na byahe, naging layunin ng programa ang tulungan ang mga mag-aaral na makakuha ng dokumento na hinihingi ng kanilang LGU. Kasama rito ang Travel Authority, Medical Certificate, at negative na COVID-19 RT-PCR Test.

Pinabaunan rin ng OVCSA ang mga mag-aaral ng kumpletong set ng pagkain (kasama snacks!) sa buong araw ng kanilang byahe. Isinigawa rin ng OVCSA



Mga mag-aaral para sa pagbabahagi ng mga relief package.
Larawan mula sa OVCSA

at OSH ang paghahatid ng mga naiwang gamit ng mga mag-aaral na nakauwi bago ipinataw ang ECQ. Sinigurado ng OSH at ng mga dormitory personnel na naka-ayon sa data privacy at health protocols ang pag-iimbentaryo, pag-eempake, at pagpapadala o pagpapasundo ng mga kagamitang ito.

Tulong Medikal para sa mga Mag-aaral

Sa mga sumunod na buwan ay patuloy na tumaas ang mga kaso ng COVID-19 sa bansa at nagbunsod pa ng bagong mga variants. Lumala rin ang kalusugang pangkaisipan o mental health ng mga mag-aaral dala ng pagkakalayo sa mga kaibigan at minamahal, pagdadalumhati sa mga pumanaw, pagkatakot sa virus, pagkagalit sa mga polisiyang ipinatupad ng administrasyong Duterte sa panahon ng pandemya, at muli't muling pagkabigo sa kagyat na pagbabalik-eskwela. Dahil na rin sa limitadong akses sa medisina at mga ospital, maraming sa mga mayroong kondisyong medikal ay lumubha ang kalagayan. Sinabayan pa ito ng kabawasan sa kita ng maraming mga pamilya dulot ng krisis pang-ekonomiya.

Minabuti ng OVCSA, sa pangunguna ng sumunod na Bise Tsanselor Louise Jashil R. Sonido, na muling magsagawa ng donation drive para sa mga mag-aaral at/o kanilang pamilyang tinamaan ng COVID-19 o nagtamo ng sari-saring bayarin dulot ng medikal na mga pangangailangan. Ang #TatagUP donation drive ay naglayong makapag-abot ng tulong pinansyal sa pamamagitan ng mas pinadaling moda ng bank transfer o GCash.

Ang #TatagUP donation drive ay nakaangkla rin sa



*Pagbibigay ng mga pagkain sa pamamagitan ng pulley system.
Larawan mula sa OVCSA*

kaagapay na pagtatayo ng mga dormitoryong Molave Residence Hall at Kamia Residence Hall bilang mga temporary isolation facilities. Ang Molave ay naging Silungang Molave sa pamumuno ng UP Health Service kung saan prayoridad na matulungan at ma-isolate ang mga mild at asymptomatic cases ng komunidad ng UP. Ang Kamia ay naging HOPE7 sa pakikipagtulungan sa LGU ng Quezon City at Philippine Red Cross. Hanggang ngayon ay patuloy pa rin ang pagtanggap ng OVCSA ng tulong sa pamamagitan ng mas permanenteng programang pampinansyal para sa mga mag-aaral na #TaguyodUPD.

Minabuti ring palawakin ang sakop ng Financial Assistance

for Student Contingencies Program ng Office of Scholarships and Grants (OSG). Ito'y upang maaaring ireimburse ng mga estudyante ang kanilang mga gastusing medikal dahil sa sakit. Samantalang dati ay aksidente at pisikal na pinsala lamang ang natutugunan ng programa, pinalawak ito upang maaari nang i-reimburse ang gastos ng mga estudyante sa medisina, lab tests, check-ups, at iba pa. Prayoridad ng programang matulungan ang mga estudyanteng hrap ang katayuang pampinansyal.

Upang tugunan naman ang mental health crisis, ang mga opisina ng kumakalinga sa lusog-isip ng mga mag-aaral ay patuloy na nagbigay ng libreng psychosocial services sa



Mga miyembro ng UP Filipiniana Dance Group sa video shoot ng "Pag-asa, Pag-ibig, Paglaya." Larawan mula sa OVCSA

pamamagitan ng *telecounseling*. Araw at gabi, weekday man o weekend, nagbuhos ng panahon ang Office of Counseling and Guidance (OCG) sa ilalim ng OVCSA at ang UP Psychosocial Services (PsycServ) sa ilalim ng Opisina ng Tsanselor para tulungan ang mga estudyante, kawani, REPS, at fakulti ng UP. Maging ang counselor na nakapaloob sa Diliman Gender Office (DGO) at ang resident psychiatrist ng UP Health Service ay overtime sa pagtutugon sa mga pangangailangang pangkalusugan ng komunidad. Kagyat ring rumesponde ang OVCSA, kaagapay ang mga opisinang ito, sa mga naging health emergencies ng mga estudyante sa panahon ng pandemya.

Bolunterismo at Bayanihan

Inspirasyon ng OVCSA sa kanyang pagpapatuloy at pagpapahusay ang walang kapagurang pagsasalubong ng mga estudyante ng UP sa mga kakaiba't matitinding hamon ng COVID-19. Hindi naging hadlang ang pandemya sa diwa ng bolunterismo ng mga iskolar ng bayan at iba pang miyembro ng komunidad nito. Nagpatuloy ang pagsasagawa ng sari-saring mga programang panaklolo ng mga organisasyong pangmag-aaral at mga konseho ng mga mag-aaral: mga relief efforts para sa mga tinamaan ng sakit o kalamidad, gadget assistance at data loading programs para sa mga hirap sa remote learning, programang pang-alwan at pang-aliwan para sa mga nanlulumo at

nanlulumbay. Ilan lamang ito sa mga tinaguyod ng mga mag-aaral ng UP upang patuloy na makapaglingkod sa komunidad at bayan sa panahon ng ligalig.

Nagkusa ang mga estudyanteng magbuo ng malikhaing mga programa para sa kapuwa at komunidad sa pamamagitan ng kanilang mga organisasyon at mga konseho; nagprisinta para sa mga programa ng mga opisina tulad ng UPD Ugnayan ng Pahinungod at Reserved Officers' Training Corps. Naging frontliners rin sa pagpapatupad ng vaccination program. Ang ilan sa pinakamahusay at pinakamabisang mga programang isinagawa ng mga estudyante ay kinilala ng OVCSA sa pamamagitan ng taunang Parangal sa Samahang Mag-aaral. Ito ay pasilip lamang sa malawak at masigasig na pagmobilisa ng mga estudyante tungo sa pagkalinga sa kapwa at pagtamo ng panlipunang hustisya.

Ang pagpapayaman ng ganitong uri ng bolunterismo ay nasa gulugod rin ng OVCSA sa pagpapatupad ng kanyang mga mandato. Sa pagkikilala ng taglay na kakayahan ng mga estudyante at pakikipagtulungan sa kanilang mga dakilang layunin, nagiging mas masagana at matagumpay ang pagsasama-sama ng iba't ibang galaw upang epektibong makapaghatid ng tulong sa mga nangangailangan at mapalakas ang mga kaisahan tungo sa ligtas na balik-eskwela at muling pagkikita-kita.

*Ang ulat na ito ay isinumite ni Bise Tsanselor para sa Gawaing Pangmag-aaral Louise Jashil Sonido. Katuwang sa pagbuo ng ulat sina Jonathan Dela Cruz at Jasmine Martinez.



The Oblation Plaza. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Administration*

For much of its history, the university has always conducted its processes and procedures manually, often through papers that were sent to and from different offices.

But with the increase in the number of personnel and offices in the last 25 years, UPD operations have been challenged to cope, given that the number of regular personnel positions have not kept up. As a result, the university has increasingly needed to hire contractual staff. Delays in processing finance and human resource transactions were prevalent, and user complaints have increased.

The COVID-19 pandemic only heightened these challenges, and even more delays were inevitable. Majority of UPD personnel had to shift to alternative work arrangements for their safety, with only the most essential staff physically reporting on campus. Among those who needed to be physically present were the OVCA Finance and Human Resource offices, which, at that point at least, were not ready to shift to a digital work environment. Their dedication and service, however, has come at a cost. As of September 2021, 30 percent of OVCA personnel had tested positive

for COVID-19, despite the numerous precautions and RT-PCR testing, which was done every two months. These numbers will inevitably rise as the pandemic continues, and as the need to always physically report to campus remains a requirement for the offices to operate.

To better cope with the pandemic, the Vice Chancellor for Administration crafted the battle cry of SWAK—*Serbisyo, Walang iwanan, Ang new normal, Kapit bisig*. SWAK is also a colloquial Filipino term, an adjective, that means “to fit perfectly.” With SWAK, the OVCA aims to ensure that the services it is mandated to perform are effectively and efficiently done despite the challenges.

The OVCA embarked on implementing change through process improvement. Three components needed to be considered in creating change in an organization are: people, process, and technology. The People-Process-Technology (PPT) Framework further emphasizes that these three components are critical, particularly when computerizing systems.

Using the PPT Framework, the OVCA Development Roadmap

was proposed for short-, medium-, and long-term plans that can be carried into the next UP Diliman administration. The short-term plan covers year 2020 to 2022. Below is a summary of the Short-term Plan vs. Accomplishments for the three key components of People, Process, and Technology.

In general, the short-term plan is focused on the assessment of current systems, processes, policies and guidelines in order to identify the gaps towards ensuring a resilient, responsive and efficient support services as the OVCA transitions to a digital work environment.

The medium-term plan, covering activities and initiatives from 2023 to 2025, are geared towards the integration of OVCA services with the systems and processes of other units in UP Diliman and the UP System. More strategic initiatives are proposed for the long term, from 2026 onwards.

**This report was submitted by
Vice Chancellor for Administration
Adeline A. Pacia.*

Key Components	Short-Term Plan (2020–2022)	Accomplishments (2020–2022)
People	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the Competency Framework and Competency Tables per position with Performance Targets 2. Align Performance Management and Learning & Development programs with the Competencies 3. Establish appropriate Rewards and Recognition programs (e.g. Galing UPD Awards and unit-level awards) 4. Rationalize UPD Organizational Structure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed the Competency Framework. Ongoing crafting of the Competency Tables per position 2. Integrated the Performance Management, Learning and Development, and Rewards and Recognition committees to ensure alignment of programs with the competencies 3. Launched the Galing UPD Awards in 2021 4. Set up the Organizational Assessment and Personnel Audit Program
Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop HR, Finance and Property Management Policies and Guidelines 2. Digitization of files and records 3. Data reconciliation and database clean-up and integration 4. Achieve PRIME-HRM Level 2 (Process Defined) and/or Level 3 (Integrated HRM) 5. Coordination with government agencies for policy and audit compliance 6. Water and Energy Audit with policy recommendations and guidelines 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crafted Policies and Guidelines for HR Development, Rewards and Recognition, Reneging Fellows, Fiscal Policies and Operations Manual 2. Digitized OVCA, HRDO and SPMO files and records 3. Conducted data reconciliation and clean-up of property and financial records as well as HR service records 4. UPD awarded PRIME-HRM Maturity Level 2 in 2021. Ongoing initiatives to vie for Maturity Level 3 5. Started project that sets up the Internal Audit Office 6. Completed the Water and Energy Audit Project
Technology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of Phase 1 of the OVCA Information System Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HRDO's PUSO - Finance's BULSA - SPMO's eBODEGA 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implemented Phase 1 of eBODEGA in 2020 with additional features implemented in 2021 and 2022 2. Initial implementation of Phase 1 of PUSO and BULSA in 2021. Ongoing development and implementation of other Phase 1 modules for completion in 2022 3. On-going integration of OVCA systems



Aerial shot of the Institute of Chemistry and the National Institute of Physics buildings.
Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO



Melchor Hall. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

Research and Development*

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development (OVCRD): Accomplishments Research and extension activities in UP Diliman have been hampered by the pandemic, especially when the lockdown was imposed in March 2020. It effectively reduced the capacity of researchers to travel and conduct laboratory and face-to-face work. As a testament to individual- and institution-level resourcefulness and resilience, many, however, soon adapted and were more than ready to continue their research and extension endeavors. The following data are limited only to those activities that were processed by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development.

Research activities

By 30 April 2020, or the very last day of the Enhanced Community Quarantine that was imposed from 16 March, the OVCRD had received

and soon processed nine memoranda of agreement (MOAs) and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with grant funding amounting to more than PhP 100 million. These were from external funding agencies, Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, Emerging Technology Research and Development (PCIEERD), the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and HGST Philippines for faculty-researchers in College of Engineering and the College of Science. Many others, from faculty and REPS from various colleges and institutions, followed by way of MOAs, MOUs, extensions, and proposals (approved by the OVCRD). These can be seen in the table below.

Note: This table, prepared only for the purpose of this book, is based solely on documents received by the OVCRD. Figures may differ from final documents (i.e. approved by the chancellor or the UP president).

Period	No. of projects	Total funding amount (PhP unless otherwise stated)	External funding agencies
April 2020	9	107,149,568.93*	PCIEERD, DOST, HGST Philippines
May 2020	32	377,194,657.96 \$80,000.00	DOST, World Bank, PCAARRD, USAID, PCIEERD, DA, PCHRD, Guiguinto Bulacan
June 2020	55	559,877,440.34	PCIEERD, DOST, PCAARRD, Oxford, World Bank, PCHRD, DA BAR, CHED
July 2020	22	164,615,944.13	DOST, CHED, PCIEERD, DA BAR, PCAARRD, PCHRD, Cagayan State University
August 2020	14	115,919,724.37 \$14,999.92	PCIEERD, DOST, CHED, DTI, DOST-JSPS, PCHRD, WHO
September 2020	22	100,704,602.00	PCHRD, DOST, PCIEERD, PCAARRD, ASP Banban, World Bank, BSP, Philrice, DHSUD, DTI-VII, DOST-VIII, NCCA
October 2020	27	129,358,158.19	PCIEERD, DOST, SRA, NCCA, DOST-MIRDC, PCHRD, PITACH, CHE, PCAARRD
November 2020	36	164,751,966.07	PCHRD, PCIEERD, UP-TCAGP, PCAARRD, Vistaland, CHED, NRCP, DOH-AHEAD-HPSR, Cayetano
December 2020	24	119,010,758.49	PCIEERD, PCHRD, DTI-IX, PTP-PPA, PCAARRD, DTI-4A, NRCP, CSU, PCAF, Spencer Foundation, CHED K-12, IRCI, DENR
January 2021	27	292,115,787.10	PCHRD, DENR, NRCP, PCAARRD, PCIEERD, DOST, DA, DOST-PNRI
February 2021	21	P140,237,615.72	PCIEERD, PCHRD, CHED, DOST, PCAARRD, CHE, Phil Coast Guard, DA, MECO-TECO, PNOC
March 2021	42	358,946,862.68	DOST, PCAARRD, PCHRD, PCIEERD, NRCP, DOTr, NFRT (Canadian government), NDA, DOH
April 2021	13	88,958,386.31	WHO, PCAARRD, DOST, PCIEERD, DOH-AHEAD-HPSR
May 2021	34	355,444,376.33	PCHRD, DOST, PCIEERD, PCAARRD, DENR-BMB, WHO
June 2021	46	448,258,603.15	DOST, PCIEERD, NRCP, BSP, PCHRD, DOST Technicom, PCAARRD, DA-Biotech,
July 2021	33	279,780,547.07	PCIEERD, Samsung Electronics, DOST, PCAARRD, PCHRD, DOST-NAST, ISSI, DA
August 2021	32	240,099,646.54	WHO, DENR, PCHRD, PCIEERD, NRCP, DOST, DENR-EMB-AQMS, POEA, BSP, DA, DENR, PCAARRD, DOT-8
September 2021	27	281,338,797.93	PCIEERD, DOST, PCA, DOH, NAPOLCOM, PCHRD, PCAARRD, BIR, DOST-JSPS, Certeza Infosys Corporation
October 2021	18	108,537,025.89	PCHRD, PCIEERD, CSC, PCAARRD, DTI-9, DTI12, DOST, DTI-8, Phil-FIDA-DA-Biotech
November 2021	17	97,613,359.80	NRCP, PCIEERD, CHED, Philrice, PCHRD, PCAARRD, DOST
December 2021	11	124,716,337.18	DOST-SEI, AUAP, PCIEERD, PCHRD, PCAARRD, DOST

As for internally funded grants, the OVCRD understandably received far fewer research proposals when the pandemic hit. Only 14 proposals, compared to 104 the previous year, were submitted in 2020. And most, if not all 14, were only eventually approved for funding because the output of those research had much to do with coping with the pandemic. Many of the grant recipients whose research was supposed to end in 2020 applied for extension. All were approved by the OVCRD.

By the following year, 2021, many UPD researchers had already learned how to engage in research despite the limitations brought about by the pandemic. The OVCRD received 141 research proposals in 2021. The OVCRD also processed and endorsed a total of 198 research proposals for the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (OVPA) from 2019 : 53 in 2019, 80 in 2020, and 65 in 2021 for ECWRG (Enhanced Creative Work Research Grant), Balik-PhD, and EIDR (Emerging Interdisciplinary Research). Applications for research and creative work load credits (RLC/CWLC) also showed a marked increase in 2020, with 510 applications compared to 340 the previous year (2019). The 438 applications for 2021, though lower than in 2020, is still almost a hundred more than before the pandemic.

Extension activities

There was no call for Internally funded extension grant proposals in 2020, but calls resumed the

following year, the OVCRD approved a total of 18 proposals from various units, namely:

- UP Diliman Extension Program in Pampanga
- CMu (Strings and Chamber Music)
- College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (Departments of Philosophy, Linguistics, Political Science)
- College of Arts and Letters (Departments of Art Studies, Filipino and Panitikang Pilipino, European Languages, and Speech Communication and Theater Arts)
- College of Social Work and Community Development (Department of Community Development)
- School of Labor and Industrial Relations
- College of Engineering (Department of Mining, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering)
- College of Mass Communication (Department of Journalism)
- Institute of Islamic Studies
- University Library
- Office of the Advancement of Teaching, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Natural Sciences Research Institute
- College of Science (Institute of Biology)

There was also a remarkable increase in extension load credit applications during the pandemic, notably twice as many in 2020. This can be seen in the following table indicating distribution of applications by cluster, unit, semester, number of faculty, and number of applications:

ELC Distribution According to Cluster

CLUSTER	FIRST SEMESTER (Academic Year 2019–2020)		SECOND SEMESTER (Academic Year 2019-2020)		FIRST SEMESTER (Academic Year 2020–2021)		SECOND SEMESTER (Academic 2020–2021)	
Arts and Letters	No. of Faculty who applied for Extension and Learning Credit (ELC)	No. of ELC Applications	No of Faculty who applied for ELC	No. of ELC Applications	No of Faculty who applied for ELC	No. of ELC Applications	No. of Faculty who applied for ELC	No. of ELC Applications
CAL	4	4	7	7	0	0	1	1
CFA	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
CHK	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
CMC	4	4	6	9	5	5	5	5
CMu	4	4	3	3	9	9	11	12
TOTAL	14	14	18	21	14	14	17	18

Management and Economics Cluster								
AIT	1	1	3	3	6	6	1	1
VSB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SOLAIR	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
NCPAG	1	1	3	3	3	3	1	1
SURP	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	4
TMC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UP DEPP	1	1	5	6	4	4	0	0
TOTAL	3	3	11	12	15	15	7	7
Science and Technology Cluster								
ASP	1	1	0		0	0	0	0
CA	0	0	4	4	4	4	6	11
CoE	17	18	7	10	42	73	16	31
CHE	2	2	4	4	3	4	4	4
CS	18	19	86	94	51	59	60	69
SLIS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
STAT	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
TOTAL	38	40	101	112	100	140	89	118
Social Sciences and Law								
AC	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2
CEd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
IIS	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
CL	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0
CSSP	24	24	26	27	19	19	17	17
CSWCD	1	1	3	3	12	13	1	1
TOTAL	27	27	32	33	36	37	21	21
CIS	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	1
	82	84	164	180	166	207	135	165

Research dissemination

Despite the pandemic, both faculty members and REPS personnel engaged in research dissemination, though primarily via virtual media. A total of 53 (including one funded by Office of the Chancellor [OC]) faculty members in 2020 and 41 (2 OC RDG) in 2021 were provided financial support to deliver papers in online conferences via the UPD research dissemination grant (UPD RDG). A total of 21 REPS personnel (6 in 2020 and 15 in 2021) were granted financial support via the REPS development fund (RDF) to deliver papers or attend conferences. The publication of research and creative work was relatively quick to transition to purely online

operations in 2020. Three hundred and eighty-three (383) international publication award (IPA) applications for journal publications and 43 for book publications were processed by the OVCRD in that year. This number increased to 437 (journal publications) and 54 (book publications) in 2021. The pandemic also had no significant effect on manuscript submissions to OVCRD-managed journals *Humanities Diliman* (HD), *Science Diliman* (SD), and *Social Science Diliman* (SSD). The number of submissions and eventual publications in 2020 and 2021 are as follows, categorized by journal title, type of manuscript, and number of articles and authors published:

Humanities Diliman	18	83
(regular article)	78	55
(monograph)	-	3
(review)	3	4
number of authors published	15	24
number of articles published	13	16
Science Diliman	11	10
(regular article)	11	10
(short com)	-	-
number of articles published	9	7
number of authors published	35	22
Social Science Diliman	27	14
(regular article)	24	11
(review)	3	3
(report)	1	-
(short essay)	1	-
number of authors published	14	11
number of articles published	12	10

As for the number of journal titles within UPD, two new titles were added in 2021 to the OVCRD-managed website, UPDJOL (UP Diliman Journals Online). The OVCRD also processed 38 science productivity system (SPS) applications in 2020, and 47 in 2021.

Intellectual property

The pandemic had a relatively minor effect on technology transfer in UPD. In 2020, there were a total of 23 disclosures, 24 filings (including patent), one technology transfer, and 9 intellectual property campaign processed by the OVCRD. These numbers increased to 47 disclosures, 35 filings, 6 technology transfers, and 10 IP campaigns the following year 2021. Details are as follows:

DISCLOSURES	Jan-June	Jul-Dec	Total
Invention / design disclosures	6	5	11
Software disclosures	3	3	6
Copyright disclosures	2	4	6
Total Disclosures	11	12	23

Prior Art Search conducted	11	10	21
Market Study conducted	6	6	12

FILINGS	Jan-June	Jul-Dec	Total
Patents (PH)	1	1	2
Patents (foreign)	0	0	0
Total Patents	1	1	2
Utility Models	8	0	8
Industrial Designs	0	0	0
Software Copyrights	0	3	3
Other Copyrights	5	5	10
Trademarks	1	0	1
TOTAL FILINGS	15	9	24

GRANT / ISSUANCE	Jan-June	Jul-Dec	Total
Patents (PH)	0	0	0
Patents (foreign)	0	0	0
Total patents	0	0	0
Utility Models	4	2	6
Industrial Designs	0	1	1
Trademarks	0	0	0
Copyrights	5	8	13
TOTAL GRANTED/ISSUED	9	11	20

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER	Jan-June	Jul-Dec	Total
Commercial Licensing Agreements	0	0	0
Non-Commercial Licensing Agreements	0	1	1
Total Licensing Agreements	0	1	1
Fairness Opinion Reports (issued)			0

Noncommercial Licensing agreement: with Ace Electronics to VISSER technology (October 2020)

IP CAMPAIGN	Jan-June	Jul-Dec	Total
Basic seminar	3	2	5
Audience size	760	29	789
Patent search	0	2	2
Audience size	0	54	54
Copyrights	0	1	1
Audience size	0	1700	1700
Others	0	1	1
Audience size	0	500	500
TOTAL CONDUCTED	3	6	9
TOTAL REACH	760	2283	3043

2021

DISCLOSURES	Jan-June	Jul-Dec
Invention / design disclosures	16	7
Software disclosures	3	0
Copyright disclosures	12	8
Trademark disclosures	0	1
Total Disclosures	31	16
Prior Art Search conducted	6	7
Market Study conducted	6	4

FILINGS	Jan-June	Jul-Dec
Patents (PH)	2	2
Patents (foreign)	0	0
Total Patents	2	2
Utility Models	0	1
Industrial Designs	1	0
Software Copyrights	2	1
Other Copyrights	2	25
Trademarks	0	2
TOTAL FILINGS	5	30

GRANT / ISSUANCE	Jan-June	Jul-Dec
Patents (PH)	0	0
Patents (foreign)	0	0
Total patents	0	0
Utility Models	1	0
Industrial Designs	0	0
Trademarks	1	0
Copyrights	2	4
TOTAL GRANTED/ISSUED	4	4

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER	Jan-June	Jul-Dec
Commercial Licensing Agreements	0	1
Non-Commercial Licensing Agreements	1	3
Total Licensing Agreements	1	4
Collaborative Research Agreements	1	0
Fairness Opinion Reports (issued)	0	0

Details of Commercial and Non-commercial Licensing agreements:

ROGER: noncommercial license with Kawing (March 2021)

Arras/Kikkomaan: Commercial license with Antipara (August 2021)

SPICE (grow racks): limited license to manufacture with Turbo Konstrak (November 2021)

Navis v.2: noncommercial license (MOA) with Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) (November 5, 2021)

SPICE (grow racks): MOA with the Freshest Inc.; noncommercial agreement (August 3, 2021)

IP CAMPAIGN	Jan-June	Jul-Dec
Basic seminar	3	6
Audience size	93	95
Patent search	2	2
Audience size	23	43
Copyrights	1	0
Audience size	15	0
Others	2	0
Audience size	202	0
TOTAL CONDUCTED	8	8
TOTAL REACH	313	138

**This report was submitted by Vice Chancellor for Research and Development Gonzalo A. Campoamor II.*



The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Development (OVCPD) assisting stranded construction workers in partnership with other companies/ organizations. Photo from the OVCPD

Planning and Development*

All the service business locators in the university were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The OVCPD, together with Office of the Chancellor, initiated assistance in the form of rental lease holidays, with waiver and discounted rates for them to continue with their operation.

Post-ECQ guidelines included health and safety protocols, which were aligned with IATF and the Quezon City government's requirements, in order to protect the UP Diliman community. These actions were documented, monitored and diligently coordinated with the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force under the Office of the Chancellor. In order to help and assist members of the SMUPC, vendors, and other business locators, the OVCPD inquired regularly about their condition and welfare.

The greatest challenge for the OVCPD during the pandemic was to ensure the compliance with all health and safety protocols in construction sites inside UP Diliman. The strict adherence to DPWH circular No. 39 in all the work areas was constantly monitored by the OVCPD's Office of the Campus Architect. During the ECQ, there were a total of 44 construction sites, with 570 construction workers, their families and

professional personnel. They received assistance and other forms of support from the OVCPD staff and personnel, who collaborated with the UP community, AUPWU, and private individuals and corporations. The OVCPD also coordinated with the DSWD central office to distributed food and hygiene kits, along with a food allowance cash aid. The OVCPD continues to monitor these sites, assisting workers, contractors and project management firms during these most difficult times.

The OVCPD, with the assistance of Office of the Campus Architect (OCA) and the UPD Asian Institute of Tourism (AIT) Office of the, Dean facilitated the use of AIT facilities as a Quezon City Local Government District 6 Covid-19 Testing / Swabbing facility. This was done with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with UP Diliman approved by Chancellor Fidel R. Nemenzo.

OVCPD and OCA assisted the University Health Service (UHS) in evaluating and preparing Palma Hall (Kanlungang Palma) as a UP Diliman isolation facility in the initial stages of Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). This measure was initiated both by the College of Social Science and Philosophy (CSSP) and College of Arts in Letters (CAL),

with the full support of the Office of the Chancellor. The OVCPD also fast-tracked the conversion of Molave and Yakal Residence Halls into Silungang Molave, an isolation facility. With the assistance of the Office of the Vice President for Development (OVPD), Project Management Office (PMO), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and its contractor, the Molave Residence Hall had CCTVs, generator sets and internet connectivity for the immediate use of the University Health Service. In April 2021, the OVCPD also assisted the Philippine Red Cross in setting up the isolation facility at Kamia Residence Hall.

The OVCPD also developed and distributed the OVCPD-OCA COVID-19 Physical Distancing Guidelines to all academic units and the offices of the different vice chancellors. These include specifications, floorplans and equipment that comply with safety and sanitation requirements.

Other Initiatives

- The OVCPD, with the assistance of the University Health Service (UHS), conducted a series of COVID-19 briefings for all the residents/tenants at



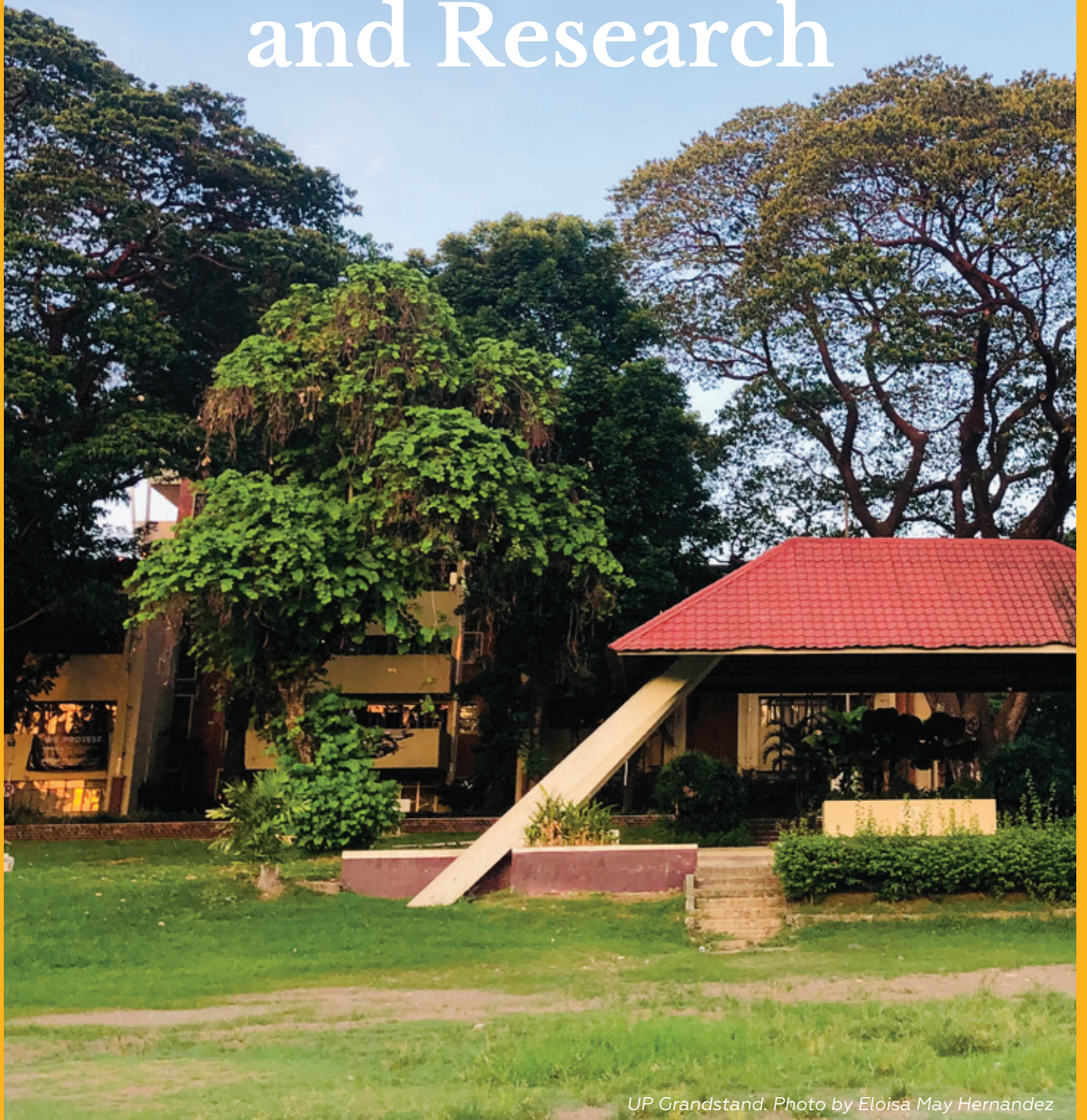
North wing of Quezon Hall. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

Balay Internasional. These sessions on health and safety protocols and for all the staff and/or caretakers.

- Kapit Balay Service Apartments were accredited by the Department of Health (DOH) and Inter-Agency Task Force for COVID-19 as isolation facilities. The OVCPD dedicated the entire fourth floor of the Kapit-Balay Apartment to house students from Sampaguita, Ilang-ilang and Sanggumay who needed to isolate.
- Kapit-Balay Apartment also provided accommodation for exchange students and returning faculty from abroad and as their quarantine area prior to returning to the respective homes. This has done since the March 2020 EQC in close coordination with the Office of International Linkages, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- The OVCPD supplied housing for the following frontline personnel upon the request of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA)
 - University Food Service
 - Employees from Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
- Employees from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration (OVCA) also provided isolation facilities for the staff of the following units:
 - UP Diliman Accounting Office
 - UP Diliman Cash Office
- OVCPD also oversaw the health and welfare of its administrative and technical staff.
 - Staff with pre-existing health condition/comorbidities were asked to work from home. Only personnel living inside the campus could physically report for work.
 - A combined skeleton and work-from-home arrangement was implemented for the technical personnel living outside the campus.

**This report was submitted by Vice Chancellor for Planning and Development Raquel B. Florendo.*

Pagtawid: Bridging Distances in Learning and Research



UP Grandstand. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

Linangan: Paglilingkod-Bayan sa Panahon ng Pandemya

Nancy Kimuell-Gabriel

Paano nga ba magtuturo ang mga guro sa panahon ng pandemya?

Sa panahong biglaan tayong nagkahiwa-hiwalay at parepareho tayong nawindang dahil sa sunod-sunod na *lockdown*, ang nangibabaw na damdamin ay magtutulong kung paano itatawid ang bayan mula sa pandemyang COVID-19. Bilang faculty, nasa isip din natin palagi kung paano maipagpapatuloy ang pagtuturo. O kung dapat pa bang ipagpatuloy. Isa itong pangyayaring ngayon lang natin narasan, at nangailangan ng maingat at hakbang-hakbang na pagtugon. Bagaman magkakalayo, nangingibabaw ang damdaming iparamdam sa bawat isa na “hindi ka nag-iisa,” “kapit lang,” at sama-sama tayo sa pagharap sa bagong kalagayan at mga suliranin.

Sa ganitong diwa nagsimula ang pagkakabuo ng **Linangan**. Ito ang naging daluyan ng ugnayan at pagtulong sa mga *general education faculty* (*gen ed faculty*) mula sa iba’t ibang unibersidad at kolehiyo sa buong Pilipinas.

Linangan ang pamagat ng *General Education Faculty Development Extension Program* na isinasagawa ng General Education Center (GEC) bilang paglilingkod-bayan sa panahon ng pandemya. Ito ay pinopondohan ng Office of Extension Coordination (OEC)-Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development (OVCRD), October 2021–October 2022. Ang GEC ay ang opisina sa UP Diliman na may tungkuling ipatupad ang mga patakaran at programa ng Unibersidad sa Pangkalahatang Edukasyon o General Education.

Tatakbo ang *Linangan* sa loob ng isang taon na nagsimula noong Setyembre 2021 at isinasagawa isang beses bawat buwan. Dahil panahon ng pandemya at *work-from-home* ang moda ng pagtatrabaho sa unibersidad, isinasagawa ang *Linangan* via zoom at maihahanay sa tinatawag nating *virtual seminar* o **webinar**, isa ring salitang nauso sa panahon ng pandemya. Inspirado rin ito ng UP System GE Conference” na isinagawa para sa GE faculty

noong 26–27 Abril 2021, 5–6 at 10–11 Mayo 2021 (“UP System successfully concludes the GE Conference 2021” <https://gec.upd.edu.ph/up-system-successfully-concludes-the-ge-conference-2021/>). Naisip namin sa GEC na maipaabot ang mga ganitong uri ng pagsasanay at *engagement* sa lahat ng GE faculty sa buong Pilipinas upang sabay-sabay ang ating pag-unlad.

Linangan Organizer & General Education Center Staff

Nakakalimang webinar na ang GEC sa panahong isinusulat ko ang artikulong ito. Sa bawat webinar, mga GE subject ang paksa, dahil ito ang mandato ng opisina. Ang serye ng webinar para sa mga GE subject ay binansagang naming **Teach-Talk**. Naisalang na ang Kasaysayan ng Pilipinas, at sinundan ito ng Understanding the Self, Critical Approaches in the Arts, at Ethics. May isang *episode* ding nakalaan sa *Blended Learning* at mga paghahanda at protokol na dapat isagawa sa panahong magbabalik na ang mga



Mula sa kaliwa: Nancy A. Kimuell-Gabriel, PhD, Czarina Dorothy R. Duka, at Jerusalem S. Cruz. Mga larawan mula sa GEC



Mula sa kaliwa: Kenrick Paul P. Buduan, Kristoper M. Tarca, at Hassy Lyn N. Trini.
Mga larawan mula sa GEC

unibersidad sa *face-to-face* na moda ng pagtuturo at pag-aaral. Pinamagatan namin ang episode na ito ng **Vacc-to-School: Doing Blended Learning for GE Courses**. May apat pang webinar ang nakahanay hanggang Hunyo 2022 ang *Linangan*.

Birtuwal na diyalogo ang *Linangan*. Tumatawid ito ng bakod ng UP para matulungan ang gen ed faculty ng ibang unibersidad. Nakasentro sa layunin ang paunlarin ang kaalaman at kasanayan ng mga guro sa pamamagitan ng tuloy-tuloy na kumbersasyon tungkol sa nilalaman at paraan ng pagtuturong *online/remote*, sa pangangasiwa sa *virtual classroom*, at sa mga bagong kagamitan sa pag-aaral. Isang serbisyo publikong nakapook sa larangan ng pagsasanay ng mga guro, ang *Linangan* ay una ring pagkakataon isinagawa ng GEC.

Para ito sa mga guro na nagtuturo sa henerasyong kung tawagin ay *generation z* o “*zoomers*.” Isang demograpikong



Nemenzo. Larawan mula sa GEC

identipikasyong para sa mga estudyanteng isinilang sa pagitan ng 1997–2012. Bagaman ang konsepto na ito ay galing sa kanluran, sa mga sesyon ng *Linangan*, lumalabas ang mga ganitong paglalarawan ng mga guro sa gen-z: sila raw ang *digital natives* (kasama ang *millennials*), *gamers*, *music-goers*, *tech-savvy*, at kilala bilang bihasa sa *messaging*, *internet*, *social media*, at *mobile system*. Sa madaling salita, sila ang **digital-ites**. Bukod dito, inilalarawan din silang “hindi na mahilig magbasa ng mahahabang babasahin,” “mas audio-visual oriented” at “may 8-minutong attention span.”

