


UP CIDS DISCUSSION PAPER • 2022-07

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UP's Pandemic Response: Activities, Programs, and Policies Implemented by the University of the Philippines in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic¹

Kathleen Mai Javier Cardoz²

Since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, it wreaked havoc across the world—lockdowns and travel bans were imposed, hospitals were swamped with patients, and businesses and schools were forced to close. The rising number of COVID-19 cases aggravated the anxiety of people.

In March 2020, the Philippine government imposed a community quarantine in Luzon following the risks brought by the disease. It restricted the movement of over 12 million people in Metro Manila, and everyone was asked to stay at home (CNN Philippines Staff 2020). Since then, community quarantines have been imposed with varying severity across the archipelago.

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- 1 This paper is part of the Higher Education Research and Policy Reform Program (HERPRP) series that documents how various higher education institutions have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first articles in this series appear in the monograph "*Higher Education Interventions during and beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic.*" Other articles are published in the subsequent monographs entitled "*Contemporary Issues in Higher Education.*" — Fernando Paragas, HERPRP Convenor
 - 2 Kathleen Mai Cardoz (kathleen.cardoz@gmail.com) graduated cum laude from the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG). After receiving her degree, she started working at the UP Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. As a Senior Project Officer, she assisted in the implementation of remote teaching and learning (RTL) of the University by organizing webinars and workshops, and curating resources.

The disruption brought by the pandemic exposed inadequacies and inequalities in the education system. Students living in the remote parts of the country are disadvantaged due to the lack of gadgets, internet connection, and a good learning environment, which hinder studying and class participation.

Shortened Second Semester, Academic Year 2019–2020

In March 2020, schools were shut down, and teaching and learning continued in a remote set-up. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the country's education sector is facing a dilemma involving the access, delivery, and governance of education. The University of the Philippines (UP), not impervious to the immense problems posed by the pandemic, was also forced to close its campuses in the middle of the second semester of the academic year (AY) 2019–2020. Prior to the announcement of the lockdown in March 2020, the university issued OVPAA Memorandum 2020-31 (Academic Contingency Plan in the light of COVID-19), which enjoined the faculty to adjust their pedagogy (e.g., syllabi, learning materials, assessments, etc.) in view of the possible rise in the number of cases of COVID-19 in the country. It called on the faculty to use the existing learning management systems or platforms in disseminating their learning materials and adjusted syllabi, and to take stock of the access of their students to devices and internet connection to participate in class.

On 17 March 2020, the UP Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (OVPAA), headed by Vice-President Maria Cynthia Rose B. Bautista, issued OVPAA Memorandum 2020-38, announcing the suspension of classes across the UP System except UP Open University while the "University assesses the situation and decides" on the steps to better facilitate teaching and learning considering the threats brought by the pandemic.

The following month, the Board of Regents issued the “UP System Policy on the Second Semester AY 2019-2020 in Time of COVID-19,” and President Danilo Concepcion issued its implementing guidelines. The guidelines stipulated that the second semester must end on 30 April 2020 in light of the current health crisis and to alleviate the anxiety of both the faculty and students. It clarified that “there will be no face-to-face classes for the rest of the academic year” and “online classes are discouraged but may be conducted for the purpose of leveling of expectations, clarification, guidance, and summation” but it shall not affect the final assessment/grade of the students.

Considering that the semester was cut short, faculty may give the students a “deferred grade” (DFG) if they do not have enough basis for assessment. Otherwise, a numeric grade shall be given. The guidelines states that “no student shall be given a grade of 4.0, 5.0, or INC.” Thus, if a student was unable to comply with the requirements and whose standing is unsatisfactory, the faculty should drop the student and it “shall be annotated in their transcript of records with an asterisk (due to the COVID-19 pandemic).”

The faculty were also instructed to adjust their course requirements accordingly, which must be communicated to the students through all means possible. Students were given until 31 May 2021, or one year, to comply with these requirements. Graduating students who were able to comply with such requirements within the deadline and were endorsed for graduation “shall be deemed graduated as of the second semester of Academic Year 2019–2020.”

“Despite having no grade yet for the prerequisite course,” in which the students were enrolled during the second semester of AY 2019–2020, the University allowed them to “enroll in the latter course for credit.” The academic units were expected to devise appropriate bridging programs to remediate the skills and knowledge of the students that were critical in their program.

The guidelines also stipulate the suspension of the academic rules, such as the deadline for dropping of subjects and leave of absence, the maximum residence rule, rules on the removal of INC (incomplete) and grade of 4.0, and the rules on scholastic standing and student financial assistance.

