

UP SYSTEM REPORT

ON COVID19-RELATED ACTIVITIES



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Constituent University (CU) Involvement in COVID19-related Research/Technology/Extension Activities

Constituent Universities Provide Hands-on COVID-19 Training Programs for Medical Personnel

Along with webinars and various ways of utilizing the online platform, several Constituent Universities have conducted hands-on training programs for medical personnel in the country. Philippine Genome Center Visayas conducted hands-on training on molecular biology techniques for COVID-19 testing which was attended by medical personnel from public and private hospitals in Iloilo City. Philippine Genome Center Mindanao has also been carrying out training for selected medical technologists and laboratory analysts to address the growing human resource demand for emerging COVID-19 testing centers in Mindanao. The training program started with an online module on the molecular biology principles for SARS-CoV-2 reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) and was supplemented with hands-on and practical exercises on laboratory procedures and workflow simulations in UP Mindanao.



Philippine Genome Center Visayas conducted a hands-on COVID-19 Testing training attended by medical personnel coming from both public and private hospitals in Iloilo City.

Constituent Universities Produce Webinars, Podcasts, Special Broadcasts and Online Educational Discussions

As the leading distance learning institution, UP Open University (UPOU) has been offering series of webinars and free online resources that help capacitate various sectors affected by the pandemic. One of the initiatives of UPOU is the *Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)* that aim to facilitate continuous learning through the different modules that cover various topics. The recent MOOC discussed the legalities involving Interlocal Cooperation. The third installment of its *Edu-Hack podcast series* centered on the Pedagogical Potential of Immersive Technologies, while the experiences of nurses in the care of COVID-19 positive patients was discussed in the last episode of the Let's Talk It Over (LTIO) Webinar Series. The Futures Research Series highlighted *Planetary Health* as the next research frontier.

The Faculty of Education, for its part, administered the webinar titled *EDUKussion: Teaching Presence in Philippine K-12 Blended Learning Classes under the Alternative Delivery Mode* which presented education-related issues, challenges, and opportunities. Lastly, UPOU, in partnership with the Association of Schools of Public Administration in the Philippines (ASPAP), organized the webinar that tackled "Open and Distance e-learning in Philippine Public Administration and Governance Education: Prospects and Challenges."

Taking off from these initiatives of UPOU, other Constituent Universities have also utilized various online platforms to effectively disseminate information, educate stakeholders, and spark meaningful discussion among members of the UP community and the general public. The UP System, in collaboration with the National Telehealth Center, continues to undertake the *Stop COVID Deaths Webinar series*, with the recent episode focusing on the experiences of various health institutions such as the Quezon Institute, Cebu City Health Department, and the Philippine Heart Center. The UP System Procurement Office, opting to adopt an online processing of documents particularly requests and bids, hosted the webinar entitled *Crash Learning with You*. UP Los Baños has also opened the discussion of planetary health and its implications for human settlements planning within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic through its webinar entitled *ePraxis: Continuing Conversations on Humans Settlements Planning amidst the Global Pandemic*. Another episode of the ePraxis webinar series, entitled *ePraxis: Why Data Matters? The Role of Geospatial Data Science Technologies for Social Service Delivery in a Global Pandemic*, provided

insights on the use of data science in helping policy makers and program implementers make informed decisions on social service delivery amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

As one of the COVID-19 referral centers, UP-PGH was featured in the first episode of *Hospitals in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic* webinar series of UP Manila's Department of Health Policy and Administration, College of Public Health. It centered on how PGH has transformed its structure, services, and procedures to adapt to the demands of the current health crisis. UP Manila has also spearheaded webinars that focused on ways to choose the right Electronic Medical Record (EMR) for the hospital (*How to Choose the EMR for your Hospital webinar*), mental health for dentistry students in time of the pandemic (*TEETH TALK: Mental Health for Dental Students webinar*), pregnancy amidst the pandemic (*UP Med Webinars: Nutrition in Pregnancy: How to Achieve Healthy Pregnancy in time of COVID*), and relevance of forensics in the management of public health issues (*Forensics and Pandemics: Concepts, Challenges and Planning Ahead webinar*). The CU also delivered a timely webinar about working from home (*UPM Webinar Series: Paglinang ng Kakayahang Makapagtrabaho sa Tahanan*).