Dito nagkakaroon ng hiram ang mga guro na hindi naman *tech-savvy*, higit na sanay sa tradisyonal na paraan ng pagtuturo, pagpapabasa ng mahahabang babasahin, at lubhang nabigla sa online teaching. Kaya kalimitang tanong ng mga guro: Paano gaganyakin ang mga mag-aaral sa klase? Paano isusustena ang klase? Paano gagawing *engaging* at *interactive* ang klase? At higit pa sa teknik, kung paano gagawing makabuluhan ang klase sa panahon ng pandemya—gutom ang mga tao, walang trabaho, walang ayuda, walang matinong internet connection.

Noong wala pang pandemik, pinapaksa na ng GEC ang ganitong pagtuturo sa Gen Z sa seminar na “ABCs of Gen XYZ: Understanding our Learners.” Sa unang taon ng pandemya (2020) iniangkop ang lekturang ito sa sitwasyon kung kaya

naging “ABCs of Gen XYZ during the Pandemic Times.” Subalit tumagal ang mga lockdown. Sumampa pa ng ikalawang taon. Hindi na lamang katangian ng Gen Z ang hinahabol ng mga guro, naghahabol na ang lahat sa bagong moda ng pagtuturo: birtuwal ang classroom, walang kaharap kundi ang maliliit na kahon ng piktyur ng mga estudyante, *frustrated* sa putol-putol na boses na hatid ng mahinang signal ng internet, bumibigay na mga gadyet.



Payongayong. Larawan mula sa GEC

Ang *Linangan* bilang Paglilingkod-Bayan

Pormal na inilunsad ang **Linangan: GE Faculty Development Extension Program** noong 6 Setyembre 2021. Paglilingkod-bayan o serbisyo publiko ang katangian nito sa larangan ng pagsasanay sa mga guro, hindi lang para sa UP units kung hindi lalo na para sa mga state universities and colleges (SUCs), local universities and colleges (LUCs) at private and special higher education institutions (HEIs). Isang *ten-part webinar series* para magkaroon ng pagkakataong

makapagbahaginan ang mga GE faculty sa nilalaman ng iba't ibang GE subject, paraan ng pagtuturo, pamamahala ng klase, at paglikha ng mga learning resources para sa *remote online learning* o sa tinatawag na *blended or flexible learning environment*. Nakabase ito sa siyam na GE core courses ng CHED at UP, at isang paksang nakatuon sa *blended learning* at mga preparasyon at protokol sa muling pagbabalik ng *face-to-face classes* (Vacc to School).

- Kasaysayan (Setyembre 2021)
- Understanding the Self (Oktubre 2021)
- Vacc to School: Doing Blended Learning for GE Courses (Nobyembre 2021)
- Critical Approaches in the Arts (Disyembre 2021)
- Ethics (Pebrero 2022)
- Purposive Communication (Marso 2022)
- Wika, Kultura at Lipunan (Abril 2022)
- The Contemporary World (Mayo 2022)
- Science, Technology and Society (Hunyo 2022)
- Mathematics in the Modern World (Hulyo 2022)

Isa itong gawaing hindi tinatrato lang bilang “extension work” o tungkulin lamang kung hindi pagsasabuhay ng ating prinsipyong maglingkod sa bayan. Ani UP Diliman Chancellor Prof. Fidel R. Nemenzo, D.Sci. sa araw ng paglulunsad ng *Linangan*: “Ang paglilingkod-bayan ay hindi dapat iniisip na isang tungkulin lamang, kundi isang prinsipyo na gumagabay sa kabuuan ng ating trabaho bilang mga guro, mananaliksik, at miyembro ng pamantasan.

Ang paglilingkod sa bayan ang buod ng ating misyon. Ito ang prinsipyong gumagabay sa papel ng UP sa sambayanan—ang tulungan ang iba pang mga

eskuwelahan at pamantasan sa Pilipinas para lalo pang umunlad at tumatag ang mga ito. Magagawa natin ito sa pamamagitan ng pakikipag-ugnayan sa larangan ng pananaliksik, pagbabahagi ng ating kaalaman sa mga kapwa-guro, pagmumulat sa mga bagong polisiyang makatutulong sa pamamalakad ng mga pamantasan, curriculum development at marami pang iba.” (Dr. Fidel R. Nemenzo, Pambungad sa “Linangan, Public Service ng GEC Inilunsad,” <https://gec.upd.edu.ph/linangan-public-service-ng-gec-inilunsad/> 6 Setyembre 2021).

Nais mag-ambag ng GEC sa pagtataas ng kakayahan ng mga GE faculty na harapin ang mga hamong kinakaharap ng sektor pang-edukasyon sa kasalukuyan—ang biglaang paglipat sa *remote learning*, ang mabilis na kumpas ng mundong digital, ang mabibigat na epekto ng pandemya, ang mga hidwaan sa loob ng bansa at may giyera pa sa ilang bahagi ng daigdig. Kailangang maalam at may kritikal na pag-iisip ang mga faculty na makapagbibigay-linaw sa mga pangyayari at pagbabago sa ating mundo. Ayon kay Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Prof. Ma. Theresa T. Payongayong, Ph.D. noong paglulusand ng GEC,

Nararapat maging handa ang mga mag-aaral sa nagbabagong panahon, kawalang-katiyakan, at mabilis na pag-angat ng iba't ibang teknolohiya. Sa madaling salita, tinalakay (sa nadaluhan kong seminar ng Quality Assurance) ang mga dapat paghandaan para maging “future proof” ang ating mga mag-aaral. Dagdag niya, “para gawin ito, sampung “skills demand” ang ibinahagi ng Taylor’s University at ito ay ang sumusunod:

- “analytical thinking and innovation”
- “active learning and learning strategies”
- “creativity, originality and initiative”
- “technology design and programming”
- “critical thinking and analysis”
- “complex problem-solving”
- “leadership and social influence”
- “emotional intelligence”
- “reasoning, problem-solving and ideation”
- “systems analysis and evaluation”

Pero ang tanong ayon kay VC Payongayong ay “paano tutugunan ng mga pamantasan ang ganitong ‘skills demand?’” Sinipi niya ang pahayag ni Professor Datuk Dr. Asma Ismail, Tagapangulo ng Malaysian Qualification Agency Board at Pangulo ng Academy of Sciences Malaysia, sa susing pananalita nito sa kaparehong seminar, “ang pangangailangang magkaroon ng ‘paradigm shift’ patungo sa ‘values-based education.’ Binigyang-diin niya ang *soft skills* (tulad ng *flexibility*, *work ethics*, *interpersonal*, *problem-solving skills*) higit sa *hard skills* (technical, management, computer skills).”

Dagdag pa niya, “maaaring *highly or technically skilled* ang ating mga mag-aaral subalit ang tanong ay, batid ba nila kung kailan dapat gamitin ang mga ito? Alam ba nila kung saan ito dapat gamitin? Alam ba nila kung paano ito dapat gamitin? Maaaring itanong din kung kailangan nga ba nilang gamitin ang ganitong klaseng skills sa pagharap sa buhay?”

Bilang pagdiriin sa Balangkas ng Pangkalahatang Edukasyon sa UP, ito na nga ang hinahangad nating kalidad ng edukasyong *tatak-UP*: hubugin ang kritikal

at mapanlikhang pag-iisip ng mga mag-aaral; humutok ng mga mamamayang may mataas na diwa ng paglilingkod sa bayan at pagpapahalaga sa katarungan. Matutuhan nilang mag-isip, magpasiya sa sarili at kumilos sa anumang kalagayan o kapaligirang kapapalooban nila sa pamamagitan ng holistiko at transformatibong edukasyong makukuha nila sa unibersidad. Para sa kompletong impormasyon tungkol sa *Linangan*, maaring tingnan ang GEC (2021a). Bisitahan ang GEC (2021b) upang mabasa ang buod ng paglulunsad.

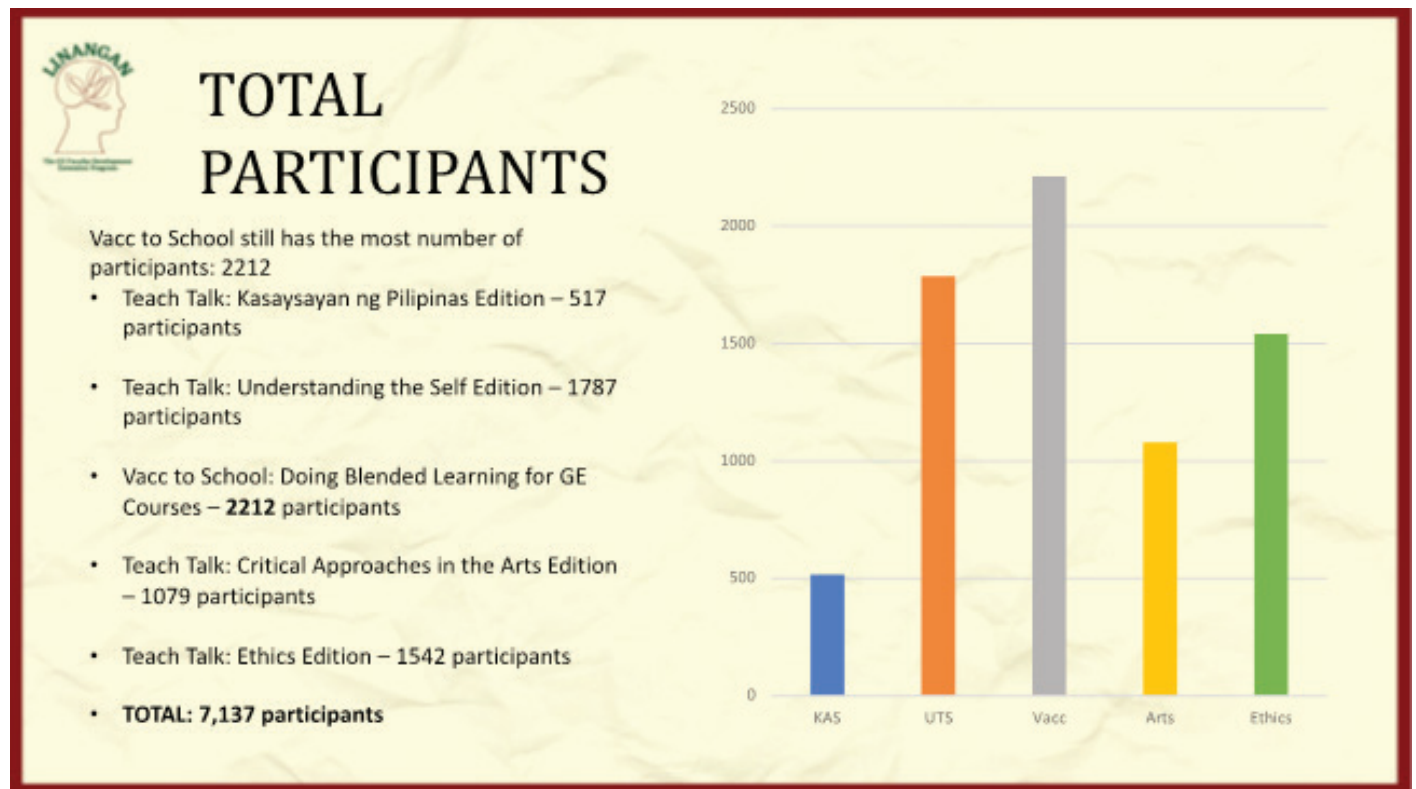
Ang pagsalubong ng mga guro sa *Linangan*

Nakakatuwa ang sigla ng pagsalubong ng mga GE faculty

mula sa unibersidad at kolehiyo sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa. Nagsimula ang *Linangan* nang may mahigit 500 na faculty na dumalo sa unang serye. Sumipa ang atendans mula sa ikalawang serye nang makasama na ng GEC ang mga rehiyonal na opisina ng CHED sa pagpapadalo sa mga faculty sa iba't ibang unibersidad at kolehiyo. Umabot sa mahigit 2,200 faculty ang dumalo sa *Vacc To School: Doing Blended Learning for GE Courses*. Sa pinakamataas na bilang naman ng representasyon ng mga institusyon, pinakamarami ang institusyong kinakatawan sa *Ethics*, mahigit 475 institusyon ang kinakatawan ng mga gurong dumadalo. Ang pinakamaraming dumadalo ay nanggagaling sa NCR, Calabarzon, at Hilagang Mindanao. At karamihan ng mga

indibidwal na kalahok ay galing sa SUCs at HEIs. Tingnan ang mga talahanayan ng atendans.

Mainit ang pagtanggap ng mga faculty sa *Linangan*. Kung pagbabatayan ang feedback, napapanahon, mahusay, makabuluhan, hitik sa mga bagong impormasyon, nilalaman, at paraan ng pagtuturo ang nakukuha nila sa mga webinar. Nakatulong na bukod sa Zoom, may live streaming din ang GEC sa mga platform nito sa YouTube at Facebook. Kung sa tradisyonal na face-to-face ito isasagawa, marahil, hindi posible na makapagpadalo ng ganitong karami mula sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa at sa ganitong kadalas na aktibidad. Isang bagay na ipagpapasalamat sa mundong digital kung saan ang





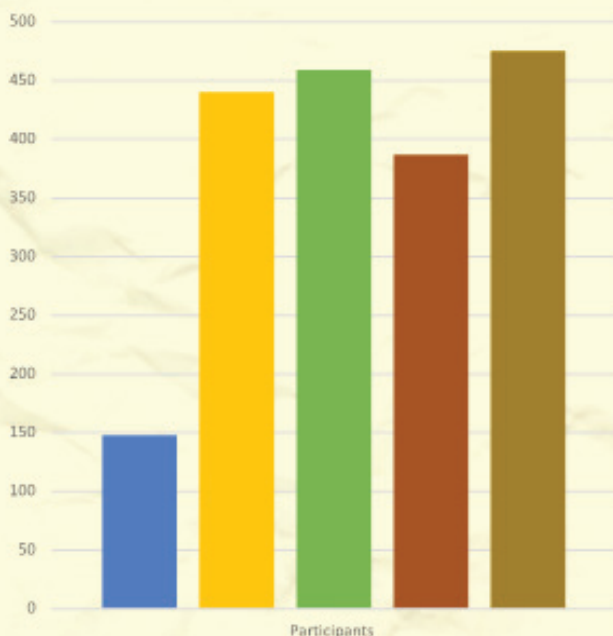
INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED

Ethics Edition now has the most number of participating institutions (475)

- Teach Talk: Kasaysayan ng Pilipinas Edition – 148 institutions
- Teach Talk: Understanding the Self Edition – 440 institutions
- Vacc to School: Doing Blended Learning for GE Courses – 459 institutions
- Teach Talk: Critical Approaches in the Arts Edition – 387 institutions
- Teach Talk: Ethics Edition – 475 institutions

TOTAL: 1909 institutions*

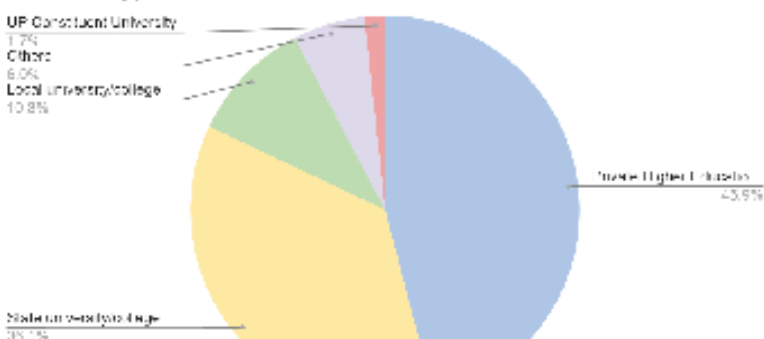
* Not unique



INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED

- Most of the participants are from private higher education institutions (private HEIs), consistent with the past 3 webinars.

Count of Type of Institution



Institutions Represented

SUC	169
LUC	48
Private HEI	216
UP CU	8
Others	28
NA	6
Total	475

lahat ay konektado. Buwenamano sa *Linangan* ang Kasaysayan 1. Naging tagapagsalita sina Prof. Neil

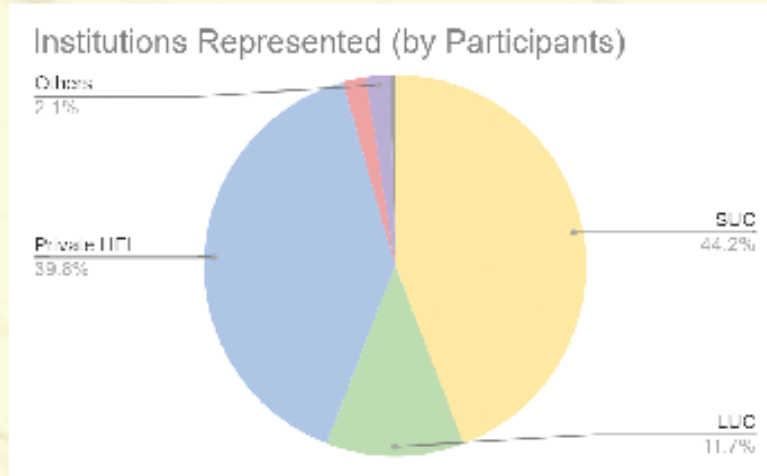
Santillan at Asst. Prof. Jely Galang ng Departamento ng Kasaysayan, UPD. Binigyang-diin ni Neil Santillan na ang

mga guro ay kinakailangang talagang magsanay na sa mga digital platform, tamang pagbabalanse ng oras, at pag-



INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED (by participants)

- Most participants are from HEIs, but Mindanao State University, an SUC, is the most represented institution with 30 participants. The total number of participants increased compared to Critical Approaches in the Arts Edition.



Institutions Represented (by Participants)	
SUC	681
LUC	180
Private HEI	613
UP CU	30
Others	32
NA	6
Total	1542

Most Represented Institution	
Mindanao State University - Main Campus	30 participants

alam sa tuwina ng konteksto ng ating mga mag-aaral. Ibinahagi nila kung paano nila sinimulan ang remote learning set-up, mula sa paggawa ng course pack hanggang sa personal na pagsasanay para matutuhan at maging bihasa din sila sa online setting. Hindi lamang pagtuturo, pero nagiging *curator* din ang mga guro ng mga materyales na ipapagamit sa mga mag-aaral, ani Jely Galang. Kailangang pairalin ang *flexibility* at *compassion*, tamang pakikinig at pag-alam sa kalagayan ng mga estudyante kung nais nating magtagumpay ang pagkatuto sa kabila ng mga gipit na kalagayan.

Mabibigat din ang mga naging katanungan na sinagot naman sa malayang talakayan ng mga tagapagsalita. Halimbawa, naitanong ang perspektiba ng mga tagapagsalita sa pagtatanggal ng asignaturang kasaysayan sa hay-iskul; kung paano ang gagawin sa rebisyonismong historikal. Kung paano hihikayatin ang

mag-aaral na magbasa ng mahahabang teksto. Marami ring katanungan sa wikang gagamitin sa pagtuturo ng kasaysayan. Dapat bang ipaturo ang kasaysayan sa Filipino kahit sa mga eskuwelahang pinapasukan ng mayayaman? Kung karamihan ay gumagamit ng Ingles, maaari ba silang sumagot sa kahit anong wika? Hindi naman daw lahat ng Gen Z ay tech-savvy. Paano nakakaapekto ang TikTok sa pagtuturo at pag-aaral ng kasaysayan at ano ang mga maimumungkahing babasahin para sa paksang Batas Militar, diktadura ni Marcos at historical revisionism?

Sa webinar na *Understanding the Self*, may mga nagpahayag na huwag kalimutang talakayin ang impluwensiya ng imperyalismo at kolonyalismo, lalo na ang Amerikanisasyon ng bansa. At sa pagpuna sa war on drugs ni Pangulong Duterte, may nagsabing “Adik lang po ang nang-rape, kaya ubusin ang mga drug lords!” Tilà ang ibig sabihin

dito ay anti-poor ang drug war campaign pero hindi hinahabol ang “malalaking isda.” May mga katanungan din sa intellectual honesty, sexual orientation and gender identities & expressions (SOGIE), etnisidad, anxiety at kalimitang problema sa mental health sa panahon ng pandemya. Paano raw ba ituturo ang *sexual self*—at mga kaakibat na paksa sa *sexual molestation, rape, contraception, sexual assault*, lalo na sa mga katolikong unibersidad. Paano raw ba magtuturo nang maayos kung may problema sa connectivity, lalo na sa mga estudyanteng kabilang sa laylayan ng lipunan. Kinuwestiyon rin mismo ang pagbibigay ng asignaturang “Understanding the Self” sa mga psychology teachers lamang gayong interdisciplinary ang oryentasyon at saklaw ng asignatura, at *overloaded* pa nga sila.

Masaya ang isang faculty na nakapagpahayag ng ganito habang dumadalo sa *Critical*

Approaches in the Arts webinar. “I feel like attending the class for the whole semester. Dami kong napulot. Ang gagaling ng mga speaker.”

Pero paano daw ba gagawing *relevant* ang pagtuturo ng art sa students sa taga-bundok at mahihirap na saray kung ang prioridad nila ay paghahanap ng ikabubuhay? Paano nila maa-appreciate ang art sa ganiyang kalagayan? Tingnan halimbawa ang sumusunod,

“Hello, I am an instructor in a State University. Most of our students are from the mountains and less privileged. Of course, art is something that they disregard in their day- to-day living because they are actually busy working just to make ends meet. How can we convince them that art has relevance in their lives? We cannot just teach them

about art just for the sake of teaching art.”

But again, our students are poor. some don't have any smart phones, and many don't have access to pop culture. It's hard to teach them beauty when their only reality is hardship. The pandemic is not even helping, it is only alienating them even more.

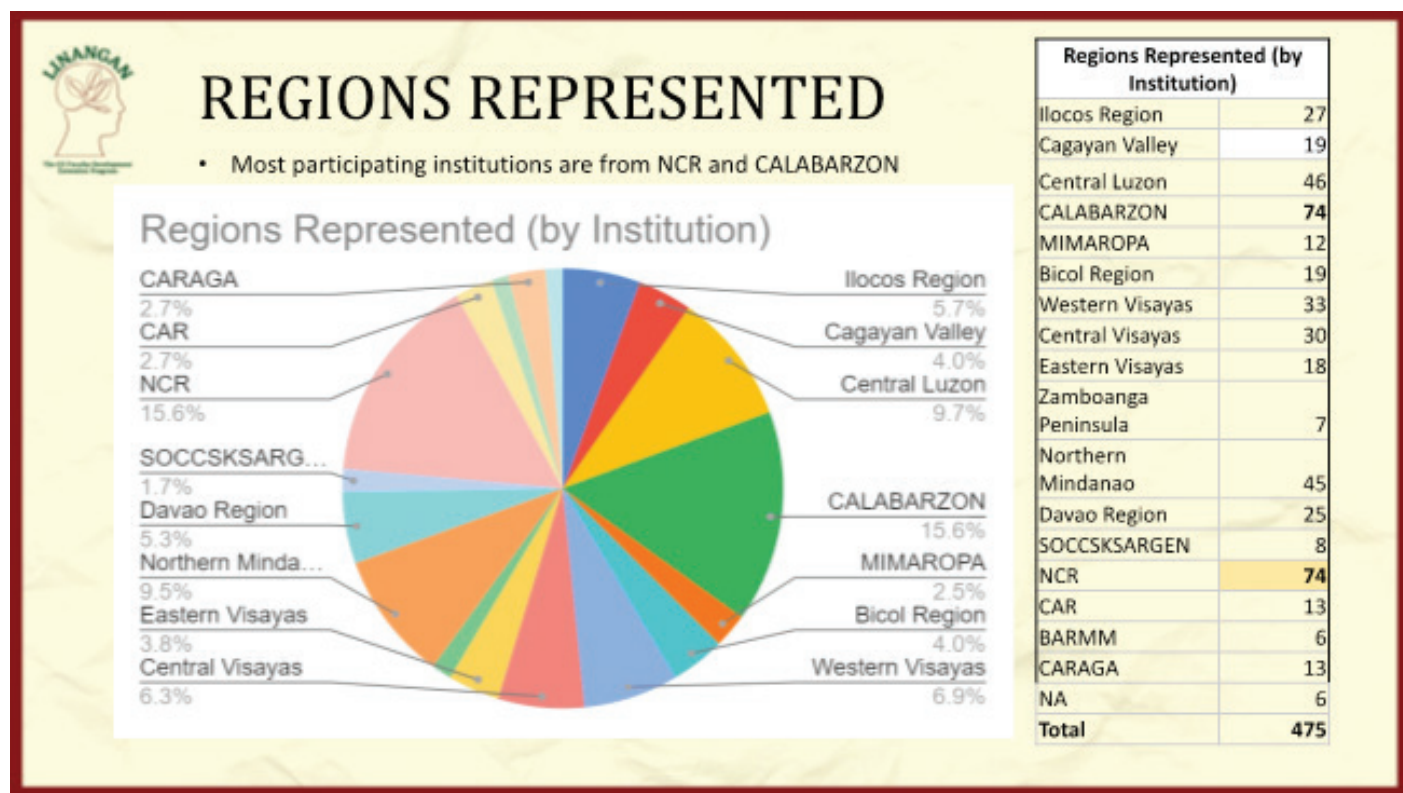
Sagot naman ng isang guro,

“Art is a way to release one's emotions and let go of our worries. In this way, it really promotes mental health if we will use art well. Students nowadays have a very low tolerance for stress and demands of schooling...”

Pagpapaliwanag ng mga tagapagsalita na hindi na talaga itinuturo ang “art of art's sake.” Ang pagtuturo ng sining ngayon ay kontekstuwal, batay

sa karanasan, kasaysayan, at kalagayan ng lipunan. Hindi lamang talakayan ito ng mga naiguhit at naipinta, at mga teknikal na aspekto ng sining. Ang mas mahalagang pinag-aaralan ngayon, ani Prof. Sofia Guillermo, ay kung paano ang realidad ng pang-araw-araw na buhay ng tao ay nasasalamín sa sining, at kung paanong ang sining ay maaaring maging kasangkapan upang mas maging kritikal sa pagsusuri ang mga mag-aaral. “Maaaring baguhin ng sining ang tao, at maaaring baguhin ng tao ang mundo,” dagdag pa niya (cf. GEC 2021c).

Kailangan na rin, ani Prof. Robin Daniel Padilla, na pag-aralan ang sining sa “glokal” na perspektiba. Ito ang pag-aaral ng kaalaman at pagkakaugnay-ugnay ng mga kaalaman sa buong mundo mula sa lente ng ating pagka-Pilipino at kontekstong lokal. Kailangan “mas maging maingat at kritikal sa kulturang popular, maging

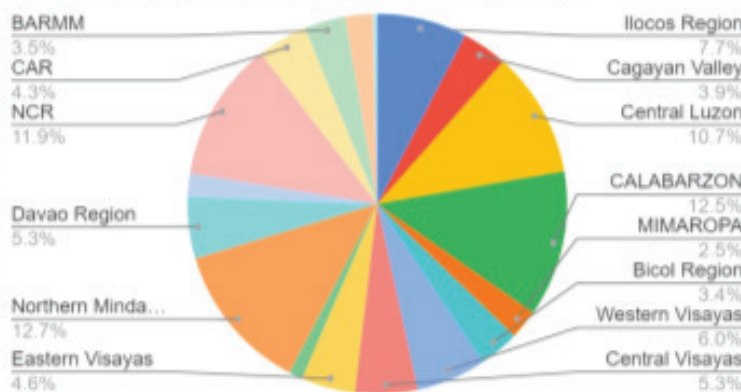




REGIONS REPRESENTED (by participants)

- Most of the participants are from Northern Mindanao, CALABARZON, and NCR, consistent with the Critical Approaches in the Arts Edition webinar.

Regions Represented (by Participants)



Regions Represented (by Participants)	
Ilocos Region	118
Cagayan Valley	60
Central Luzon	165
CALABARZON	192
MIMAROPA	38
Bicol Region	53
Western Visayas	92
Central Visayas	82
Eastern Visayas	71
Zamboanga Peninsula	18
Northern Mindanao	196
Davao Region	81
SOCSCSARGEN	30
NCR	184
CAR	66
BARMM	54
CARAGA	36
NA	6
Total	1542

mas maalam at mapanuri sa mga lumalaganap na mga *trend* ngayon na kinasasangkutan ng mga estudyante.” Na sinagot naman ng isang guro sa chatbox na gayon nga ang ginagawa niya, pinapakinggan niya kung ano man ang pinapakinggan ng kaniyang mga estudyante at pinapanood kung ano ang kanilang pinapanood. At pinag-uusapan nila ito sa klase. Mensahe naman ni Prof. Eloi Hernandez.

“Our students are very interested in the arts, they just don’t realize they are consuming the arts. Hip hop, Spotify, memes, video games,

K-pop, drama, etc. [they] consume those everyday. What we have to do as Arts 1 teachers is to deepen their understanding about these art forms, encourage them to be more critical.”

Sa bawat webinar, palaging sumusulpot ang komentaryong huwag haluan ng politika ang paksa. Maiiwasan nga ba? Samantalang bahagi ng buhay ang politika. Malaking bahagi ng mga reklamo natin sa kasalukuyang kalagayang pang-edukasyon ay bunga ng politika—unang-una na rito ang kahirapan bunga ng mga maling programa at patakaran. Ang

isyu ng kahirapan, kawalan ng gadget, connectivity, kasanayan ng mga guro, kakulangan sa mga kagamitang panturo ay konektado sa pangangasiwa ng mga ahensiya ng pamahalaan, badyet na inilalaan nila sa edukasyon, nilalaman ng ituturo, at suporta sa kaguruan. Sabi nga ni Assoc. Prof. Portia P. Padilla sa *Vacc to School: Doing Blended Learning for GE Courses*, “real talk lamang po tayo dito.”

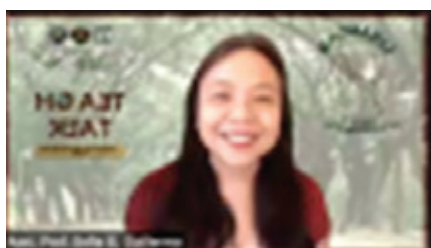
Kaya hindi kataka-taka na sa *Ethics* webinar, may mga tanong din kung paano magagamit ang Etika bilang batayan sa pagpili ng iboboto at kung anong klaseng kandidato ang dapat



Mga tagapagsalita sa Kasaysayan 1 webinar (mula sa kaliwa): Neil Martial R. Santillan, PhD, Jely A. Galang, PhD, Nancy A. Kimuell-Gabriel, PhD (moderator). Mga larawan mula sa GEC



Mga tagapagsalita sa *Understanding the Self* webinar (mula sa kaliwa): Josephine C. Dionisio, Rosanne Mari G. Echivarre, at Ruth R. Lusterio-Rico, PhD (moderator). Mga larawan mula sa GEC



Mga tagapagsalita sa *Critical Approaches in the Arts* webinar (mula sa kaliwa): Robin Daniel Z. Rivera, PhD, Sofia G. Guillermo, Mark Louie L. Lugue (moderator). Mga larawan mula sa GEC

nating piliin. May mga nagsulong sa chatbox ng mga ganitong idea: ang *good governance* ay katumbas ng etikal na pamamahala; kailangan natin ng etikal na liderato; kailangan ng pananaliksik sa mga kandidato at huwag basta-basta magpadala sa mga propaganda, lalung-lalo na ang lumalabas sa social media. Kaya nagulat si Prof. Lumberto Mendoza sa komentaryo ng isang kalahok, “Ok na sana ang talk na ito kung di natin isama ang politika. Please, let us not include politics in this discussion.” Paglalahad ni Sir Totoy (Mendoza),

“Nagulat ako sa comment na ito dahil galing na rin mismo sa mga kalahok ang pagtatanong kung paanong maisasama ang etika sa mga usapin tungkol sa pagiging mabuting mamamayan. Sa aking palagay ang pagboto at pagpili ng tamang iboboto ay kasama sa ating mga responsabilidad na ito. Di lamang ito personal at pribadong gawain kung saan mayroon tayong kani-kaniyang

opinyon. Totoo na ang pagboto ay nakasalalay sa indibidwal na pagpasiya pero ang proseso at epekto ng pagboto ay nasa public domain. Marahil ang pinupunto ng nagtanong na kalahok ay dapat na maging non-partisan ang mga guro.”

Sa talakayan, naimungkahi ni Dr. Ma. Liza Ocampo na sa halip na mag-endorso ng isang partikular na taong iboboto, baka kailangang *general moral guidelines* na lamang ang imungkahi sa mga mag-aaral na magsisilbing gabay nila sa pagpili ng kanilang iboboto. Subalit nagpahayag din si Sir Totoy ng agam-agam dito,

“Paano kung mali yung application ng moral guidelines? Baka dapat po ay magbigay din tayo ng kongkretong halimbawa. Halimbawa, deretso na nating sabihin na ang dapat lamang nating iboto ay yung mga nagbabayad ng tax.”

Ethics

Sa aking pampinid na pananalita, sumang-ayon ako kay Sir Totoy sa puntong kailangang isakongkreto ang pagbibigay ng guidelines, ibig sabihin, nakabatay sa ating konteksto. Halimbawa, batay sa danas ng ating bansa, kailangan talagang ipahayag na hindi dapat sinungaling, hindi korap, hindi nagnanakaw ng yaman ng bayan, walang hidden wealth, at hindi mura nang mura sa mga public event. Nabanggit ko rin ang mga halagahang Pinoy tulad ng dangal, linis ng kalooban, kalayaan, at katwiran bilang mga bahagi ng pagkataong Pilipino na may tuwirang kaugnayan sa pinag-uusapang etika ng mga pilosopo.

Sa personal na komunikasyon pagkatapos ng webinar kay Sir Totoy, nabanggit niyang pinalawig niya ito sa kaniyang klase,

“Sa totoo lang, ang pinaghuhugutan ng



Mga tagapagsalita sa Ethics webinar (mula sa kaliwa): Lumberto G. Mendoza, PhD, Alexander Atrio Lopez, Ma. Liza Ruth A. Ocampo, PhD (moderator). Mga larawan mula sa GEC

aking tanong ay mula sa kontemporaryong debate sa moral philosophy tungkol sa paggamit ng *thick at thin concepts*. Ito ay usapin sa virtue ethics kung saan tinutukoy ang pagkawalang-saysay ng pag-uusap tungkol sa moralidad kung ito ay masyadong *abstract* at wala sa konteksto. Ganito ang nangyayari kapag puro moral guidelines lamang ang pinag-uusapan at walang kongkretong pagpapaliwanag na galing sa ating kultura at karanasan. Sa halip halimbawa na pag-usapan lamang natin ang konsepto ng “masama” o “di mabuti,” ang dapat gawing pagsasalarawan sa isang di-kaaya-ayang kandidato sa mas partikular, tulad ng mga salitang “mapagsamantala,” “marahas o biyolente.”

Pagpapatuloy niya,

“Sa aking palagay hindi totoo na ang pagiging etikal at moral ay neutral. Sa halip, ito ay *bias* o kumikiling sa katotohanan at tamang pangangatwiran. Ang ganitong talakayan sa *Teach Talk* ay hindi natapos sa pagitan naming mga Propesor dahil nabuksan ang isang kumbersasyon para palawigan ang pagtalakay ng etika mula sa perspektibang Pilipino at lapat sa kasalukuyang konteksto ng eleksiyon. Sinang-ayunan ko ang pangangailangang maging kontekstwal at kongkreto ng guidelines dahil sa Pilipinong

perspektiba, ang etika ay ang “matwid, katwiran, at katarungan” na naglalayong gumawa ng mabuti sa kapuwa at hindi makasama o makapinsala sa kanila.”

Ito naman talaga ang silbi ng *Linangan*. Ang lumikha ng mga puwang ng talastasan para mapalawak at mapalalim ang kaalaman. Sa madaling sabi, nagbunga ito ng imbitasyon sa akin at kay Prof. Ramon Guillermo sa talakayan sa mga klase ng Ethics 1 ni Sir Totoy kung saan mas nadikdik pa namin ang konsepto ng matwid, katwiran, katarungan, karangalan, dangal, at mga konsepto ng “linis ng loob” at pakikipagkapuwa-tao.” Hindi *neutral* ang usapin ng pagiging etikal o moral dahil nakakiling ito palagi sa kung ano ang totoo, sa kung ano ang tuwid, sa makabubuti at sa nararapat salig sa sarili nating danas at realidad. Tagapagsalita rin sa edisyon ng Etika si Instructor Alexander Atrio Lopez. Para sa kaniya, maraming mahalaga at praktikal na implikasyon ang etika sa lipunan kahit halos teoretikal ang paksa. Kailangan aniya na humahamon ito sa mga nakagawian, sa paglabas sa kahon at pag-igpaw sa mga limitasyon, pagwasak sa mga luma upang magpalitaw at makapagsulong ng mga bagong diskurso sa mga isyung panlipunan sa kasalukuyan. Kaya ang mga assessment tools din niya at exercises pagkatapos ng talakayan ng iba’t

ibang teoryang pang-etika ay gumagamit din ng mga praktikal na halimbawa. Pinaalalahan niya ang mga guro na ayaw ng mga Gen Z na tinatrato silang parang wala silang alam. Mahigpit din niyang isinusug na iugnay ang talakayan sa antas personal ng mga mag-aaral, o karanasan ng komunidad at lipunan (cf. [GEC 2021d](#)).

Ang *Vacc to School* webinar—na may dalawang paksa ng “*Doing Blended Learning*” at “*Limited Face to Face Classes in the Context of COVID-19*”—ang tumanggap ng pinakamataas na atendants sa *Linangan* (mahigit 2,200). Kitang-kita rito ang pagkauhaw ng mga faculty sa mga pagsasanay sa blended learning at ang interes na mabalitaan kung paano ba tayo magtatransisyon mula sa remote patungong blended at aktuwal na pagbabalik sa mga paaralan.

Ayon kay Assoc. Prof. Portia P. Padilla (2021), ang susi sa mahusay na pagtuturo sa blended learning ay ang paghahanda ng isang mahusay na course design. Sa isang matalino at cute na pagbibigay ng akronim sa salitang Course PAK GANERN (mula sa Course Pack), naisuma ni Prof. Portia ang tungkulin ng mga guro at katangian ng isang mahusay na course design. Ano ang katumbas ng PAK sa Course Pak Ganern?

P- Pagkilala sa mga estudyante (ang Gen Z ay may mas maikling attention span, mas natututo gamit ang teknolohiya tulad ng video, at woke o mulat sa kalagayang panlipunan)

A- Ayos ng nilalaman (maayos ang organisasyon at daloy)

K- Koleksyon ng mga materyales (humanap ng mga naaangkop sa katangian ng estudyante)

Ano naman ang GANERN?

G- Gawain ng mga estudyante (Ano ang ipapagawa sa kanila online at sa F2F?)

A- Adhikain sa pagtatasa (assessment tulad ng test at iba pang instrumento)

N- Ninanais sa kurso (Ano ang gusto nating matutuhan ng estudyante?)

E- Engganyo sa Pag-aaral (Paano hihikaytin ang mga digital natives? Ano ang koneksiyon nito sa kanilang major courses?)

