



Dear Reader

This issue of Alipato presents some efforts at curriculum development. However, even before we go into them, we need to review some basic concepts.

Let's start with a definition of curriculum. Since there are too many definitions to choose from, let us adopt one which is broad enough for this issue. That would be Marsh and Stafford's (1988) definition of curriculum as "an interrelated set of plans and experiences which a student completes under the guidance of the school." This would include planned and unplanned content, procedure and activities inside or outside the school under its guidance.

The second basic concept involves factors affecting curriculum development. For our purpose let's limit them to the political, economic and socio-cultural factors. The political factor refers to the attempt of persons in power or authority to promote and propagate their ideology; the economic factor refers to efforts of the same people to ensure that their economic agenda such as industrialization and globalization are included in the curriculum, and the socio-cultural factor refers to the development, use and propagation of values necessary to nation-building.

The third basic concept deals with the levels at which curriculum planning is done. At the system or national level, we have centralized planning at the Department of Education, Culture and Sports. Then we have school-based curriculum planning which is practised at the UP Integrated School. At the classroom level, we have teachers who make ultimate decisions on what supplementary material to use, what teaching aid to prepare, whom to invite as resource speaker or where to bring the class for the next field/exposure trip.

Last is the concept of context. Does our curriculum address the problems of our own



society so that our students can appreciate them and work towards solving them when and where they can? Simply put, what is the context of our lesson, say in Science? Math? Communication Arts?

Having cleared those concepts, we may proceed to this showcase of different curricula. They are, on the main, answers to these questions: given the national situation and the particular set of students, what should we teach? how should we teach? how do we know that what and how we teach are correct or appropriate?

Here, then, are the curricula of a pre-school, literacy-numeracy program for the early grades, a school on TV, a special school for dyslexics, an integrated school from kindergarten to fourth year, a work program, a Department of Science and Technology node school, a science school, a DECS home-study program, a basic education program for the Dumagats, and a research-generated curricular innovation by DECS-CAR. Included, too, are the basic education curricula of our neighbors - Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

With this issue, we invite you to reflect on curriculum development in our country and determine whether or not we are generating knowledge necessary to improving not only the quality but also the relevance of our basic education.

Let us hear from you.

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