UP Visayas has produced *Online Talk Series* on the production of sanitizers and disinfectants to aid the growing demand for these products. Another webinar tackled the post-quarantine general economic outlook in Western Visayas.

In the online educational discussion titled *Kumusta Kabataan?: A Youth Situationer in the Midst of the Pandemic*, the UP Diliman University Student Council spearheaded the discussion on how the education, economic, and health conditions of the youth are being affected by COVID-19. Similarly, the issue on the cases of domestic violence during the lockdown was the topic of another student-led discussion, organized by the UPLB Sociology Society.

CU-initiated Online Platforms and Online Resources

Aside from webinars and online discussions, Constituent Universities have also harnessed the immense reach of the Internet as they develop various web platforms to disseminate information, undertake training programs, and become repositories of various online resources. Mandated to promote women's rights and equality, the UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies (UPCWGS) came up with *DAKILA (Data, Knowledge, and Information Launcher)*, an online training

platform to be used for gender-responsive training courses. UPOU promoted Moodle, another online learning platform that may be utilized to provide educators, administrators, and learners with an integrated system to create personalized learning environments. It may be used to provide free basic courses for the general public.

UP Diliman, UP Los Baños, UP Baguio, and UPOU have also created several online resources that are free for download. UP Diliman's College of Education curated resources for remote learning. A study by a group of experts on the *COVID-19 Forecast in the Philippines: NCR and Cebu*, which shows key findings and forecast on the cases of COVID-19 in the Philippines was also made available online. UPLB's Department of Human and Family Development Studies (DHFDS) of the College of Human Ecology released several e-books for children, entitled *Merienda Na!: Kwentong Pambata ukol sa COVID-19*, showing the importance of serving nutritious meals for the family even amidst a pandemic; *Pabili ng Munting Ilaw: Kwentong Pambata ukol sa COVID-19*, exhibiting the struggles that students face; *Ang Super Lola ni Pia*, that allows a glimpse into the grandparent-grandchild relation and the challenges for the elderly in the time of COVID-19; and *KwaranTEEN Diary 2020*, a free journal and workbook for teens that underlines the importance of keeping a journal in this time of health crisis. UPOU has likewise made available for download the different presentations from its *Let's Talk it Over webinar series*, including *Appreciative Resilience in Times of Crisis*, *Strategic Planning Considerations in Remote Teaching and Learning*, *Gender Perspective in Psychosocial Support and Well-being*, and *Technology Enhanced Learning System*. Information, education, and communication (IEC) materials continue to be uploaded in the *Bayanihan Na!* webpage which features various health advisories and tips on how to fight COVID-19. UP Visayas produced a collection of maps based on data from the Department of Health-Eastern Visayas Center for Health and Development which was featured in the *Development of Eastern Visayas COVID Maps*. UP Manila and UP-PGH have also been regularly updating the public about matters related to COVID through the weekly release of *Healthscape*, a special publication that features UP Manila's ongoing COVID-19 efforts, and UP-PGH's COVID-19 *Daily Report* that gives a daily update on the number of confirmed, probable, suspect, and recovered/improved cases.

Acknowledgement of the Best Practices of CU Initiatives

The best practices of CUs in their feat to curb the spread of COVID-19 have been recognized. The important role of Philippine Genome Center-Visayas was recognized in the fight against COVID-19 and the institution's critical role in providing technical assistance for the establishment of several COVID-19 testing centers in Western Visayas. Prof. Patricia Arinto's research entitled, "Issues and Challenges in Open and Distance e-Learning: Perspectives from the Philippines" was featured in the International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning (Vol. 17, No. 2, February 2016). The said article discussed the challenges the Philippine education community might face based on the experience of UPOU. UP Manila's ongoing COVID-19 initiatives were also underscored in DZUP's special broadcast entitled, *TatakUP Special Broadcast: Panayam at Talakayan ukol sa COVID-19*. Lastly, in appreciation of the University of the Philippines COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team's tireless efforts in conducting researches, producing policy recommendations, and producing various online resources for information dissemination, the J. Amado Araneta Foundation featured the team in its #LivingHeroes Innovators series.