R- Responsabilidad ng mga estudyante (ang mag-aral, ang matuto)

N- Natatanging tunguhin (Para ihanda sila? Linangin ang kritikal na pag-iisip?" Maging mas mabuting tao sila? Mas mapagmalasakit?)

Sa ikalawang bahagi ng episode na ito, tinalakay ni Dr. Melinda Lacuna-Alip ang "Limited Face to Face Classes in the Context of COVID-19." Ito ay bilang paghahanda ng mga unibersidad at paaralan sa pagbabalik sa F2F

classes. Ibinatay niya ang talakay sa dalawang dokumento:

DOH Administrative Order No. 2020-0015 o Guideline on the Risk-based Public Health Standards for COVID-19 Mitigation
CHED JMC AO 2021-01: Guidelines on Gradual Reopening of Campuses of HEI for Limited Face to Face Classes During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

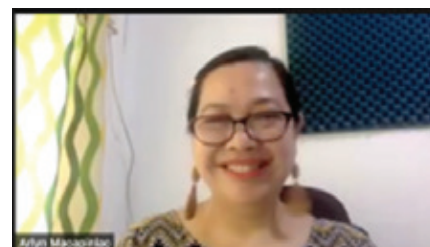
Kasama sa pinaksa ni Dr. Alip ang *precautionary measures, protocols, basic classroom set-up, personal workflow, at contingency plan in case of outbreak*. Binigyang-diin sa talakayan ang pangangailangan ng sapat na suporta ng pamahalaan sa mga unibersidad at paaralan para tiyakin ang kaligtasan ng mga estudyante, faculty, at empleyado sa pagbubukas ng klase. Nangibabaw ang mga salitang "retrofitting" at "future-proofing," at pagtitiyak na "inclusive, adaptive, equitable at compassionate" ang isasabuhay na edukasyon (GEC 2021e).

Pangwakas

Dalawang taon ang pandemya na biglaang sumagasa sa ating buhay. Nakayayanig noong simula...nakakaparalisa, subalit napangibabawan naman sa maagap na pagtugon, mapag-angkop na pamamaraan, at marubdob na pagtangan sa misyon ng unibersidad. Itinulak tayo ng bagong sitwasyong

maging higit na maunawain sa kalagayan ng bawat isa, mapagmalasakit, matatag sa pagtangan ng mandato, maging mapanlikha, masigasig sa paghahanap ng rekurso at mga pamamaraan, at magkaroon ng higit na mataas na diwa ng pagtulong at pakikilahok.

Ipinakita ng *Linangan* na maaaring ipagpatuloy ang mga gawain sa bagong anyo: hindi pinapahintulutan ang pisikal na paglahok sa klase, ginawang birtuwal. May mga problema, pero nagagawan naman ng solusyon sa proseso. May mga ipinaubayang bentaha ang webinar: hindi kailangang bumiyahe, nakakatipid sa oras; madali ang pagdalo, matipid, pambansa pa ang attendance; nakabubuo ng network ng GE teachers, at ang lumalawak na network ay sinasalo ng GEC website. Bentaha rin na may recording na maaaring balikan at mapanood pa ng ibang hindi nakadalo sa aktuwal na petsa ng webinar. Hindi lang isa, subalit tatlong platforms ang maaaring puntahan ng mga guro. Gayunman, may kahinaan at limitasyon din ang webinar. Unang-una ang problema sa connectivity, kawalan ng mahusay na gadget, mga pagkakataong walang koryente at mahinang kalidad ng koneksiyon sa ilang lugar. Hindi rin lahat ng tanong ay mababasa dahil sa kakulangan ng oras, at walang *sensorial interaction* ang mga kalahok. Hindi mo tuloy alam kung paano ba minsan



Mga tagapagsalita sa Vacc to School: Blended Learning & Face-to-Face Class (mula sa kaliwa): Portia P. Padilla, PhD, Myrissa Melinda Lacuna-Alip, MD, Arlyn P. Macapinlac (moderator). Mga larawan mula sa GEC

babasahin ang tanong. At kung ano ang nangingibabaw sa kanilang diwa at damdamin. Maraming impormasyong mapupulot ang faculty at updated sa nilalaman at paraan ng pagtuturo ang mga kasamahang gurong nagsilbing tagapagsalita at moderator sa bawat webinar. Maraming pananaw na napalilitaw sa loob ng talakayan, na maaari nilang balikan dahil may recording facility ang Zoom. Sinusundan ito ng write-up at mabilis na pag-upload ng recording sa GEC website para tugunan ang kahilingan at gawing accessible sa mas malawak na bilang ng faculty ang produkto ng *Linangan*.

Ang *Linangan* ay isang anyo ng paglilingkod-bayan na mataas ang ambag sa paghubog sa mga GE faculty, ambag sa pag-update ng itinuturo, sa kritikal na panunuri, talastasan, kalakaran sa teknik, at kagamitan sa pagtuturo. Ang mga bahaginan ay mayaman at kapupulutan ng ideya, at may tunggalian din. May silbing tagapagmulat din ito lalo na sa kamalayang panlipunan at pampolitika.

Bakit nga ba palaging lumalabas sa komentaryo na dapat hindi hinahaluan ng politika ang edukasyon? At saang kamalayan kaya ang pinanggagalingan ng ganitong ideya? Dahil sa aking pagpapakahulugan, ang mapagpalayang edukasyon ay hindi naman neutral o non-partisan. May tindig para sa katotohanan, sa kung ano ang tama, ano ang mabuti at ano ang nararapat batay sa konteksto ng ating danas, kasayayan at kultura. Sa madaling salita, hindi neutral ang usapin ng dangal sa tatak-UP na Dangal at Husay. Naninindigan ito palagi sa katotohanan, katwiran, at katarungan. Malawak at nagbubukas ng malawak

na landas ng pagkatuto, nagpapalaya sa makikitid na kaisipan, kapuwa holistiko at transpormatibo, lumilinan ng mga kamalayan, ugali at pagkilos na mapagpahalaga, at mapaglingkod sa tao at sa bayan.

May responsabilidad din tayong ipaubaya sa lahat ng guro ng iba't ibang unibersidad at kolehiyo ang ganitong pagsasanay upang maparami ang mga gurong may katulad na prinsipyo ng paglilingkod sa bayan at higit pang mapahusay ang kanilang kasanayan. Sa gayon, sabay-sabay nating maihahakbang ang kalidad ng edukasyon sa ating bansa. Higit sa lahat, matitiyak natin na ang bawat guro ay mulat sa nagaganap sa lipunan, mahigpit sa pagtangan sa katotohanan, malalim sa nilalaman, at makabago at naaangkop sa mga pamamaraan.



The Main Library and the Sunken Garden. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

Lib in the Time of COVID-19

Ma. Esmeralda A. Abarabar, Sharon Ma. S. Esposito Betan,
Eimee Rhea C. Lagrama, and Elvira B. Lapuz



University Library infographic. Image from the University Library Facebook page

As a repository of resources in the social, natural, and engineering sciences, as well as in the arts, humanities, and business, the University Library aligned and adapted its programs and services in consonance to the information and remote-learning needs of UP faculty, staff, and students.

Support for Remote Learning

With support from the UP System, the University Library subscribes to a vast collection of databases of peer-reviewed academic journals and publications—which includes *Cambridge Core*, *EBSCO Academic Search Complete*, *Emerald Premier*, *Gale Reference Complete*, *JoVE Unlimited*, *JSTOR Arts and Sciences*, *Philippine eJournals*, *ProjectMuse*, *ProQuest One Academic*, and *Taylor*

and Francis Social Sciences and Humanities Collection—as well as Turnitin, a plagiarism checker tool. Through UP Mail and the Open Athens platform, researchers can access these resources remotely.

The University Library revamped the content, design, and functionality of its official website—<https://mainlib.upd.edu.ph>. To better facilitate its online services, it also enhanced the security of its portals such as the Index to Philippine Periodicals (IPP), Index to Philippine Newspapers (IPN), and the Digital Archives at UPD.

Tuklas, the UP Libraries Web-Scale Discovery Service, was launched in July 2020. Based on the open-source software, *VuFind*, Tuklas primarily enables users to search across millions of print and electronic resources available in the different libraries of the University of the Philippines System. Currently, it is integrated with existing local databases of UP Diliman, such as IPP, IPN, and *iLib*. To support its full implementation, an online workshop, “Search, Discover, and Create with Tuklas,” was conducted in October of the same year. In 2021, the libraries of the College of Mass Communication (CMC) and the College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD) launched their respective websites, whereas the College of Science (CS) library introduced changes to improve its online presence.

The University Library has supported faculty members in preparing their respective course packs for the remote-learning classes; in searching for online resources; and in scanning pages of printed materials as required readings for students. Likewise, through the Resource-On-Demand (ROD) service, researchers ask for and receive materials, such as scanned copies of book chapters, articles, and preliminary pages of theses and dissertations subject to copyright rules of the university). ROD was initially implemented by the College of Engineering (CoE) and College of Science (CS) libraries. ROD-derived materials may also be reserved, borrowed, or claimed by appointment at a designated area near the



University Library infographic. Image from the University Library Facebook page

entrance of library buildings. There is also an option to have the requested materials delivered through a courier service.

The library has also upgraded the number of eReserve Book titles, as initiated by the College of Engineering (CoE) library under the Vital Source Bridge. Materials were sourced in coordination with the Library Faculty Committee, the offices under the Associate Dean for Research, the Associate Dean for Instruction, and five (5) international publishers: John Wiley and Sons, Pearson, McGraw Hill, Cengage, and Cambridge. The College of Science Library has also increased the e-book collection by identifying frequently used reference materials from syllabi and textbooks.

Funded by a Source of Solutions Grant from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development (OVCRD), the College of Engineering (CoE) library developed its online Library Fund Management System to better facilitate its collection development process. Training sessions were conducted among the library staff, members of the Library Faculty Committee, and College of Engineering faculty.

Most of UP Diliman libraries offer online library orientation sessions to introduce their collection and services to students and faculty. Also, by scheduling an appointment, members of the UP Diliman community can now talk to reference librarians and ask for guidance in conducting research and in navigating the collections of the library.

To raise awareness among the UPD community, the Strategic Communication, Research, and Marketing Section published an online infographic series (#UPDLibGuideToNewNormal). It identified services that had been developed or resumed, but both were in line with the university's Post-ECQ Guidelines.

The infographics cover health protocols, available online library services, procedures for borrowing and returning books, and (still) suspended library services, among a few others. A Library Starter Kit was also designed to provide an overview of online library resources for remote learning. The Information Services and Instruction Section also organized a webinar series, "Rediscovering Your Library in the New Normal." About 1,000 attended the faculty edition in August 2020, 579 for the student edition in October 2020.

COVID-19 Response

The University Library developed and implemented its Post-ECQ Guidelines. Posted in the Library's website, the guidelines show how libraries in the UPD campus should operate and what services it can or should offer once the pace of work in the university resumes or increases. The Guidelines also take into consideration the health and safety of all library personnel and clientele. The University Library has also worked together with the UP Administration in developing the Guidelines and Assistance for Faculty and Students to Access Library Resources.

To contribute to capacity-building in redefining reference services, the Information Services and Instruction Section organized webinars for librarians across the UP System. "Virtual Reference Services Webinar Series" and "Looking Forward Together: Online Resources Training for UPD Library Staff" were held, respectively, in July and December 2020. Both webinars covers new modes of data gathering—Facebook, Google Forms, and Google Sheets; analysis of library usage statistics; maximizing the use of online platforms to access local and foreign databases; and best practices for reference services among work-from-home and skeleton workforce

teams. Additionally, the following webinars were conducted in 2021:

- (1) Discovering Connections, Connecting Discoveries: An Introduction to the New Online Resources of the UP System
- (2) Getting Acquainted: An Introduction to Library Resources and Services
- (3) Upskill Tuesdays and Thursdays
- (4) New Resources
- (5) Product Demo Day 2021: The Search Continues; and
- (6) Show and Tell: The University Library Online Resources Midyear Report.

The Cataloging and Metadata Services Section, as well as the Serials Section of the Main Library, conducted a joint training on cataloging and indexing for new library staff.

The College of Engineering (CoE) Library hosted the following events in coordination with publishers, suppliers, and resource persons:

- (1) Increasing Efficiencies in Scholarly Writing and Publishing on 06 March 2020
- (2) Researcher Online Forum: Publishing in Southeast Asia on 16 June 2020
- (3) An Afternoon with Knovel: Training and Orientation on 01 September 2020
- (4) Entrepreneurship: Evaluating the Food and Drinks Market on 23 September 2020 and
- (5) Elsevier's Tools: Best Practices for Research Writing on 10 November 2020.

As for measures concerning physical space, some college/unit libraries procured disinfecting equipment, while others received them from various donors. The College of Engineering (CoE) library received two disinfecting machines donated by the CoE Library Faculty Committee Chair, Dr. Florencio Ballesteros, Jr. Several college/unit libraries received air sanitization machines from Wiserf. The Technology Management Center Library procured a UV Sterilizer Lamp. The College of Education (CoEduc) and College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD) introduced renovations in their respective libraries even as on-site visits were halted.

The library also opened its doors for donation drives at the onset of the pandemic. The College of Science (CS) library opened its facilities where different stakeholders of the UP community conducted their relief initiatives during the pandemic. The Archeological Studies Program (ASP) library pooled their resources to donate masks to the ASP's maintenance and guard

personnel. The University Library-Gender and Development Committee organized a fundraising activity; its proceeds were given to the security, job order, and maintenance personnel of the University Library who were affected by the Enhanced Community Quarantine from March to May 2020. In 2021, the Technology Management Center Library launched the project, "Bond Paper Mo, Modyul Ko," which aims to supply bond papers for learning modules in public schools.

The Strategic Communication, Research, and Marketing Section launched two webinar series, "ISKOncern" and "Shoutout," which feature social media posts. Both aim to boost the morale of frontliners and various sectors of the community, and to promote the mental health of UP students. The Section also produced "Tanglaw Kaalaman," a video presentation featuring the initiatives and activities carried out by different University Libraries during the community quarantine. Other relevant webinars were also held. For instance, in celebration of UP Pride Month, the College of Engineering library hosted "Reading is Fundamental: The Human Library is Now Open" on 30 June 2020, while the University Library-Gender and Development Committee organized "How to Be an LGBTQIA+ Ally Amidst A Global Health Crisis" on 20 June 2020. "OKAY KA PA BA?: An Online Chikahan on Women, Well-being, and Community Organizing in the New Normal" was held on 21 November 2020.

As the COVID-19 situation in the country improved, the University Library and a number of its college/unit libraries prepared for a gradual reopening to support limited face-to-face (F2F) classes. They identified services that could be offered again onsite; rearranged the lay-out of the facilities to ensure that proper health protocols are observed; acquiring appliances and adopting technologies for contact tracing, sanitation, and ventilation; and placing signages and markers library users. Among the first units in UP Diliman to earn the "Safety Seal" were the College of Engineering (CoE) and College of Science (CS) libraries.

Projects

Despite the pandemic, the University Library continued to fulfil its mandate by making necessary changes and improvements for its stakeholders. The renovation of Gonzalez Hall has been underway, while the construction of the Learning Commons Building of the College of Engineering (CoE) library resumed in September 2020 and is now 98% complete. The Strategic Communication, Research, and Marketing Section of the University

Library has been working on a comprehensive User-Experience (UX) study. The College of Science (CS) library introduced the CS Libraries E-Book Hub, Journal Checking and Verification System, and CSLIB website enhancements. The School of Library and Information Studies introduced its new logo as part of its branding effort.

The Cesar A. Virata School of Business Library collected business registration and regulatory forms from government agencies, and compiled them to serve as a resource on starting businesses in the Philippines. The National College of Public Administration and Governance Library participated in the Socioeconomic Research Portal of the Philippines, which shares an index of various journals. The Asian Center Library has been, for several years already, a recipient of the Japan Foundation Library Support Grant, which provided Japan-related books covering a wide range of disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, political science, history, international relations, cultural studies, literature, and tourism. Through this project, the Asian Center affirmed its commitment to advance Japanese Studies as a field of study and research within the university and beyond. The College of Fine Arts (CFA) library, together with a number of its faculty, facilitated the production of 4,000 mugs as an income-generating project (IGP) that support the programs and activities of the library.

The University Library also continued its hallmark initiative: digitization. The University Archives Division has digitized the works of Teodoro Agoncillo, in cooperation with Infobuilders. The project also received funding from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) through Asosasyon ng Aklatan at Sinupan ng Diliman, Inc. (AASDI). The Archives Division was also awarded Php 7 million for the Storage System Improvement Project. Meanwhile, the Special Collections Section has digitized its Local History and People's Court collections—with a total of 74,500 images—through an Academic Program Improvement Fund grant from the UP System. The section has also secured funding from the Projects/Activities/Programs (PAP) grant of the UP System to digitize the Philippine Radical Papers, Japanese Occupation Papers, and the remainder of the People's Court collection. Through the same funding, the Information Services and Instruction Section has continued to digitize and preserve its analog collections.

The Digital Archives@UPDiliman, a program spearheaded by the Institutional Repository and Intellectual Property (IP&IR) Committee, has taken this opportunity to encourage unit libraries to use,



University Library's Tuklas poster. Image from the University Library Facebook page

upload, and populate the electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) of their respective colleges. As of January 2021, from six (6) unit libraries contributing to the institutional repository (IR), there are now thirteen (13), with a total of 800 ETDs available in full text to registered UP users. A number of college and unit libraries (e.g., College of Music, National College of Public Administration and Governance, College of Science, College of Social Work and Development) have also undertaken digitization initiatives to preserve its collection and facilitate remote access thereto.

Awards

On 29 January 2021, the College of Engineering (CoE) library received the Outstanding Library Program of the Year Award for 2020 from the Philippine Association of Academic/Research Librarians, Inc. (PAARL) for their nationwide campaign, "I Need. I Value. I Love My Library." Meanwhile, the University Library-Gender and Development Committee received the first Gawad Kasarian from the UP Diliman Gender Office in March 2021. Additionally, the Information Literacy Group of the Main Library Information Services and Instruction Section received the GALÍNG Award (Pagkilala sa Pinakamahusay na Yunit/Pangkat) in 2021.

There were also a number of personnel recognized by various institutions, both in and outside the university:

- Ms. Eimee Rhea Lagrama (Gawad Tsanselor sa Natatanging REPS awardee, 2017) Dr. Pio Valenzuela (Awardee for Profession [Librarianship] of the Local Government of Valenzuela, 2021)
- Ms. Sharon Maria Esposito-Betan (Gawad Tsanselor for Natatanging REPS, UP Diliman, 2021)
- Mr. Edwin Raymond R. Gerodias (Dangal ng UP Diliman Award from the Galing UPD Awards (2021); and
- Mr. Liberato Javier (Puso Award from the Galing UPD Awards, 2021).



Roces Street. Photo by Eloisa May Hernández

Office of Field Activities Diliman: Exploring the Field through Remote Learning

Eunice Gabrielle V. Caburnay, Louisa Marie V. Guevara, and Arlyn P. Macapinlac

While the words “education” and “learning” usually bring to mind the image of a teacher and students in a classroom, the significant role of various out-of-classroom activities in the holistic learning of students cannot be downplayed. Such activities include field trips, internships, field surveys, community immersions, and others. In UP Diliman (UPD), we refer to these activities as Academic Field Activities or AFAs.

Recognizing the value of AFAs affirms the oft-repeated line, “learning happens beyond the classroom walls.” In any AFA, the host training establishments (HTEs), partner communities, museums, historical sites, parks, and other venues become wellsprings of reflective insights and experiential learning. The valuable exposure and hands-on training in these spaces supplement and enrich the knowledge obtained in the classroom.

Overseeing the safe implementation of AFAs is the Office of Field Activities (OFA) Diliman. It ensures

compliance with the university’s AFA policies, including their proper operationalization and contextualization. The OFA also takes initiatives in establishing and maintaining linkages with various organizations, companies, and other institutions that could be tapped for AFAs.

The COVID-19 pandemic raised an unexpected hurdle to the Office. Given that all AFAs are conducted face-to-face and outside a classroom, are AFAs still possible during this difficult time? Can the AFA experience be available to students? How can the university ensure that they are not deprived of this enriching experience during the pandemic?

Aware of these concerns, OFA Diliman adopted to the shift to remote learning. It diligently worked through the challenging situation and focused on properly contextualizing and operationalizing AFAs amidst the pandemic. This was done through the following:

1. Revising OFA Diliman's policies, guidelines, and forms
2. Adding pertinent provisions onto agreements and understandings with HTEs to ensure the safety of AFA participants
3. Creating AFA instructional videos
4. Conducting baseline research
5. Expanding connections and innovations on partnerships; and
6. Enhancing internal systems and communication lines with other units.

Revision of OFA Diliman Documents and Processes

Soon after the announcement of the Enhanced Community Quarantine in March 2020, OFA Diliman promptly revised its policies, guidelines, and forms, which were posted in the website and Google Drive and announced via Memorandum No. OVCAA-MTTP-OFA-20-002, starting May 2020. These revisions were made to ensure that:

1. The policies, guidelines, and forms related to the conduct of AFAs during remote learning are appropriately contextualized and operationalized
2. The students are safely conducting AFAs remotely; and
3. Academic units are redesigning courses with AFAs to fit the remote learning set-up.

Revision of Policies and Guidelines for all AFA Types

OVCAA Memorandum No. 2020-68, "Academic Plans for AY 2020-2021 and Timetable for Dialogues with Faculty, Students, Staff, and Concerned Parents" mandates that all AFAs be done remotely. Exemptions to this policy must be requested in writing and approved by the UPD Chancellor. Below are the revised minimum requirements for all types of AFAs.

1. The remote conduct of the AFA must be clearly indicated in the redesigned course syllabus and linked to the learning objectives of the course.
2. The approved OVCAA OFA Form No. 3, a consolidated list of redesigned AFAs, must be emailed to OFA Diliman two weeks before the official start of classes.
3. The adviser or faculty-in-charge (FIC) of the course shall properly inform students that the course requires a redesigned AFA through the following:

- *Enlistment.* Prior to the enlistment of the subject, the department shall indicate the phrase, "WITH REDESIGNED OFF-CAMPUS INDEPENDENT ACADEMIC FIELD ACTIVITY DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC" under the remarks section of the U.P. Computerized Registration System (CRS).
 - *Orientation.* Remote orientation shall be conducted by the FIC to ensure that students are well-informed about the redesigned AFA. Protocols and important matters must be clearly discussed by the FIC during orientation.
4. The redesigned plan for the conduct of the AFA must be clearly indicated in the prescribed OVCAA OFA forms, depending on the AFA type.
 5. Students participating in the redesigned AFA must be physically and mentally fit.
 6. Communication lines must always be open during the entire conduct of AFA, especially between the FIC and students.
 7. With due diligence by all parties, especially the FIC, every redesigned AFA is expected to achieve the learning objectives without any untoward incident that may harm the safety or security of a person or result to damage or loss of property.
 8. After the conduct of an AFA, the FIC shall submit a post-AFA report and documentation to their Department Head or College Dean.

Revision of OVCAA OFA Forms

OFA Diliman revised the prescribed AFA forms to include questions and prompts that describe the innovations of academic units in redesigning their courses with AFAs. In addition, OFA Diliman reduced the number of forms to be accomplished by academic units. This helped avoid redundancies. Removed from the requirements were OVCAA OFA Form No. 8 and No. 6, which pertained to AFA Types 4 and 1A, respectively. Some forms were merged to create one comprehensive and coherent form.

Revision of OFA Processes

OFA Diliman has adopted a work-from-home (WFH) set-up to ensure personnel safety and reduce their risk of acquiring COVID-19. Memorandum No. OVCAA-MTTP-OFA-20-002 provides the detailed guide of online processes, which were later consolidated with the revised protocols from other offices under the OVCAA. This consolidated version was posted in UPD's website.

Addition of Work-From-Home (WFH) Provision and Insurance on Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)

The conduct of students' internships, practicum, and on-the-job-trainings (OJTs) still pushed through amidst the pandemic. OFA Diliman ascertained that the safety of student interns is prioritized.

In April 2020, OFA Diliman consulted the Diliman Legal Office (DLO) to revise provisions in the University's MOAs/MOUs with host training establishments (HTEs). Heeding DLO's advice, OFA Diliman added a provision to the MOA/MOU template, stating that the hours acquired from the students' internships, practicum, or OJTs shall be completed in a WFH set-up.

Furthermore, OFA Diliman also ensured that student interns had insurance from the University and/or the academic unit. The Office closely coordinated with the Office of Scholarships and Grants in this matter.

To guarantee compliance with the revised guidelines, OFA Diliman meticulously conducted initial reviews of all submitted documents before processing the MOAs/MOUs.

OFA Diliman Video Series Project, "OFA and AFAs: What You Need To Know"

In September 2020, OFA Diliman proposed a video series project, "OFA and AFAs: What You Need To Know." It a series of instructional videos aimed to guide OFA Diliman stakeholders regarding new processes, policies, and guidelines.

Data on the implementation and operationalization of AFAs from 2017 to 2019 show increased awareness and compliance with AFA policies and guidelines. However, the implementation of the remote learning set-up by the second semester of A.Y. 2019–2020 saw a significant decrease in the submission of AFA-related documents, despite the issuance of pertinent memoranda and guidelines. Faced with these problems, OFA Diliman launched the video series project to:

1. Boost awareness among academic units regarding AFAs
2. Increase information dissemination regarding the Office's revised documents, policies, and guidelines; and
3. Offer a readily-available online reference for stakeholders on the information and processes regarding AFAs.

The said project was approved in October 2020 and was launched in February 2021 via the OFA Diliman website. The Diliman Information Office (DIO) also posted the video series on UPD's Facebook page and Twitter account, as well as DIO's Facebook page. A memorandum from the OVCAA informed academic units about the launch.

A Baseline Research on the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of UP Diliman Stakeholders on UP Diliman Policies on Academic Field Activities

In 2021, OFA Diliman marked its fifth year of operations. It then reviewed its implementation of university policies on AFAs to help improve the delivery of its services. The Office believes that planning these necessary innovations can be best carried out if these are grounded on research-based policy recommendations.

As a first step, OFA Diliman proposed to embark on a baseline study to help the Office craft a more updated and more responsive approach to improve the implementation of AFAs. In November 2020, the proposed study, "A Baseline Research on the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of UPD Stakeholders on UPD Policies on Academic Field Activities" was approved. The conduct of the study began immediately in January 2021 and the implementation and writing concluded in June 2021. This study helped OFA Diliman stakeholders assess and share how the office can improve its current services and processes. The office also surveyed a total of 334 UPD faculty members on AFA policies and processes, and conducted 32 focus interviews with UPD heads of academic units, faculty members, and administrative staff. A thorough analysis of the data yielded recommendations, which were mostly focused on enhancing the Office's communication channels and lines, and streamlining AFA processes and forms.

Expanding Connections and Innovations on Partnerships with Host Training Establishments (HTEs)

Remote learning prompted some academic units to stop offering internships as part of their course requirements. As a consequence, some students opted to voluntarily apply for internships in their chosen HTE. These HTEs, however, required a MOA/MOU between them and the university. Since voluntary internships are not AFAs, OFA Diliman sought advice from the Diliman Legal Office about the legal dimensions of such partnership. After the consultation, OFA Diliman set virtual meetings with HTEs to clarify

the implications of processing MOAs/MOUs, and to explore possible internship programs or partnerships in the future that would qualify as AFAs.

These meetings opened more opportunities for UPD students, and prompted OFA Diliman to create a system that would connect HTEs with their academic units of choice for potential partnerships. Thus, the Office has consolidated a list of HTEs for future AFAs.

Connecting HTEs with academic units for partnerships was done via email or Zoom. Often, HTEs directly contact OFA Diliman to propose a partnership. Sometimes, they are referred to OFA Diliman by other UP units (e.g. Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs [OVCAA] Central Office, academic units, etc.). Such correspondences involve orienting the HTEs about the Office's guidelines, processes, and requirements before entering a partnership with the university. From there, HTEs are given a catalog of degree programs with required or elective internship courses. Later on, OFA Diliman formally informs a UP unit of potential and suitable partnership with the HTE. Academic units are given a deadline to accept or decline the proposal. Should they accept, the processing of the requirements begins. In 2021, a total of 16 HTEs were linked by OFA Diliman to various academic units in UPD.

Enhancing Internal Systems and Communication Lines

Despite the WFH arrangement, OFA Diliman has worked efficiently and effectively by conducting monthly meetings and improving records management. Such practices include the creation of various trackers and databases in order to keep track of academic units' compliance and correspondences concerning AFAs. Aside from improving internal systems, OFA Diliman also set and conducted meetings with other UPD offices or units to consult or align the Office's processes and/or documents.

Early in 2021, the Office consulted DLO regarding special concerns on internships and MOA/MOU processing. It also sought guidance on the development of the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Community Engagement Contract, as well as legal advice on the MOU between UPD—through the Department of Military Science and Tactics (DMST)—and the Army Reserve Command (ARESCOM). By the end of 2021, concrete forms, guidelines, and processes had been devised

for NSTP community engagements. An online ceremonial signing of the approved ARESCOM MOU was subsequently conducted.

Moreover, the Office aligned its mandate with the Office of Extension Coordination (OEC). This alignment meeting helped streamline the processing of MOAs/MOUs that were being forwarded to both offices. It also guided both offices regarding the criteria or requirements needed before an office processes a MOA/MOU.

Finally, OFA Diliman had special meetings with some academic units, namely, the College of Engineering, the Asian Institute of Tourism, and the College of Mass Communication. These meetings discussed internship allowance, MOA or MOU processing, and the deadline of submissions for internship documents.

Opening Opportunities for International Internships

In May 2021, OFA Diliman coordinated with the Office of International Linkages (OIL) Diliman to craft the guidelines, processes, and templates for virtual international internships. To date, parts of the guidelines and the necessary templates for the documents are with the Diliman Legal Office for review and approval. Once implemented, these documents will enable UPD students to pursue international internships through a virtual set-up. Developing guidelines for such internships will shall advance and maximize their remote-learning experiences amid remote learning.

Involvement in UPD Crisis Management Committee

Early in 2021, the OVCAA turned over the requests from academic units for face-to-face (F2F) classes to OFA Diliman, which reviewed and consolidated such requests, and provided assistance on the submission of requirements to the OVPAA.

In April 2021, the Office of the Chancellor created an Ad Hoc Committee, that included OFA Diliman. The committee was in charge of the preparation for accomplishing the requirements set by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for the gradual reopening of limited F2F classes in UPD. On December 21 of the same year, UPD received CHED-issued Certificates of Authority to Reopen Limited F2F Classes.

Since then, the OFA Diliman Director and OFA Diliman personnel have been closely working with the UPD Crisis Management Committee,

OVCAA, and other relevant offices in preparation of F2F classes requirements. These include writing the UPD Guidelines for the Gradual Reopening of Limited Face-to-Face (F2F) Class Activities, presenting the guidelines to UPD COVID-19 Task Force, facilitating consultations with deans and their academic units, consulting with parents and students, and inspecting and assessing the readiness of UPD facilities for F2F classes.

Continuity of Operation

Since the start of the pandemic, OFA Diliman has increased its projects, engagements, and staff to help] evaluate its performance and carry out its mandate more effectively and efficiently. The Office continues to collaborate with partner offices and provide pertinent information, assistance, and networking opportunities to academic units. To date, OFA is actively involved in special committees of the university. Such involvement is particularly helpful in formulating cohesive, flexible, and up-to-date AFA guidelines. The foregoing represent efforts to continuously improve services and promote relevant, quality, and enriching AFA experiences for UPD students that are grounded on the university's ideals of honor and excellence.

The pandemic has no doubt birthed different kinds of challenges, but OFA Diliman's commitment to its mandate fueled its will to face these challenges head-on. This helped the Office stand strong even as it continues to explore and embrace the New Normal in the conduct of AFAs. It is this same commitment to its mandate that will keep OFA Diliman prepared to take on any challenge that may come its way. That is the kind of resolve that will see it through the fulfillment of its mandate.



New dorms being constructed on campus. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Major and Minor Revisions: Notes on Publishing Academic Journals during a Global Health Emergency

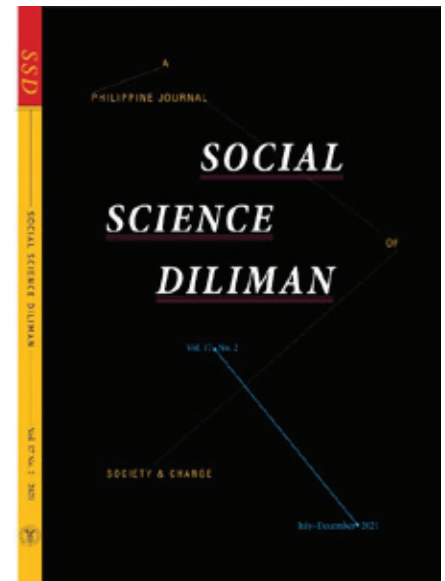
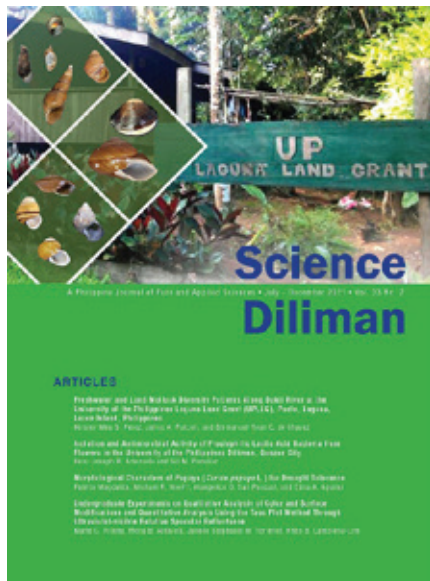
Conchitina Cruz

1. Clock

Three journals published twice a year. In June and in December, the Research Dissemination Office (RDO) releases an issue each of the peer-reviewed, open-access journals *Humanities Diliman*, *Science Diliman*, and *Social Science Diliman*. Although our responsibilities are by no means limited to these publications, it is fair to say that the rhythm of our labor is significantly defined by this cycle: mellow for the briefest period in the half year before the issues are due; steady as we attend to multiple manuscript submissions moving at different speeds through the review process; hectic as we ferry accepted manuscripts in varying stages of production to the same point of readiness for publication; frantic in the run-up to our release date. Time speeds up, runs out, slows down, then picks up again. Somewhere along

the way, hopefully like clockwork, our work gets done—knowledge produced becomes knowledge disseminated through the sensible, practical path of publication.

I joined RDO in June 2020, a few months into the COVID-19 pandemic. In those early days when the pandemic was the great unknown and not yet everyday reality, time seemed to stop. Classes briskly moved online then ended prematurely; the campus shut down; we stayed home. I met the RDO staff of four—eventually five—in a Zoom meeting. We began working together during a month that, pre-pandemic, would be a frenzied time for the office, coinciding with the release of the three journals' latest issues. Instead, we were in a period of what felt like stopped time, though it was no less frantic. Work was delayed—it had to be. Our sense of time (and accomplishment), which was



Journals published by UPD. Images from the journals' submission websites

governed by a publication cycle, had to change. It was reasonable to try to get back on track, but it was also reasonable to calibrate the effort in relation to the health emergency that was afflicting the world. Especially in those early days, decreased productivity was a necessity, and it wasn't (shouldn't be) something to apologize for.

2. Care

In the almost two pandemic-era years I have worked in the RDO, the members of our office have tended to sick loved ones, lost loved ones to illness, and struggled with their own health. All of us are women, and all of us deal with the care work that disproportionately falls upon women. The work-from-home set-up to which the pandemic forcibly subjected the workforce at large (or at least those of us whose labor may be carried out remotely) has proven to be compatible with the responsibility of publishing three academic journals. Practically all tasks—from receiving submissions, to fielding manuscripts for evaluation or revision or copyediting or lay-out, to

communicating with the various participants in our editorial and production process, to publishing the (online versions of the) journals—were already taking place online, and working from home only clarified that having a strong internet connection was a far more crucial component to our job than physically reporting to work. The work-from-home set-up also both eased and put pressure on our care work. On the one hand, without the clear line between our professional and personal lives drawn by literally going to the office, we could be more available to provide care—guiding children through their online classes for some, nursing sick family members for others, and attending to domestic obligations for all. On the other hand, the constant presence at home meant being on call for care work all the time, just as the constant presence online (which has become a necessity in order to stay connected with others while remaining physically distant) produced the risk of being at work all the time.

These are little things, but I've found that honoring work

hours and checking in on each other at the start of our weekly virtual office meeting are simple and necessary ways to care for each other at work. Nothing like the incessant anxieties and unprecedented restrictions caused by COVID-19—compounded by our perpetually volatile political climate and the widespread suffering aggravated in no small part by the government's consistently inadequate pandemic response—to put one's work life in perspective. Tasks need to be taken seriously, but now, more than ever, what constitutes an “urgent matter” work-wise should be weighed prudently against the demands of survival that unquestionably need our attention. In other words, there is generally nothing in our work of publishing three academic journals that needs to happen after 5pm, that can't wait until the start of the following workday. Quick voluntary life updates when we get together online as a team are also a way to acknowledge that work is (only) one among multiple components that make up our lives, and is among the multiple components that need adjusting should emergencies

(involving, say, our health and the health of our loved ones) arise.

3. Collaboration

Any given article that appears in *Humanities Diliman*, *Science Diliman*, and *Social Science Diliman* is the outcome of efforts by many others aside from the author/s: the associate editor and external reviewers who evaluate submissions and whose expert feedback, particularly for manuscripts with the potential for publication, provide authors with guidance in revising their work; the copyeditor who polishes accepted manuscripts through mechanical and substantive editing; the lay-out artist who turns our content into its published form; and the tight-knit team of the editorial assistant, managing editor, and editor-in-chief who handle each journal's daily operations and see each issue through every step in the entire process of its making. As mentioned earlier, this process largely (if not fully) occurs online; the authors, editors, and reviewers we work with are from various institutions in the Philippines and abroad, which makes the internet the most sensible and viable venue for our work to happen.

While the work-from-home arrangement did not considerably disrupt our already online-based workflow, the bigger context of the pandemic certainly affected everyone involved in executing it. Keeping to the timetable for every step in the editorial and production process—a constant challenge in journal publishing, especially when our collaborators are likely to be doing work for us on top of their full-time jobs—has unsurprisingly become more difficult under pandemic conditions. Authors have had to request for extra time to revise their articles, reviewers have missed deadlines or declined invitations, for reasons related to COVID-19—having it, caring for someone who has it, recovering from it. Such delays rightly need accommodation. As of this writing, when vaccines are more accessible, COVID-19 cases are down, and a semblance of normalcy from the world as we used to know it is in the air, it seems feasible to begin taking a more panoramic view in coping with delays to our workflow, that is, to expend more energy toward getting more than the minimum number of submissions to the finish line at the soonest possible time. Building a bank of forthcoming articles that could fill multiple issues would make it easier to manage delays that are bound to occur at any point in our workflow. At the same time, we have just caught up (or are on the verge of catching up) with backlog across the three journals, thanks to the considerable energy mustered by all our collaborators to pull through

despite ever-present challenges. There is, finally, a small window to catch our breath, but not without the nagging feeling that this sense of ease would be short-lived and impractical, and could be cut short by fears becoming yet again reality—another COVID variant, another surge, another lockdown. Always, there is a need to strike a balance between getting back on track and rethinking what exactly “getting back on track” means in a world permanently changed by the pandemic.