Academic Plans for Academic Year 2020–2021

Education needed to continue amid a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world. The pandemic catalyzed the overdue transformation of higher education such as a paradigm shift to lifelong learning, and the transition from purely face-to-face delivery to blended learning.

On 19 June 2020, the OVPAA issued OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-68 (Academic Plans for AY 2020–2021 and Timetable for Dialogues with Faculty, Students, Staff and Concerned Parents) and OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-100 (UP Academic and Student Affairs Roadmap for AY 2020–2021). Following the memoranda, the first semester of AY 2020–2021 commenced on 10 September 2020 for undergraduate and graduate students. Meanwhile, classes in basic education began on 5 October 2020, in compliance with the Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 007 Series of 2020 and Republic Act No. 11480 (2020).

The courses in the first semester of AY 2020–2021 were delivered remotely, wherein the faculty and students do not meet in a physical classroom. Instead, teaching and learning were carried on through information and communication technologies, either in the form of synchronous or asynchronous sessions. Only graduating students and researchers who requested permission to conduct or “complete laboratory experiments, internships, and clinical or laboratory-based course requirements” were given the exemption, subject to the approval of the constituent units’ respective Chancellors and to “strict compliance with the public health protocols and guidelines set by the government and the University.” By principle,

approved courses may only proceed with face-to-face activities once retrofitting is done, “subject to a compliance review and inspection” before and during implementation (OVPA Memomandum 2020-100, Section 3.1).

The same memoranda laid down the academic plans of the University in the AY 2020–2021 into six pillars:

- (1) Academic Infrastructure
- (2) Physical Infrastructure
- (3) Remote Learning Preparations
- (4) Student Support
- (5) Faculty and Staff Capacity Building for Remote Learning
- (6) Support for Teaching, Research for Teaching Technologies/Innovations

Pillar 1: Academic Infrastructure

In order for UP to continue its role as a higher education institution, the first pillar of the preparation plans for the first semester of AY 2020–2021 was setting up its academic infrastructure so that it could facilitate remote learning. These include the provision of library databases and learning management systems.

Prior to the pandemic, only UP Diliman, UP Los Baños, UP Manila, and UP Open University had their own Moodle-based learning management systems (LMSs) in place—the University Virtual Learning Environment (UVLê) of UPD; UP Manila’s VLE; eLBI of UPLB; and MyPortal of UPOU (UP Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2019). Other Constituent Universities (CUs) procured either a Moodle-based LMS or Canvas.

Table 1. List of learning management systems used per CU

CU	Learning Management System (LMS)
UP Baguio	Moodle-based LMS
UP Cebu	Moodle-based LMS
UP Diliman	University Virtual Learning Environment (UVLÊ)
UP Los Baños	eLBI (Moodle-based) and Canvas
UP Manila	UPM VLE (Moodle-based) and Canvas
UP Mindanao	Canvas
UP Open University	MyPortal (Moodle-based)
UP Visayas	Moodle-based LMS

Source: UP Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2019.

Aside from the aforementioned LMS, faculty also used Google Classroom, Edmodo, email, Facebook, and SMS to keep in touch with their students and distribute their course packages. However, CUs were urged to use a uniform LMS or limit it to at most two.

According to its announcement, the UP Diliman Interactive Learning Center released the “updated version of UVLe that is based on Moodle 3.9” on 13 August 2021 through a temporary website. The updated UVLÊ was moved to the main website after the midyear term of 2021 (UPD Interactive Learning Center 2021). The upgrade included a new user-interface, Turnitin integration, stabler base, and better internal load management. It still allowed integration with the student’s CRS and Zoom accounts (Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2019). It also allowed them to log in through DILNET (UP Diliman’s internet connection and UP Mail, a Google-based email service).

The LMSs that were in place prior to the pandemic were underutilized. Not all faculty knew how to use these tools. To familiarize and capacitate them, the Interactive Learning Centers and Teaching and Learning Resource Centers provided training. The same was done for the students.