Constituent Universities Render Assistance and Donations to the General Public

Different UP Constituent Universities have undertaken proactive roles in rendering assistance and donations to the general public. UP Visayas donated fifty (50) liters of UPV-made ethyl alcohol to the Miagao LGU through Mayor Macario Napulan, while UP Tacloban Batch Maanyag has donated one hundred test kits to the Eastern Visayas Regional COVID-19 Testing Center (EVRCTC). On a similar note, UP Mindanao has offered assistance to the Development Academy of the Philippines Mindanao for its *Mindanao Food Highway (MFH) project*. It facilitated the dissemination of surveys to the UP Mindanao's network of rice farmers, millers, consolidators, wholesalers/retailers, NFA administrators, local government units, and rice consumers. UP Baguio, on the other hand, has put up a farmer's market called *Talipapa sa Oble* that aims to generate income for local growers who are unable to sell their harvest due to the pandemic.

UP Visayas opened its doors to serve as a quarantine facility for seventeen (17) UP Los Banos students and five (5) students from UP Diliman who were sent home after being stranded in their respective campuses.



Talipapa sa Oble will be open every Friday from 8:30 a.m. to noon, and the public is advised to bring reusable bags and observe health protocols.

Health and Nutrition Tips during the Pandemic

Amidst a global pandemic, health and nutrition should be given the utmost priority. However, with limited available resources for some families, nutrition may be compromised. Fortunately, UP Diliman's Department of Food Science and Nutrition of the College of Home Economics has come up with various recipes for nutritious dishes for the family using relief goods in its initiative called *Really Really Good Recipes using Relief Goods*. The same department has also released four health guides for the elderly during the time of a pandemic, as the group is seen to be most vulnerable to COVID-19.

Development of Online Consultation Mechanisms and Protocol

Constituent Universities have developed ways to effectively serve their constituents while taking into account the different protocols imposed under the General Community Quarantine. UP PGH introduced its *Online Consultation Request and Appointment (OCRA)*, an online system to be used by patients of the outpatient department in order to request a consultation and to schedule an appointment, while the University of the Philippines Health Service (UPHS) began to utilize the

UP Health Services Telemedicine Consultation which aims to provide telemedicine outpatient consultations to all UP Diliman-mandated clientele and residents. The University of the Philippines Manila–College of Medicine Surgical Innovation and Biotechnology Laboratory or UPM-CM SIBOL COVID Task Force on the other hand has developed a *Telepresence Device* that enables health workers to communicate with their patients remotely.



UP Antiqueño together with SK Federation Bugasong distributed food packs and snacks to police officers, tricycle drivers and public market vendors.

Constituent University Involvement in COVID19-related Research/Technology/ in the Development or Call for Donation Stages

On-Going Donation Drives

In line with the ongoing researches and initiatives of the Philippine Genome Center (PGC) about COVID-19 and to continue its operations for COVID 19 testing, PGC has launched the donation campaign, *PGC Para sa Bayan* through the Give to UP portal. The UP-PGH Blood Donation Center, in partnership with the UP Medicine Student Council (MSC), UP Manila University Student Council, and various organizations, is currently undertaking Sanduguan, a series of mass blood donation campaigns. This is done to address the critical shortage of blood products in PGH brought about by travel restrictions caused by the COVID 19 pandemic, especially as the hospital transitions to normal operations.

Constituent University Involvement in COVID19-Related Coping Mechanisms (for students, faculty, researchers, staff, and community/residents)

Provision for Food

UP Antiqueño, a student organization based in UP Visayas, distributed food packs and snacks to police drivers, tricycle drivers, and public market vendors. The initiative was done together with Sangguniang Kabataan Federation of the Municipality of Bugasong.