4. Count

Like any office, the RDO strives to abide by the metrics of productivity that govern its mandate. In our work of academic publishing, all hands are constantly on deck in the effort to produce journals of high quality and impact, an aspiration realized through excellence manifested and maintained across a complex combination of parts, including but not limited to groundbreaking scholarly work secured through a rigorous peer review process and recognized for its significance, as evidenced by citation statistics; a diverse and international pool of authors, reviewers, and editors—whether emerging or established in their fields—from a range of institutions; and the timely release of issues that are widely disseminated through multiple channels, in print and online. The road to publishing productivity—the kind legible to academia and the renowned institutions that oversee knowledge production—is long and circuitous and riddled with existential dilemmas along the way, from cultivating local scholarship in local languages for a local audience alongside (but also against) scholarship for a global audience moving in circuits away from Philippine shores, to chasing after indexing in prestigious citation databases without losing sight of the reality that valuable knowledge production also takes place beyond their purview. As we live from day to day in the shadow of a pandemic that is far from over, it is clear that life as we know it is, to say the least, in need of revision. We need to imagine better, and among the many things that need reimagining are the metrics of productivity that define our labor. It is productive to interrogate the ways our productivity is measured, to be certain that the accomplishments we work toward in fact serve the larger vision for the work we do. It is also productive, in this time of heightened uncertainty, to step away from work, if it means producing time and care for ourselves, our loved ones, and what truly matters to us.

Linang at Lingkod: Systems Innovation



Palma Hall. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

What's in a Name?

Adeline A. Pacia

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines last March 2020, the world turned topsy-turvy as the work environment as we knew it then had to transition to a work-from-home set-up. For the university that operated mostly through manual and paper-based transactions, the world almost halted.

Initiatives towards digitization and digitalization in the past have been slow and challenging, their success limited. But the pandemic became the catalyst for the long deferred digital transformation. With support from the new administration under the leadership of Chancellor Fidel Nemenzo, UP Diliman restarted building its own flavor of a digital work environment.

To ensure that we stamp “Tatak UP” on the new systems for development, they had to embody the “Utak Puso” battlecry of UP Diliman. And a creative play of words for naming the systems ensued. So, what's in a name?

The first system under the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration to be developed was named PUSO (Personnel Unified Systems Outlook). The heart of the university is its people—the faculty, students, and staff. They are the heart and soul of UP Diliman and give its unique life and character.

PUSO cannot stand alone. Thus, UTAK was born under the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. UTAK (University Transactions Automated Kit) provides a one-stop shop for all academic-related transactions.

Consistent with its all-Filipino naming scheme, other UP Diliman units developed systems that are in different stages of implementation. The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration (OVCA) systems has BULSA (Budget Utilization and

Liquidation System Analytics), a platform for the financial management and information system. It also has eBODEGA for the Supply and Property Management Office's system. eBODEGA (Electronic Buying of Common Use Supplies and Equipment and Organized Disposition of Government Assets) accounts for common-use supplies, equipment and government assets.

For the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development, they will also develop TALAS (Talaan ng Likha at Saliksik) to manage research-related projects managed by OVCRD. The library system has TUKLAS (the repository of all library resources), which means discovery.

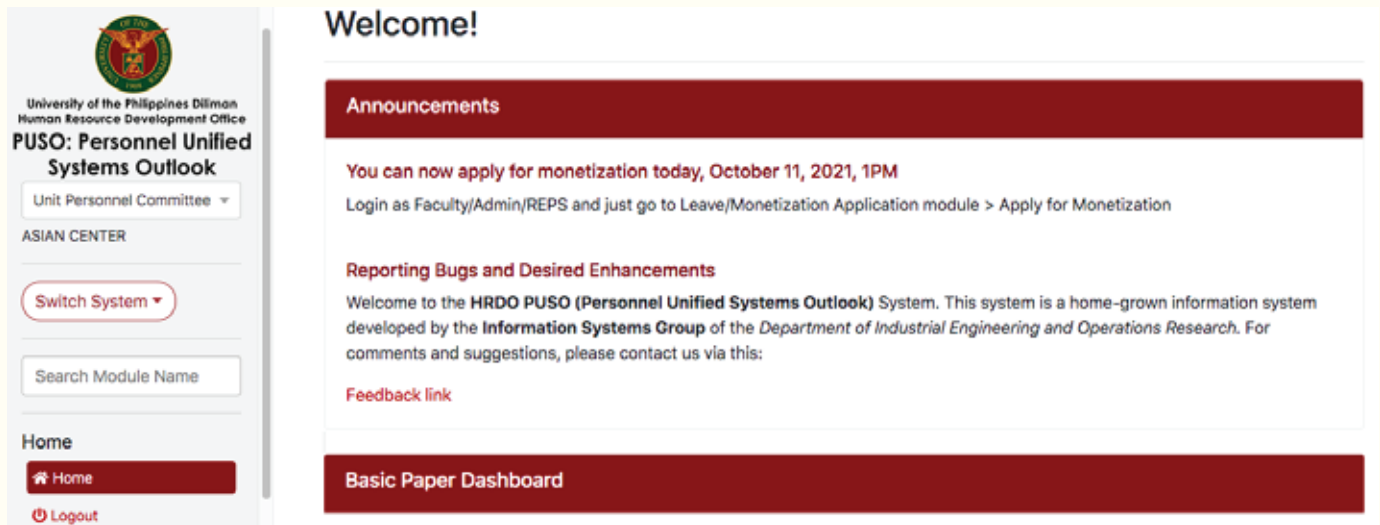
As we pursue the development of an integrated information system for UP Diliman, we will name it UPD ISKOLAR (UP Diliman Information Systems for Knowledge, Operations, Linkages, Academics and Research). ISKOLAR also represents our students—Iskos and Iskas—the country's scholars, or more popularly called Iskolars ng Bayan. It is for them and through them that the university pursues its mandate, with Honor and Excellence!



Aerial shot of Quezon Hall and University Avenue. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

The Personnel Unified Systems Outlook (PUSO) and Budget Utilization and Liquidation Systems Analytics (BULSA) Systems

Georgiana Ang Dy Pay



Screenshot of the PUSO website

The COVID-19 pandemic forced industries to adopt a work-from-home (WFH) arrangement, and many organizations were unprepared for a remote working set-up since manual procedures and systems were in place. The UP Diliman administration was no exception to this. The health crisis challenged various offices in the campus to improvise in order to continue to be of service to the UP community.

In line with the direction of the Office of the Chancellor (OC) and through the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration (OVCA), the PUSO and BULSA systems were developed. PUSO, which stands for Personnel Unified Systems Outlook, aims to effectively deliver the university's

human resource-related functions. On the other hand, BULSA (Budget Utilization and Liquidation Systems Analytics) aims to seamlessly integrate the functions of the Budget, Accounting, and Cash offices. While both the PUSO and BULSA systems are still works-in-progress, we are confident that these systems will help the university become more resilient in the future. The members of the PUSO and BULSA development team are as follows. PUSO Development Team:

- Project Leader: Prof. Eugene Rex Jalao
- Lead Developer: Asst. Prof. Raymond Freth Lagria
- Developers: Asst. Prof. Simon Anthony Lorenzo, Asst. Prof. Regine Tejada

- Business Process Expert: Asst. Prof. Georgiana Ang Dy Pay
- Administrative Support Staff: Ms. Sunshine Joy Nacional
- Student Assistants: Mr. Lucas Emilio Cu-Unjieng, Ms. Andrea Atendido, Ms. Patricia Laura Carpo, Mr. Jose Xavier Alde, Ms. Leslie Joie Noche, Ms. Mari Joyce Sagum

BULSA Development Team:

- Project Leader: Prof. Eugene Rex Jalao
- Lead Developer: Asst. Prof. Carlo Angelo Sonday
- Developers: Asst. Prof. Raymond Freth Lagria, Asst. Prof. Allan Villena
- Business Process Experts: Asst. Prof. Georgiana Ang Dy Pay, Asst. Prof. Benette Custodio, Asst. Prof. Leonardo Nestor Espenilla
- Junior Documentation Expert: Ms. Paola Marie Lim
- Administrative Support Staff: Ms. Sunshine Joy Nacional
- Student Assistants: Ms. Caitlin Marie Tordesillas, Ms. Gabrielle Anne Mata

The PUSO Development project spanned from July 2020 to April 2022, while the BULSA Development project commenced in January 2021 and is slated to finish in December 2022. One of the major challenges that we faced was collecting data under a remote set-up. It was much easier to communicate, ask questions, and learn about how things work when everything is done face-to-face, but just like everyone else, we had to adapt. Another challenge was having to learn a number of processes and procedures in a short period. It was especially difficult with processes that were not systematized, and which instead relied on the habits and practices the staff members were accustomed to. Thankfully, with the help of our colleagues in the Human Resource Development Office (HRDO), Diliman Budget Office (DBO), Diliman Accounting Office (DAO) and Diliman Cash Office (DCO), we managed to make the most out of the situation.

The data gathering we conducted for the project served as a learning opportunity that allowed me, an instructor, to understand the administrative processes of the university. The journey has been enlightening thus far. As industrial engineers, we are trained to analyze systems and help improve their overall efficiency and effectiveness. In working with PUSO and BULSA stakeholders, we drew inspiration from several like-minded individuals who, despite different educational and

professional backgrounds, share our vision. The stereotype of government employees working only from 8 am to 5 pm is not true. Coordinating with the different administrative offices of the university introduced me to some of the most dedicated employees who go above and beyond the call of duty to be of service to the community. This makes our work even more fulfilling, knowing we will be able to help make work easier for many. While there are some who are resistant to change, most members of the UP Diliman community are very supportive, patient, respectful, appreciative, and encouraging. I am fortunate to be part of the development teams of both systems.

For PUSO, the HRDO successfully launched the Basic Paper module, which made the appointment process more streamlined and visible to key stakeholders. The HRDO also made the PUSO system accessible to all employees for their Leave Applications and Document Requests. For BULSA, the Budget Office successfully launched the Budget Clearance module where Letter Requests, Purchase Requests, Contracts of Services, Job Orders, and Requests for Overtime could be easily created and approved. A Financial Dashboard allows unit heads to allow real-time viewing of budget utilization. Lined up for implementation are the Obligation/Budget Utilization Request module, Disbursement Voucher module, and the Payroll module, among others.

The pandemic sped up the process of digitalization that called for more effective and efficient systems. While our current situation is still far from the ideal, I am confident that we will come out to the other side of the pandemic more resilient, more adaptable, and simply better overall.



Fire trees along Roces Street. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

The Journey of the Supply and Property Management Office

Rachel Locsin

The UP Diliman Supply and Property Management Office (UPD SPMO) was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Just when we were about to start our project, the Property Management System (PMS) in January 2021, one of our staff contracted COVID-19. This is led to a delayed start because all the other staff needed to quarantine. We also experienced the second wave of COVID-19 in September 2021. Almost half of our personnel tested positive, and our office had to close for around one (1) week.

Our office was fortunate enough because even prior to the pandemic, we had already implemented some innovations which helped us cope with the situation. One was the implementation of the Electronic Buying of Common Use Supplies and Equipment and Organized Disposition of Government Assets (e-BODEGA). It includes the development of the UPD SPMO Common-Use Supplies and Equipment Portal (UPD SPMO CSE Portal), a Lazada-style of ordering such supplies and equipment without having to go to our office. Delivery services to the colleges and units commenced in April 2022.

The development of the UPD SPMO CSE Portal was recognized by the Development Academy of the Philippines as one of the winners in the 2020 Government Best Practices Recognition (2020 GBPR). It was also awarded by UP Diliman as Galing-UPD Galing Awardee in June 2021.



Screenshot of the SPMO website

Our office continues to think of ways to improve our services. This year, we started the Property Management System (PMS) project, which aims to streamline the inventory system by installing QR codes on all property, plant, and equipment. With the QR codes, we eliminated the manual encoding of data. The process is automatic and the system allows the SPMO to generate the required Report on the Physical Count of Property Plant and Equipment, which needs to be submitted to the Commission on Audit every January. Moreover, we created the mobile application scanner that scans the QR code and helps make taking inventory much easier. We also developed the Property Accountability Records and Disposal System (PARDS) Portal, which allows accountable officers to know and transfer their property accountabilities when they resign or retire from the university or transfer to another UP unit. Pilot implementation of the PARDS portal took place on 30 March 2022, with accountable officers from 16 UP units who tested the system.

The accountable officers could also automatically generate the Inventory and Inspection Report on Unserviceable Property (IIRUP) in case equipment are no longer needed. In April 2022, we also implemented a link to the UP Procurement Office Dashboard, which included the inspection module in the Procurement dashboard. This way, end-users are no longer required to submit requests for inspection. The SPMO will simply inspect the items delivered to our warehouse, and the system will automatically generate the Inspection and Acceptance Report.

The UPD Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO) hosted the benchmarking activity requested by the personnel from the Materials Management Office of the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center. The activity took place on Monday, 18 April 2022, at the UPD SPMO's Conference Room. Parties mutually learned from one another's best practices to help improve their respective services.

Despite all the challenges our office experienced during this pandemic, we remained steadfast in our faith that we could overcome this crisis and will succeed in all our undertakings, especially when it comes to streamlining our processes and improving our services.



Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

From Auxiliary to Necessity: Challenges in Scaling Up UVLé

Miguel Francisco M. Remolona

Edited by Carlo Angelo Sonday

The University Virtual Learning Environment, more commonly known as UVLé, catered to 1,981 courses that had to be created at the onset of the pandemic in second semester, Academic Year (AY) 2019–2020. In the first fully online semester that followed, the number of courses in UVLé almost doubled to 3,700. To manage the surge and sustain such usage, the Interactive Learning Center (ILC) Diliman innovated and worked together with the stakeholders in the university.

Amidst a lockdown and quarantine restrictions, questions on how to continue education—and whether it was right to do so—were raised. UP continued to fulfil its mandate as the national university in the hope that it will

prepare the students to better serve the nation.

To support the faculty members and students in adapting to remote learning, ILC Diliman ensured that they had the tools and technology to conduct classes online. Two of the most crucial platforms are Zoom and UVLé. Zoom made virtual meetings possible, allowing video and audio conferencing as well as live chatting, screensharing, and other collaborative capabilities. Meanwhile, UVLé as a learning management system allowed faculty to create and share learning materials to their students.

UVLé Before and During the Pandemic

Prior to the pandemic, UVLé could not be accessed by more than a few hundred students at the same time because of its limited computing power and network. This constraint caused issues, particularly for timed quizzes which students had to access simultaneously. The old UVLé servers also did not have enough storage. For the first semester of AY 2020–2021, they only had about 1 TB of space. A year and a semester later, this increased to 2 TB, excluding recurring back-ups.

ILC Diliman was not prepared for the sudden need to shift to online classes. We wanted to help but were unable to



Screenshot of the UVLe website

do so because the necessary developments required funding, approval for which requires a lengthy procurement process. Without the necessary equipment to improve UVLé, we were paralyzed. Fortunately, we received assistance from the Office of the University Registrar - Computerized Registration System (OUR-CRS) and the PCARI Research and Instructional Infrastructure for Mentoring and Collaboration (PCARI-PRIME) project.

The OUR-CRS temporarily provided two virtual machines (VM; servers) that could handle the UVLé's backend: a webserver and a database server. The PCARI-PRIME Project supplied the back-up system. Since these servers were located at the Computer Center—close to the network switches that provide the university its local internet—connectivity on campus could be guaranteed.

Unexpected Issues

In March 2021, the UVLé servers broke down. Back-ups from eight hours before the incident could be recovered, but the entire file system of the old servers was irrecoverable. There were no spare resources. UVLé was down for the start of the second semester of AY 2020-2021.

Since CRS servers were also trying to recover their systems, they could not provide ILC with the resources to restore UVLé. Fortunately, the Computation Science Research Center (CSRC) agreed to launch a version of UVLé on their servers. However, rushing the relaunch caused some issues.

While the team was still trying to resolve the issues that arose from CSRC, the PCARI-PRIME

Project provided VMs to host UVLé. The team worked for about a week to minimize fewer issues in the future. Internet security checking programs were used to check the vulnerabilities in the implementation of UVLé.

When the procured servers arrived in April 2021, diagnostics had to be performed. However, the uninterrupted power supplies (UPS), peripherals, and networking switches did not arrive with the servers. After the initial diagnosis, the servers could not be turned on as they did not have back-up power. The UPS arrived after some time, but the network switches were still in the process of procurement.

It was only in August 2021 that the servers were used, and only after ensuring that they were within specifications when running the software. The new servers were mainly used to test the new UVLé, which was eventually launched as UVLé '22.

UVLé Upgrade

The project to upgrade the UVLé commenced in February 2021. Developers were sourced outside the ILC to get different perspectives, and to ensure that the existing UVLé and other services would be unaffected. As the demand for ILC services increased during the pandemic, additional personnel allowed the regular staff to focus on addressing the concerns of both faculty and staff.

The UVLé '22 project was a success. Other than transitioning to a more stable version using Moodle 3.9 as a base, it has a new user-interface, Turnitin integration, and better internal load management that prevents inaccessibility unless

the UP network is down. Its fresh look and new features were welcomed and praised by the UP community.

Usability Studies

A team of usability experts from the Industrial Engineering (IE) department were tapped to perform quality checks on the new UVLé. They sought to ensure that the user interface was easy to understand and navigate for faculty and students alike. The usability studies involved (1) a preliminary investigation into UVLé using standards for User Experience (UX) in any client-oriented service; (2) a testing survey involving both faculty and students; and (3) a review of helpdesk topics relating to UVLé. The first two were conducted before the release of the new UVLé, and the last one was completed the first two months after the launch.

The preliminary investigation was meant to generate insight on how to improve the user interface even before the faculty and students saw it. The testing survey was conducted after UVLé '22 was ready for implementation—participants were asked to accomplish a series of tasks, and the user experience was evaluated based on how long and how well the participants were able to perform them. The participants were also asked about their feedback. The final investigation looked into helpdesk concerns to check which features still needed to be improved. This served as a basis for the continuous development of the platform, especially in terms of user experience.

Deploying the New System

To ensure the reliability of UVLé, it has been engineered to have a lot of redundancy, which will be further enhanced once all the equipment arrives. Six basic types of virtual machines comprise the basic configuration of UVLé. While the configuration changes a lot as we try to optimize its architecture, the increase in the number of virtual machine types from two to six gives a sense of scale of how we are trying to balance security, reliability, and accessibility.

UVLé Tutorials

The ILC facilitated four types of training workshops—done over ten sessions—to equip the faculty with knowledge and skills in navigating the updated version of the UVLé. The first type focused on moving courses from the old UVLé built in Moodle 3.5 to the new UVLé done in Moodle 3.9. This allowed faculty members to simply copy old materials instead of recreating them from scratch. The second type focused on course creation and editing, which were primarily for first-time users of UVLé. The third focused on tutorials for Turnitin, a plagiarism checker tool, which was recently integrated in UVLé '22. The fourth type focused on creating quizzes.

Other than these sessions, learning objects (LOs) for all topics were also created and were added to the new UVLé along with recordings of the training workshops, so faculty can review the content as needed.

Availability of the ILC Diliman Help Desk

One of the most improved services of ILC Diliman is the increased availability of helpdesk services. Two additional specialists were hired to attend to inquiries even outside office hours. They also helped manage social media pages to deliver news when there is no network in UP Diliman (e.g., website is down, UVLé is inaccessible). Apart from increasing the help desk staff, the helpdesk ticketing software and server were also improved. Leaving communication channels open allowed users to become aware of what was happening from the ground up. Quick updates promote transparency, which foster a feeling of service security.

Moving Forward

The pandemic has not ended, as has the concerns that need to be addressed to improve the delivery of education in an online learning set-up. The ILC Diliman was faced with a number of challenges in serving the constituents of UP during this time, but these were all learning points, which only fueled the desire to do more and better.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the contributors of information for this article, who were the principal drivers and movers of the communications and the transitions during this period: Ralph Jonathan Ignacio (former CRS staff and current OVCAA system administrator), Tristan Alcantara (ILCD system administrator), and Prof. Lorelie Grepo-Jalao (former ILCD director).

We would also like to express our appreciation for the people who supported ILC Diliman as well as those who continue to contribute to UVLé : Prof. Johnrob Bantang (from the CSRC), Prof. Roel Ocampo (from the PCARI-PRIME project), Prof. Manuel Ramos (from the UP Computer Center), and Mikko Gozalo (system administrator for the UVLé upgrade project).



Aerial shot of the area near the Parish of the Holy Sacrifice. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

“OUR” Workspace in the Wake of COVID-19

Office of the University Registrar



OUR hallways. Photos from the OUR

The SARS-CoV-2 virus responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered the dynamics of working in the Office of the University Registrar (OUR). The intermittent lockdowns since March 2020 restricted traveling and upended office work. OUR staff who had never worked remotely suddenly found themselves working from home for the first time, simultaneously coping with the challenges of new technologies and family responsibilities. During the first few months of the pandemic, some staff converted rooms at their own homes into offices and classrooms for their young children. The lively hallways at the OUR were reduced to rows of empty chairs, face-to-face engagement and casual “chikahan” in the office were limited, in-person chats were swapped for video calls, and all meetings were held in a virtual environment.

Our first challenge was to ensure that everyone at the OUR could continue to work safely and efficiently, and support our students and campus partners. Their health and well-being were our top priority. Several dedicated OUR staff are in their sixties (a.k.a. ‘senior citizens’) and had underlying health conditions. Thus, when the

government prohibited senior citizens from physically reporting to work, the rest of the staff faced additional pressure, particularly those in the student evaluation and the transcript sections, as they worried about their backlogs.

Upon consultation with the UPD Health Service, the OUR provided transportation to those living on campus, including “senior” staff and those with underlying health conditions who needed to physically report for work. It was important that everyone supported and addressed the concerns of the staff who were at additional risk from the COVID-19 virus.

To ensure the health and safety of all staff, the following protocols have been strictly implemented:

1. Adopting a flexible work arrangement
2. Imposing the “No Mask, No Entry” Policy
3. Transferring entrance to OUR premises (Entrance is at the back of the building, exit in front)
4. Providing rubbing alcohol at the OUR’s entrance area and in every section

5. Conducting temperature checks upon entry to the OUR premises and use of the health monitoring form
6. Using UV Light Box for documents
7. Strictly following “No eating together” in a closed area
8. Disallowing food delivery
9. Regular and thorough hand washing and provision of disinfection floor mats at the entrance gate
10. Using a face shield while at work (1st year of the pandemic)
11. Practicing social distancing at all times
12. Maintaining a clean workplace
13. Regularly cleaning and sanitizing all spaces, especially high-touch areas such as doorknobs and phones
14. Providing UV light per office
15. Ensuring proper ventilation in office/work areas
16. Installing plastic barriers between partitions
17. Installing a handwashing area in the lobby
18. Separating sick employees and sending them home
19. Putting up a glass counter in the Administrative Section

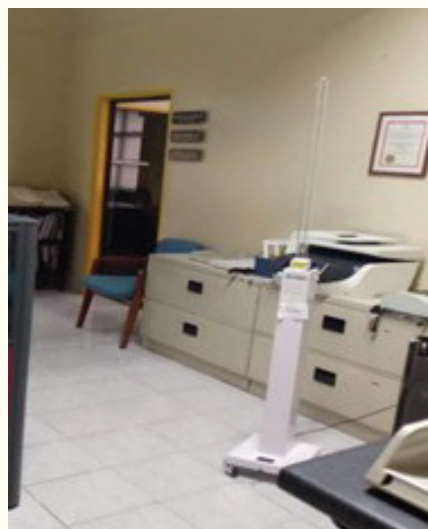
The majority of the staff availed of the free nasal swab for COVID-19 testing as well as free vaccines and booster provided by UPD.

During the lockdowns, the OUR canceled all in-person interactions to prioritize the health and safety of its personnel. During the surge in cases, all transactions were done online. The pandemic forced everyone to pivot to email, which led to a

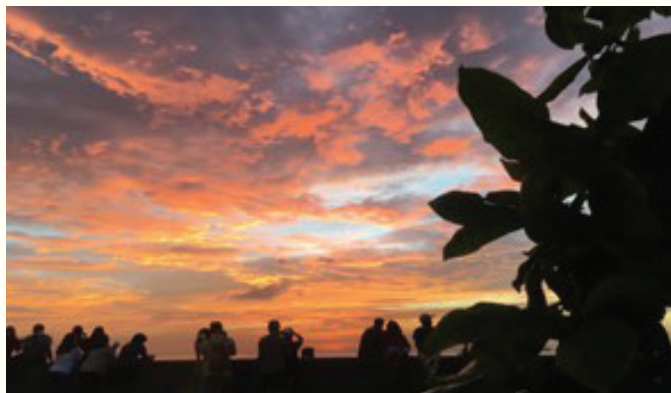
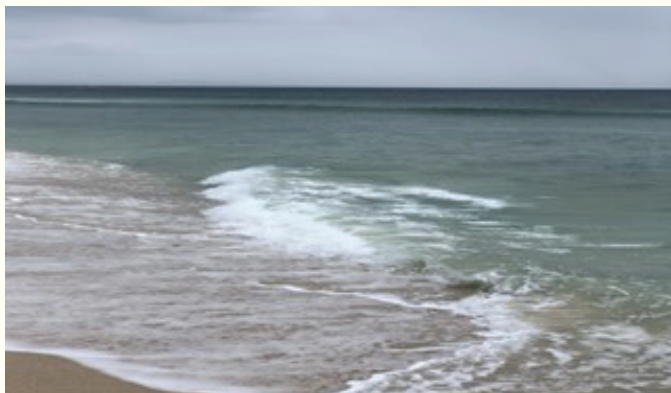
significant increase in the volume of the messages handled by the OUR staff. The OUR has attended to 100,000+ emails since the start of the pandemic, testing the patience of the staff. During the first year of the health crisis, the majority of personnel had to work beyond office hours (via work-from-home mode) just to respond to all requests and queries. Everyone was preoccupied with serving others and meeting the students’ demand for instant responses.

I must admit that I am biased in saying that no other office had shown such commitment and worked as hard as OUR staff. As Grant (2013) writes, *Give and Take: Why helping others drives our success*, “everybody gave their time and energy without regard for their own needs and paid a price for it.” It slowly took a toll on the health and wellness of the majority of the OUR staff, thus, affecting the efficiency of delivery. Grant explains that “selfless giving is a form of pathological altruism, which defined by researcher Barbara Oakley as ‘an unhealthy focus on others to the detriment of one’s own needs,’ such that in the process of trying to help others, givers end up harming themselves” (157). Grant adds that “in one study, college students who scored high on selfless giving declined in grades over the course of the semester. These selfless givers admitted ‘missing class and failing to study because they were attending to friends’ problems’” (157).

In the case of the OUR staff, everyone was so focused on answering all helpdesk emails, responding to requests, and processing documents despite the limitations at work and stringent



*Measures (physical distancing, sanitization) implemented by the OUR to prevent the spread of the virus.
Photos from the OUR*



Some OUR staff found comfort in going to the beach to recharge. Photo from an OUR staff member

health protocols that we forgot about ‘self-care.’ Grant adds that, “selfless giving, in the absence of self-preservation instincts, easily becomes overwhelming” (158).

By 2021, we were more aware of running a “hybrid engine” (Grant 2013, 157), i.e., caring about others’ needs and consciously looking after our own. We were more conscious of nurturing our relationships, regularly checking on each other’s health and well-being, and ensuring that ‘offline is my time.’ It was through camaraderie that we were able to pull through the stress and concerns that came with navigating the pandemic, especially for the staff who were infected by the virus (including their family members) and those whose loved ones had passed on.

The next challenge was introduce innovations to ensure continuous OUR operations flow. The Computerized Registration System (CRS) has been a tremendous help. While CRS has been in place since early 2000, in-person transactions were still the norm at the OUR before the pandemic. Starting March 2020, the CRS team had to recalibrate and work doubly hard to expedite the development of completely online processes, such as the health certificate of compliance, updating the modules on late registration and change of matriculation, leave of absence (LOA), and dropping applications, residence enrollment, university clearance application, grades-related modules, application, and the evaluation of transfer applicants from other schools/universities among others. A pre-enlistment survey on remote learning was also incorporated into the Student Profile module to obtain more nuanced information about the capacity of all students to participate in remote learning in terms of access to internet connection and necessary equipment.

As the campus lockdown and quarantines continued, the OUR updated the CRS’ web

server, database, and platform. We also launched new modules (i.e., payment validation viewing, first-time job seekers tagging, and procedure for assessment override), deployed the Student Vaccination Survey Report and new SET reports (student evaluation), and set up the online processing of RFIDs. In 2021, to better serve stakeholders’ inquiries and requests, the OUR migrated to a new and improved Helpdesk.

The OUR had to closely collaborate with different offices in the university to disseminate information on the new processes. Memoranda were issued, information was posted online, and emergency meetings with concerned administrators were held. It is important to note, though, that with most transactions done online since the COVID-19 pandemic, the OUR has been practicing prudence in issuing memoranda since teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as students, complain of “memoranda fatigue.”

Meanwhile, disruptions in the workplace did not prevent the OUR from recruiting and hiring new staff. We also provided opportunities to reskill and to cultivate a culture of upskilling to maximize staff potential. They were encouraged to attend webinars, employee development programs, and virtual wellness activities, and continuous education to help them advance in their career path. Most of these programs were offered for free by the different offices in UP Diliman and other government and private agencies.

So what have we learned from the pandemic in the last two years? What would the future of the OUR workforce and work environment be like?

1. **Valuing communication.** Regular communication (whether virtual or face-to-face) among is imperative. This not only

allows us to disseminate new information but also gives OUR staff a chance to connect, re-connect, and know the concerns of everyone. A simple “how are you?” or sending a “virtual hug” via FB messenger or Viber group chat may be a very simple act, but it may change or save a life.

2. Putting a premium on wellness, self-care, and establishing a healthier work culture.

Burnout, health, and wellness issues have increased during the pandemic. Sitting for most of the day in front of the computer, being inactive, staying indoors, and not getting enough sunshine and fresh air have detrimental effects on our health. The pandemic has taught us to invest in wellness and self-care. Section heads have been regularly reminded to inform the staff to take regular breaks in between work hours. I recommend a 5- to 10-minute break every 90 minutes of work to get up from one's desk and stretch, drink a glass of water or a cup of coffee, do breathing exercises, or perhaps take a short walk outside, while being mindful of physical distancing. This has to be an intentional routine until it becomes a regular part of OUR's healthy work culture. Everyone has been encouraged to prioritize self-care when offline, during weekends, and on holidays. When caring for others is paired with a healthy dose of caring for the self, one is less prone to burn-out (Oakley et al. 2011).

3. Kindness, compassion, and “human touch.”

We learned to be more patient, to have faith in the innate goodness of others, and to practice goodwill—even when we feel overwhelmed and some of OUR clientele are pushing all our buttons. The pandemic made us realize that some people may be quietly struggling and trying to weather pain and disappointments. It taught us that if just we listen and extend our hearts, slow down, and cultivate compassion by being present for others in tiny ways, we can make a big difference.

4. Adopting an agile mindset. In the blink of an eye, COVID-19 significantly altered our lives. The experience allowed us to value the importance of adopting an agile mindset—that is, being more open to change and being comfortable with risks and uncertainty. What is most admirable about the OUR staff was that, at the onset of the pandemic, everyone collaboratively reimagined the OUR workspace to adhere to public health protocols and proactively thought about the best work arrangement. There was a shared sense of responsibility to find innovative ways

to accomplish traditional tasks and processes, and to help each other handle the cognitive and practical demands of new technologies.

5. Shaking it off. How the OUR staff handled their difficult personal and professional struggles and experiences is best depicted by the [story of the Farmer and the Donkey](#):

One day a farmer's donkey fell into a well. The animal cried for hours as the farmer tried hard to figure out the best plan. Finally, he decided that it just wasn't worth his effort to retrieve the donkey.

He invited the passersby to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first, the donkey realized what was happening and cried horribly. Then, to everyone's amazement, he calmed down.

A few shovel loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well. He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. He would shake it off and take a step up.

As dirt was continuously shoveled on top of the animal, it would shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

Our COVID-19 experience was not a smooth one. The abrupt shift to online processes in 2020 disrupted our workflow and daily routines, slowed down our operations, and increased our workload. But like the donkey, to get 'out of the well' is to stay calm, shake it off, and take a step back. We have learned to persevere and take each challenge as a stepping stone.

In the end, it is perhaps a source of great relief to look back at this horrible crisis from the rearview mirror, thankful that we survived to fight for another day. I am sure most of us will choose to look forward and move on with optimistic determination while remembering the optimistic Latin phrase: **Ad Meliora! Onward to Better Things!**



Diliman Community Pantry. Photo from Clodualdo Cabrera

#UnoSaSarapMaglingkod: Mga Danas ng University Food Service sa Panahon ng Pandemya

April J. Perez

Dalawang taon na ang lumipas simula nang makapasok sa bansa ang *coronavirus*, o mas kilala natin sa sakit na idinudulot nito: COVID-19. Hindi maitatangging malaking bahagi, kung hindi man buong mundo, ang naapektuhan ng pandemyang ito. Hanggang ngayon, hindi pa rin nakababalik sa dating normal ang pamumuhay ang karamihan. Walang katiyakan kung makababalik pa nga ba rito o magpapatuloy na tayo sa tinaguriang “new normal” na ginagalawan sa kasalukuyan.

Sino nga ba ang makalilimot sa nangyaring *lockdown* noong Marso 2020? Hindi inaasahan, hindi lubusang napaghandaan. Lahat ay walang kapanatagan sa maaaring maging banta sa ating kalusugan, gayundin sa sanga-sangang mga aspekto ng ating buhay. Kasabay ng *lockdown* ang pagsususpende sa mga klase sa lahat ng antas, maging sa mga opisina ng hindi itinuturing na esensiyal ang serbisyong ibinigay. Samut-saring hamon ang sumalubong sa bawat sektor, kabilang na mismo ang Unibersidad ng Pilipinas. Bukod sa mga akademikong usapin at pag-a-adjust na kinakailangang tugunan bilang isang guro, nariyan din ang kaakibat na responsabilidad at pagsubok para sa mga administrador.

Sa ilang taon na rin ng pagharap sa pandemyang ito, lalong napatunayan ang dedikasyon,

pagsusumikap, at katatagan ng mga kawani sa iba’t ibang opisina. Mababakas ito sa karanasan ng University Food Service sa UP Diliman o mas kilala bilang UFS. Mapalad ang yunit na sa mahigit na 40 kawani, ang karamihan ay naninirahan sa loob ng *campus* o sa mga kalapit na barangay. Ibig sabihin, may akses pa rin silang makapasok sa kabila ng limitadong pampublikong transportasyon. Nang magsimula ang *lockdown* noong Marso 2020, inabisuhan kami ng dating Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Prop. Jerwin Agpaoa, na kinakailangang magpatuloy ang operasyon ng UFS. May mga estudyante pa rin kasing nananatili sa *campus*, partikular ang mga dormer na hindi pa nakauwi sa kani-kanilang probinsiya. Sa kabila ng iba’t ibang pangamba, at sa pagsangguni sa mga Food

Service Supervisor at iba pang kawani ng yunit, walang pag-aalinlangang tumugon sa tawag ng tungkulin ang UFS.

Tuloy-tuloy at magkakatuwang ang iba’t ibang yunit ng UFS sa pagtupad sa mandato nitong maghanda at magbigay ng serbisyong pampagkain para sa mga mag-aaral, guro, kawani, at maging sa buong komunidad ng UP Diliman. Kasabay ng pagsunod sa ipinatutupad na minimum health protocols gaya ng pagsusuot ng face mask at face shield, at ng physical distancing ay nagsimula na rin ang UFS sa pagpapaigting ng kaligtasan para sa mga kawani gayundin sa mga nakakahalubilo nila. Tiniyak ang pagkakaroon ng mga thermal scanner, foot bath, alcohol, disinfectant, vitamins, flu vaccine, at iba pang kailanganin upang mapigilan ang pagkalat ng virus sa yunit.





Sa puntong ito ay hindi na lamang pansariling kalusugan ang isinaalang-alang, bagkus ay maging ang kalusugan ng bawat taong nakapaligid sa atin, lalo't higit ng ating pamilya. Hindi nakikita ang kalabang virus at wala itong pinipiling tamaan kaya naman mas mainam nang magdoble-ingat.

Buong linggo ang naging operasyon ng UFS noong kasagsagan ng pandemya. Naiiba man sa nakasanayang operasyon, bukod sa mga senior citizen o may mga co-morbidity, hindi natinag ang mga kawani. Araw-araw silang pumapasok upang makapahanda ng pagkain. Dinadaan na lamang din sa biruan na “Hangga’t may UFS, walang estudyanteng magugutom.” Samantala, sa pangunguna nina Pangulong Danilo at Atty. Gabby Concepcion ng UP System, at sa pakikipag-ugnayan kay Tsanselor Fidel Nemenzo ng UP Diliman ay binuksan din ang donation drive para sa mga nais magbahagi ng anumang tulong. Lahat ng mga nakalap ay ipantutustos para sa pang-araw-araw na pagkain ng higit sa 500 mga estudyanteng na-stranded sa campus, habang inaayos ang kanilang pagbabalik-probinsiya, o ang Oplan Hatid. Dumagsa ang mga donasyon mula sa iba’t ibang sektor. Magmula sa bigas, gulay, prutas, de-lata,



isda, karne, itlog, asin, mantika, harina, tinapay, hanggang sa mga pampalasa at hygiene kit, lahat ng mga ito ay ipinaabot sa mga mag-aaral. Maging mga dagdag na chiller ay may nagpahiram sa UFS upang makasapat sa paglalagyan ng mga donasyon.

Bunga nito, sa loob ng isa’t kalahating buwan ay nabigyan ng *subsidized meals* ang mga mag-aaral na nasa kani-kanilang dorm. Nakaabot din ito sa mga mag-aaral na ang *boarding house* ay nasa kalapit na mga lugar katulad ng Krus na Ligas at Katipunan. Araw-araw na inihahatid ng mga *waiter* at *driver* ng UFS sa bawat *drop-off point* ng mga dormitoryo ang kanilang pagkain para sa almusal, tanghalian, hapunan. Malaking bagay ito para sa kanila, hindi na kailangan pang sumadya sa UFS para kuhanin ang pagkain kung kaya’t maiiwasan din ang pisikal na interaksyon sa iba. May isang organisasyon ding nagbigay ng tinapay araw-araw sa loob ng mahigit isang buwan. Sa ilang pagkakataon ay nakaabot din ito sa mga na-stranded na *construction worker* sa loob ng campus. Matingkad na matingkad ang bayanihang ipinakita ng mga nagkaloob ng donasyon. Sa kani-kanilang natatanging paraan, maliit man o malaki ay nakapag-ambag ito sa panahong walang katiyakan.

