
**UP OPEN UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF GENDER CONCERNS**

**A Proposal to Institutionalize
the UP Open University Gender Focal Point System
(GFPS) and Create an Office of Gender Concerns
(UPOU OGC)**

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Since 1981, the Philippines has been committed to uphold the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN CEDAW), which requires governments to provide enabling mechanisms to plan, implement, and monitor national and local policies for the protection of women's human rights. The 1986 Constitution duly recognizes the role of women in nation building.

Laws have since been passed to intensify efforts to fulfill the government's duties under international and domestic laws to recognize, respect, protect, fulfill and promote women's rights and freedom, especially marginalized women, in all fields. Among others, these include RA 7192, the Women in Development and Nation-Building Act passed in 1991; RA 7877, the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995; RA 7845, the General Appropriations Act of 1996 which earmarks a certain percentage of the government appropriation to agencies for use in GAD activities; and RA 9710, the Magna Carta of Women in 2009, which is a national translation of the CEDAW.

The above laws were passed to promote the substantive equality of women and men. One of the main tools for such is Gender mainstreaming, which is seen as an instrument to push for equity. Translated in the academic setting, the goal is for the University to operate as a gender-sensitive and gender-responsive organization and to prevent and respond to other concerns that relate to equity, fairness and optimum development of women and men.

II. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The UP Open University Committee on Gender Concerns (CGC) was created in 2001 by virtue of Memorandum No. FL-01-028 primarily to deal with the prevention of or in response to cases or incidents of

Sexual Harassment in the University. It is composed of the following: the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, a Point person (PDA) for Gender Concerns, Chief, HRDO (Committee Secretary), two representatives each from the faculty, REPS and Administrative staff. The UPOU CGC has since expanded its mandate to include gender advocacy and gender mainstreaming. It meets at least four times a year to plan and implement gender and development (GAD) activities.

The Magna Carta of Women in 2009 identified government agencies as the key duty bearers in "upholding women's rights and promoting gender responsive governance, protecting and fulfilling women's rights, and promoting women's economic empowerment." The University of the Philippines has stepped forward with its implementation, starting with the requisite Gender Audit, finished in 2010, which recommends that the University strengthen its GAD mechanisms, particularly in transforming gender committees, such as the UPOU CGC, into offices or centers. Also, it was apparent that the UPOU was not optimizing the use of its Gender budget, not because it has been denied such, but because of the transitory nature of the CGC's operations and the lack of full-time staff to ensure the continuation of GAD efforts. This was a perennial audit observation of the Commission on Audit.

The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) meanwhile issued Memorandum Circular 2011-01 which provides guidelines for the creation, strengthening and institutionalization of a gender focal point system (GFPS) in all government instrumentalities and clarify the roles and responsibilities, composition and structure of the GFPS to enable it to function as a mechanism for catalyzing and accelerating gender mainstreaming in the agency towards the promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

With the growing use of the internet by the public for various purposes, there is also a need to conduct research on gender and gender-related issues not only in the physical world but also in the cyber space which should then inform the University the need to develop interventions that can prevent and respond to such issues and concerns.

UPOU being the cybercampus of the University of the Philippines should spearhead the research on and interventions to gender and gender-related issues over the internet. The cyberspace being the virtual classroom or office of UPOU should also be looked into if there are issues and concerns in relation to gender such as discrimination, harassment, cyber bullying, exploitation, and the like. which need urgent attention and response.

It is in these contexts that the institutionalization of the UPOU Gender Focal Point System (UPOU GFPS) and the creation of an Office of Gender Concerns (UPOU OGC) is being proposed.

III. GAD FOCAL POINT SYSTEM AND OFFICE OF GENDER CONCERNS AT UPOU

A. The Proposal

The UPOU Gender Focal Point System and Office of Gender Concerns are being proposed to institutionalize UPOU's commitment to gender mainstreaming by specifically engendering its teaching, research and public service activities, with the end in view of upholding equality in women and men and fulfilling and promoting women's human rights and development. The GFPS and Office will also hopefully work, together with all stakeholders in the University, towards a more gender-responsive governance in UPOU.

This proposal will entail:

- 1) transforming its existing Committee on Gender Concerns (CGC) into a policy advisory Gender and Development Executive Committee (GAD ExeCom) headed by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs with the following as members:
 - a. Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration;
 - b. Deans of the Faculties of Studies;
 - c. Representatives of each sector, e.g., Faculty, REPS, and Administrative Staff, as members; and
 - d. Director of the Office of Gender Concerns as Member-Secretary;
- 2) establishing a UPOU Office of Gender Concerns (OGC); and
- 3) bringing in all units of the University in participating in the overall scheme of GAD planning, implementation and evaluation.

