



# UP SYSTEM REPORT

ON COVID19-RELATED ACTIVITIES



**JULY 1-15**



## **UP Constituent Universities Involvement in COVID19-related Research/Technology/Extension Activities**

### **Constituent Universities provide policy recommendations regarding COVID-19**

UP experts have always been in the forefront in providing policy recommendations that help improve the lives of Filipinos, especially during this time of the pandemic. UP Philippine General Hospital (UP PGH) Executive Director Dr. Gap Legaspi, together with other health experts, suggested a “one ward” system for Philippine hospitals that will provide a unified database of hospitals to facilitate cooperation and sharing of resources to fill each other’s gaps in services. The UP Pandemic Response Team, on the other hand, recommended that the government must consider the needs (from basic necessities like food, water, and sanitation to social protection and quality health care) of the marginalized and vulnerable sectors in these trying times. While the UP COVID-19 team recommended that Metro Manila should continue to be under quarantine to lessen virus transmission as they predict the number of COVID-19 positives will reach 80,000 by the end of July 2020.

### **Direct participation in COVID-19 testing**

UP Diliman (UPD), UP Los Baños (UPLB), and UP Manila (UPM) have continuously provided assistance to improve COVID-19 testing in the country. The faculty from UPD College of Architecture has designed a central referral complex and portable testing stations to assist medical personnel in testing. On the other hand, UP PGH is now accepting outpatient testing, it will begin its research on the use of convalescent blood plasma to treat COVID-19 patients, and it will be one of the hospitals that will serve as a clinical trial site for a COVID-19 vaccine. Lastly, UPLB’s Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory officially opened on July 10, 2020.

### **Constituent Universities contribute to information dissemination and knowledge-building**

Information is one of the best tools the public can use to combat COVID-19, which is why the UP System and UPLB developed mechanisms to assist the public make informed decisions during the pandemic. The UP COVID-19 Pandemic Response Team recently enhanced its [endcov.ph](https://endcov.ph) dashboard, so that anyone can already view case projections, state of NCR virus

transmissions, and information resources and advisories on COVID-19. UPLB biomathematicians also developed a job risk calculator and workplace outbreak simulator that can help anyone assess the risk level of going to their workplace.

Likewise, UP Mindanao (UPMin), UP Open University (UPOU), and UP Baguio (UPB) had initiated projects that aimed to help different sectors of society understand the world's current situation and how they can adjust in the new normal. UPMin Philippine Genome Center trained medical personnel from Dr. Jorge P. Royeca Hospital last July 2-4, 2020. UPOU together with the University of New South Wales in Australia, conducted free online courses for teachers to help them become qualified in handling online courses. It also offered a Masterclass on statistical methods for Social Sciences, which the participants could use in understanding the COVID-19 data generated by the government and various institutions. On the other hand, UPB Prof. Junley Lazaga translated children stories on COVID-19 in Ilokano so that more children will better understand the pandemic.

Experts from various units of the UP System, UPD, UPM, UPOU, UPLB, UP Cebu (UPC), and UP Visayas (UPV), have been active in conducting free webinars, and in producing podcasts and online videos related to COVID-19. Many of the UPM and UP System webinars are about the health component of the pandemic. UPM discussed occupational health in times of COVID; challenges of forensic DNA; impact of the virus in maternal and child health; enhancing public health, surveillance, and response time; and the meanings of numbers in COVID-19 data. UP System, on the other hand, conducted webinars on the challenges for anesthesiologists; genetic sequencing research; and rehabilitation as a critical part of recovery of COVID-19 patients. UPOU held a webinar on Philippine nursing service preparedness amidst pandemic.

The challenges of the education sector in time of pandemic is also a popular topic among the CU webinars. UPD College of Education, UPC, UPV, and UPOU conducted webinars on the challenges of online learning for Higher Education and Institutions, and ways to conduct online teaching and learning. Another popular webinar topic is the intersection between environment, science, and COVID-19. UPD Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology webinar looked into the environmental origins of the virus; UPLB College of Development Communication tackled science communication and its role in time of COVID-19; UPLB student organizations initiated a

webinar on agri-biotech's role in the fight against COVID -19; UPOU focused on the molecular epidemiology perspective of the pandemic; and UPM discussed environmental health interventions.



*Offline Technologies and Remote Teaching and Learning publicity material from UP Open University Facebook page.*

Aside from health and education, the role of local government units in times of crisis was also discussed in the webinar of UPLB College of Public Affairs and Development; while the UP International Training Center for Authorities and Leaders Philippines (UP CIFAL Philippines) tackled the relationship of local governance, human rights, and technology on physical distancing. Lastly, the UPD Extension Programs in Pampanga and Olongapo looked into the economic component of the pandemic in their webinar on the impact of COVID-19 for businesses and how they can survive.

Some UP experts have also provided expertise, as resource persons for online news articles. Dr. Salvana of UPM, an infectious disease specialist shared insights on how the public can stay safe now that it was discovered that COVID-19 has airborne characteristics; UPD School of Labor and Industrial Relations faculty offered some legal advice and instructions on labor issues during the pandemic; and UPOU former Chancellor explained the context behind online learning and the necessary steps needed to make it effective and efficient.



## UP Constituent Universities Involvement in Various Donation and Support Campaigns for the General Public

Constituent Universities are continuously providing support to various sectors greatly affected by the pandemic. A UPD student organization sold face masks for a community in Abra. UPD professors are also calling for donations for jeepney drivers who lost their jobs due to the lockdown. UPV donated UPV-made alcohol, face masks, COVID-19 kits, and food packs to homeowners, public schools, and indigenous communities in Iloilo. On the other hand, UPB donated alcohols to the police in Baguio City and they supported local artists and entrepreneurs who sell their products in the UPB grounds. This initiative enjoins the public to support local products and to help small businesses stay alive during the pandemic.



*Riverview Homeowners Association in Iloilo receive COVID-19 kits from UPV Community Development 181 students.  
Photo from Riverview Homeowners Association Facebook page.*

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

## **Provision for IEC materials**

Constituent Universities have released IEC materials online to help the public further understand the pandemic and adjust accordingly in the new normal. First, UP-PGH, through the Bayanihan Na! Webpage and through the official UP-PGH Facebook page, has produced various publicity materials that provide relevant information for the general public. UPM also regularly releases its Healthscape magazine that features COVID-19 efforts of UPM. Second, the UPD University Health Service (UHS) has released guidelines on how to conduct proper home quarantine. And UPOU created videos on how people can conduct teaching, learning, and meetings online (how to use social media, mobile phones, Zoom, Google, etc.).

## **Provision for transportation**

UP Baguio and UP Cebu assisted their locally stranded students to return to their home provinces in Luzon and Visayas.

## **Provision for psychological support**

UPD, UPM, UPC, UPOU, and UP System all developed projects aimed to help the UP community take care of their mental health during these times of uncertainty brought by the pandemic. UPD PsycServ released IEC materials regarding the importance of sleep and keeping relationships healthy even when people are at home 24/7. UPC, on the other hand, shared tips on how to manage anxiety. UPM and UP System students created songs about Filipino frontliners and love in time of the pandemic which are meant to inspire others to continue fighting until the pandemic is over.

### **Other initiatives**

UP Constituent Universities have been diligent in keeping the UP community well informed about the status of COVID-19 cases in their respective CUs, and the corresponding response measure. UPD has issued an advisory regarding the temporary closure of the University Health Service (UHS) and UPD HRDO, due to the COVID-19-positives in their units, disinfection schedule and alternative agencies to contact while the UHS is still closed. UPLB has also issued a similar advisory regarding the first COVID-19 case in their campus.