Aside from the LMSs, the University also subscribed to additional online databases/collections that students and faculty could access remotely, in addition to existing subscriptions to ScienceDirect, and Scopus. These include:

- Cambridge Core
- EBSCO Academic Search Complete
- EBSCO eBook Academic Collection
- EBSCO Discovery Service
- Elsevier
- Emerald Premier E-Journal
- Gale Reference Complete
- Global Springer Nature e-Journals
- JoVE (Journal of Visualized Experiments)
- JSTOR
- OpenAthens
- Philippine eJournal
- Project Muse Premium
- ProQuest
- Taylor & Francis Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) Collection
- Turnitin
- Web of Science
- Wiley eBooks and eJournals
- ODILO
- PressReader
- Statista (UP OVPA 2021b)

The University Library of UP Diliman organized webinars on the online resources and services available in the libraries across the UP System for the faculty, staff, and students. The webinar series aims “(1) to walk the users through the library’s various online databases/collections, (2) to provide a venue for users to ask questions, and get hands-on experience in navigating the online resources” (UP Diliman University Library 2021b). The following list shows the webinars that UP Diliman’s University Library hosted in 2020 and 2021:

- Rediscovering Your Library in the New Normal: Information Literacy Webinar for Students (20–30 October 2020)
- Discovering Connections, Connecting Discoveries: An Introduction to the New Online Resources of the UP System (UP Diliman University Library 2021a)
 - Faculty and Staff webinar series (22–26 February 2021)
 - Student webinar series (18–26 March 2021)
- Getting Acquainted: Webinar Series on the Library’s Online Resources and Services for UP Faculty (23–27 August 2021) (UP Diliman University Library 2021b)
- Turnitin x Moodle Training

The current remote set-up provided an opportunity for the libraries to make their resources available and accessible to all faculty, staff, and students across the University System. The former University Librarian of UP Diliman, Mr. Chito N. Angeles, spearheaded the development of *Tuklas*, a resource discovery tool customized to the “research needs and information-seeking behavior of the UP community and the general public.” This tool “enables users to search across millions of print and electronic resources available in the different libraries of the UP System” (UP Diliman University Library 2020–21).

Faculty, staff, and students can also access the educational resources available on the following UPOU and TVUP websites:

- UPOU Networks – An “online repository of all UPOU-produced multimedia resources such as OERs, publications, web-streamed lectures/presentations/seminars/university events, radio, and podcasts.”
- UPOU MODeL – Official platform of UPOU’s Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
- TVUP website – Online repository of UP-produced documentaries, “short films, lectures and panel discussions by the country’s top scientists, artists, and experts.”

In addition to the library resources, the University also subscribed to multiple software to supplement the delivery of courses such as

- NVivo – a software used for qualitative and mixed-method research. It is used to organized qualitative data from multiple sources
- SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) – a software used for complex data analysis
- ArcGIS – a “cloud-based mapping and analysis solution.” It allows users to create maps, analyze data, and “share and collaborate.”
- Qualtrics – a web-based software that allows one to create and distribute surveys, as well as to analyze data and generate reports
- Slido – an interactive question-and-answer (Q&A) and polling platform (Cameron and Brossart 2021)
- EdPuzzle – an online video editing and teaching tool where one can incorporate interactive content into pre-existing videos

- MATLAB – a “programming platform designed for engineers and scientists to analyze and design systems and products” (i.e., develop algorithms and create models and applications) (Alferez 2021)
- ANSYS Multiphysics – a software that allows engineers and scientists to explore and predict how a product works through simulations
- Adobe Acrobat Pro DC – a PDF solution software where you can edit, create, and sign PDFs
- Adobe Creative Cloud – a subscription service that provides access to the full suite of Adobe creative software such as Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, etc.
- Zoom – a cloud-based video communications application (UP OVPA 2021c)

The UP System Committee on Remote Learning created a website—<https://bit.ly/up-rtl>—that includes all open-access resources related to remote learning, as well as announcements, events, webinars, memoranda, policies, and other initiatives organized by the different CUs (UP OVPA 2021a).

Pillar 2: Physical Infrastructure

Education should continue amidst the health crisis while keeping in mind that no student should be left behind. Gadgets and internet support were given to the students through the Student Learning Assistance System (SLAS), Kaagapay sa Pag-aaral ng Iskolar ng Bayan Program (Kaagapay Program), and other campus- or college-led initiatives.

The University developed the SLAS as a screening tool “to expand the support to financially-challenged students and expedite the processing support for academic activities” (UP Media and

Public Relations Office 2020c). The system obtained information on the students' connectivity situation, financial capacity, and learning assistance requirements. This information served as basis for determination of the support to be provided (UP Student Learning Assistance System Online n.d.). Student applicants are classified into four types of learning assistance needs (Table 2).