Totoo ngang hindi lahat ng mga frontliner ay nasa ospital, yung iba, nasa UFS! Hindi man nakasuot ng Personal Protective Equipment o PPE katulad ng mga nasa larang ng medisina, hindi rin biro ang pagsuong ng mga kawani sa banta ng pandemya. Katulad halimbawa sa Purchasing Unit, tuloy-tuloy pa rin ang dating ng mga order ng UFS mula sa iba’t ibang *supplier* upang hindi maubusan ng *stocks*, bagama’t may ilang *supplier* na may mga *adjustment* ding ginawa sa kanilang *delivery*. Samantala, ang iba pang mga yunit ng UFS kagaya ng Bakeshop, Cafeteria, Catering, at Admin ay patuloy rin sa pagtupad sa kani-kanilang mga tungkulin. Malaking bagay ang pagkakaloob ng Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA) ng pansamantalang tirahan para sa mga waiter, driver, at cook upang hindi na nila kailanganin pang bumiyahe tuwing umaga papasok sa opisina. Makababawas din ito ng *exposure* sa posibleng may dala ng *virus* na maaari nilang makahalubilo.

Sa panahong ito, ilan sa mga opisina naging regular na kliyente ng UFS ang Philippine Genome Center (PGC) at University Health Service (UHS). Sila rin ang mga yunit



na masugid na nagbabantay sa sitwasyon ng COVID-19 sa unibersidad. Nang magbukas ang Kanlurang Palma at Silungang Molave, sa UFS din sila kumuha ng pagkain para sa mga kawani, maging sa mga pasyente o mga *close-contact* na naka-admit sa mga nabanggit na *isolation facility* tulad mga estudyante, kawani, at mga taga-campus. Gayundin naman, nang magkaroon ng *targeted testing* para sa mga kawani noong Oktubre 2020, isa ang UFS sa mga yunit na sumailalim rito. Lahat, regular man o kontraktual, ay dumanas, sa unang pagkakataon, ng libreng RT-PCR testing. Sa tulong ng Office of the Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs (OVCCA), madaling naipaabot sa amin ang mga dokumentong marapat na ihanda ng bawat kawani bago ang testing. Binigyan ng *schedule* ang bawat isa kung kailan pupunta para sa testing. Sa personal na danas, totoo ngang hindi naman pala masakit ang *swab test* na ginagawa, mabilis lamang din ito. Mas nakakakaba ang paghihintay ng resulta.

Sa hindi inaasahang pagkakataon ay may ilan ding nagpositibo sa COVID mula sa mga kawani. *Asymptomatic* naman sila at sumailalim sa dalawang linggong *home quarantine* bago magbalik sa trabaho. Nagpaabot din ng kaunting ayuda ang UFS sa mga kawani at lalo pang pinaigting ang paalala at pag-iingat para sa lahat. Sa pagtatapos ng 2020, mababanaag ang malaking pagbabagong naidulot ng pandemya. Walang mga estudyanteng nagkukuwentuhan sa *cafeteria* habang kumakain ng paborito nilang pork sisig at mainit na kanin. Wala ring mga kawaning nag-uusap-usap habang bumibili ng empanada at kape para sa kanilang meryenda. Ang dating aktuwal na *Commencement Exercises* na talaga namang

pinagkakaabalahan ng Catering Unit ilang buwan pa lamang bago ito gawin ay napalitan din ng Birtuwal na Pagtatapos. Hindi rin kasi pinapayagan ang *buffet style service* sa panahong ito. Kanselado rin ang UPCAT noong 2020 na isa pa sa mga pangunahing okasyong pinaghahandaan ng UFS taon-taon. Wala ring mga pagpupulong na *face to face* ang halos lahat ng opisina, kaya naman paniguradong na-miss na nila ang ube ensaymada at ham and cheese roll na dapat sana ay pameryenda. Sinubok man tayo ng 2020, nanatili naman ang UFS sa pagtupad sa tungkulin nito. Hindi nagpagapi sa banta ng COVID-19, sa halip ay araw-araw pa ring bumangon at naghatid ng mga putaheng mula sa puso para sa mga tagatangkilik nito.

Sa pagpasok ng 2021, hindi pa rin humuhupa ang pandemya. Nariyang bumaba o tumaas ang kaso ng mga patuloy na nagpopositibo sa virus. Nakailang pagbabago rin sa *quarantine classification* na ibinababa ng Inter-Agency Task Force o IATF. Nag-ECQ, MECQ, GCQ, MGCQ sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa. Gayumpaman, katulad ng iba pang mga esensiyal na yunit sa UP Diliman, nagpatuloy pa rin ang UFS sa pagtupad sa mandato nito,



kaakibat ng mataimtim na panalanging maproteksiyunan laban sa COVID-19 at matinding pagpapalakas ng resistensiya. Kaalinsabay ng panibagong taon ang pagpapalano ng OVCSA, sa pangunguna ni Vice Chancellor Louise Jashil Sonido, sa lalo pang pagpapaunlad ng mga programa at tunguhin ng iba't ibang opisina sa ilalim nito.

Unti-unti ring nasimulan ang pag-rollout ng bakuna kontra COVID-19 kung kaya't kahit papaano'y nasabing may panlaban na rito. Sa paglulunsad ng Bakunahan sa UP Diliman, nagtamo ang karamihan sa mga kawani ng UFS ng kanilang una't ikalawang dose ng bakuna. Sa pangkalahatan ay wala namang nakaranas ng kakaibang *side effect* nito. Bagaman hindi ganoong kadali sa panahong ito, malinaw na ninanais ng UFS na ibalik ang dating sigla nito noong wala pang pandemya.

Nagpatuloy pa rin ang mga kliyente ng UFS mula sa mga opisina ng may regular na pasok, mga mag-aaral na nananatili sa dorm, katulad ng mga estudyanteng atleta at maging ng mga residente sa loob ng campus. Sinubukan



naming bumuo ng Facebook page para sa UFS kung saan ipo-post tuwing umaga ang mga mabibiling ulam sa Cafeteria, at mga tinapay at panghimagas naman na gawa ng Bakeshop. Sa kabutihang-palad, pumatok ito at mas marami ang naabot ng mga paninda ng UFS.

Mas maraming nakaalam na bukas pala ang UFS. Maaga pa lamang ay nagtatanong na ng menu ang ibang customer at nagpapareserba na ng kanilang ulam. Ang iba ay sumasadya sa UFS para i-pick up ang kanilang mga order habang ang iba naman ay nagpapa-deliver sa pamamagitan ng mga courier service. Batay na rin sa mga feedback ng mga customer ay nagustuhan naman nila ang mga pagkain sa UFS. Masasarap daw ang mga ulam at mga tinapay, at ang pinakamahalaga, abot-kaya ang presyo. Bunga nito, lalo pang nadagdagan ang mga tumatangkilik sa UFS kaya naman hindi rin kami tumitigil sa pag-iisip ng mga panibagong maaaring ihain sa kanila.

Tuloy-tuloy rin ang paggamit ng mga sustainable packaging ng UFS para sa mga take-out na order bilang pagpapahalaga sa kalikasan at kapaligiran. Maging ang ibang bumibili ay nagdadala na ng sarili nilang reusable na lalagyan. Samantala, lalo pang pinapagting ang iba't

ibang capacity building training para sa mga kawani, partikular kung sila ay naka-work from home. Sa ganang ito ay higit pang mapauunlad ang kanilang kasanayan sa kabila ng sitwasyon sa ngayon. Natutunan na rin ng karamihan ang paggamit ng mga platform gaya ng Zoom kapag may pulong o webinar, at naging mas gamay sa paggamit ng email, at sa mga bagong sistemang sinimulang ipatupad ng Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration tungo sa mas episyenteng pagpoproseso ng mga dokumento. Para sa ilang kawani ng UFS, naging mabunga ang kanilang pagpupursigi at natamo ang regularisasyon sa trabaho noong 2021. Tunay ngang hindi lamang puro malungkot o negatibong balita ang mayroon sa panahong ito. Naroon pa rin ang sinag ng tagumpay sa kabila ng kadiliman.

Kahit ako mismo ay nanatili nang ilang araw sa Silungang Molave bilang close contact ng nagpositibo sa COVID-19 kung kaya't naranasan ko ang pag-aasikaso nila roon. Hindi ako gaanong nangamba dahil tiwala ako sa mga taong mag-aalaga sa akin, at siyempre pa sa masarap na pagkaing ibinigay sa amin mula sa UFS. Naalala ko pa na sa tuwing nagdadala ng pagkain ang aming mga kawani para sa mga pasyente ay natatanaw ko sila mula sa bintana ng aking kuwarte. Nakakataba ng puso sa tuwing babalikan ko ang senaryo. Sa kabila ng lahat ng ito, matiwasay pa rin ang naging pagtatapos ng taon at sa kabuuan ay naging bahagi pa rin ang UFS ng mga birtuwal na seremonya sa unibersidad.

Iba naman ang naging bungad ng 2022 para sa UFS. Inabisuhan ang lahat ng magbabalik-trabaho na sumailalim sa RT-PCR o antigen testing batay na rin sa assessment ng UHS. Sa kasamaang-palad, 18 o 37.50

porsyento ng mga kawani ng UFS ang nagpositibo. Sumailalim sila sa quarantine kahit pa karamihan ay asymptomatic naman. Kasabay rin ito ng panibagong surge ng mga kaso sa maraming lugar sa bansa. Bunga nito, ilang linggo rin ang pinalipas ng UFS bago muling magbukas. Nagsagawa muna ng paglilinis, pagpapaayos, at pag-disinfect sa buong cafeteria at sa opisina. Matapos maka-recover ng mga kawani, buong-siglang sinalubong ng lahat ang panibagong taong puno ng pag-asa. Muling napatunayan ang katatagan ng loob at pagtutulungan sa pagitan ng mga kawani, sa gabay ng kanilang mga supervisor.

Sa kasalukuyan, mas nadadagdagan pa ang mga tumatangkilik sa UFS kaya naman tuloy-tuloy rin ang yunit sa pagpapakilala ng mga bagong produkto, sa Cafeteria man o Bakeshop. Kamakailan ay binuksan na rin ang UFS Café corner para sa mga nais magkape o bumili ng mga panghimagas. Sinisimulan na rin ang pagpapalano sa posibleng pagbubukas muli ng limitadong dine-in, lalo pa't kung mas magiging maayos na ang sitwasyon sa mga susunod na buwan kasabay ng pagbabalik-opisina ng mga kawani o ng limited face-to-face classes sa campus. Simula noon hanggang ngayon, ramdam namin ang tiwala at pasasalamat na ipinaabot ng mga walang sawang sumusuporta sa UFS.

Hindi pa nawawala ang COVID-19 ngunit umaasa ang marami na huhupa na ito sa lalong madaling panahon. Simula pa lamang ng pandemya, hanggang ngayon, pinatunayan ng buong UFS ang determinasyon at sigasig sa kanilang mga sinumpaang tungkulin. Nagkaroon man ng mga pagbabago sa dati nang

nakasanayan, naging madali naman sa bawat isa ang pag-adapt sa *new normal*. Lahat ay nakahandang umagapay sa isa't isa, sa abot ng kanilang makakaya. Napakapalad na magkaroon ng mga kawaning may pagpapahalaga sa trabaho. Kaakibat ng masasarap na inihahain ng UFS sa mga tumatangkilik dito ang mga maaasahang kawani na laging handang magsilbi, kahit higit pa sa pangangailangan.

Katulad din ng mga paborito nating lutuin, kulang ang lasa ng laing kung kulang sa gata. Mas malalasap ang letsong kawali kung malutong at bagong luto. Sa kape naman, ramdam dapat ang tapang kahit na may pait. Sa UFS, tama ang timpla at laging bagong luto ang mga pagkain, at mas nangingibabaw ang tapang kaysa pait kung may mga pagsubok mang dumating. Magpapatuloy sa pagsulong ang UFS dahil sa at para sa mga taong tumatanggap at nagmamahal dito. Sa huli, mamumutawi pa rin sa aming utak at puso na sadyang **#UnoSaSarap**Maglingkod.



HOT DRINKS

Espresso Shot	P 50.00
Americano	P 75.00
Cappuccino	P 115.00
Café Latte	P 125.00
Butterscotch	P 145.00
Caramel Latte	P 145.00
Café Mocha	P 145.00
Hazelnut Latte	P 145.00
Salted Caramel	P 145.00
Vanilla Latte	P 145.00
Chocolate	P 125.00

COLD DRINKS

Iced Americano	P 75.00
Iced Latte	P 135.00
Flavored Latte	P 145.00
Iced Mocha	P 145.00
Chocomint Frappe	P 155.00
Salted Caramel Frappe	P 155.00
Mocha Frappe	P 155.00

MILK SHAKES

Cookies and Cream	P 155.00
Chocolate	P 145.00
Strawberry	P 145.00
Vanilla	P 145.00
Matcha	P 145.00

Menu ng UFS. Ang mga larawan sa artikulong ito ay mula sa UFS Facebook page.

A photograph of Gonzalez Hall, a large, multi-story building with a prominent portico supported by columns. The building is illuminated from within, and its name "GONZALEZ HALL" is visible on the upper facade. The scene is framed by large, leafy trees in the foreground and sides. A paved walkway leads towards the building. The overall atmosphere is serene and academic.

Usap Tayo: Communications and Counseling

Gonzalez Hall (Main Library). Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

Communication Strategies

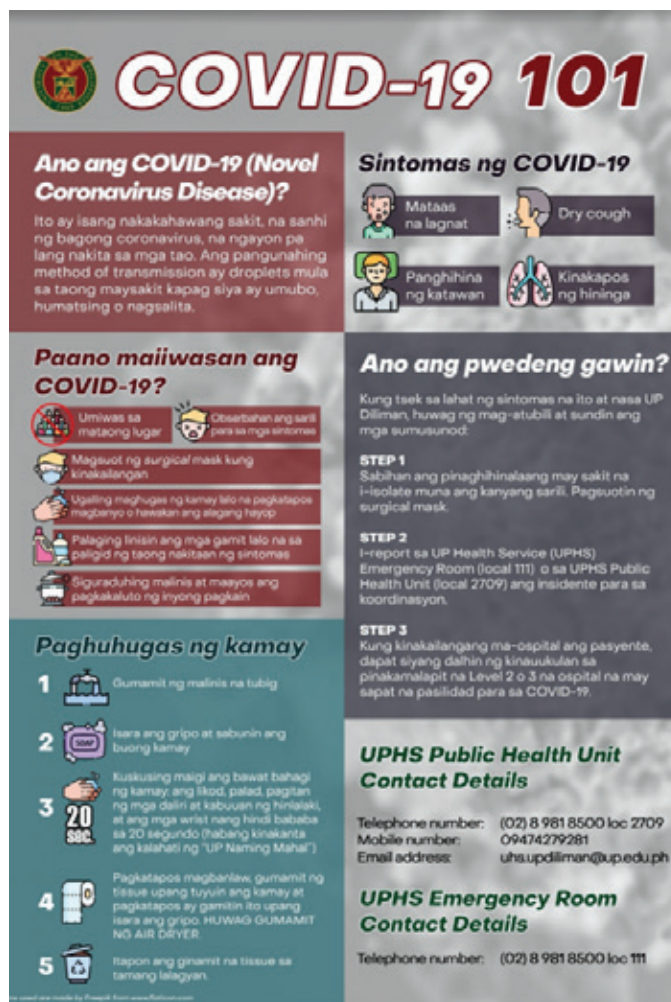
Mariamme D. Jadloc

In March 2020, the UP Diliman (UPD) Administration devised communication strategies to effectively address the UPD community's concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the UPD COVID-19 Task Force (TF) that spearheaded the university's pandemic response, the UPD Information Office (UPDIO) was tasked to release updates on developments related to the ongoing health crisis.

When national government and local government units imposed community quarantines, the UPDIO kept constituents of the university informed about the changes in campus operations through articles, advisories, bulletins, and announcements. All were posted on the UPD website and social media pages, as well as in UPDate, the Office's online community newspaper. The DIO also covered events such as webinars about the evolving nature of the virus and the ways to prevent its transmission. It helped promote the various relief efforts and donation drives organized by various academic and administrative units in the university for nearby communities.

The UPDIO also monitored daily COVID-19-related news on and off campus. Editorial meetings are held before any material is written and published. To ensure timely release of core information, the Office closely coordinates with the UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force who approves the final materials for posting on the UPD website and social media platforms. For urgent announcements, the UPDIO sends text blasts so that all UPD employees subscribed to this service can receive relevant information immediately.

Since effective crisis communication involves processing and disseminating information in way that will get people's attention without evoking fear and panic, all materials released by UPDIO are produced with careful consideration. The



A sample infographic released by the UPDIO.
Image from the UPDIO

words, graphics, colors, and layout are curated to ensure the audience can easily understand the message. For more information about the UPDIO communication strategies, three other articles included in this collection offer detailed accounts of how the Office manages its operations amidst the pandemic.



Bakunahan sa UP Diliman. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Ang Kuwento sa Likod ng mga Kuwento

Mariamme D. Jadloc, Haidee C. Pineda, at Jose Carlo G. de Pano

Matinding pagbabago ang idinulot ng pandemyang COVID-19 sa normal na daloy ng pang-araw-araw na buhay sa buong mundo. Sa UP Diliman (UPD), ramdam din ang mga pagbabagong ito sa operasyon ng mga akademiko't administratibong yunit. Ngunit, hindi naging hadlang ang krisis sa pagtupad ng unibersidad sa mandato nito.

Matapos ideklara ng pamahalaan ang pagsasailalim sa enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) ng buong Luzon, kaagad na ipinatupad ng pamunuan ng UPD ang work-from-home (WFH) arrangement para sa mga kawani nito. Sinuspinde rin ang pisikal na operasyon ng halos lahat ng tanggapan sa kampus. Tanging iyon lamang mga nagbibigay ng serbisyong esensiyal sa buong komunidad ng UPD ang nanatiling bukás.

Kabilang ang aming tanggapan, ang UP Diliman Information Office (UPDIO), sa mga yunit na sumunod sa direktibang ito. Ang mga pinayagan lamang na pumasok sa aming opisina bilang bahagi ng skeleton workforce ay ang mga kawaning naninirahan sa loob ng kampus at iyong mga nakatira malapit sa UPD.

Bago pa man magkaroon ng sunud-sunod na lockdown o community quarantine sa buong bansa matapos ang unang bugso ng COVID-19 noong Marso 2020, pinaghandaan na ng UPD ang mga hakbang upang mapigilan ang pagkalat ng coronavirus.

Kasama rito ang pagpapalano sa agarang pagpapalaganap ng mga impormasyon tungkol sa COVID-19, ang paghahanda ng mga guideline mula sa UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force para sa buong komunidad ng UPD, at ang pagkakaroon ng mga taong dagliang tutugon sa pagsulat ng mga balita, pabatid, patnubay, ulat, at iba pang mga materyales na magpapalaganap ng mga tamang impormasyon.

Sa aming mga pagkilos, may mga prosesong inilatag at sinunod ang aming opisina dulot ng maraming pagbabagong dala ng WFH arrangement, lalong-lalo na sa mga staff writer. Kabilang dito ang pagbuo ng mga paraan upang magpatuloy ang pag-cover ng mga aktibidad ng unibersidad kahit mayroong mga limitasyon sa pagkilos.

May kuwento sa likod ng bawat kuwentong naisulat at nailathala.

Sa pagpasok ng bansa sa isang bago, kakaiba, at tunay ngang nakatatakit na lakbayin, lahat ay kinailangang tanggapin ang katotohanan: ang kalaban ay hindi nakikita at hindi pa tiyak ang mga paraan kung paano ito susugpuin. Noong mga panahong iyon, ang mga bagay na ito ay kailangang ipaalam sa buong komunidad ng UPD sa paraang madaling maintindihan ng nakararami. Hindi ito naging madali.

Bago nagkaroon ng pandemyang COVID-19, hitik na hitik sa mga aktibidad ang unibersidad.

Ang bawat tanggapan sa UPD, akademiko man o administratibo, ay may mga kani-kaniyang inoorganisang proyekto tulad ng mga kumperensiya, panayam, paglulunsad ng aklat, eksibit, at iba pa. Karamihan sa mga gawaing ito, lalo na ang mga institutional event ng UPD tulad ng pangkalahatang pagtatapos, pagdiriwang ng Buwan ng Sining, Linggo ng Parangal, Pag-iilaw, at Lantern Parade, ay pisikal na ginaganap sa kampus.

Ang normal na proseso ng UPDIO sa paghahanap ng mga ibabalita ay ang pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga yunit sa pamamagitan ng pagtawag sa telepono at pagpapadala ng email. Madalas din silang magbigay ng pormal na liham upang hilinging i-cover namin ang kanilang mga aktibidad. Sa puntong buo na ang plano ng pag-cover, matiyagang pinupuntahan ng isang manunulat, kasama ang isa o dalawang photographer, ang event. Matapos ang mabusising pananaliksik, muling pakikinig sa recording, at pagsilip sa mga nakuhang larawan, sinusulat ang news feature o full feature article. Maingat din kami sa lahat ng balitang aming isinasapubliko. Sinusuri namin ang bawat impormasyong inilalabas at tinitimbang ang bawat salitang ginagamit sa pagsulat.

Sa dami ng mga kailangang isaalang-alang sa paglathala ng isang kuwento, kabilang na ang

pagtalima sa mga patakarang ukol sa data privacy, hindi nagtatapos ang lahat sa pagsulat. Dadaan ang artikulo sa iba pang mga manunulat upang tingnan kung may impormasyong nakaligtaan. Babasahin din ito ng copyeditor upang matiyak na sumusunod ito sa estilo ng pagsulat ng UPDIO. Bago ilabas ang istorya, kainakailangan din itong aprobahan ng direktor o ng kaniyang itinilagang tagapangasiwa.

Sa pagpasok ng pandemya, naging higit ang pagdepende ng mga tao sa internet. Ito ay nagsisilbi hindi lamang bilang pangunahing pinagkukuhanan ng mga impormasyon at balita tungkol sa COVID-19; ito rin ay naging daan upang makapagpatuloy ang maraming gawain at manatiling matatag ang mga personal na ugnayan.

Sa UPD naman, ang mga aktibidad ay isinasagawa online gamit ang Zoom application at mga social media platform, kung kaya't birtuwal na rin ang pagko-cover namin sa mga ito. Binabantayan din namin ang mga ibinabahaging impormasyon ng mga akademiko at administratibong tanggapan ng UPD sa website at mga social media page upang malaman kung alin sa mga ito ang maaari o nararapat gawan ng balita.

Dahil nga sa WFH ang karamihan sa amin at naging online na rin ang pagkalap namin ng mga balita at ang maraming transaksyon sa unibersidad, nakita namin sa UPDIO ang pangangailangang paigtingin ang presensiya ng UPD sa social media. Bagama't noon pa mang 2014 ay mayroon nang Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, at YouTube ang UPD, higit naming pinagtuunan ng pansin ang mga ito sa pagpasok ng pandemya.

Isang halimbawa nito ay ang paghatid ng balita ng pagpanaw ni Aileen S. Baviera, PhD, dating dekanong ng Asian Center, anim na araw matapos ideklara ang community quarantine. Siya ang kauna-unahang miyembro ng komunidad ng UPD na nabalitang pumanaw dahil sa COVID-19. Noong araw ng kaniyang pagpanaw, agad itong nalaman ng UPDIO. Mabilis kaming humanap ng tama't dagdag na impormasyon tungkol sa kaniya na lalamanin ng aming artikulo.

Sa panahon ng pandemya, malaking hamon ang kinaharap ng UPDIO sa pagkalap ng mga impormasyon. Lahat halos ay online. Walang matawagang mga tao sa mga opisina at dumepende na lamang kami sa informal channels. Malaking tulong ang mga kaibigan at kakilalang kawani. Kung dati-rati ay hinihintay pang i-accept ang friend request, sa panahong iyon ay kinakausap na agad sa Messenger, madaliang nagpapakilala, at agad ding hinihingan ng tulong sa mga kailangang impormasyon. Mabuti na lamang at sadyang matulungin sa kapuwa ang komunidad ng UPD kung kaya't naibibigay din ang mga kailangang datos kara-karaka.

Sariwa pa sa aming alaala ang sinabi sa UPDIO na kailangang ilabas ang balita "in 10 minutes" matapos malaman ang pagpanaw ni Prop. Baviera. Naalala rin namin ang usapan sa group chat (GC), ang paghahanap ng credentials ng yumaong propesor, ang mga post ng mga kaibigan at katrabaho, at ang pag-alam tungkol sa mga naiwan niyang pamilya. Pagkatapos nito ay ang pagsulat na ng obituary.

Matapos itong isulat ay dumaan ito sa editing sa GC. Tinimbang ang bawat salitang isinulat, kung ito ba ay tamang gamitin o hindi,

kung ang pagkakahanay ba ng mga salita ay akmang gamitin sa panahon ng pandemya, at kung sensitibo ba ang mga ito sa sitwasyon ng pamilya ng yumaog at maging sa dinaranas ng publiko sa panahong iyon. Sa ilang piling balita, paktapos ma-edit, maisulat ang final copy, at maaprobahan ng direktor ng UPDIO, ito ay muling iniakyat sa Opisina ng Tsanselor para mabigyan ng final approval.

Marapat ding bigyang-diin ang maski pagbabahagi ng mga impormasyon sa mga social media page ng UPD ay dumadaan muna sa metikulosong proseso, sa butas ng karayom ika nga, upang masigurong tama't malinaw ang mga ito. Pati ang mga caption na ginagamit sa bawat post ay sinusuri rin nang maigi, at ini-edit kung kailangan.

Isang halimbawa na lamang ay ang ipinagawang infographic tungkol sa COVID-19. Bagama't binigyan ng COVID-19 Task Force ang aming opisina ng mga impormasyong ilalagay sa naturang infographic, dumaan pa rin ito sa masusing editing at proofreading. At dahil nakasulat sa Ingles ang mga impormasyong ibinigay sa amin, isinalin din namin ito sa wikang Filipino upang higit na maunawaan ng nakararami. Matapos ang paghahanda sa teksto, ini-layout ito ng aming graphic artist at ibinahagi ang draft ng layout sa aming group chat upang i-edit at i-proofread. Pagkatapos noon ay ipinasa ang materyales sa isa naming manunulat bilang huling tagatingin bago isinumite sa aming direktor. Ang direktor namin ang nagpasa ng revised version sa task force para sa huling approval ng lay-out.

Nang maaprobahan na ang naturang infographic, ibinalik iyon sa UPDIO upang mai-

upload sa website at sa mga social media platform ng UPD. Ngunit, bago ito i-upload sa mga social media page, may inihanda muna kaming caption para sa ipo-post na infographic.

Busisiin, timbangin, siguraduhin. Ang mga salitang ito marahil ang bubuod sa prosesong sinusunod ng UPDIO bago lumabas ang kahit anong impormasyon sa publiko. May pandemya man o wala, sa mga prinsipyong ito nakaangkla ang karamihan sa aming mga gawain.

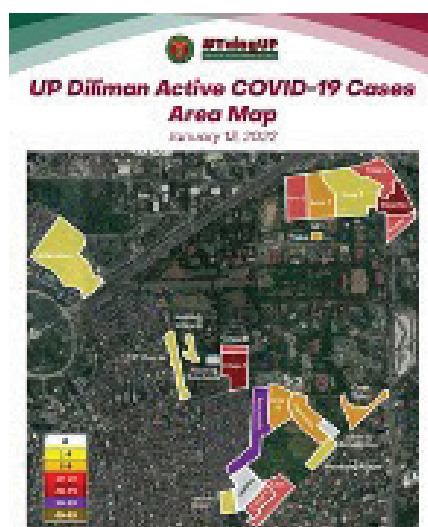
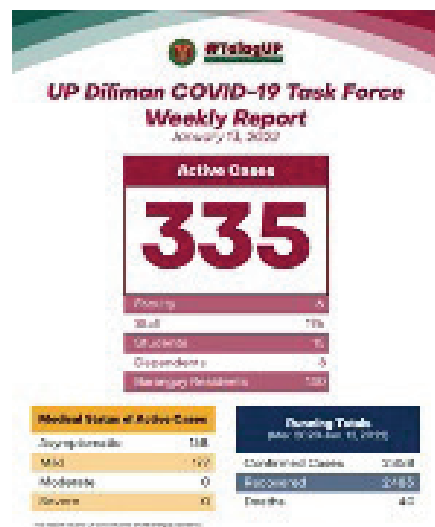
Ang makapagpalaganap ng mga impormasyon sa buong komunidad ng UPD at sa publiko sa kabila ng mga hamong dala ng ating kasalukuyang sitwasyon ay maituturing naming munting tagumpay. Para sa amin, sinisimbolo ng tagumpay na ito na sa gitna ng madilim na lakbayin ng bawat isa ngayong pandemya, mayroon pa ring natatanaw na liwanag. At sa panahon ng pusikit na kadiliman, isa ang UPDIO sa mga nagsusumikap magbigay kahit ng bahagyang tanglaw lamang sa gitna ng mga pangyayaring nagdudulot ng ligalig at pighati.



UP Theater. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

From Generic Templates to Custom Icons: Designs from the UP Diliman Information Office

Jacelle Isha B. Bonus



Dear Members of the UP Diliman Community:

As of 8 a.m. of March 10, 2020, we received the following updates: **we received information that all FUIs tested negative for COVID-19.**

UP Diliman is still COVID-19 Free.

We received information that another faculty member who arrived from travel abroad two days ago tested positive for COVID-19. But this faculty member sought home after landing at the airport and did a self-quarantine. After a day of self-quarantine, the faculty member is a hospital for check-up. This result was released today and the faculty member is being treated at the hospital.

The faculty had no interaction with anyone from UP Diliman. The said faculty also did not visit UP Diliman.

Remember that the campus of UP Diliman is still COVID-19 Free.

Rest assured that we will keep you updated.

For now, we will move forward and remember the safety measures and precautions to take.

UPDIO Announcement 2020-03

UPDATE

Design, at the minimum, aims to make information easy to understand. “Good design” goes beyond form and function to establish a way audiences can recognize and process messages efficiently. This aspect is essential in navigating the sea of information, especially in identifying those that are credible.

When the first lockdown was implemented in March 2020 due to the rising cases of COVID-19, the primary concern of the UP Diliman Information Office (UPDIO) was to disseminate information effectively to the UPD community and the general public. Amidst the panic, there was a need to publicize announcements, statements,

and messages while combating fake news.

The first order of business at that time was to inform the UPD community about the lockdown and how it would affect people’s movements. After that, there was a need to release information focused on the burgeoning pandemic. The multimedia section wanted to design materials that were functional, aesthetically pleasing, and in line with the UPD brand. Two years into the pandemic, these are still our core design philosophies.

The UPD Brand

Branding is a buzzword in media, advertising, and the

academe. Having a “strong brand” sounds very corporate, but in its essence, allows the organization to have a recognizable and recallable identity. Symbols such as the Oblation and the UP Seal, along with the motto, “Honor and Excellence,” ensure the revered status of the university in the public eye. In the digital age, it is important to use these icons and adapt them to updated styles of information dissemination.

The Visual Identity Guide (VIG) of UP sets the rules for the use of UP symbols, as well as the recommended colors and font styles that fit the university’s brand. Formal collaterals like letterheads and business cards strictly adhere to these

guidelines, but online and other print materials concerning announcements, statements, and infographics allow for more creative freedom, especially in terms of colors and font styles.

Does UPDIO's style deviate from the UP brand? No. Online and other print materials such as magazines, flyers, and posters frequent the public eye more than letters and business cards. The information presented also needs to be more accessible to various types of audiences. If the UPDIO limits the UPD brand to how it is formally presented, things would look monotonous and, quite frankly, unappealing. Moreover, UPD is not a static entity; rather, it serves as a place of diversity, freedom, compassion, and creativity.

With these considerations in mind, the Diliman Information Office released the first set of infographics on COVID-19 in March 2020. The UP Seal and Oblation were present to tag the graphics as official materials from the university, and the heading has colors, maroon and white. The background was a blurred grayscale photo of the

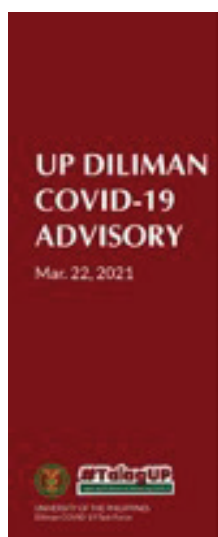
coronavirus' first art rendering released by the World Health Organization to signify that the infographics pertained to COVID-19. Different sections had varied background colors to group related information, while the texts were accompanied by icons. This design template appeared in subsequent infographics, such as flyers, and were uploaded to the UPD website and social media accounts. To distinguish the materials from each other, varying color palettes were used. They remained cohesive because of similar elements and color saturation points.

The UPDIO, together with the UPD COVID-19 Task Force, created #KapitDiliman, a campaign that highlighted the initiatives of various units, offices, institutions, and organizations amidst the pandemic. The design for this campaign was simpler because it eliminated the image of the coronavirus to emphasize the most dominant UP color, maroon, and overlaid the different images of UPD initiatives. The Oblation was also featured front and center to lend credibility to the campaign.

#KapitDiliman showed that amidst the crisis, members of the UPD community were courageous enough to step up to serve their country.

Eventually, quarantine restrictions were relaxed, which necessitated a change in the messaging of UPD. Consequently, #KapitDiliman was replaced by #TatagUP to prepare the university for a post-ECQ situation. #TatagUP was inspired by "Tatak UP," which focused on the resilience, survival, and response of UPD to the new normal. The design changed from being maroon-dominated to being more colorful, vibrant, and graphic. The #TatagUP logo still utilized maroon and green as main colors, but paper textures were added to make the imagery look more trendy and friendly.

Furthermore, the logo had the same font type as the first batch of materials and still used the Oblation to echo and cohere with #KapitDiliman. Although the colors of some design elements deviated from the VIG, they still adhered to the UPD brand by highlighting the university's research and public



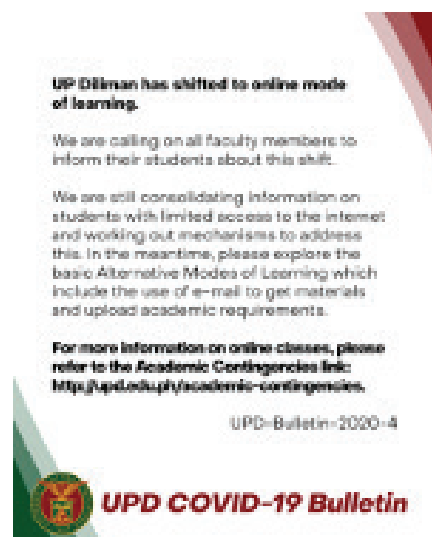
The UP Diliman COVID-19 Task Force would like to announce that on Mar. 22, 2021, we have started screening members of the UPD community tested positive for the COVID-19 variant B.1.1.7, also commonly known as the "South African Variant". After testing positive for the COVID-19 virus, there were immediate isolation and contact tracing were initiated.

The first case experienced a gradual worsening of symptoms leading to admission and close monitoring at the Lung Center of the Philippines where the person was managed as a case of moderate to severe COVID-19 requiring oxygen supplementation and plasma transfusion. The patient was discharged after 11 days of hospitalization and is currently recovering well in isolation. Transmitted case, on the other hand, experienced mild symptoms and rapid recovery upon quarantine and close contact tracing.

These events come in light of recent reports of increasing numbers of positive cases across Metro Manila, which have been attributed to a combination of factors, all which include the identification of variants circulating in the country.

As of Mar. 21, 2021, the "UK variant" B.1.1.7 variant, "Spanish variant" P.2 variant, and South African Variant B.1.1.7 variant have all been identified in various locations from across the National Capital Region by members of the National Center for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) under the recent report of laboratory of the South African variant and the closest cases that identified in the UPD community.

In addition to these reported variants, an additional four variants named the "Belgian variant" P.2 have been identified and are currently circulating in the National Capital Region. It is still necessary to determine the effect of this variant on clinical cases, but early indications suggest similarity to the "South African Variant".





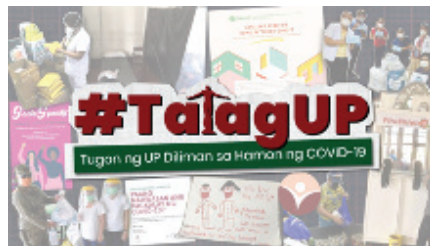
service functions. Various units were also featured in #TatagUP, which justified the use of their respective brand colors in the customized graphics. This creative decision rendered a more hopeful look for the initiatives, donation drives, innovations, and other news related to UPD's response to the pandemic.

Apart from the aforementioned campaigns, the UPDIO multimedia section also created various logos and publicity materials for the UPD COVID-19 Task Force, such as Kanlungang Palma, Silungang Molave, and Bakunahan sa Diliman. These logos mark the “brand” of the programs without fully separating from that of UPD. Additional elements like letters in baybayin as well as vector graphics were included to convey the purpose of the program.

Functionality

Design templates contain the font types, colors, and elements that generate a uniform look. As standardized, ready-made materials, templates promote efficiency as multiple graphic designers can release information simultaneously without appearing they came from different sources.

Each design template for the UPD COVID-19 response effort serves a specific purpose and visually conveys distinct yet cohesive messages. One of the more versatile templates I created is a white rectangle



that can either be in portrait or landscape orientation depending on the platform, with maroon and green gradient arcs at the corners that can be easily transferred when needed. To make the template official and credible, the UPD seal graces the top or bottom, as dictated by the content. The easiest go-to-template, it was used before and during the pandemic.

However, the circumstances surrounding the pandemic challenged the efficiency, functionality, and versatility of this template. Since announcements and other messages had to be released more frequently, it caused visual fatigue. People skipped the content, or worse, were confused about which type of content had been published. This defeated the purpose of information dissemination.

Prompted by the comments of some colleagues and our current director, Jose Carlo G. de Pano, PhD, I experimented with the elements of the old template. I used the same elements for familiarity, but laid them differently to establish a distinguishable



look for each type of content. The new template has a more identifiable heading and a larger space for the content of general advisories. Weekly updates on COVID-19 use the general template, but the design elements are placed on top to allot enough space for other elements, especially those presenting data. Announcements from other offices such as the UPD COVID-19 Task Force and the UP Health Service (UPHS) use a new minimalist design that allows the audience to focus on the logos and important details. Lastly, the template for statements and messages underwent a total revamp; it uses a photo of Quezon Hall as a header and halftone dots at the footer.

COVID-19 advisories, infographics, reminders, and



guidelines are typically longer, spanning up to more than three pages at times. The templates change depending on the type of information released—simple ones are primarily used for FAQs or explanations that need to be formal, while colorful and more complex templates and materials use vector graphics to communicate hope. The UPD seal and other pertinent logos are always included to highlight the source of the information.