As adopted from the PCW Memo 2011-01, the UPOU Gender Focal Point System will include the following:

B. Roles and Responsibilities

Again adopted from the PCW Memo 2011-01, the following are the roles and responsibilities of these focal point system mechanisms:

1. The Chancellor who is the **GFPS Chairperson** shall:
 - a) Issue policies or other directives that support GAD mainstreaming in the policies, plans, programs, projects and activities, budget, systems and procedures of the UPOU including the creation, strengthening, modification or reconstitution of the GFPS; and
 - b) Approve the GAD Plan, Program and Budget of the UPOU as duly endorsed by the Executive Committee, with the assistance of the Office of Gender Concerns and ensure its implementation.
2. The GAD **Executive Committee** shall:
 - a) Provide direction and give policy advice to the Chancellor to support and strengthen the GFPS and UPOU's GAD mainstreaming activities;
 - b) Direct the identification of GAD strategies, programs, activities and projects based on the results of the gender audit, gender analysis and according to the identified priorities of the UPOU in response to the gender issues faced by its students and employees; and
 - c) Ensure the timely submission of the UPOU GAD Plan and Budget, Accomplishment Report and other GAD-related reports.
3. The **Office of Gender Concerns** shall:
 - a) Spearhead the institutionalization and mainstreaming of a gender-sensitive and responsive perspective and framework in the curriculum, research and extension activities of the University;
 - b) Coordinate with the various units of the University in the development of the annual GAD Plan and Budget and Reports and ensure their meaningful participation in GAD strategic services that address a range of issues of gender, equity and other concerns in addition sexual harassment; and
 - c) Develop and implement policies, programs, services, information systems, advocacy activities and the like which are gender-fair, sensitive and responsive, and which will ideally contribute to an engendered University governance; and
 - d) Ensure the functional operationalization of the Gender Focal Point System (GFPS) in the University.

4. Functions of the UPOU Gender Focal Point System

Though also involved in the planning and organizing of the GAD Plan and Budget, the Faculties of Studies and other units of the University are the major implementors of the GAD programs and services in the University.

In sum, the UPOU Gender Focal Point System shall, together, perform the following functions:

- Work to mainstream gender in UPOU. This includes the three functions mandated by the UP Charter, namely, instruction, research, and public service. (Activities to this effect may include but are not limited to:
 - Engendering the curriculum,
 - Creating programs as well as formal and informal courses on gender,
 - Creating a gender research program in the University which includes all research activity, study gender and equity implications of online learning environments, maintain accessible databases for monitoring data which relate to gender and other concerns that challenge equity in the university,
 - Implement programs that promote a safe and healthy workplace and learning environment
 - Implement necessary activities as required by the Magna Carta of Women
- To creatively and proactively deal with gender, equity and development issues such as among others, gender discrimination and violence. To immediately act on complaints of sexual harassment, and to regularly train the personnel in the Anti Sexual Harassment Hearing pool.
- To actively promote the development of experts and advocates in gender and equity concerns in the University.

C. Financial and Personnel Requirements

C.1. UPOU GAD ExeCom

The GFPS Chairperson (Chancellor), members of the GAD ExeCom and of the Implementing Units are already in place in the University. However, as earlier proposed, the existing Committee on Gender Con-

cerns shall be reconstituted into the UPOU GAD ExeCom and an Office of Gender Concerns shall be created.

With regard to the reconstitution of the UPOU CGC, the matrix below provides the differences between the CGC and the GFPS GAD ExeCom:

Particulars	Committee on Gender Concerns	GAD ExeCom
Nature	Policy advisory cum implementing body	Policy advisory i
Mandate	Address sexual harassment initially then expanded to gender advocacy & mainstreaming,	Gender mainstreaming, promotion & advocacy including sexual harassment
Composition	VCAA as head; PDA for GC, HRDO Chief (Secretary), representatives of each sector as members	VCAA as head; VCs, deans, representatives of each sector as members; the Director of the Office of Gender Concerns as Member-Secretary
Financial Requirements	For PS: Honorarium for standing committees	For PS: Honorarium for standing committees
For Programs, etc.—chargeable against the balance in the 5% allocation for GAD		

What is needed in the GAD ExeCom proposal is basically a memorandum from the Chancellor reconstituting the Committee on Gender Concerns into the GAD ExeCom.

