

Report of the Student Regent to the Board of Regents

1275th Meeting of the Board of Regents

24 November 2011

Local concerns

Three units in the Visayas have common concerns regarding student services and facilities. Consultations with students and formations in UP Iloilo City, UP Miag-ao and UP Cebu were held 18-21 November 2011.

School venues

The campus in UP Iloilo City is closed by 9:00 pm, a time too early according to the students. Practice for sports, theatrical and other extra-curricular activities are thus held off-campus, which poses more safety concerns.

UP Miag-ao, meanwhile, has enough wide open spaces to accommodate student gatherings after class. But these meetings and groups naturally have to break up when the lights are put off around 9:00 pm. However, there is no urgent request for an extension of the curfew.

The students are apprehensive of fees that are being and may be imposed upon the use of the venues and facilities especially for activities that are co-curricular.

Libraries

The libraries of these three campuses are in a sorry state, in terms of what materials are stored and how they are stored. UP Iloilo and UP Cebu's libraries are both housed in old buildings, limiting the type of refurbishing that may be done. The lack of adequate airconditioning, computerized public access catalog, and other amenities regularly found in say, UP Diliman libraries, is stark. Internet and wifi connection is available, but oftentimes spotty.

The book collection and journal subscriptions are largely outdated, marginal works, or questionable. Students' access to materials is limited. This is the trend: regional UP units have poorer library and other instructional facilities compared to those in the main campus. This issue must be addressed as soon as possible, in order to avert the decline of scholarship.

Tambayans/Student Centers

Students need to have designated areas where they can hold organization meetings and activities, and perhaps store communal property. These areas must afford privacy, security, comfort, and self-sufficiency.

Such areas are absent in the three units. UP Cebu has three or four waiting-shed type tambayans which houses only as many organizations. UP Miag-ao has stone tables and seats made fixtures of the landscape, but they are outdoor and cannot be used in rainy weather. UP Iloilo has small huts do not territorially belong to any group.

There are no student centers as envisioned in UP Diliman and Los Banos, such that these campuses have Vinzons Hall and the Student Union (SU) building. These centers will supposedly centralize the common student needs: cheap food, semester-long book rentals,

photocopying and computer services, accessible student council offices, ATM machines, meeting places.

Deposit fee

UP Visayas is the first unit which has released the deposit fee for “student activities and scholarships”. It has set aside P1.5 million as seed fund for a trust. However, there are no guidelines yet so the money has not been utilized by this batch of student councils. UP Cebu, now separate from UP Visayas, has to yet to separate its collections from its erstwhile mother unit.

OJT/practicum fee

The OJT or on the job training fee is a concern consistent across the UP system. Students who are enrolled in summer OJT programs are charged base tuition and miscellaneous fees despite their absence from school. The fees allow library access and use of wifi within campus, but the idea behind the OJT precisely is to send them off to working places. The students would like to have this fee rationalized.

Special concern: Avila case

The Student Regent had the opportunity to interview key witnesses in the Avila trial, and to see the disputed football fields and the Executive House.

Activities

The General Assembly of Student Councils (GASC) will convene in UP Miag-ao on 20-21 December 2011. It will be hosted by the UP Visayas student councils. The GASC is a mechanism to select the Student Regent and deliberate system-wide concerns. Some of the matters that will be tabled are: drafting of guidelines for the release of the deposit fee, consultations on the Student Code of Conduct and the Student Handbook of Rights and Responsibilities, and the STFAP Review.