Colorful templates appear in videos for the isolation facilities Kanlungang Palma and Silungang Molave, as well as the Bakunahan sa Diliman program. These videos provide information on processes and house rules for the COVID-19 Task Force programs. All of them use voice-overs by Asst. Prof. Olive Nieto and myself, upbeat music, and colorful graphics to capture and maintain the attention of audiences. Each video communicated the UPD brand as well as the brand of the program itself through logos, specific color palettes, and context-appropriate photos. Not all videos were publicly released because they were tailor-made for very specific purposes.

A #TatagUP microsite was created on the UPD website



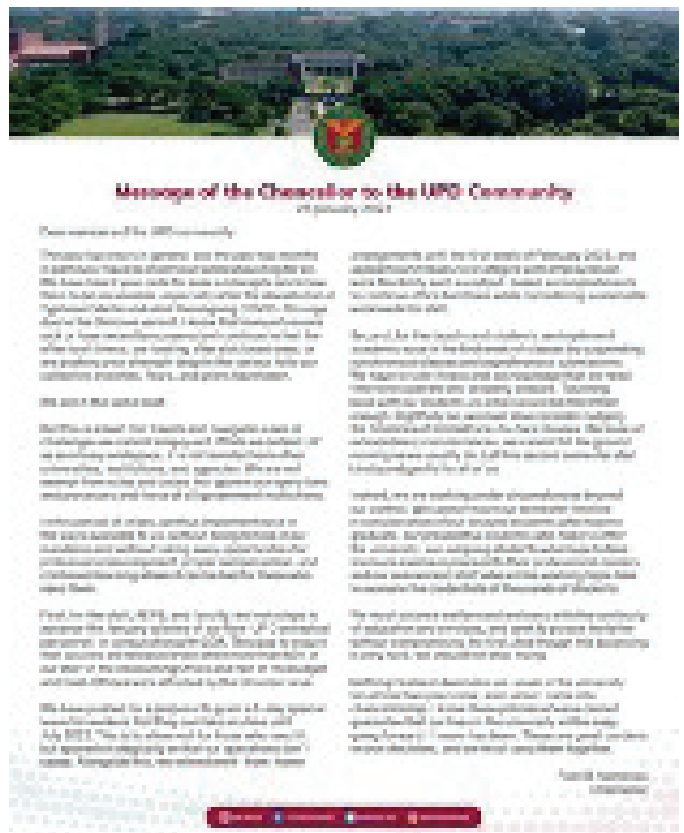
to compile all information that had been disseminated; it was also wise to archive the files for reference. With the help of the UPDIO, Jefferson Villacruz from the multimedia section designed the first microsite. Easily accessible from the homepage, it functioned as the go-to page for any COVID-19 update. It contains an internal navigation mechanism for the different categories of information. It also carries the #TatagUP brand.



Aesthetics

The presentation of material is crucial to reaching audiences and communicating the credibility of its source. Visual elements such as colors, lay-out, font styles, and icons evoke specific emotions, which influence the way audiences perceive and receive the content.

The first aesthetic concern in designing all UPD COVID-19 materials is to make them look non-threatening and non-alarming. To achieve this, darker colors are used more in design accents rather than applied throughout. Pastel colors, fun icons, and tilted text allow for a more casual look yet still grabs attention. Another aesthetic concern is to distinguish the designs from previous UP Diliman templates. This way, posts do not look monotonous, repetitive, and outdated. The last pressing aesthetic concern is the need for custom icons and vectors. While some graphic design websites allow the use of royalty-free, copyright-free, and readily available icons, they were easily recognized, and even mocked by some. These comments fueled me to create original vector images that helped further define the style of the COVID-19 materials. While it may seem impractical to make something from scratch, it was more sustainable in the long run. Having original customizable vector images allows me to design graphics and anchor them to the UPD brand.



The images included in this article are sample materials produced by the UPDIO.



Stairs at Quezon Hall. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

UP Diliman Information Office: Mga Hamon sa Trabaho sa Panahon ng Pandemya

Bino C. Gamba, Mariamme D. Jadloc, Haidee C. Pineda, at Jose Carlo G. de Pano

Dahil sa ipinatupad na ilang beses na *community quarantine* o *lockdown*, naging hamon para sa UP Diliman Information Office (UPDIO) ang pagharap sa mga nakaatang na gawain, kabilang na rito ang pagsulat ng mga artikulo at paglathala ng mga impormasyon ukol sa unibersidad.

Mahirap man, naging malikhain pa rin ang UPDIO sa pagtugon sa mga pagsubok na ito. At dahil likas na masiyahin ang mga tao sa opisina, kahit pa minsá’y dumaraan din sa pagkabagot at matinding lungkot dahil sa sitwasyong kinalalagyan, buo ang loob naming lahat sa pagharap sa bawat hamon. Madalas na maririnig ang mga katagang nagpapalakas sa mga ka-UPDIO at maging sa sarili: “Go lang!” o di kaya ay “Press on!” Malaking tulong din ang mga saglit na pagkukuwentuhan tungkol sa kung ano ang kinakain, iniinom, o pinapanood ng aming mga kasamahan habang itinatawid ang importanteng “To Dos” para sa araw na iyon. Kumbaga, kahit hindi laging nagkikita-kita, malaking bagay ang paglikha ng koneksiyon sa bawat isa kahit online lamang.

Naging matingkad sa amin sa UPDIO ang mga katagang “Huwag susuko. Kapit lang.” Sa bawat lathalaing inilalabas ay isinusulat namin ang “KapitDiliman” upang paalalahanan ang lahat, lalo na ang bumubuo ng UPDIO, na “Kaya natin ‘to!” Nang lumaon, naging “Tatag UP” na ito sapagkat mula noon hanggang ngayon, lagi naman tayong nananatiling matatag.

Ibinaba na sa Alert Level 1 noong 27 Pebrero 2022 ang National Capital Region. Nangangahulugang wala nang masyadong restriksyon o paghihigpit kaugnay sa COVID-19. Ang panahong ito ang inaasam-asam ng lahat sapagkat nagbibigay ito ng kaunting kalayaan sa paggalaw. Hindi man katulad ng dati, isa namang malaking kaginhawahan ito dahil unti-unti nang nababawasan ang malaking pag-aalala at takot sa *virus*. Ngunit bago natin masilayan ang kaunting liwanag, hindi

maitatangging tila butas ng karayom ang dinaanan ng marami sa atin.

Ano-ano nga ba ang mga naging hamon sa UPDIO sa panahon ng pandemya? Ano nga ba ang mga naging hamon sa mga manunulat sa UPDIO?

Mahirap maghagilap ng *source*. Mahirap maghagilap ng makakausap upang makakalap ng maisusulat, lalo na ng mga pertinenteng impormasyon sa mga na-cover na mga *event*. Dati-rati ay tatawag lamang kami sa opisina at may makakausap ng makatutulong sa amin. Sa pagpasok ng pandemya, halos wala nang mga tao sa opisina. Hindi naming magawang makakuha ng impormasyon agad-agad.

Buti na lamang at mayroong Messenger. Malaking bagay ang pag-*chat* sa mga kakilala at kaibigan sa iba’t ibang yunit ng UP Diliman (UPD). May ilang oras o araw man ang paghihintay, dahil kabilang ang UPDIO sa mga nakapilang humihingi ng tulong o impormasyon, nakukuha pa rin naman ang kailangang datos.

Naging mahirap din para sa UPDIO ang mga *restriction* ng Data Privacy Law. Pakiwarin ng bawat manunulat sa UPDIO, nalilimitahan nito ang pagbibigay ng komprehensibong impormasyon ukol sa mga nababanggit na mga tao sa balitang isusulat. Katulad halimbawa ng isang pampublikong kumperensiya na hiniling na i-cover ng UPDIO. Kung ang isang tagapagsalita ay walang pahintulot na gamitin ang kaniyang *public lecture* bilang isang materyales para sa artikulo, hindi ito maisusulat ng UPDIO.

Madalas na maisulat ng UPDIO ang obitwaryo ng mga UPD personnel. May mga probisyon ang Data Privacy Law na hangga’t walang permiso ang mga kaanak ng yumao, hindi mailalathala ang ilang impormasyon ukol sa kaniya. Ang ilan sa mga ito ay ang edad ng yumao, ang petsa ng kaniyang

kapanganakan, at ang dahilan ng kamatayan. Sa ganitong sitwasyon ay humahanap kami ng paraan upang makuha ang permiso ng mga kamag-anak ng yumao. Maaari silang kausapin nang direkta o di kaya'y ipadaan sa aming mga kakilala. Minsan naman ay humihiling na kami ng tulong sa mga opisyal ng unibersidad upang sila na mismo ang kumausap sa kanila para pahintulutan kaming gamitin ang impormasyong nakalap para sa obitwaryo.

Bagama't mayroong mga suliranin sa pagpapatupad ng *work-from-home* (WFH) *arrangement*, mayroon din naman itong mga mainam na naidulot. Halimbawa, maganda ang WFH dahil hindi na kailangang na sumakay sa pampublikong sasakyan. Ibig sabihin, mas maliit din ang posibilidad na mahawa ng COVID-19. Mayroon din kaming pagkakataong makapiling nang mas mahabang panahon ang aming mga mahal sa buhay habang nagtatrabaho. Mas tipid din sa oras sapagakat hindi na naming kailangang gumayak bago magsimula sa trabaho.

Sa kabilang banda, dahil WFH, madalas ay humahaba ang oras ng pagtatrabaho at mas mahirap nang paghiwalayin ang personal sa propesyonal na buhay. Nawala na ang oras para sa opisina at para sa sarili. Kumbaga, hindi na malinaw ang *demarcation line* ng oras ng trabaho at paggawa ng mga tungkulin o responsabilidad sa bahay. Mas mahirap pa sa kalagayan namin sa UPDIO sapagakat tila lagi kaming *on call*. May mga hindi maiiwasang pagkakataong kailangan naming biglaang sumulat ng mga pabatid o di naman kaya'y mag-post ng mga anunsiyo sa *website* at *social media pages* ng UPD.

Sa biglaang pagpapatupad ng WFH, ang ilan sa aming mga kasama ay nahirapang mag-*adjust*. Dahil sa mga balitang kailangan naming basahin at harapin, naapektuhan na rin ang aming kalusugang pangkaisipan o *mental health*. May mga sensitibong impormasyon na kahit ayaw naming harapin ay kailangan pa ring intindihin dahil bahagi ito ng aming trabaho. Kumbaga, hindi namin magawang umiwas sa mga impormasyon kahit nakadadagdag ito sa aming *anxiety* sapagkat kinakailangan ito sa mga balitang aming isinusulat.

Naging hamon ang pagkakaroon ng *anxiety attack*. Ito ay pinalalala pa ng mga nababalitang nasawi dahil sa COVID-19. Iba pala kapag kakilala na ang nalalaman naming nagkakaroon nito. Mas nagiging bahagi ng aming realidad ang pandemya.

Sa mas personal na paglilimi ngayong panahon ng walang katiyakan, minsan na rin naming inakala

na hindi kami tatamaan ng anxiety at pagod kasi pakiramdam namin ay matibay kami. Ngunit, nagkamali kami.

Sa panahong lumilipad na ang aming mga isip dahil sa pinaghalong pangamba sa di-tiyak na pagtatapos ng pandemya, lungkot sa mga nababalitaang permanenteng paglisan ng mga kaibigan at kakilala sa UPD o ng mismong kapamilya, at tindi ng pagod dulot ng sabay-sabay na mga pangyayari sa unibersidad, naging gawi na namin ang saglit na pagpapaalam sa loob ng GC at opisina ng *break time*. Ito ang panahong nagpapahinga muna kami mula sa pagsulat at pagpo-proseso ng mga impormasyong lalamanin ng mga lathalain.

Hindi pa man pumapasok ang pandemya, napakahabang proseso na ng pagsulat sa UPDIO. Hindi natatapos ang lahat sa pag-cover ng isang event. Kinakailangang muling pakinggan ang buong *recording* upang matiyak na tama ang aming isinusulat. Dapat ding magsaliksik upang maunawaan namin nang lubusan ang isyu. Matapos ang unang *draft*, dadaan pa ito sa iba't ibang proseso ng editing bago tuluyang mailagay sa website o sa aming mga publikasyon.

Sa pagdating ng pandemya, dumoble pa ang hiras sapagkat maliban sa pahirapan ang pagkuha ng mga impormasyon dahil sa mga limitasyon ng WFH arrangement, hindi rin namin maiwasang mabalisa at mangamba. Laging kinakailangang balansehin ang pagtupad sa mga tungkulin at arugain ang pagal na utak, puso, at katawan.

Sa panahong pakiramdam namin ay malapit na ring ma-*burnout*, kami ay "lumalabas" muna sa gawain at nag-iipon kami ng lakas upang suungin muli ang trabaho. Dahil alam namin na ang kontribusyon ng pakikiisa sa komunidad ng UPD ay nagsisilbing tulong na rin upang mapalakas hindi lamang ang iba kundi pati na rin ang aming mga sarili.

Ang isa pa sa mga kalaban sa WFH set-up ay ang pagkakaroon ng mabagal na *internet connection*. Hindi sa lahat ng oras ay may maasahang mabilis na koneksiyon lalo pa't hindi lang naman isa ang gumagamit ng *WiFi connection* sa bahay. Nakikipagkumpetensiya kami sa mga kasabay ding gumagamit ng internet tulad ng ka-pamilya sa kani-kanilang lang trabaho o pag-aaral. Kung minsan, problema rin ang pagkasira ng aming mga computer o ang madalas na pag-init ng mga laptop dahil sa labis na paggamit.

Sa hamon ng mahina o mabagal na internet connection, natuto kaming maging mas matiyaga sa paghihintay. Sinusubukan din namin, hangga't

maaari, na huwag mag-*attach* ng mabibigat na *file*. Natuto na rin kaming mag-*strategize* kung kailan magpapadala ng mga *file* na dumadaan sa deliberasyon ng marami sa aming mga kasamahan sa UPDIO. Kung minsan, nagtatalaga na lamang kami ng isang time slot para magkasama-sama sa isang kinakailangang “*huddle*” meeting online.

Sa usaping ng paggamit ng computer na sariling pag-aari, ito ay tinugunan sa pamamagitan ng pagpayag na magamit ang mga *office computer* sa panahong kami ay naka-WFH. Binigyan din ng *internet subsidy* ang ilan sa amin upang kahit papaano’y maging mas madali ang pagtatrabaho.

Bukod pa sa mga regular na tungkulin sa opisina, naging hamon din ang madalas na mga dagdag na gawaing ibinibigay sa UPDIO na lampas na sa oras ng trabaho.

Naging hamon din ang mahabang paghihintay ng mga desisyon kung dapat na bang ilabas ang naisulat ng balita at mga *publicity material*, at minsan naman ay ang pagbago ng mga natapos nang materyales ngunit ang *deadline* ay hindi naurong.

Sapagkat nauunawaan namin ang kahalagahan ng pagbibigay ng tiyak at tamang impormasyon, malugod pa rin naming inaayos at pinagbubuti pa nga ang mga ito. Inuunawa rin naming hindi maiiwasan ang mga ganitong pangyayari sapagkat nahaharap sa kakaibang sitwasyon hindi lamang ang UPD kundi ang buong mundo. Pagod man, may galak sa aming mga puso, sapagkat alam naming kami ay mayroong malaking ambag sa komunidad ng UPD.

Mahirap ang mga hamong aming hinarap at patuloy na hinaharap, ngunit lagi’t lagi kaming humahanap ng paraan upang lagpasan ang bawat suliranin at pagsubok. Patuloy naming sinisikap na ipamuhay ang tatak ng isang miyembro ng komunidad ng UPD, ang lumalaban at nagpapatuloy sa buhay nang may pag-asa. Isang tatak nang pagiging [ma] Tatag [na] UPD.



IPINAGBABAWAL ANG MGA SUMUSUNOD:

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Counseling and Guidance in UP Diliman during the Time of COVID-19

Office of Counseling and Guidance

We never imagined ourselves being thrown at the mercy of a pandemic. Like any human being, our first response was self-preservation. We queued endlessly in drugstores and supermarkets to procure our necessities for what we thought was just a month or two of lockdowns. This health crisis brought to the fore the fragility of human existence, but also the tenacity and resilience of the Office of Counseling and Guidance (OCG) personnel, the OCG QuarantTeam! We were caught ill-equipped on how to deliver our services in a remote set-up. Thus, we trained ourselves on how to use various online platforms. We adapted, adopted, and grounded on solution-focused counseling techniques in crisis situations. We crafted standard protocols in responding to requests for counseling and other services. We continued to cater to our previous face-to-face clients who reached out to us, and expanded to include new clientele: students, alumni, employees, and even referrals from other constituent universities.

In time, we found it necessary to teach the public about coping mechanisms amidst the different psycho-social challenges brought about by the pandemic. We designed and conducted webinars on various topics as we saw fit, successfully shifted the Celebrate Life program into a virtual event, and introduced new projects that will benefit

primarily our students who are struggling amidst this pandemic. We provided them safe spaces to share their experiences through in-take interviews, individual and group counseling, and group guidance sessions. We assisted in pre-employment testing and research activities as needed. During this period, we also conceived the OCG's mascot—LiLa, a portmanteau from the combination of the words “Ligtas” and “Laya”—which aims to communicate OCG's vision of providing students a safe space to explore themselves freely, unclutter their thoughts, acknowledge their emotions, and then discern and decide on the next steps in their lives.

Counseling Services Reimagined: “Kumustahan—Kumusta ka na...Tahan na...”

We were so used to doing counseling sessions face-to-face, and so the sudden need to conduct these sessions online required retooling. This we did with the help of the UP-ITDC who familiarized us with Zoom, Google Meet, MS 365, Viber, and Messenger. We also took various courses and training programs offered by Coursera, CURE COVID-19, DOST-NCRP, PGCA, Red Cross Philippines, CEFAM, and other institutions responding to mental health concerns of our fellow citizens. After which, the UPD Psychological Services opened itself to the public, and two (2) of our Guidance Services

Specialists (GSS) became volunteer counselors.

When we resumed our counseling services after complying with health protocols, students from UP Diliman and other Constituent Universities (CUs), employees and their loved ones, as well as alumni, came knocking at our doors. From the UP Diliman student body alone, there were 1,369 unique clients who availed of counseling services from March 2020 to December 2021. We also extended our counseling services to 41 unique clients from UPDEPP, UPOU, UPLB, UPV, and UP Baguio, and to 58 alumni, 31 employees, 113 referrals (which included loved ones of students and employees), 20 parents (through parent conferences), and 25 non-UP clients.

The COVID-19 pandemic stirred varied concerns during the counseling sessions. These include personal concerns (590 instances), administrative (376) and intake (326) interviews, academic (259) and career (245) matters, and even psychological (169) matters. OCG became a safe refuge for our Iskolar ng Bayan at the height of a health crisis.

Intake Interviews

The intake interview refers to the initial interaction between the student and the Guidance Services Specialist (GSS). It aims to gather the necessary information about the personal

background and concerns of the student. The OCG conducted the Intake Interviews upon the request of the School of Statistics and the College of Engineering. The freshmen, transferees, and shiftees of AY 2020-2021 were encouraged to make an appointment with their assigned GSS. “Kumustahan” encourages students to discuss matters concerning their studies, current emotional state, or any personal affairs.

Group Guidance

OCG responded to requests for group processing, where like-minded people share their thoughts and emotions as they go through similar struggles, like those we experienced during the pandemic.

When the Association of Biology Majors (ABM) invited us to provide group guidance to its members, the GSS assisted them in developing a Membership Welfare Survey that was fielded

in midyear 2020. The results of the survey became the framework of Group Guidance, where students were organized into small groups of five (5) to six (6) members. The group guidance aimed to impart techniques and tools to cope with the difficult conditions during the pandemic, to develop self-esteem, to facilitate goal-setting for a greater sense of purpose, and to build resilience and motivation. Through lectures and other activities, students are prepared and trained to face the challenges in the academe in a holistic manner. Four groups completed the modules, and we will be welcoming another set of teams with the help of ABM.

In October 2020, the NSTP Coordinator of the UP National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG) requested for a debriefing session for students who had their on-the-job-training (OJT) at the Human Rights Violation Victims Memorial Center (HRVVMC). Due to the potential vicarious stress from exposure to other people’s traumatic experiences, four one-hour “Kumustahan” sessions with students from different year levels were conducted synchronously via Zoom.

In December 2020, the Diliman Learning Resource Center (DLRC) invited us to organize group guidance for students who wish to attend monthly sessions with others who may be facing similar challenges. In a testament to the program’s effectiveness, one of the groups requested to extend the group guidance sessions until October 2021.

The UP Business Administration Council (UP BAC) also requested for a guidance program that would cater to the diverse psychosocial concerns of their constituents. In the midyear 2021, the CBA Safe Spaces program was launched, guided by the framework below.



An infographic released by the OCG. Image from the OCG

Productivity Learning Sessions were facilitated for six days among students of the Virata School of Business (VSB), with each session lasting two hours. Small-group sessions allowed a more personal and interactive means of learning from the facilitator and among student participants. The modules focused on identifying strengths and weaknesses, setting personal goals, sustaining passion and motivation, coping skills, and organizational skills. All were aimed at developing resiliency amidst a pandemic. After receiving feedback and evaluation, the modules were adjusted to meet a blended-learning arrangement, where three sessions can be conducted synchronously and the other three can be accessed asynchronously. The UP BAC remains in charge of continually promoting the program and forming teams who will benefit from this group guidance.

The Institute for Small-Scale Industries (ISSI) also invited us to a unique group process which focused on processing loss and grief. Four of their colleagues passed away in 2021. Five

sessions on “Debriefing in Grief” with ISSI employees were led on 12, 18, 20, 27 January and 3 February 2022.

Flourish-Oriented Webinars: Bawat Iskolar, LILA (Ligtas at maLaya)!

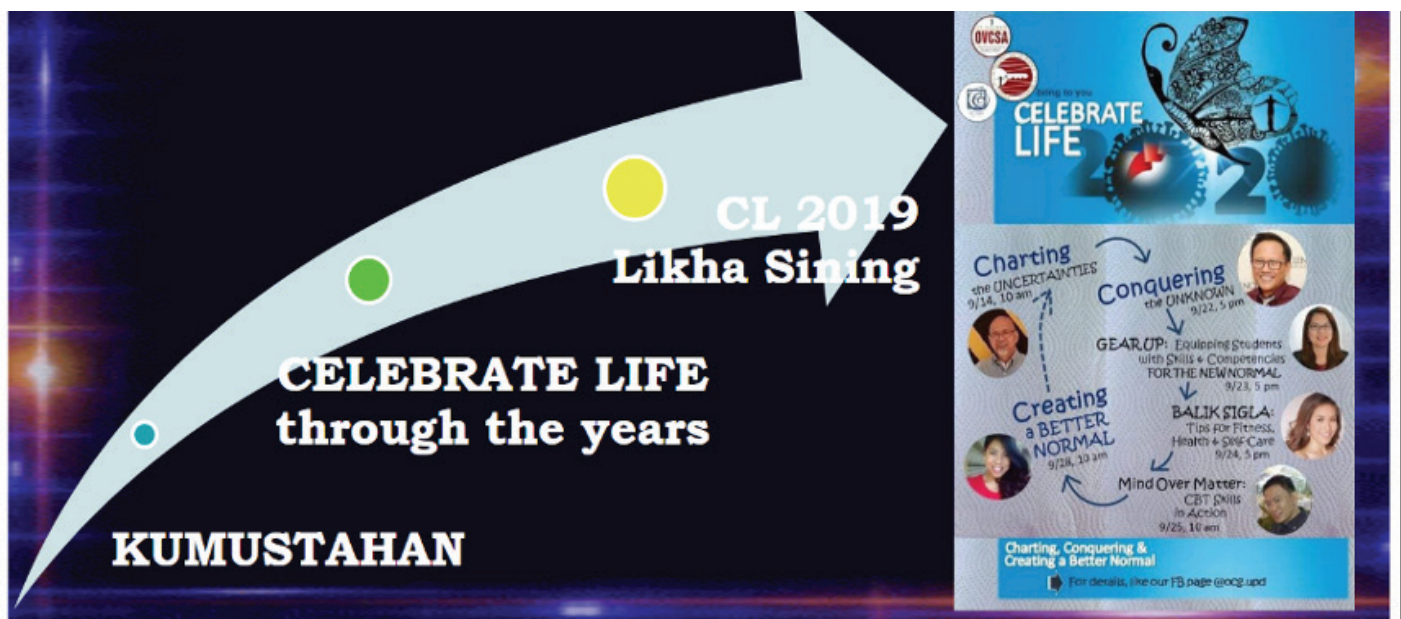
The OCG responded to requests from various groups and organizations within and outside UP to discuss coping strategies. We designed and facilitated webinars tailored to their needs in order to equip them with skills for surviving, thriving, and flourishing despite mental health concerns amidst the pandemic.

Celebrate Life 2020: Charting, Conquering, and Creating a New Normal

The annual Celebrate Life (CL) program was held alongside the opening of AY 2020–2021, which saw the implementation of the first remote-learning throughout a full semester. As students were only starting to adjust to the demands of virtual classrooms and still had health, financial, and/or psycho-emotional concerns, it was fitting to have a discussion about navigating the new normal.

The theme of the OCG’s Celebrate Life 2020 (CL 2020) was “Charting, Conquering, and Creating a New Normal.” It aimed to promote mindful acceptance of the changes brought about by the pandemic. Instead of the usual in-campus event, the OCG hosted the first-ever webinar series featuring experts on coping strategies such as flexibility, problem-solving, and self-care. CL 2020 encouraged stakeholders to be trailblazers in creating a new normal that demonstrates social responsibility and a wider sphere of influence for the greater good.

The project commenced with a social media post in May 2020, which prompted students to share their experiences transitioning from pre-pandemic to the new normal. The result of the “Kumustahan” survey served as a baseline in formulating the topic of guest speakers. Social media presence featuring CL activities through the years served as publicity materials for the event.



Event poster. Image from the OCG

Based on the data from the evaluation forms, the six-part webinar series had an average attendance of 60 participants, from which 50% were UP employees and students and 50% were Non-UP attendees. The length and pace of each session were likewise rated excellently, and the webinar with the highest attendance was Fr. Arsie Lumiqued's talk on Cognitive-Based Therapy session. The participants rated the event as very good to excellent in terms of the platform used. For this, we are grateful to the UP Computer Center for assisting and training us in using Zoom.

The program continued to permeate in the social media through post-webinar publication materials and the re-run of the recorded webinar during the Christmas break 2020. Attendees expressed their learnings and insights which are summarized below.

Celebrate Life 2021: "Pagdadala, Pagbangon, Pagkatuto: Sulong-Tulong sa Pagtuklas ng ating Sariling mga Kalakasan"

Since the coronavirus outbreak, students have experienced mental and emotional fatigue. They face the challenge of performing academic tasks in a remote learning set-up while fulfilling other responsibilities. Likewise, teachers and staff had personal struggles other than devising creative strategies to efficiently provide services to the members of the university.

After the success of first digital Celebrate Life (CL) event in 2020, the OCG, in partnership with the Office of Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA) and the Philippine Guidance and Counseling Association (PGCA), hosted CL 2021 with another

webinar series. The theme was "Pagdadala, Pagbangon, Pagkatuto: Sulong-Tulong sa Pagtuklas ng ating Sariling mga Kalakasan." The webinars on 13, 20, 27 September and 4, 11, 18 October 2021 comprised a two-month-long celebration and OCG's participation in the World Suicide Prevention Month in September and the National Mental Health Awareness Month in October.

The distinguished speakers were alumni of the University of the Philippines Diliman, and experts in mental health, nutrition, and education. The six-part webinar series aimed to develop, promote, and optimize the personal strengths of students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders to face the challenges of the times. The topics included in the series were: (1) Name that emotion: Emotional self-control matters, (2) Optimizing student's strengths in remote learning, (3) Discovering and exploring your strengths through problem-solving and decision-making processes, (4) Unleashing your inner strength: Mindfulness-based strategies in coping during the pandemic, (5) Guided nutrition amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and (6) Learning through reflections: remote learning tips and tricks.

The webinars were well-attended. Participants include students and employees from the five UP constituent universities (UP Diliman, UP Manila, UP Los Baños, UP Visayas, and UP Open University) and other stakeholders, such as guidance counselors, psychologists, psychometricians, and academicians. In a post-webinar survey, sixty-nine percent (69 percent) of the participants rated the CL 2021 webinar series as excellent. They acknowledged

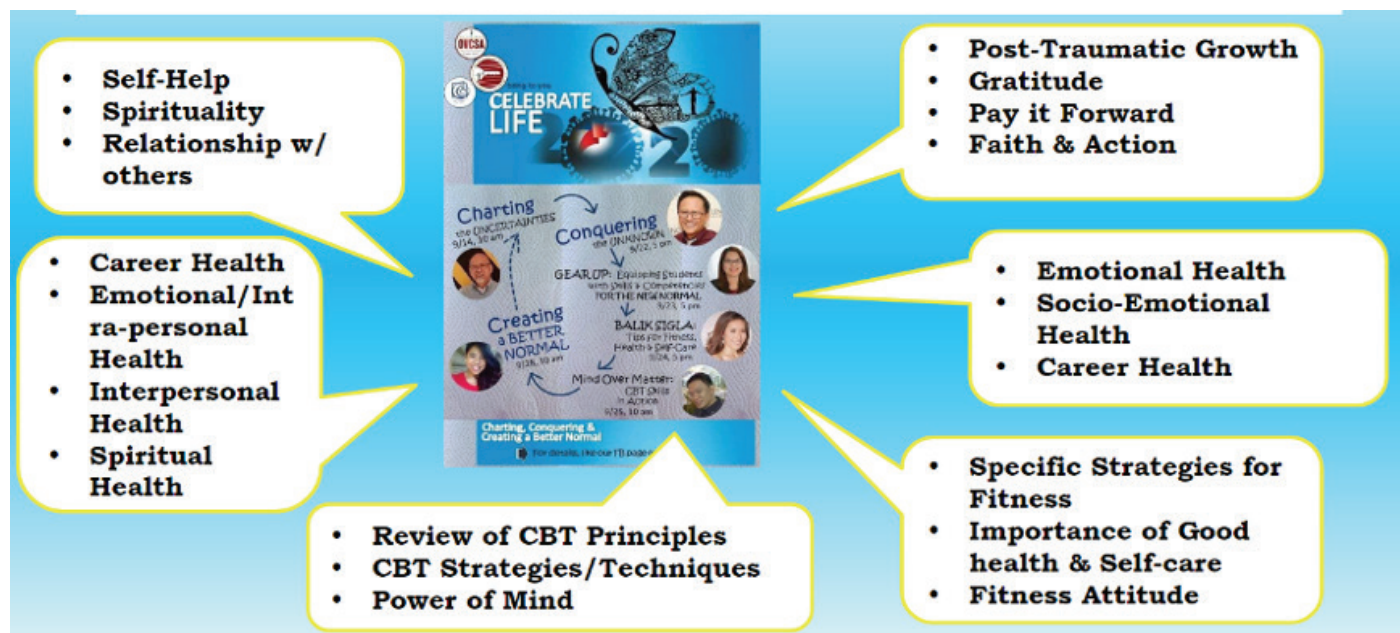
the importance of the topics shared by the resource speakers. One of the participants commented that the event was handled well and that "[i]t's very informative as well as helpful to us students and mental health professionals."

Collaboration with CHK Varsity Sports Program

The OCG assists the UP College of Human Kinetics Varsity Sports Program (CHK-VSP) in fostering an empowering environment where student-athletes can survive, and even thrive, despite the daily stress they encounter. This ensures the overall well-being of the teams and of each student-athlete.

The CHK-VSP confirmed the OCG's observation that student-athletes rarely ask for help when distressed and distraught. Thus, for Batch 2020, we offered an individual session of "Kumustahan" from May to September 2021. This provided student-athletes a safe space where they share experiences of UP Diliman life in a remote set-up. For many, it was their first time to talk with a Guidance Services Specialist (GSS). After learning of OCG services, some of the rookies contacted us for counseling. Others, together with student-athletes from older batches, even participated in the 2021 Celebrate Life (CL) webinars in September and October. The OCG also forwarded to CHK-VSP the links to the reruns of CL 2021.

The coaches and team staff, as well as the CHK-VSP, consistently monitored the student-athletes. However, personal issues and concerns could not be easily surfaced and addressed by those providing support, since doing so requires self-check and self-monitoring. Agreeing that



Event poster. Image from the OCG

self-awareness and a healthy self-esteem are some of the foundations of mental health and overall well-being, CHK-VSP requested that OCG include online psychological testing and test interpretation, alongside “Kumustahan” sessions for Batch 2021. Online assessment started in December 2021, while individual sessions were scheduled from March to July 2022. In support of the CHK-VSP for juniors and seniors, the OCG also facilitated a Leadership Training for Batch 2019 in March 2022, and hosted a webinar on Personal Development for Batch 2018 in May.

For monitoring, evaluation, and research purposes (i.e., batch profiling), the Basic Information Sheet (BIS) were collected via Google Forms for more efficient archiving. The e-BIS that the student submits is directly received by the GSS assigned for individual counseling to ensure the confidentiality. Other OCG forms used for the programs for student-athletes are also now digitized.

Actively Engaging with College of Engineering Student Organizations

Collaborating with student organizations is part of the goal of OCG. Partnering with student organizations is an opportunity to extend our reach in creating a caring and nurturing environment. In 2021, the OCG worked with two student organizations from the College of Engineering: Engineering Student Council (ESC) and Industrial Engineering Club (IE Club).

The program designed for the ESC aimed to equip volunteer students with the emotional and social skills that will help them assist peers who may need to be referred to a mental health professional. The OCG facilitated the Peer Support Training among volunteer officers of ESC on 23, 25, and 30 October 2021. The three-day training sessions covered four main topics: (1) Awareness of self and others, (2) Basic facilitating skills with practice simulation, (3) Roles, functions, and responsibilities of peer

support, and (4) Self-care. The participants appreciated the interactive activities, which involved actual practice of asking the right questions and of being mindful of boundaries when making referrals to mental health professionals.

On 15 November 2021, the OCG facilitated Sensitivity Training on Work Boundaries among officers, members, and applicants of the Industrial Engineering Club (IE Club). The discussion centered on role identification, the importance of roles in communicating others, common barriers to effective communication, and tips on managing responsibilities and decision-making processes related to non-academic concerns.

The training programs for ESC and IE Club were both facilitated via Zoom. Breakout rooms, chat box, and other online interactive presentations helped engage participants and encourage them to actively participate in the sessions.

Financial Intelligence Resource Management (FIRM)

The OCG provided Department of Science and Technology (DOST) scholars with a group guidance and self-awareness workshop titled, FIRM ©: Financial Intelligence Resource Management, which covered the topic on managing stipends wisely. The interactive sessions were conducted on 7 & 9 September and 6 December 2021. Mary Ann Gina Valderrama was the lead facilitator, while Aileen Bartolome, Belina Cuevas, Rolando de los Reyes, and Charity Orense served as breakout room facilitators. The same workshop was conducted for graduate scholars on 21 December 2021.

Psychological Testing

Two months after the enhanced community quarantine was implemented, the OCG crafted Post-ECQ Guidelines in rendering Testing Services since one of the key functions of the office is to provide psychological assessment. Pre-employment testing in UPD was still conducted in face-to-face setup twice a month, unless testing had to be cancelled due to stricter lockdown.

OCG testing service contributed to the establishment of UP Resilience Institute last October 2020. The OCG administered a hiring test to prospective personnel. When 20 applicants vied for researcher/scientist position, the test took place in a classroom that fits a maximum of eight examinees. Since then, it has become the protocol to hold any testing in a classroom when there are three or more examinees.

Students' face-to-face testing was deferred, and

the counselors adapted tele-assessment procedures using the materials reviewed and recommended by the OCG Testing Taskforce.

Towards the last quarter of 2021, when most of the GSS had been vaccinated, we once again offered face-to-face testing for graduate students applying for international research and internship grant courtesy of the UP-System Office of International Linkages (OIL). A total of six MS students with under the following degree programs were assessed: MS Environmental Engineering (3), MS Materials Science (2), and MS Chemical Engineering (1).

In the tail end of year 2021, the OCG offered an online test battery for the Rookies of Varsity Batch 2021. A third-party psychological testing center provided standardized tests that could be taken remotely by 123 rookies. The tests were relevant to the program and the needs of varsity students.

Looking Back, Looking Forward

We can liken the journey of the OCG during this pandemic to a phoenix rising from the ashes. Despite struggling at the onset of the health crisis, we managed to come together as a team to accompany one another and our beloved students through these uncertain times. In his speech in Indianapolis on 12 April 1959, John F. Kennedy said, "The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.' One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity."

The COVID-19 pandemic brought seemingly unstoppable and relentless dangers physically, emotionally, mentally, socially, etc. Nevertheless, these trying times have also provided

the OCG opportunities for creativity and innovation to continue to provide the best possible service to our Iskolar ng Bayan, Para sa Bayan!

Pandemic Performance: Pagkinig sa mga Himig, Pagtugon sa mga Tinig



The UP Carillon. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

Distanced Musicking with UP Symphony Orchestra (UPSO): Bringing Hope and Keeping UP Together Amidst the Pandemic

Bernice Elaine Go

“Thirty minutes left!!!” our manager texted. It was the afternoon of 16 October 2020, and our first online concert was scheduled to premiere very soon. Editing had wrapped up just that morning and with the figurative ink still drying, we hurled the files onto the orchestra’s YouTube channels and Facebook pages to begin the long uploading process. We sat helplessly biting our nails and nervously watching the seconds tick by as gray upload bars moved, a handful of hours away from the rise of our digital curtain.

Seven Months Earlier: March 2020

Almost immediately after the Philippines and the rest of the world entered a lockdown, a trend of online “collage” performances began. Musicians would record themselves at home, and these videos would be woven together in a “video collage,” forming a musical tapestry of everyone performing together. It provided a small comfort to many, musicians and listeners alike, as we all did what we could to overcome our collective anxiety and isolation.

In March 2020, Prof. Josefino Chino Toledo, music director of the UP Symphony Orchestra (UPSO), held a conference call for the group. We would make a collage performance of our own, he announced. But it would be a work that spoke directly to the hearts of our Filipino audience. It would be the premiere of a new arrangement he had made specifically for the occasion.