Provision for IEC Materials

The pandemic has not only changed the way people lived, but it has also changed peoples' perceptions and mindsets. These changes often have implications on one's mental health. In the infographic *Kamalayan CoPES*, the Ugnayan ng Pahinungod Committee on Psychosocial Emergency Services presented ways to prevent and overcome loneliness. Similarly, UP Diliman Health Service also released a primer entitled *Bagong Kamalayan* which calls for adopting new ways to cope with the demands of the pandemic: "*Iwanan ang nakagawian para gawin ang bagong pamamaraan.*"

Several IEC materials were also released by the UP Diliman PsycServ. These infographics tackled ways by which people may deal with personal and collective grief in time of pandemic. It also crafted a *Mindfulness Bingo*, an infographic that shared tips on how to ease one's negative thoughts and feelings through a series of exercises. The UP Manila College of Allied Medical Professions (CAMP) has produced *Routine Infoseries* to help develop and maintain routines at home during the quarantine. As parts of the country transitioned from ECQ to GCQ, new habits needed to be adopted for the new normal. In line with this, the UP Open University Ugnayan ng Pahinungod released a useful guide on how to practice physical distancing and the UP Manila CAMP produced a set of infographics entitled *Physical Distancing at Home Quarantine* that explains these concepts.

Provision for Transportation

Constituent Universities have been tirelessly coordinating with various government agencies and local government units in order to bring the students stranded on campus home. UP Los Baños' Oplan Hatid has transported one thousand (1,000) students both domestically and internationally. It has covered various provinces in all island groups and has included an international leg that transported twenty-four Sri Lankan graduate students back to their home country. UP Visayas has also undertaken transport provision to repatriate students to Northern Mindanao, Sultan Kudarat, Cebu, Bohol, Zamboanga, Southern Mindanao, Negros, Panay, and Luzon. Through the efforts of the Office of Student Affairs, UP Mindanao has also successfully transported students back to their respective hometowns in various provinces in the country in coordination with various LGUs.

In order to ensure the safety of its employees, UP-PGH has undertaken a free transport service through the UBE EXPRESS and BEEP bus services.



UPLB Task Force LB Kontra COVID-19 has upgraded their COVID-19 swabbing booth in order to address problems of storage, documentation, and mobility.



UP Baguio gives assistance to the Social Welfare Employees Association of the Philippines (SWEAP) Cordillera chapter.



UP Los Baños, led by Office of Student Affairs, embarks on biggest international operation by bringing home 24 Sri Lankan graduate students.

Provision for PPEs

Following the transition to GCQ, the UP Los Baños Office of the Chancellor distributed health supplies such as face shields, surgical masks, 72% ethyl alcohol, bleach, disinfectants, and spray guns to the colleges and offices. UP Baguio supported the Social Welfare Employees Association of the Philippines (SWEAP) Cordillera chapter by providing them with PPEs and sanitary alcohol.

Likewise, UP Los Baños has upgraded their COVID-19 swabbing booth in order to address the problem of the shortage of medical equipment and materials as well as other issues such as storage, documentation, and mobility.

Provision for New Work Arrangements

New guidelines, safety protocols, and work arrangements were introduced as the country transitioned to GCQ. UP Diliman released post-ECQ guidelines concerning academic matters, administrative processes, research and extension work, student and community concerns, and campus resources and assets. The UP Diliman Office of Student Projects and Activities also released guidelines for all University-registered student organizations on the conduct of activities during the GCQ. On a similar note, UP Los Baños released work arrangements and health safety protocols to be observed during the state of public health emergency and the GCQ period and implemented a four-day work week (Monday to Thursday). Sports and outdoor activities on both campuses during the GCQ remains prohibited. The UP Baguio Library issued an advisory on the operation of the UP Baguio Library, and UP Cebu released guidelines on the conduct of the UP High School Admission Test (HSAT) during COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs has released a memo for UPCAT qualifiers that the University shall be adopting the “new normal” of remote learning.

Tribute to volunteers and frontliners

Members of the UP Alumni Association (UPAA) Iloilo handed over their send-off gifts to resident dormers of Balay Ilonggo who were going home to their respective hometowns in Bohol, Zamboanga, and General Santos City. These students have worked tirelessly in the production of the DIY face shields that the UP Alumni Association was able to distribute to health workers and frontliners in Western Visayas.

A tribute video for front liners was also produced by the UP System and TVUP to show gratitude for their unwavering spirits in serving the nation.



UPAA Iloilo gives their send-off gifts to resident dormers of the Balay Ilonggo dorm who have tirelessly been helping in the production of DIY-face shields