C.2. UPOU OGC

With regard to the creation of the Office of Gender Concerns, which shall be under the Office of the Chancellor, the following staffing requirement is proposed:

- (1) Director (position to be created on additional assignment basis; University level-administrator with honorarium (additional assignment allowance), RATA and 6 unit-credit load)
- (2) Extension Associate (may be contracted service, contractual or casual)

The Office Director shall:

- Assist the Chancellor and other university officials on matters related to gender mainstreaming, equity and development
- Initiate, coordinate, monitor, or support gender and equity-related activities and programs of the University
- Serve as Secretary of the GAD ExeCom
- Prepare and submit Gender and Development plans and reports, including Financial Reports, to the Office of the Chancellor as well as to other offices which may require them
- Exercise supervision and control over staff members under the office, and
- Perform other functions as may be required.

In terms of budgetary requirements, the Director position will be appointed on an additional assignment basis and will receive an honorarium (additional assignment allowance), RATA, and six (6) administrative load credits. The Director will serve for a term of three years following the University rules on appointment.

The personal services and other expenses for the Director and Extension Associate (may be contracted services, contractual or casual, if plantilla items may not be secured) items, as well as the programs, activities and services of the Office, including maintenance, operations and other expenses, and capital outlays, will be charged against the minimum of 5% GAD budget of UPOU. The GAD budget does not constitute an additional budget over UPOU's total budget allocation.

More specifically, the budgetary PS requirements of this Office translate to the following per year:

**Table 1. Annual Budgetary PS Requirements
of the Office of Gender Concerns**

Item	Particulars	Amount (P)
Personal Services	Director's Honoraria (Additional assignment allowance), RATA and Overload, Extension Associate	P584,155.60

Major Plans and Programs

The major plans and programs of the Office of Gender Concerns among others are as follows:

1. Operationalization of the Gender Focal Point System (GFPS);
2. Advocacy and capacity building programs and services on GAD through trainings, fora, competitions, awards, exhibits etc. on GAD;
3. Conduct researches leading to Gender-responsive systems;
4. Create gender-sensitive and responsive programs that respond and prevent issues of gender violence and discrimination such as helping community build families where reproductive roles are shared among members;
5. Create gender-responsive programs to facilitate empowerment of community to track and create solutions to their own concerns;
6. Offer courses on gender for the academe as well as government and non-government clients;
7. Continue to develop and offer undergraduate and graduate-level courses on gender in cooperation with the Faculty of Studies;
8. Review, revise and offer Diploma in Women and Development Program in cooperation with the Faculty of Management and Development Studies;
9. Develop and offer continuing Education Courses on gender and related issues;
10. Expand and strengthen linkages and partnerships with stakeholders towards gender mainstreaming and advancing women's rights.

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES SYSTEM

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE UNIVERSITY
AND OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

3 November 2014

Memorandum No. LADLL-14-46

For: All Vice Presidents
All Chancellors
The Dean, UP Cebu
All Directors, HRDO

Subject: Summary of Decisions of the Board of Regents at its 1302nd Regular Meeting held on 30 October 2014

Please be informed of the attached ***Summary of Decisions of the Board of Regents at its 1302nd Regular Meeting held on 30 October 2014*** for your appropriate action. The said summary shall be uploaded in the official OSU website: osu.up.edu.ph

The Chancellors and the Dean of UP Cebu shall please see to it that copies of the said summary are furnished to all units/person concerned.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Prof. LILIAN A. DE LAS LLAGAS, Ph.D.
Secretary of the Board of Regents

cc: Office of the President

**1302nd BOARD OF REGENTS MEETING
30 OCTOBER 2014, 9:00 A.M.
Executive House, UP Diliman Campus, Quezon City**

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

(As of 3 November 2014)

NOTE: The Chancellors will please see to it that copies of the 1302nd Summary of Decisions are furnished to all units/persons concerned.

I. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES		
Item No.	Agenda Item	Board Action
1	Approval of the Institution of Tuition and Laboratory Fees in the Professional Masters in Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management (PM-TMEM) Program	APPROVED
II. MATTERS FOR APPROVAL OF THE BOARD		
Item No.	Agenda Item	Board Action
GENERAL GOVERNANCE Appointment of University Officials		
2	Proposal to institutionalize the UP Open University Gender Focal Point System (GFPS) and to Create the Office of Gender Concerns (UPOU OGC), UP Open University	APPROVED
3	Appointments of the Following Faculty Members as Vice Chancellors of the University of the Philippines Los Baños , effective 1 November 2014 to Serve at the Pleasure of the Chancellor, with all entitlements due to their positions: 1. Dr. Portia G. Lapitan as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs	APPROVED

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Prof. Rex B. Demafelis as Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension3. Dr. Crisanto A. Dorado as Vice Chancellor for Administration4. Dr. Marish S. Madlangbayan Vice Chancellor for Planning and Development5. Dr. Serlie B. Jamias as Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs	
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