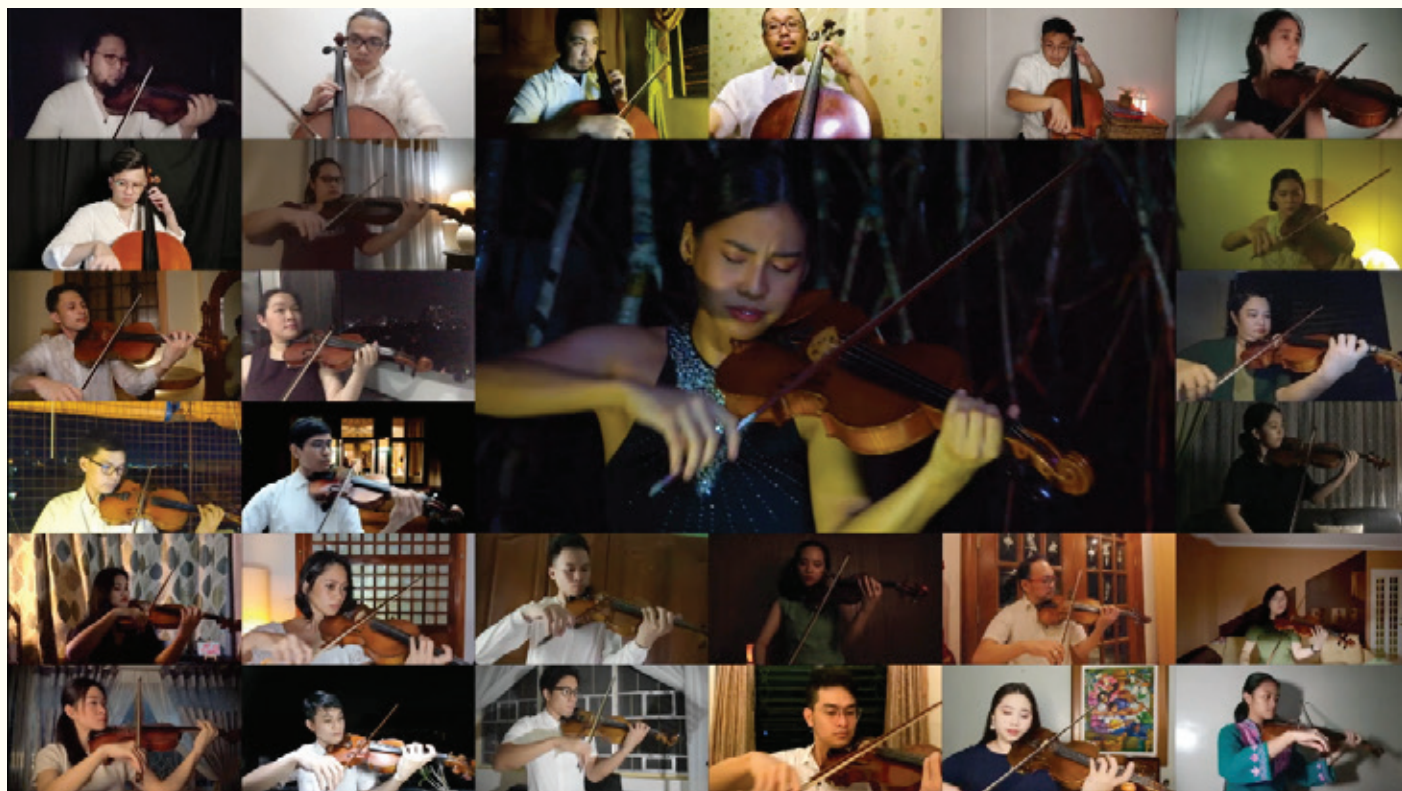
Currently Professor 12 of Music Composition and Chair of the Department of Composition and Theory at the UP College of Music, Prof. Chino Toledo also holds the elite title of University Artist III, a recognition conferred upon him since 2009 for his outstanding prolific and acclaimed work in music and arts scholarship. As a composer, Prof. Toledo has built an impressive body of work that has made Filipino music internationally renowned. He has received many awards from all over the world, yet still tirelessly continues to contribute to the university and to the country.

After pulling a hundred or so musicians and three editors together, UPSO released our

first virtual project, “Maghintay Lang,” on 19 April 2020. Taking its text from Psalm 46, the choir sang, “*Maghintay lang, kaluluwa at diwa / Dalhin mo ang dalamhati at dusa / Panginoo’y magaayos maglalaan / Magpakailanman, siya naririyán.*” The words were set to the well-known, hymn-like music of Jean Sibelius’ “Finlandia, Op.26.” It was a statement and reminder to our listeners to have faith and stay strong, as this pandemic too shall pass.

But it did not. Months passed and we were still all locked in our homes, constantly disinfecting and worrying about our health, our finances, and our loved ones. UPSO faced a quandary: What do we do? How can we keep making music not only for the sake of our musicians, but also for our listeners? How can we contribute a small semblance of “normalcy” to everyone’s lives, and help our musicians stay afloat by providing them a means of income in these hard times?

Since UPSO’s establishment by the Board of Regents on 30



UPSO's virtual performance. Image from the UPSO

August 2018, we have mounted concerts that told socially and culturally important stories, and championed UP artists and Filipino composers. Mere days before the lockdown, UPSO had been recording the works of National Artist for Music Dr. Ramon Pagayon Santos as part of a legacy project. A month prior, we were at the AS steps for “FQS@50: Konsyertong Bayan sa Ika-50 Taon,” which, as the title suggests, looked back at the First Quarter Storm and the music produced in its wake. That concert was our 13th performance in only fifteen months.

We had a large amount of momentum, and it did not take us (too) long to decide that we were not letting a pandemic stop us from fulfilling our mandate. Despite the distance and the technological challenges, we resolved that UPSO would mount an online concert season. We would continue our collaborative

work to promote Filipino music and artists. We would resume telling important stories to our listeners, and even expand our audience to those abroad. But most importantly, we would return to bring joy and hope sprinkled with *utak*, *puso*, and *diwa* to all who would hear us.

A New Kind of Rehearsal

The first major adjustment UPSO faced was rehearsal structure.

Rehearsals are vital before a performance. Without them, concerts would simply sound like sixty individual people playing on a stage without any connection to each other. Rehearsals provide the opportunity for an ensemble to learn to make the music together—for each member to understand how their part fits in the whole, and for everyone to develop that musical connection with each other as they play. They are facilitated by the conductor who shares his

interpretation of the piece to the members, and works with them to produce the sound he has in mind.

Since everything was done via Zoom, our members could no longer actually play together because of internet connectivity issues, though we did try it once. It was a terribly noisy experiment that led to good-natured laughter accompanied by the decision to never do it again. Thankfully, other rehearsal functions were still very much possible over the platform.

Together in a big call, the whole orchestra would listen to the assigned piece of the rehearsal simultaneously before Prof. Toledo would break down the musical elements he would like to hear. He would note things such as, “Flutes, make sure you are heard in this section,” and “Violins, you need to sound very firm here.” He no longer gestured on a podium in front

of the group, but made his intentions known in these lectures, and in the audio study guides he had prepared weeks before rehearsal, to which each member had access to.

But to make sure the musicians truly understood what he was looking for, Prof. Toledo would give additional explanations of the piece, from its historical context to the original intentions of its composer. While musicians are expected to know such information even in the pre-pandemic setting, they are often left to do it on their own. By doing this kind of learning together alongside Prof. Toledo's clear verbal instructions and customized audio guides, the orchestra grew together as a group and also as individual musicians— each one was challenged to perform beyond playing notes “by rote,” and playing solely from a sheet music. All of these combined to help UPSO maintain our high standard of performance.

A New Kind of Performance

While rehearsals were underway, the UPSO production team tackled another challenge: how to make an orchestra's concert a more visual experience, one that could compete online against funny memes and cute kitten videos? We pulled in a UP College of Mass Communications-graduate-turned-film-director-friend, Jose Carlos Soliongco. He shared his expertise and explained the importance of colors, textures, camera angles, and phone FPS (frame per second) settings. The orchestra members were asked to set aside their standard all-black attire and instead don colorful attires with matching backdrops and look like they were performing. Typically, orchestra musicians maintain a stoic

composure, but now, with each musician confined in their own little square, it was important to be more engaging than usual. It was different, but our members played along.

That visual aspect was only half the story. Members had to learn how to properly record their individual performances, too. UPSO refused to require members to purchase equipment amidst the financial uncertainty that came with the health crisis. Thus, we sought to make the best use of our phones. For this, we pulled in one of the most respected mix engineers in Metro Manila, Aji Manalo from Acoustic Underground, to give members a crash course on microphone positioning and audio recording settings. Each instrument had its own requirement: string players had to position the microphone one to two feet away from their instrument's f-hole. Certain woodwind instrument players were encouraged to record while sitting on a bed or next to a stack of towels (to absorb the sound), while brass players had to place their microphones by their bells. We were granted a practice round where each member received personalized feedback on the submitted sample recordings in order to ensure each one understood and applied the theory correctly.

These aside, there was yet another adjustment to be made: playing in an orchestra requires a combination of visual and aural instinct, with eyes on the conductor and ears on each other. Now, members had to play “blindly” with no visual cues available. Members were challenged to play together purely by ear, making sure they were still in time and in tune, with only the audio guide as the anchor.

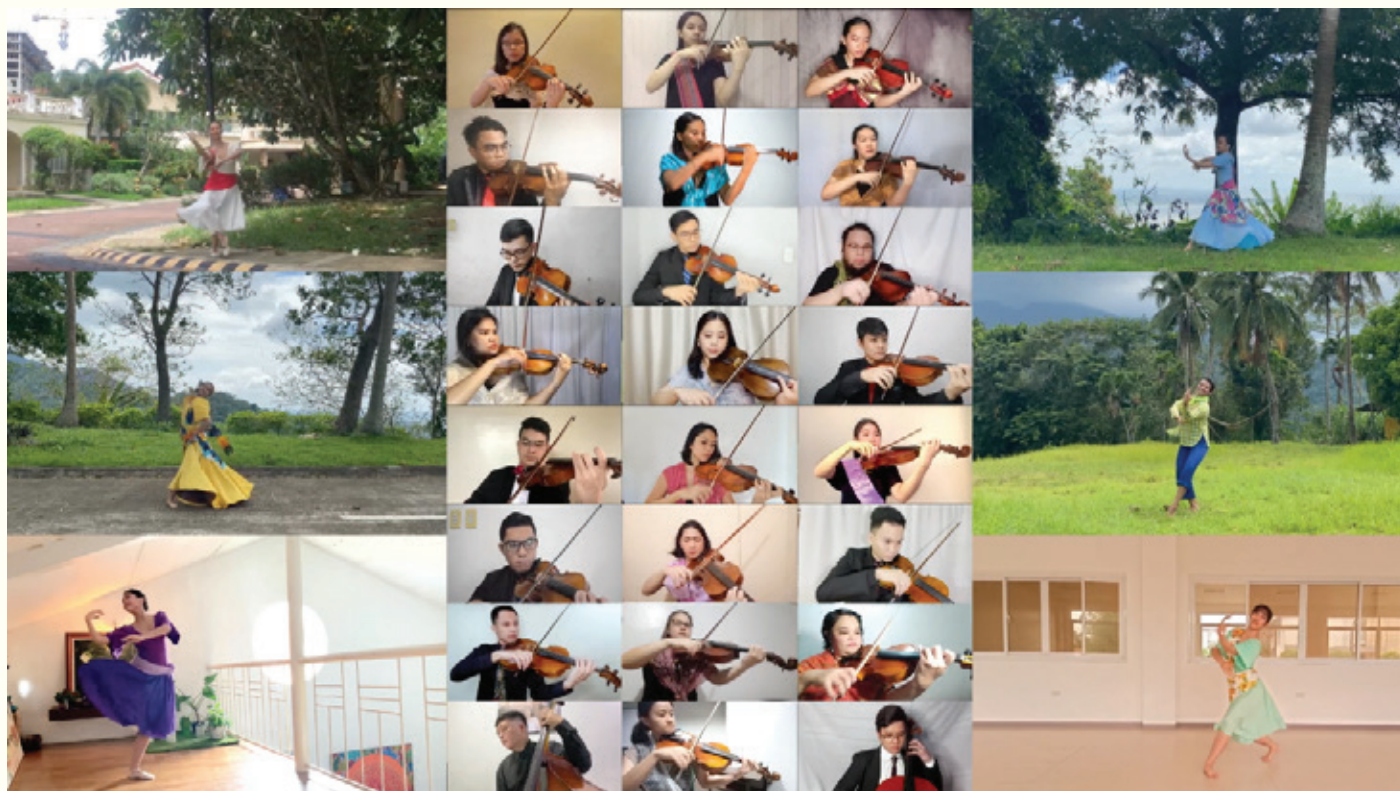
After all the concerns were addressed, the members were finally prepared to actually make the recordings amidst the hustle and bustle of busy home life. We had to keep pets and children away while recording videos, and find quiet time to record without any roosters crowing or jeepneys passing, usually ending up doing so in the middle of the night. We had to find a strong internet connection and enough space in the cloud to submit our recordings. We had to meet deadlines. And though perhaps an unconscious decision, we also had to make ourselves slightly vulnerable by allowing strangers into the private spaces of our homes as seen in the backgrounds of the videos.

All these efforts are a clear testament to the members' dedication to the orchestra, to our listeners, and to keep music going.

A New Kind of Concert

From the onset, Prof. Toledo shared with the production team his vision of “online blended performances.” They would be a mix of new remotely recorded works and of pre-existing archive videos. It would display the current reality of distanced music-making while adding a small touch of nostalgia to our concerts, giving audiences a glimpse of our “regular concerts” back in the days. As a final touch, he also requested that each online blended performance end with “Maghintay Lang,” UPSO's first virtual project. As long as these virtual performances went on, we would keep reminding our audiences to hold on because soon, all shall be well again.

Our director liked the vision, and further augmented it by adding a lot of B-roll (“extra” footage that provides context



UPSO's online concert. Image from the UPSO

and visual interest to help tell your story), including newly taken shots of the now-empty campus. Together, we were painting a bittersweet story of the past we took for granted, our current reality, and our hopes for a better future. Over the span of a few weeks and more than a thousand individual submissions later, the efforts of each musician and editor fused together into a cohesive whole.

And so there we were, on the afternoon of 16 October 2020, sitting and waiting for our online blended performance to be uploaded to YouTube. It had been a difficult process, to say the least, requiring UPSO to innovate ways of rehearsing, performing, and so much more. We did make it in time for the premiere, and watched the entire hour-long show with bated breaths, responding to comments in real-time and keeping an eye on the ever-changing number of viewers. As the credits rolled, we all

released huge sighs of relief and exchanged virtual high fives.

And then the comments started coming in:

"What a musical experience!" one audience member wrote. "It has raised the bar of online music performance. Congratulations, Dean Verne [de la Peña], UP College of Music Alumni Association, and everyone involved in this event."

"Thanks for keeping art alive in this difficult moment!" another wrote.

We were elated. We had survived the fire!

So we decided it was time to go bigger.

Keeping UP Together

The annual community Christmas concert has always been UPSO's way to bring together various constituent

units (CUs) in one stage. Each year, we invite choirs from various campuses to share the spotlight with us. We realized that with the new online format, we were no longer limited to those within easy travel distance to Diliman; we could involve everyone.

The 2020 community Christmas concert excitingly featured choirs from campuses representing the three major Philippine island groups: the UP Medicine Choir and UP Madrigal Singers from Luzon; the UP High School in Iloilo Harana Choir and UP Cebu Serenata from the Visayas; and UP Mindanao's Koro Kantahanay. Joining us in the community singing of Christmas carols were UP President Danilo L. Concepcion himself, and Chancellors Jose V. Camacho, Jr. (UP Los Baños), Atty. Liza D. Corro (UP Cebu), Dr. Melinda dela Peña Bandalaria (UP Open University), and Dr. Larry N. Digal (UP Mindanao). In total, seven constituent universities

were involved in the production, doubling the usual three. It was not until the following year, the 2021 community Christmas concert, that UPSO finally achieved our goal of having all eight CUs perform with us, albeit only virtually, and we could not have been more proud and joyous.

UPSO brought another unifying thread to other UP events throughout the year, particularly graduation season. In June 2020, the orchestra produced videos of *UP Naming Mahal*, the official university hymn, and the Philippine National Anthem, originally for the first virtual graduation ceremony which took place that year. These videos have gone on to be used in nearly all constituent universities' respective ceremonies, as well as those of certain individual colleges and departments. They have also been used in other events such as webinars and conferences. Since UPSO can no longer physically travel to various celebrations as we have done in the past (such as the Foundation days of UP Los Baños and the Philippine General Hospital, both back in 2019), it gladdens us to know we can still be there for the system in a different yet similar way.

As the months passed, UPSO found our digital footing and have produced monthly concerts, each more grand than the last. We have collaborated with the Philippine Madrigal Singers, the UP Dance Company, Harmony: The String Ensemble of UP Los Baños, UP Manila Classical Ensemble, the Kuwerdas Filipinas Symphonic Rondalla, the UP Singing Ambassadors, the UP Concert Chorus, the UP Engineering Choir, the UP Los Baños Choral Ensemble, the UP Manila Chorale, and others. For

Halloween 2021, we produced an illustrated children's concert featuring an original story written by London-trained and Paris-based UP alumna, Charley Magalit. We have also featured numerous soloists, including soprano Bianca Lopez-Aguila, tenor Itchie Boy Montilla, UPSO's own concertmaster Janine Samaniego, UPSO's principal trumpet John Paulo Ramos, US-based mezzo-soprano Pauline Tan, and more. We are extremely proud to be the only orchestra in the country who has successfully mounted two full concert seasons from 2020 to 2022, and who has continuously explored and took advantage the possibilities of online blended performances.

As of this writing, concert halls are still mostly quiet, but life is slowly going back to "normal." We are eager to return to live performances, but we also know that we must first learn a whole new set of protocols, one as firmly established as shifting sands. We are also aware that we might *not* return to live performances yet, should another surge occur. Whatever comes along, UPSO will be ready to adapt and thrive because we are the *Orkestra ng Bayan*, standing as strong and resilient as the people we represent.



UP Amphitheater. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Student Collaboration and Performance-Making in a Time of Precarity

Louise Jashil Sonido

*Ang tadhana’y para bang may dala-dalang sumpa sa sangkatauhan
‘Di mo alam kung sa anu-anong bagay tayong lahat nagkulang
Tao man o ‘di tao ang may gawa, ang pagkakaisa na ang mahalaga
Lumalakas, umiigting, humihyaw ang panawagan ng lahat na
tumalima sa kapwa.*

...
*Maghawaan ng kabutihan, kasakima’y ‘wag nang ‘tulutan.
Lahat ng kahirapan mayroong hangganan.*

— “Huling Liwanag,” Jitter Jays (2020)

In 2021, more than a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, the virus showed no signs of slowing down. Video conferences and webinars had lost their novelty. People had resigned themselves to the constant exhaustion of their multiple roles, enacted simultaneously, porously day by day. The brave new world remained uncertain, insecure, and somehow, the lockdown wore on increasingly old, jaded, and decadent. In the wake of the COVID-19 Delta variant surge, the university’s hallways gaped empty, the trees still, the grass long.

But, somehow, despite the relentless battering of new

variants of concern, it needed to be a year to rally—to regain some footing, if not to gain ground. A new batch of bright-eyed first-year students were waiting to be welcomed into the premiere national university to claim it as their own. Beleaguered continuing students struggled to replenish energy and renew morale. Another semester of remote learning and teaching promised compromise as much as redress. For the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA), the challenge of bringing UP Diliman to its students somehow was both impossible and indispensable.

The temporal disruption of remote learning posed an intricate challenge to the work of nurturing a sense of community—a task accomplished most swiftly by shared experiences in a specific place and a specifically curated environment. For the UP Diliman community, its massive campus, almost 500 hectares wide, stands determinedly in the middle of the city as one of the “last lungs” of Manila. It is a literal and metaphorical oasis—for biodiversity as much as academic freedom—that nurtures its students through the intensive rigors of knowledge consumption and production under the eaves of abundant greenery and in the hallowed hallways of historic structures punctuating the expanse of trees and grassy hills.

The UP Diliman campus is ground zero for every UP student’s journey in the university. It lays the groundwork for how learning proceeds and progresses, enriching and enriched by the various place-making activities of its multisectoral community. Brian Edwards¹ in “Why does the

¹ Edwards, B. (2013). “Why does the university campus matter?” *University*

university campus matter” has rightfully described university architecture and its campus as “the backcloth to academic life: they contain functions but their content necessarily contributes to the pedagogic whole.” Without the experience of the campus in a remote learning set-up, students’ university life was effectively reduced to pure (e-)classroom learning during the pandemic. This is an arrangement students and faculty members have since learned to face as a challenge to creativity and innovation, but also one that inevitably buckled under the concomitant psychosocial and cultural disruption.

For these reasons, I approached my work in the OVCSA, coming into office in the middle of the pandemic, with one foot in administration and the other in Architecture. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. Perlego. Accessed 20 March 2022.

cultural and performance work. Without common ground, we needed to try and tap into new modes of cultural exchange and build new pathways to the university, and to each other, for our physically distanced students. To this end, video-performance provided one of the most enabling strategies to negotiate the liveness/realism and virtualization of the university experience.

Muli: Activating Nostalgia and Memory

The OVCSA produced the video-performance, *Muli*, in collaboration with the UP Street Dance Club (SDC), for the 2021 University Welcome Assembly (UWA) held virtually on 17 September 2021. The UWA is an annual bonanza of performances and speeches to welcome first-year students into the premiere national university. It is an initiation rite meant to instill pride of place and a sense of belonging in their

new community. This effect was difficult to approximate for freshies who had never stepped foot in the campus and did not have the benefit of the traditional campus tours, freshie concerts, and other freshie-centered festivities.

In the virtualized world, film and video presented the most accessible means to introduce the campus to students. But without the sensorial dimension of physical presence, communicating the vibrancy of the campus came down to film language. The goal of *Muli* was to revisit and reactivate the iconic and well-loved spaces of UP Diliman through dance, to charge them with the energy of student activity in a way that they had not been for a long time because of the pandemic. The project embraced the growing nostalgia and yearning for the campus. At the same time, it introduced the university to its new students in a way that they could vicariously



The last tableau featuring UP Dancesport Society, UP Street Dance Company, UP Filipiniana Dance Group, and UP Dance Company for “Pag-asa, Pag-ibig, Paglaya.” Photo from the OVCSA

celebrate as part of their new community. Street became the dance style of choice for its invigorating pump and hype, providing an energy boost to disrupt the long-drawn-out tedium of the unrelenting community quarantine.

It bears noting that the various disruptions of the pandemic had, at that point, also aggravated the mental health crisis among staff, faculty, and students of UP Diliman, and it surged in parallel with the public health crisis. While the UPD COVID-19 Response Framework was articulate in implementing community-based strategies to manage the challenges and minimize the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, navigating the mental health crisis necessitated far more improvisation.

In performance, to improvise is “to engage with states of ongoing precarity”—to move without knowing what comes next. Improvisation is “always pointing to vibe, flow, liveness, surprise, and unintended, irreducible consequence,”² write Fischlin, Risk, and Stewart in “The Poetics of Engagement: Improvisation, Musical Communities, and the COVID-19 Pandemic.” Improvisation exercises a certain agility to navigate constant change and uncertainty—an indispensable value for the constant work of living, being, and striving in the unpredictability and precarity of the COVID-19 world.

For OVCSA and the UP SDC, *Muli* opened up a heady new horizon for the university: to begin exploring blended

modes of collaboration with students who, until then, were still prohibited from visiting the campus while it remained on lockdown. When UP SDC’s Head Coach Ariel “Aye” Alba and I ventured to invite a limited number of SDC members, on a purely voluntary basis, to perform and film a special performance for the UWA in campus, mitigating health risks was our paramount concern. Everyone needed to commit to strict health protocols. Nothing could be done in the same way that the performers were used to. The principles of the UPD COVID-19 Post-ECQ Guidelines remained iron-clad: assess risk, mitigate risk.

Only vaccinated students were allowed to participate, and only if they agreed to sign a waiver form detailing the protocols they needed to comply with to participate. These include a two-week quarantine period before coming to campus for the two-day shoot. The project would be done in a bubble. All performers, coaches, videographers, and production assistants had to undergo RT-PCR testing before entering the dormitory where they would stay in individual rooms for the duration of the shoot. All meals would be provided. The performance was choreographed in such a way that the shoot could be done in small batches, with only a limited number of students performing in a given place for a certain sequence. Transitions from one scene to the next were carefully planned and executed in-camera. All students and coaches underwent RT-PCR testing again before returning home, COVID-negative.

Outside these minimum health protocols, everything else needed to be improvised. Because nothing ever goes

according to plan in a precarious world, the project constantly navigated problems and challenges. A month before the shoot, Coach Aye, along with the assistant coaches, taught the SDC members the choreography through video call so that they could rehearse the dance in their individual homes. A few days before the bubble shoot, one of the dancers was identified as a close contact of a symptomatic COVID-19 case and needed to be replaced because he had to self-quarantine. The results of the first RT-PCR test came out late, and so even in the dormitory where we had set up accommodations, the SDC members had to rehearse apart while waiting for results: Coach Aye set up the speakers on full blast so they could dance in the corridors in front of their rooms, within view of each other but more than adequately socially distanced. After finally getting their negative results, overnight, they blocked, adjusted, and rehearsed the dance together for the first time.

During the shoot, more improvisations had to be made—accommodating bad weather and changing sunlight because we were shooting mostly outdoors with a skeletal crew; switching out symbols and props depending on what was available; re-strategizing entire transitions. The dance would not be what they rehearsed. Given the number of retakes and outtakes, it would not exactly be what they danced at one particular moment either.

We produced it in a state of asynchrony and left cohesion up to montage to fulfill. Nobody would see the full performance until after the video was edited.

In the temporal disruptions of COVID-19, synchronicity has its unique uses. We premiered *Muli*

2 Fischlin, D., Risk, L. & Stewart, J. (2021). *The Poetics of Engagement: Improvisation, Musical Communities, and the COVID-19 Pandemic*. *Critical Studies in Improvisation / Études critiques en improvisation*, 14(1), p. 3.

during the UWA, in the middle of a virtual program that featured two (2) hosts being livestreamed from another indelibly iconic UP space: the Palma Hall lobby. We had a technical crew of barely ten (10) people on set—a skeletal set-up that considered the new uncertainties brought about by Delta variant surge. Ten (10) was the ideal number because a gathering of that size would not be cancelled by any level of government-imposed quarantine. The UWA would set the tone for how another academic year would go for the UPD community. The freshies were excited. We were all in need of hope. Postponement due to yet another COVID-19 contingency was not an option.

We streamed the program to an audience of over 3,000, and for an hour and a half we felt somehow in sync, finding each other in the simultaneous bursts of comments, tweets, and reactions. The hosts, officers of the University Student Council, regaled the viewers by engaging with and reacting to their posts. Audiences shared stories and UP memories through a common hashtag, #BuhayIsko. There were raffle prizes and surprise videos from varsity players. We curated the program to have different emotional arcs: some pump, some rest, and toward the end a call to action. When *Muli* premiered at the peak of the pump, the comments section was palpably electrified, and somehow we felt that within those four minutes and twenty-five seconds our 3,000 hearts were in the same place.

In *When Blood and Bones Cry Out: Journeys Through the Soundscape* (cited in Fischlin, Risk, and Stewart's work above), John Paul Lederach and Angela Jill Lederach reflect beautifully on such moments of human

connection, despite conditions of despair and violence, enabled by music and performance.

Violence destroys our ability to feel human. We are lost in a landscape that has no vibration, no way to locate ourselves. At its deepest level healing functions like a metaphoric journey to find ourselves, a search to find a location with meaning in a barren landscape. This journey may in an extraordinary, though mostly unspeakable way, represent the sonic odyssey to re-touch vibrations that create bearings and make sense of our place in the world. People are trying to feel again. That is why we so often hear from those living through violent conflict or in its aftermath that they are trying to “feel” like a person. To be human is to feel the basic vibration of life.³

I like to believe that *Muli* somehow rekindled this vibration for the UP community in creating conditions for the performers and collaborators to live and feel together. In the days that followed, freshies, continuing students, and even faculty and staff would continue to watch *Muli* and testify to their own nostalgia for the university surfacing—warm recollection made bittersweet by the yearning to return.

The production of *Muli* was a feat as much in video-performance as it was in performance-making as a transformed and transformative process. Because of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, all the project collaborators for *Muli* needed to establish a clear sense of responsibility for every act. They need to understand the nuances

³ quoted in Fischlin, Risk, and Stewart 2013, 4.

of risk and accountability in the give-and-take of collaboration, and to honor these as part of an ethics of care.

For a weekend, the long silence of the campus was broken by the sounds of people laughing and music pumping. Even the racket they made in the dormitory, to the extent that the few residents who stayed there requested SDC to tone the volume down, was strangely nostalgic, reminiscent of the happy mess of the pre-pandemic world. The guards in the various locations shared how they had missed having people to look after. Between shoots, the students seized the opportunity to ride around campus in one of the e-trikes we had booked for the day, breathing in the fresh air.

For the fifteen (15) performers who were just grateful to dance together again after almost two years of dancing on their own, the experience stood out as a distinct memory of the pandemic: a strangely beautiful rupture in a disoriented world, made beautiful and effective precisely by the conditions of precarity that created it. *Muli* was every bit a performance of *this* time, a work as much valuable for its process as its product, a moment of grace amid the madness of an anxious, isolating, deadening world.

Pag-asa, Pag-ibig, Paglaya: Ways Forward

We sought to replicate the magic of *Muli* and push for further collaborations with students during the 2021 UP Diliman year-end program, known in pre-pandemic years as the annual Lantern Parade. Virtualizing the Lantern Parade was an incredible challenge for the OVCSA and the Office of the



The band covering “Pag-asa, Pag-ibig, Paglaya.” Photo from Mark Estandarte

Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs (OVCCA), which often worked together to mount the physical parade under regular circumstances. The theme for the year was “Ugnayan at Pagpupugay: Tulay ng Buhay at Pag-asa Ngayong Pandemya.” It was meant to engage the community in looking back at the year that had passed and giving tribute to the frontline workers of UP Diliman.

In the hope of activating the UPD community toward a unified year-end celebration, the virtual program featured three special components: (1) video-lanterns to replace physical floats and *parols* produced by students, offices, and organizations of UP Diliman; (2) a virtual parade of the video-lanterns projection-mapped on giant placards designed and built for the program stage; and (3) an interactive 360 map of UP Diliman, where the video-lanterns can pop up over the respective home units of their contributors and be watched asynchronously by visitors

even beyond the year-end program itself.

Innovating the program modes again aligned with UPD’s core principles of care and continuance, seeking to mitigate health risks while improvising strategies to reach a still-disconnected community. For the year-end program, community participation was at the very heart of the festivities and having multiple modes of presentation was the most generous means to allow for many ways to do so. As a gift to the community, the OVCSA produced the video-performance, *Pag-asa, Pag-ibig, Paglaya* (PPP), this time in collaboration with five (5) different performing groups: a band and an ensemble of dance groups.

Because participation and engagement were key, we formed the band with two undergraduate students, Dez and Del; one UP staffer, Edge Uyanguren; one UP alumnus, Pol Torrente; and two guest

percussionists, Peter Panelo (drums) and Arthur Cadungon (djembe). They covered the Lion and the Scouts’ “Pag-asa, Pag-ibig, Paglaya”—a song of hope, love, and freedom—to profess our eventual release from quarantine and imminent return to campus. After a month of listening to the original track separately, the band rearranged the piece in one remarkably short afternoon—as if it were not their first time to jam and render the song together. Granted, some members of the group did know each other from shared circles, but we were still surprised at how collaboration came so easy to everyone. We recorded the track the following day at the Strawberry Jams Music Studio.

Our musical choices for these performances deliberately strived to feature student groups, in the spirit of collaboration and to nurture a sense of community. Our curatorial process in putting the performances together was very conscious of making

students feel included and seen, even if they were away from the university. The track for *Muli* included part of a song by UP-based band, Jitter Jays, whom we had discovered along with Dez and Del when they submitted their videos for inclusion in the 2020 Virtual Open Mic hosted by OVCSA.

For the dance, we invited the UP SDC, the UP Dance Company (UPDC), the UP Filipiniana Dance Group, and the UP Dancesport Society to divide and choreograph the sections of the track into unique but interwoven sequences. In the final product, a special segment featured the different frontline offices of UP Diliman: the UPD COVID-19 Task Force, the Bakunahan sa Diliman Team, the UP Health Service, the Ad Hoc Committee for Limited F2F Activities, and the Philippine Genome Center, and other essential units.⁴ PPP was the first ensemble performance of multiple dance groups in UP since the pandemic started, harking back on the good old days of pep rallies and parade performances.

The production for PPP presented opportunities for the OVCSA to get to know the performing groups and to navigate a different set of challenges with them. Again, improvisational strategies were key to managing

4 Other frontline offices identified in various memos as essential offices of UP Diliman, which continued to serve and report physically during the strictest lockdowns, were also documented via drone shots and video-mapped on the giant placards during a special segment in the program. These included the OVCSA, the OVCCA, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Development with the construction site workers, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration and all of its sub-units, the Office of Student Housing, the University Food Service, the Campus Maintenance Office, and the Public Safety and Security Office.

these hurdles. While the music track was still being recorded and mixed, the coaches of the different dance groups choreographed with their dancers using counts until a draft track could be used as playback. To have an idea of what each other was working on, they posted videos of their home rehearsals to a common thread we shared. Coach Aye choreographed the ensemble dance for the finale through video call, and additionally made a tutorial video for those who were unable to attend the Zoom rehearsal. We discussed our cinematographic approach prior to choreography to make sure the dances would look cohesive even if they were conceived apart, and decided that light rays would be the common visual element for all sequences. SDC would shoot outdoors in the morning for natural sun rays. Filipiniana would use hand-held lights at sundown for their *oasiwas* segment. The multimedia crew would set up dramatic lighting to turn the Palma Hall lobby into a ballroom floor for Dancesport, and UPDC would improvise with the video team on the spot once they saw the actual site for their dance inside a dormitory.

The shoot with UPDC turned out to be particularly remarkable for us because their artistic director and choreographer, Elena Laniog-Alvarez, had to remotely coach the dancers from Iloilo City. She had gone home for the lockdown with her husband and co-artistic director, Herbert Alvarez—a choice to keep their young daughter safe from the COVID surges in Metro Manila. While specific steps had been rehearsed for the UPDC segment in PPP, how these would be performed still had to be adjusted to the performance site. And so with Elena participating through video

call, our team and the UPDC members scouted Kalayaan Residence Hall for the right locations for their sequences, and re-blocked, rehearsed, and adjusted the dance with Elena through my phone screen. Similarly, the Dancesport coaches, Rhea and Roque Marquez, oversaw their dancers' performance via mobile phone. A Dancesport member relayed all the coaches' notes after every take, from timing and execution down to the finest details like a headband out of place.

Among other unexpected turns we needed to take into stride, Filipiniana had a last-minute change in location, and artistic director Peter Alcedo Jr. had to divide the efforts of the dance group because they had another performance to rehearse for. We reshot the entire SDC sequence when we spotted better light at a different area. The dance ensemble rehearsed the finale sequence together only on the day of the shoot. The formation and final tableau would not be decided until an hour before the take.

In a non-pandemic setting, live performances and production shoots are certainly not without hiccups. In fact, it is precisely the spontaneity and unpredictability of liveness that emphasize the value of *presence* in the live arts—the tactility of the physical body, the sensitivity of energy exchange, the forced empathy of the collaborative give-and-take. The experience of the PPP production was memorable for us because it created spaces in which to revitalize such intimacies of exchange during a period of danger and disconnection. Everyone in the production understood keenly that being together meant risk, even as it also meant survival.

Synchronicity is a precious resource in the time of COVID-19. It has clear costs: for bubble shoots, there are expenses for RT-PCR testing, transportation, food, accommodation, and many others; video livestreams incur the costs of connectivity and high bandwidth consumption. During the year-end program on the eve of 21 December 2021, the UP community gathered online in synchronized time to watch the video-lanterns that they had made; waited together to hear who had won the coveted prizes; congratulated and celebrated each other through the comments section; and together saw, recognized, and honored those among us who never stopped serving at the frontlines during the pandemic. It was by no means as big a crowd as a face-to-face lantern parade would have been, but it enacted a treasured ritual both bygone yet renewed.

At the advent of the gradual reopening of the campus, curating and doing the year-end program with its multiple modes and emotional leaps was like watching the university, ourselves, in transition: rooting in the comfort of our traditions, reaching outward for the ways we can't help but change. The conditions of precarity on which these projects were premised allowed us to capitalize on the strength of the film medium as an essentially asynchronous process that drives toward a synthetic but overall satisfying narrative whole—a sutured reality that no one and yet everyone can experience.

For the OVCSA, these film shoots, video-performances, and blended programs were laboratories for rethinking practices of care and resilience. *Muli* and *Pag-asa*, *Pag-ibig*, *Paglaya* created spaces in

which we could reimagine ways of doing and making that would give care and attention to everyone's changing circumstances. Lapses and hiccups, viewed normally as errors and failures, are viewed in the improvisational space as just another moment in the flow of creating and making together. We knew clearly, working with the students, that what we wanted to create were not just good shows but also places, spaces, moments to reconnect with our students and our community again. And from there, we could create new experiences to help us gather and recover ourselves.

Collaborating and performance-making during the pandemic, for all their practical achievements—continuation of traditions, artistic innovation, movement as its own therapy—were in the final analysis an exercise in resistance: to deny the pandemic an uninterrupted sense of loss, to insist on life and to bear responsibility for it in the face of paralyzing grief. Despite the memories we feel were taken from us in a COVID-stricken world, these ways of creating conditions of joy and intimacy, with care and a keen sense of responsibility, testify to the ways that through the immobility and solitariness of the pandemic we had changed and transformed, and therefore *lived*, after all.

Lingkod-Aral: Service to and by the Students



Aerial shot of the UPD Main Library. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs in Action: The COVID-19 Experience of OVCSA Staff during the First Enhanced Community Quarantine in NCR

Jonathan Ceazar S. Dela Cruz

On 9 March 2020, the UP Diliman Administration suspended classes and work in the university, following the recommendations of the national government to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Thinking that this would just be a short and temporary measure, most students stayed in their dormitories and housing on campus and in nearby UPD communities. Little did everyone know that it was only the beginning of two (2) years of restrictions and varying levels of quarantine.

On the onset of the enhanced community quarantine in March 2020, the UPD Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA) was quick on their feet. It provided assistance to the stranded students by delivering them cooked meals prepared by the University Food Service (UFS), which sourced out from donations. Full of energy and eagerness to serve the students despite the fear of contracting the virus, the OVCSA staff delivered meals to 177 students from Mondays to Fridays in several areas in Brgy. UP Campus, Krus na Ligas, Katipunan, and Maginhawa. During these visits, the staff

joked around with the students and asked how they were doing during the quarantine—simple acts to show kindness and solidarity. During the regular trips, OVCSA staff delivered meals over gates and fences, traversed the narrow streets of Krus na Ligas, and even befriended guards/manongs of condos and villages in order to reach the students.

Aside from the meals provided by the UFS, donations received from various national government agencies and private organizations coursed through the OVCSA were also given to the stranded students. It was always festive when students were asked to pick up their donations in designated areas.

Months into the quarantine, several students began requesting assistance to return to their respective homes. In response, the OVCSA implemented *Oplan Hatid*, which not only facilitated transportation but also ensured students were COVID-19 free before the journey home. This achievement became possible thanks to various offices and



OVCSA delivering meals over a gate through a pulley system. Photo from the OVCSA

organizations inside UP Diliman (University Health Service, Office of Student Housing, Public Safety and Security Office, among others) and outside the campus as well (Philippine National Police, Philippine Army, various local government units). The OVCSA reached out to the students to know their destination provinces and determine which LGUs to contact and seek assistance from. This was easily accomplished with the help of the UPD University Student

Council in disseminating the form. Armed with the information, the OVCSA communicated with LGUs from all over the Philippines to coordinate the best possible ways to transport their constituents.

Some LGUs provided their own vehicle and fetched the students in UP Diliman. For LGUs in Luzon who lacked resources, the OVCSA coordinated with the Philippine Army and requested for vehicles, mostly buses. Some LGUs in Visayas and Mindanao arranged air transportation for their constituents, so when the OVCSA was informed of this, the staff immediately arranged the necessary requirements for the students, and made sure that they would be able to avail this service when offered.

During the send-offs, the OVCSA staff—dressed in their full PPE gear, including head caps, long sleeves shirts, and hand gloves—acted like parents saying goodbye to their children. They also provided the students with meals, and ensured that coordination with the LGUs was in order. The then OVCSA Vice Chancellor Jerwin Agpaoa gave reminders and instructed the students to inform the Office and their parents of their locations.

When the students reached their destinations, the OVCSA received various messages from the students about how thankful they were. Some shared that staying in the isolation facility provided by their respective LGUs felt like living in a hotel, but others informed us that they were not expecting to be isolated in a covered court or that their LGU was not considerate of their requests. When the travel restrictions were eased, the OVCSA focused on helping other students secure medical certificates from LGUs, as well as travel authority issued by the NCR Police Office. When



Iloilo City-bound students take a photo in front of Quezon Hall before being escorted to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA). Photo from the OVCSA

necessary, the OVCSA also offered service to the airports. In extreme cases, the OVCSA, through the endorsement of Vice Chancellor Louise Jashil Sonido, requested swab tests for students who were required by their LGU to have a negative COVID-19 test result.

After two years of living and studying amidst a pandemic, now the call of the students is loud and clear: **#LigtasNaBalikEskwela**.



Students strike a pose with their DSWD relief packs. Photo from the OVCSA

Mga Karanasan ng Office of Scholarships and Grants

Armando G. de Leon

Noong taong 2020, dalawang beses akong naabisuhan ng *contact tracer* para mag-*self isolate* dahil may *exposure* daw ako sa isang tao na maaaring may COVID-19. Sa dalawang pagkakataong ito ay nakaranas ako ng takot na baka ako'y mawala na sa mundong ito. Hindi madali na mag-isip at paulit-ulit na nasa isip ko ang maaaring mangyari sa akin. Sa kabila ng sitwasyon, patuloy ang takbo ng buhay. Tulad lang ng regular na araw pero nakakulong sa kuwarto at gumagawa ng mga trabaho sa opisina nang naka-work-from-home. Salamat sa Diyos na sa dalawang

pagkakataon na nag-isolate ako ay hindi ako nakaranas ng masamang pakiramdam gayundin ang aking pamilya.

Naging malaking challenge ang internet connection at ang ginagamit kong lumang desktop sa pagtatrabaho. Iniuwi namin ang aming mga computer simula nang mag-lockdown. Kailangan pa rin kasi naming gumawa at hindi magpabaya dahil sa mga estudyanteng umaasa at naghihintay ng mga desisyon ng kanilang mga apela sa *socialized tuition*, o ng kanilang buwanang *stipend* para makapag-aral at may magastos sa panahon ng pandemya. Laging sa Zoom kami nagmimiting. Mahirap kapag nawawala ang connection. Araw-araw din kaming nakatunghay sa aming mga *email*. Mabuti na lamang ay nasimulan na naming gumamit ng mga Google drive bago pa man magpandemya. Hindi kami masyadong nahirapang mag-adjust sa bagong sitwasyon.

Dumating ang Oktubre 2021. Nagkaroon ng sintomas ng COVID-19 ang aking nanay, si Ginang Nieves G. De Leon. Inatake siya ng *vertigo* na may halong ubo at sipon na may kasamang nerbiyos. Lumabas sa



Molave Residence Hall. Larawang kuha ni Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

RT-PCR test na siya ay positibo sa COVID-19. Dalawang pamilya kaming naninirahan sa isang bahay na nahahati lang ng dibisyon. Ang pamilya ng aking kapatid na babae, si Ginang Glenda De Leon Mayordo, isang empleyado na naninilbihan bilang isang UP contractual sa College of Engineering, ang kasama ng aking nanay. Kaya silang dalawa ang magkasamang dinala sa isolation facility sa tabi ng SM North Edsa. Salamat sa Diyos at *mild* lamang daw ang kaso ng aking nanay kaya sa facility ay pinatapos lang siya ng gamutan at pinalakas ang katawan. Inaalagaan si nanay sa facility. Binigyan at regular na pinapainom siya ng mga vitamins at antibiotic. Nagpapasalamat din kami sa Diyos dahil ang Ate Glenda ko naman ay hindi nagpakita ng kahit anumang sintomas. Siya rin ay regular na binibigyan ng mga karampatang gamot para lumakas ang kaniyang katawan. Maigi na rin na naroon siya kasama ni nanay para mag-assist din niya ang aming ina, na isang *senior citizen* na.

Isa sa mga naranasan ko nang mga panahon na iyon ay ang paggamit ng *face mask* hindi lang sa bahay kundi lalo na sa pagpasok sa opisina. Pumapasok kasi kami nang isang beses sa isang linggo para magampanan ang mga gawain na tanging sa opisina lamang naming magagawa. At para na rin may mga sumasagot sa telepono. Hindi man ako nakaranas ng COVID-19 symptoms ay nagkaroon naman ako ng *allergic reaction* sa pagsuot ng *face mask*. Isang araw ay nakatulugan ko ang facemask matapos ng araw ng trabaho nang naka-*quarantine*. Nairita ang aking ildong at nagkapiagsa. Pinainom ako ng antibiotic na galing ang reseta sa UP Health Service (UHS). Ang gamutan sa

allergy ay tumagal nang pitong araw na tuluyan din namang gumaling. Hindi ko alam kung mahinang kalidad ng *face mask* ang nagagamit namin.

Noong 5 Enero 2022 ay inatake naman ako ng *allergy* (rhinitis). Namaga ang aking mata. Uminom lang ako ng *anti-allergy* pero kinabukasan (6 Enero 2022) ko pa nagawang pumunta sa UHS para magpa-*check-up*. Dahil ako ay may sintomas ng COVID-19, iniskedyul ako ng RT-PCR test noong 11 Enero 2022. Inaasahan kong ito ay negatibo dahil maingat naman kami sa bahay. Dahil sa aming mga naranasan, natuto kami ng aking pamilya kung paano maiging maglinis ng katawan, maging maingat at malinis sa mga ginagamit na mga bagay kapag lumalabas, paghuhugas ng mga pinamili sa palengke, at pag-iingat sa mga nakakasalamuha habang namimili. Gayundin sa mga *protocol* na dapat gawin tulad ng paggamit ng mga *face mask*.

Dahil maingat ako sa maraming bagay at sumusunod sa mga *protocol*, hindi ko inaasahan positibo ang resulta ng aking RT-PCR test. Mas natakot ako ngayon dahil ako na mismo ang may sakit at kasama ko ang aking pamilya sa loob ng aming bahay. Nangamba ako na na-*expose* sila sa akin. Hindi na sila nagpa-test pa ng RT-PCR. Inaakala na lang namin na dahil magkakasama kaming kumakain ay malamang na *carrier* na rin sila. Nakipag-ugnayan kami sa barangay at sa UHS para sa aming gamutan.

Sa bahay lang namin napiling mag-quarantine. Naranasan kong lagnatin nang isang gabi. Kinabukasan ay nawala rin agad ang aking lagnat. Hindi na ito nagtagal. Hindi ako sinipon o inubo sa buong panahon ng

aking *isolation*. Ang aking asawa naman ay hindi nilagnat pero nakaranas ng ubo at sipon. Ang dalawa kong anak ay nilagnat sa magkaibang araw pero isang gabi lang din tumagal, at inubo't sinipon din. Tumagal ang aming quarantine hanggang 23 January 2022 dahil sa pag-ubo.

Ang buong pamilya namin ay fully vaccinated at may booster shots na. Malaking bagay ang suportang moral galing sa mga kaibigan at pamilya, gayundin ang suporta ng unibersidad sa mga *announcement* ng mga bakuna para magkaroon ng proteksiyon laban sa COVID-19. Nababawasan ang pag-aalala at pag-iisip nang sobra.



Aerial shot of the Science Complex. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Braving the Current, Revisiting the Past: Student Representation in UP Diliman amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

Maria April Lanot-Estanes and Eugene Enriquez Solla

Hours after polling precincts close in UP Diliman during the student council election day, it is typical to see a sea of people in red, blue, and yellow swarming at Vinzon's Hall and at the AS (Palma Hall) Steps. The students—wearing the color of the political party they support or they are affiliated with—chant “tunay, palaban, makabayan” or “para sa bayan!” There is all-out cheering and passionate booing. It is that season of the academic year. It was that season.

It was in 2019 when the UP Diliman student body elected its leaders under regular circumstances before the pandemic necessitated a new means of campaigning and voting. A lot was at stake that year. 2019 was crucial for the UP community and the Philippine society. Aside from the urgent need to rebuild the University Student Council (USC) following controversial resignations because of fiascos caused by alleged fraternity-related violence, there were threats to the university's academic freedom, with state forces coming up with ridiculous plots linking the campus to deliberate communist recruitment. That year saw the efforts of opposition forces unifying in order to resist and condemn Duterte's blatant consolidation of power in government institutions.

With the crucial issues at hand, it was clear that an efficient, responsive, and transformational leadership was needed in order to address the challenges head-on. While the student body was able to elect a new set of leaders, the 2019 student



Poster for the student council elections. Image from the Halalan UP Diliman Facebook page

election had the lowest voter participation in at least 11 years, clinching only a 40.85% turnout. Seeing the need to further mobilize the students, the Office of Student Projects and Activities (OSPA) and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA) headed by then Vice Chancellor Jerwin F. Agpaoa, started the planning process for Halalan UPD 2020 during the last quarter of 2019.

On 9 March 2020, the University Student Electoral Board (USEB) convened its first meeting, laying out its close-to-final plans for the upcoming student council elections.

On 15 March 2020, a nationwide enhanced community quarantine was implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Classes and offices in UP Diliman were suspended. The faculty, staff, and students were advised to focus on their and their family's health and well-being. Everything was in disarray, everyone was fazed. People were in a state of panic as no cure or vaccine was available at the time.

The OSPA and the OVCSA convened to rethink the approach for the student council elections. Both offices coordinated with the University Computer Center (UCC) and the Office of the University Registrar (OUR) to deliberate on technical requirements, security issues, and logistical needs. To concretize the plans, the administration also consulted one of the key stakeholders of the election process: the political parties in the university.

In their proposal, UP Alyansa ng Mga Mag-aaral Para sa Panlipunang Katwiran at Kaunlaran (UP ALYANSA) highlighted the importance of a democratic, representative, and participative elections. "...before we evaluate our options, we first emphasize and present our position on principles and actions that must be done regardless of the method utilized for elections." Moreover, they stated that an on-ground campaign is necessary and is non-negotiable in order to properly elect the next student leaders.

On the other hand, Nagkakaisang Iskolar para sa Pamantasan at Sambayanan (KAISA UP) surveyed alternatives to in-person elections, including the possibility of a holdover term. They recommended that until a regular on the ground election can be made possible, incumbent student council officers must continue council work.

Meanwhile, the Student Alliance for the Advancement of Democratic Rights in UP (STAND UP) expressed their strong opposition to the online election proposal. For the party, it was imperative that all students be able to freely and without restrictions express their right to vote and run for positions in the student council. They pointed out that a stable internet connection was important in online campaigning, election events, etc., and gravitated towards the direction of a holdover term. The League of College Councils (LCC), headed by then University Student Council

Vice Chairperson Kenneth Eser Jose, also made their position. All the members did not support online elections and agreed with the holdover of incumbent council officers. The results of the whole consultation process, along with the official proposal for a holdover term, was submitted to and eventually recognized by the Office of the Chancellor (OC).

Amidst the worsening situation of the pandemic, the student councils continued their advocacy work. They focused on calls for a swift and health-centered response to the health crisis. Student leaders were at the forefront in protecting the university as a sanctuary for free and critical thinking. Despite the limitations of the remote set-up, student councils across the UP system launched campaigns against anti-people policies such as the Anti-Terror Law and the unilateral abrogation of the UP-DND accord.

However, after months of adapting to the online learning set-up, coupled with student council work, several members of the council resigned, citing as reasons academic and health-related concerns. Following talks with members of the holdover councils, Vice Chancellor Louise Jashil Sonido issued a memorandum announcing the formation of the Ad Hoc Online Student Election Committee (AHOSEC). The memo read:

In UP Diliman, student representatives who were elected to office in the Academic Year 2019-2020 needed to function on holdover status for lack of existing guidelines on how to conduct online elections safely and ethically. This has delayed the University Student Council elections for a year; meanwhile, many of the elected student-officials have graduated or have had to resign for various reasons.

Because of the continuing uncertainties of the pandemic, preparations for the online conduct of the USC elections have become inevitable. Hence, the OVCSA is forming an Ad Hoc Online Student Election Committee (AHOSEC) in order to craft an Addendum of Supplementary Guidelines for the Conduct of Online Student Elections to the current UP Student Election Code.

The AHOSEC was composed of representatives from the incumbent USC, College Councils, political parties in the university, the OVCSA, faculty members, and the OSPA. The AHOSEC was tasked to (1) write the Supplementary Guidelines for the Conduct of Online Student Elections; and (2) propose a consolidated timeline of student elections on the local and university levels.

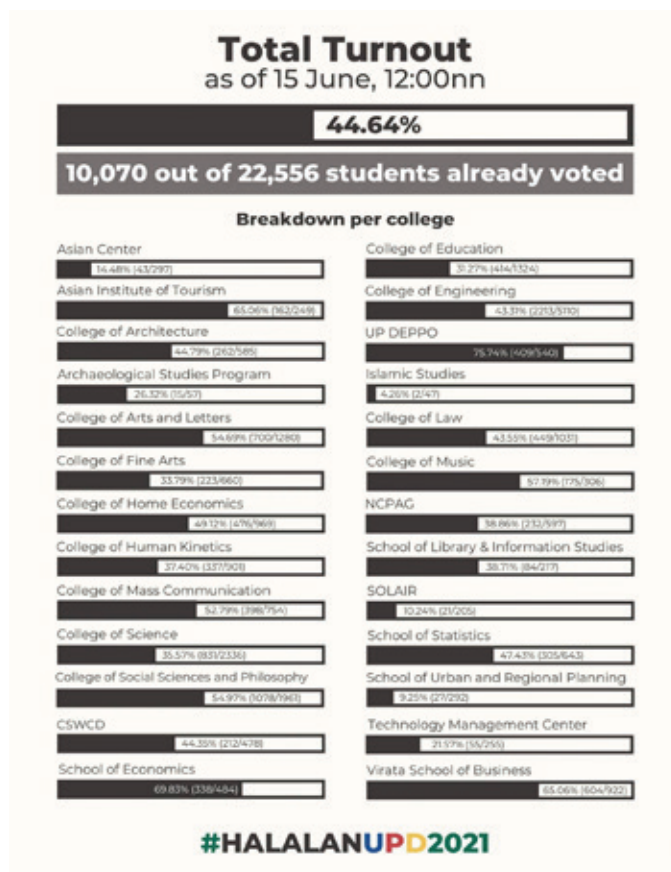
In late March 2021, the committee collectively endorsed the proposed election addendum and supplementary guidelines for the remote elections to Vice Chancellor Sonido and Chancellor Fidel Nemenzo. Unfortunately, a surge in COVID-19 cases directly affected the Diliman Legal Office (DLO) and delayed the review of the document. Chancellor Nemenzo eventually approved and released the Special Guidelines on Remote Student Elections in May 2021. This marked yet another milestone for the UP Diliman community: ensuring a democratic electoral process in the university amidst a pandemic.

The formal announcement of the calendar for UP Diliman's first-ever remote elections created a buzz in various social media platforms. What used to be a three-color rivalry for the positions in the USC turned to a head-to-head competition between UP ALYANSA and STAND UP, the two oldest political parties in UP Diliman. KAISA UP, after winning the top USC post for two consecutive years, decided to take a step back from the university-wide election; nevertheless, some of their local college affiliates were still able to field their candidates.

The events that marked Halalan UPD 2021 were unprecedented. The usual room-to-room (RTR) campaigning that allowed aspiring leaders to interact with constituents gave way to digital methods. The candidates resorted to online gimmicks to sway the electorate. Despite the set-up, the staple miting-de-avance was still made possible by the UP Economics Society (EcoSoc) and its partner organizations. UPFront 2021 was held for two days and consisted of four major events: Magpakilala, Magtagisan, Magpaliwanag, and Makialam. Through the event, the candidates presented their platforms and positions to the members of the UP Diliman community.

The Halalan UPD system—voting proper—opened on 9 June 2021. To avoid disenfranchisement, the Halalan UPD team contacted students who experienced difficulties casting their votes because of connectivity issues, and sought to honor every student's right to vote. To give students more time to vote, elections was extended for a day, thanks to an appeal by councils and political parties. On the night of 15 June 2021, STAND UP secured a landslide win.

Without a doubt, the University's first remote student election opened doors for innovative ideas, productive collaborations, and rich discourse among the stakeholders of the UP community. It has been said time and time again that UP is



Poster showing voter turnout. Image from the Halalan UP Diliman Facebook page

a microcosm of Philippine society. As such, the UP student election serves as a reflection of the future of our beloved nation. Given the university's role of serving the Filipino people with honor and excellence, it is important that elected student leaders live by these lines from the university hymn:

Humayo't itanghal, giting at tapang,
Mabuhay ang pag-asa ng bayan!



PALMA HALL

UP
OFF

The Resiliency of UP Diliman Student Organizations amidst the Pandemic

Glenn Joseph F. Cabradilla and Arcy Lyn K. Salvacion

It has been two years since the COVID-19 pandemic started wreaking havoc in our country. At the onset of the health crisis, the government's immediate response was to impose a total lockdown and prevent the quick spread of the virus. Only the Authorized Persons Outside Residence (APOR) were allowed to go out of their homes; only businesses and industries tagged as essential were permitted to operate; public transportation was suspended; curfews were strictly implemented; public gatherings were prohibited.

The prolonged lockdown caused temporary and permanent closures of local businesses; those that managed to survive had to cut operational budget, which led to loss of jobs. Contractual employees with no-work-no-pay status were laid off. Self-employed workers, drivers of public utility vehicles (PUVs), and sidewalk vendors had no source of income. Although the national government and the Local Government Units (LGUs) provided emergency subsidies through its Social Amelioration Program (SAP), this was not sustainable; not all constituents were able to receive such

aid. Many families, especially those belonging to the lower class, were anguished over food insecurity due to a lack of income.

As the months of the pandemic turned into years, people grew anxious because of the increasing number of COVID-19 cases, even more so with the government's lackluster pandemic response. With the absence of mass testing and lack of financial support to workers who lost their jobs, there was growing fear of not only getting infected by the virus, but also of not having the bare necessities. Given the circumstances, the people gathered in the streets to voice out their dissent and dissatisfaction.

The UP Community during the Pandemic

The UP community also suffered the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students were stranded due to the restriction of movement; there was no clear advice on whether they had to stay in their respective accommodations or to return to their hometowns. Like everybody else, they were anxious about their health as



Announcement on freshie recruitment ban. Image from the OSPA Facebook page

well as the condition of their families, especially as hospitals became overcrowded. This was further exacerbated by the fact that most students did not have any kind of medical or health insurance.

Students were also red-tagged under the Anti-Terror Law. There were numerous reports of students, volunteers, organizations, and NGOs being arrested and charged for organizing community pantries and other community service activities. In June 2020, students and members of progressive groups holding a protest were arrested by the police inside a UP campus. In 2021, the threat was aggravated by the unilateral abrogation of the University of the Philippines (UP)-Department of National Defense (DND) Accord, an agreement

meant to limit the presence of the military on UP campuses.¹ The pandemic was weaponized against students' organized efforts to call for better policies and pandemic response. Various harassment techniques were employed to silence those who dared critique the government. Students also grappled with the uncertainties and challenges of remote learning—lack of gadgets and efficient internet connection, absence of a conducive learning environment at home, and burnout caused by major adjustment to the demands of online classes.

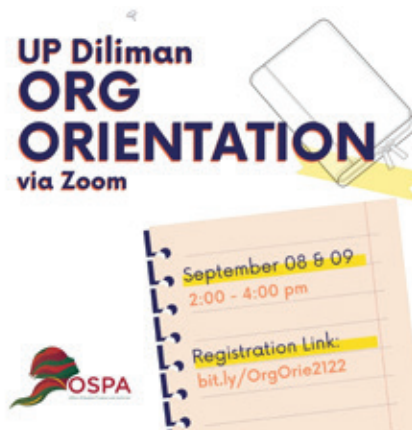
Thriving amidst the Pandemic

The abrupt shift to online learning and working from home took a toll on the mental health and well-being of students, faculties, and staff. During the UP Diliman Student Leadership Summit, “Bigkisan” held on 27 and 28 November 2020,

1 Ador Vincent Mayol and Nestle Semilla, “Terror Bill Protests: Cebu Cops Arrest 8 Inside UP campus,” *Inquirer.net*, June 6, 2020. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1287133/terror-bill-protests-cebu-cops-arrest-8-on-up-campus>



Event poster for “Talaban 3.” Image from the OSPA Facebook page



student leaders from various organizations acknowledged the difficulties in the recruitment process, especially for sports and music-related organizations that involve training and rehearsals. Unstable internet connection, power outages, and heavy coursework were also identified as possible contributory factors to low turnout and productivity among members. The participants also recognized the struggles and limitations when activities were confined to digital platforms. However, despite health-related concerns and remote learning challenges, students and student organizations remained resilient and found ways to adapt. Online platforms were maximized for various activities such as donation drives and income-generating projects. The precarious conditions also invited introspection; some organizations reviewed and revised their constitution and by-laws (CBL), lessened the requirements for application, reduced tasks, and adjusted their schedule of activities. They also adopted new policies, made flexible deadlines and mass-promoted applicants.

To foster a sense of community and connection among members across different locations, they created their online *tambayan* through the Discord application.



Announcements on student organization orientation and registration. Images from the OSPA Facebook page

Additionally, *kumustahan* helped monitor the well-being of the members and the pulse of their organization. Through these efforts, student organizations cultivated feelings of comfort, safety, and belongingness among their members.

At the height of the pandemic, 197 student organizations opted to register as university-wide organizations for AY 2020–2021. Eighteen (18) of these registered as new organizations that exceeded the required minimum number of members (8). The UP Kalinaw, a regional organization for the Mindanaoans in UP Diliman, recruited sixty-three (63) members, while the Google Developer Student Clubs managed to add 338 more members.

Despite the lack of face-to-face interaction, student organizations organized timely and meaningful activities for personal growth and public service. They launched numerous outreach programs and advocacy activities not just within the vicinity of the campus, but also in their

respective provinces and hometowns. Since the pandemic started, student organizations have launched and facilitated more than 400 academic and capacity-building projects, as well as community and extension services.

Students and student organizations also supported community pantries initiated by Ana Patricia Non, a UP alumna. The community pantry began as a bamboo cart with vegetables, rice, canned goods, and a note saying, *“Magbigay ayon sa kakayahan, kumuha batay sa pangangailangan /“Give according to one’s capacity, take according to one’s need.”* It inspired others to set up their own pantries in their own neighborhoods nationwide. Many pledged to sustain the movement to address the problem on food insecurity, albeit temporarily.

Combating State Repression

Student assemblies continued to fight for their rights and welfare despite the constant threat of the state. Aware and involved in social issues, students and various student organizations joined the UP community in defending academic freedom against the possible intrusion of the military in UP campuses. Students also joined mobilizations for *“Ligtas na Balik Eskwela”* as they expressed their concern about the lack of a comprehensive plan regarding their safe return for face-to-face classes.

In the Defend UP campaign, the Office of Student Projects and Activities (OSPA) released a statement on the unilateral termination of the UP-DND Accord; it refuted the baseless accusations of the Department of National Defense that there was ongoing recruitment for

the CPP/NPA on campus. Contrary to the allegations that UP students were involved in terrorist activities, the OSPA recorded instead a surge in student activities related to the pandemic and disaster response. These include donation drives, capacity-building activities, and psychosocial support services for UP and non-UP students. Thus, the OSPA urged the government to recognize the youth’s active participation in disaster response, community-building, and cultivation of service-oriented leadership, instead of disseminating baseless accusations that stigmatize students.

Institutional Support for Student Organizations

Despite the precarious times, the offices in the university continued to fulfil their roles and responsibilities in ensuring student safety and well-being. The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA) and its units made projects, policies, and services more accessible. During the first remote University Student Council (USC) elections, the OVCSA designed a manual voting process to accommodate the students who could not cast their ballots online. The OSPA implemented provisional changes in the guidelines on the registration of student organizations. Before, new organizations had to have at least 20 members and 15 members for renewing organizations. This time, only eight members for either type are required.

The Freshmen Recruitment Ban in the 2012 Code of Student Conduct of UP Diliman (Article IV.1.3.1.d) was also provisionally lifted throughout the pandemic. The Office also streamlined processes and adapted all

transactions to online platforms, including the registration of student organizations and the filing of their activities through Bukluran 2.0.

The OSPA also organized the “Talaban 2021” student webinar series to help student organizations promote their advocacies. The first installment of the series was held on 17 April 2021, and it featured two student organizations—UP Supporting PWDs Through Exercise and Recreation Organization (SUPER) and UP Special Education Council. The webinar tackled important issues on inclusivity, such as understanding and working with special needs students during the pandemic.

The second installment was held on 5 June 2021; centered on community engagement and leadership, it was co-organized by UP Diliman Student Alliance for the Advancement of Democratic Rights in UP (STAND-UP) and UP Alyansa ng mga Mag-aaral para sa Panlipunang Katwiran at Kaunlaran (UP ALYANSA). The third webinar took place on 30 October 2021; co-organized by different student publications such as Philippine Collegian, Kalasag, Radyo Eduk, SINAG, and SULO, it focused on journalism and on press freedom.

Conclusion

The health crisis, alongside threats and harassment, posed challenges to the student body, but it did stop them from organizing and mobilizing to promote their advocacies. In fact, it only encouraged and inspired them to unite and work harder to advance the people’s struggle.



Academic Oval. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO

Keeping Links OILed

Office of International Linkages Diliman

The Office of International Linkages Diliman (OILD) greeted 2020 with high hopes; the Student Mobility (SM) section's programs for inbound and outbound exchange students were gaining momentum. As the semester opened in January, OILD welcomed students from Thammasat University, Thailand. Moreover, through a partnership between UP OIL and El Colegio de Mexico, the Office welcomed, for the first-time, exchange students from Mexico. Inbound students were taken on cultural trips, and the OILD VolCorps facilitated weekly discussion groups.

However, the regular operations and programs of OILD needed to be reconsidered when the Taal Volcano erupted on 12 January 2020. Then, two months later, the government imposed a lockdown to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In UP Diliman, the chancellor announced the temporary closure of the campus.

Addressing Primary Concerns

For Prof. Gilda Uy, then OILD Project Development Associate (PDA) for Student Mobility, the most important questions were: Should the exchange program be continued if the country of destination is under lockdown? How will inbound international students return to their respective home countries if their passports are still being processed for visa application/conversion upon arrival? How



OILD Student Mobility's meeting with parents of outbound UPD students on 28 February 2020 at the OVCAA conference room. Photo from OILD

will exchange students in different parts of the world return to the Philippines when there are no available flights, dormitories are closing, and the students lack financial resources? Where will the exchange students returning to the Philippines temporarily stay for quarantine? OIL Diliman addressed these valid concerns and found ways to ensure the safe return of all inbound and outbound exchange students.

A week before the campus had to close, the Academic and Administrative Staff Mobility (AASM) section was processing between 20 and 25 travel authority requests. For Catherine Tagaban, head of the AASM section, the biggest challenge was tracking the faculty, REPS, and administrative staff who were out of the country on special detail.

One of the initiatives implemented by OILD to address the abovementioned concerns was *Kumustahan at Huntahan*, a series of online meetings organized to determine the conditions of the following stakeholders: UPD faculty who have not yet, or had just returned to the Philippines; inbound and outbound international exchange students; and international faculty based in our campus. The meetings sought to alleviate the impact of the pandemic on their mental health.



Laranjo (wearing a blue cap) taking a group of exchange students (from the Busan University of Foreign Studies) to NAIA Terminal 1 on 15 March 2020. Photo from OILD

These were only the initial challenges that the OILD needed to urgently and simultaneously address to ensure the well-being of the UP constituents and stakeholders.

OILD in Action

The first concern OILD addressed was to persuade the parents of outbound exchange students to cancel the participation of their children in the program. The students still wanted to go, even offering to sign waivers. But the suspension of all exchange programs followed the suspension of classes.

Meanwhile, for faculty and REPS who still pursued plans to leave the country despite the OIL Diliman developed an online guide—which includes government-issued policies and warnings from the World Health Organization in relation to the pandemic, and a Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

The second concern was to facilitate the departure of international students amidst a travel ban. Prof. Uy recalled having to rely on contacts in other government offices such the Bureau of Immigration to expedite the release of passports of the foreign students. Transportation was also a concern, since the OVCAA had limited transport services. Concerned faculty and staff volunteered to take international students to the airport. This involved preparing IDs and passes, and crossing several security inspections and checkpoints. It took several months for the 51 inbound exchange students to return home, but the OIL Diliman made sure to assist them every step of the way.

The third concern was to ensure the safe return of UPD students from their respective exchange and study programs abroad. Although the initial

batches were able to leave their host countries before flights got cancelled, there was difficulty in arranging their lodging. According to Prof. Uy, an airport personnel informed OIL Diliman that arriving students must be accommodated at a BOQ-accredited quarantine facility. But at that time, the permit application for facilities on campus was still pending. For the subsequent batches, the quarantine facilities UP set up for returning students and faculty—Balay Internasyonal and University Hotel respectively—were already accredited by the BOQ. The University Health Service (UHS) facilitated monitoring and health clearances, while a graduate student delivered their meals. Returnees were given special passes—issued by the BI and Department of Tourism (DOT)—at airport terminals, exempting them from staying at the government-recommended facilities. Some constituent UP campuses asked to be part of the scheme).

Some flights had to be diverted to Clark, causing students on board additional expense. Other students also had to pay the rebooking fee for several cancelled flights, prompting them to request financial assistance from OILD. With the efforts of Prof. Uy, Aura, and Christopher who monitored the situation and communicated with the students, all 21 homebound exchange students returned in good health, testing negative for COVID-19 in September. Meanwhile, Catherine, with then PDA for Faculty Mobility, Prof. Galileo Zafra, led the efforts in ensuring the safe return of our exchange faculty. This was done in coordination with the OVCAA and CHED, among other offices.

Prof. Almoró and Prof. Zafra came up with *Sulong Layag: Internasyonalisasyon sa Panahon ng Pandemya*, which was “an outreach webinar meant to be a venue for conversation about the experiences related to internationalization. This was deemed important amidst the taxing exercise of muddling through the seemingly endless challenges during the first year of the pandemic. Faculty members, students, staff, and other stakeholders presented their reflections and experiences on navigating the new normal, particularly for internationalization programs. The aim was to promote good practices, effective strategies, and initiatives that provide adaptive solutions to the current crisis. The video documentations alone already comprise an oral history that can help open up new discourses about internationalization research in higher education.”

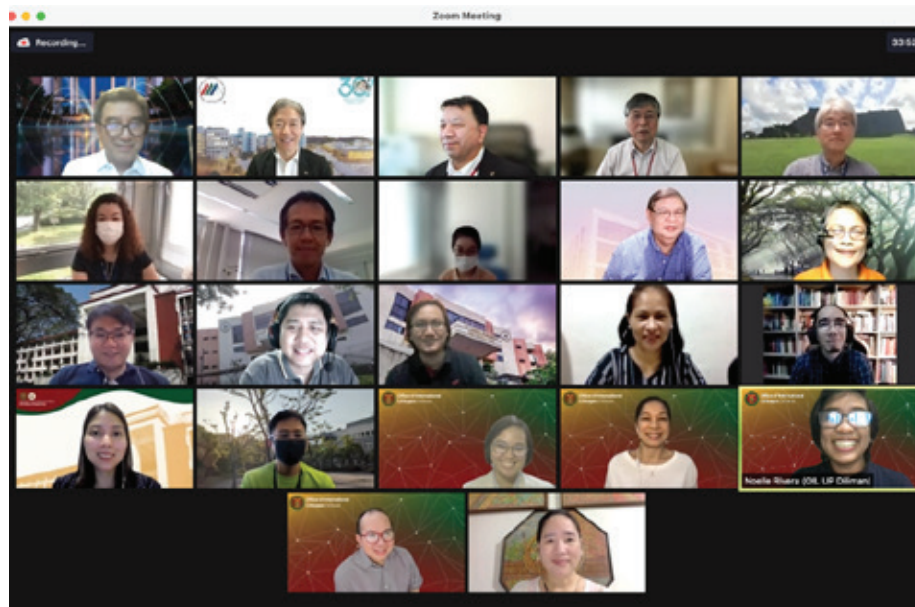
Moving Forward

The Student Mobility (SM) section explored the online mode for inbound exchange in the second semester of AY 2020–2021. The Office facilitated online discussions with the students twice a month, and later on invited some resident UPD students to discuss about food, tourism, politics, etc. These activities were eventually institutionalized.

In April 2021, the UPD Data Protection Office (DPO) issued an advisory on Affixing and Accepting Electronic Signatures. Previously, agreement processing had to be on hold because of the logistics on acquiring necessary signatures. For several weeks, international agreements would be stuck at review phase. The advisory of the DPO was crucial to resuming the further processing of international agreements. PC section Head, Ms. Noelle Rivera, frequently consulted the Diliman Legal Office (DLO) and the DPO to verify information and processes.

Pre-pandemic, there was hesitation regarding the alternative ways of processing agreements for international collaborations. But with research, benchmarking, and numerous consultations with the DLO, the shift to digital mode of processing documents became a success. It allowed for a more systematic filing and monitoring of agreements, and also improved connections with other international institutions. OILD was gearing up to permanently adopt many of the policies and operational changes. This was evident in many ways. First was the aforementioned acceptance of electronic signatures.

Early in 2021, it became apparent that institutions here and abroad had finally settled



Virtual visit of NAIST officials to UPD held on 25 August 2021. Photo from OILD

into working remotely. US embassy partners requested a virtual courtesy call with the newly appointed UPD Chancellor, Dr. Fidel Nemenzo; colleagues and partners from Belgium, Finland, Canada, Taiwan, and ASEAN countries reached out; some projects that had been deferred resumed. In August 2021, the officials of the Nara Institute of Science and Technology (NAIST) had a virtual visit to UPD via Zoom. The officials from UPD used photos of different locations on campus as their Zoom background, while Team OILD used the OILD background to create a welcoming atmosphere.

As remote work continued to gain momentum, OILD—with the support from international partners and various offices such as DLO, OFA, OIL, CHED—explored other possibilities e.g., virtual visits from international faculty and virtual international internships for students among others.

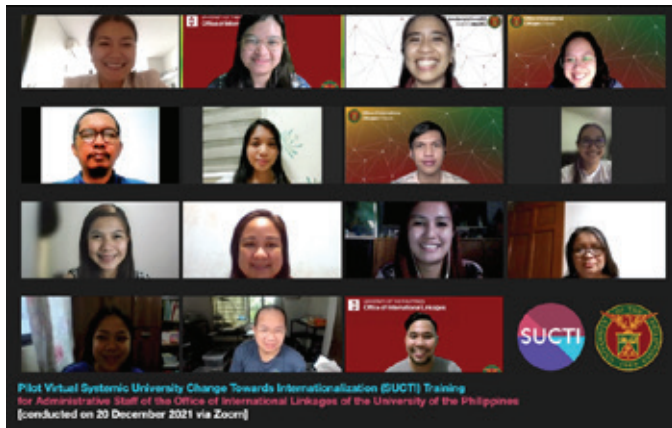
Online meetings always began with *kumustahan* or checking in. Participants asked each other questions like: How are

you coping so far? How have you been able to continue operations while working from home? Shall we start working together (again)? How do we proceed? Despite the grueling situation, the team proved to be ever ready to innovate in order to serve.

One of the most notable achievement of the team was Prof. Almoro and Prof. Zafra's primer for online conferences.

One project that went on standstill because of the pandemic was the Systemic University Change Towards Internationalization (SUCTI). A training workshop for administrative staff, it helps enhance their appreciation of internationalization (IZN) and the importance of their role in the IZN process of the university.

OILD initially planned to hold several trainings for UPD admin staff in 2020, but due to the health crisis and the restrictions that came with it, the first SUCTI training was held remotely in December 2021 for UP OIL staff and personnel. OILD continued their IZN



OILD meetings with OFA (L) and DLO (R) on 11 May and 02 July 2021, respectively. Photo from OILD

efforts, targeting the staff through the SUCTI offshoot: Sustainability, Inclusiveness, Integration for University Support Services (SiiUss). Fellow SUCTI Trainers from Karolinska Institute, Sweden, reached out to Noelle in late 2020. The budding partnership obtained funding to jointly develop and implement an online training course that would target university support services staff. Prof. Zafra and Prof. Laranjo assisted in conceptualizing SiiUss as an instrument to empower support staff so that they can play a more active part in efforts concerning internationalization, inclusiveness, and diversity. The online mode proved effective in resuming collaboration; even the funding institution agreed to continue their sponsorship.

There were also efforts to ensure a healthy relationship and working environment for OILD personnel. These include adopting two special items in the regular meetings: (1) the Teammate Situationer, where each OILD team member shares his/her current situation (e.g., health, home, hobbies); and (2) a costumed Zoom photo-op upon adjournment. It was uplifting to begin and end long discussions with a reminder: that the personnel belong to a compassionate and optimistic team.

Next Steps

In 2022, a memorandum enjoining personnel to transition to working onsite anew, as quarantine restrictions were relaxed. On 14 March 2022, Team OILD met at the office for the first time in exactly two years. We looked around our office, checking if the equipment and appliances still run, amused to find documents dated March 2020 still on our desks. More importantly, we looked around among team members, checking if everyone was well, and thanking each one for doing their best since the first day of the lockdown.



The Oblation Plaza. Photo by Eloisa May Hernandez



One of the lanterns of the College of Fine Arts (CFA) for the Lantern Parade 2021. Photo from the CFA



Lantern of the College of Home Economics (CHE) for the Lantern Parade 2021. Photo from the CHE



Part of the virtual lantern of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP) for the Lantern Parade 2021. Image from the CSSP



Quezon Hall. Photo by Jefferson Villacruz, UPDIO
Back cover photo by Eloisa May Hernandez

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