Table 2. 4 Types of Learning Assistance Needs (LAN) and Screening Criteria

LAN Type	Screening Criteria
LAN 1	The applicant must be a Filipino and an undergraduate student in their first degree program. They must be prioritized in the grant of devices and internet subsidies due to these factors: (1) being part of a "vulnerable household" that cannot afford devices and internet service, (2) needing devices to continue with studies for AY 2020-21, and (3) having reported a stable internet connection in the area. A LAN 1 student may still become part of LAN 3.
LAN 2	The applicant must be a Filipino and an undergraduate student in their first degree program. They must be prioritized in internet subsidies due to these factors: (1) being part of a "vulnerable household" that cannot afford devices and internet service, and (2) having reported a stable internet connection in the area. A LAN 1 student may still become part of LAN 3.
LAN 3	Applicant who declared a need for specific learning assistance requirements, such as "referral to tutorial services," "assistive services," and "individualized support programs."
LAN 4	They are applicants who are not part of LAN 1, 2, or 3, but filed their applications to SLAS

Source: OVPAA Memorandum 2020-100 (2020, 9).

The same system supported “applications to the following learning assistance programs” (UP Student Learning Assistance System Online n.d.):

- **Grants-in-Aid Program (GIAP).** Covering undergraduate, law, and medicine students, the GIAP aims to reduce the total cost of enrollment based on the amount that students’ households can pay. GIAP works in the form of partial subsidies, waived miscellaneous fees, and cash allowances every month.
- **Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES).** Under the Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST), the TES provides cash allowance to undergraduate students whose families earn less.
- **Learning Assistance for Remote Learning.** The University provides this service to undergraduate students (including law and medicine students) from low-income households who need internet support. In addition, students from the most vulnerable families are also provided with a device.
- **Kaagapay sa Pag-aaral Program ng Iskolar ng Bayan Program.** With the help of private sector donations, students experiencing financial difficulties receive computing devices.
- **Donor-funded Scholarship Programs.** These programs are financed by private individuals and organizations and managed by the different UP CUs.

The data collected through this online system can also provide faculty with information on their students and help them adjust their course offerings based on such demographics.

Faculty were also given an internet connection subsidy amounting to PHP 1,500.00 per month and a PHP 6,000.00 one-time

gadget subsidy. The same amount for an internet connection subsidy was given to REPS and staff “whose work relies moderately or heavily on internet connectivity” (OVPAAMemorandum 2020-100).

Aside from this, the UP Provident Fund, partnering with the UP administration, offered the Remote Learning Support Loan (RLS), a computer loan product with zero percent interest that aims to help qualified employees with procuring their gadgets and ensuring internet connectivity amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Faculty can loan up to PHP 50,000.00. Meanwhile, research, extension, and professional staff (REPS) and administrative staff may avail of up to PHP 20,000.00 based on their net take-home pay. Borrowers pay for the RLS over five years; however, they may identify their preferred loan durations. The loan payment may be deducted from the borrower’s salary. However, if salary deductions cannot be possible, they can directly deposit payments to the UP Provident Fund’s bank account (UP Provident Fund 2020).

The University is currently developing is telelearning. Through telelearning, UP will broadcast lectures on television, given the conditions of the Philippines’ internet infrastructure. (OVPAAMemorandum 2020-100). The Office of the Vice President for Public Affairs (UP OVPPA), through the TVUP, piloted Digital TV with the General Education course FN 1 (Food Trip) of UP Diliman College of Home Economics (TVUP 2021). However, the University is currently coordinating with government institutions concerning its own TV channel.

Pillar 3: Remote Learning Preparations

In June 2020, the OVPAAMemorandum constituted the UP System Committee on Remote Learning (SCRL), which is headed by Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs Evangeline C. Amor, and staffed with

members from the different CUs (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-67). The committee is expected to:

- (1) Recommend activities to facilitate the UP System faculty's implementation of remote learning for AY 2020–2021;
- (2) Oversee identified activities in support of remote learning for the said school year; and
- (3) Prepare a report on these activities and present them to the UP System as needed.

The committee was later reorganized into the System Committee on Remote Teaching and Learning (SCRTL) in October 2020 and the System Committee on Teaching and Learning in August 2021 (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-113, 2021-125).

The same committee was constituted in each CU to:

- (1) Recommend activities to facilitate the shift to remote learning in AY 2020–2021;
- (2) Oversee CU-approved activities in support of remote learning;
- (3) Coordinate with relevant offices to ensure that the different offices are in synergy with each other in their support for remote learning;
- (4) Clarify and document concerns raised by academic units, faculty, and students regarding remote learning; and
- (5) Prepare a report on the activities, implementations issued and resolutions of problems in the first semester of AY 2020–2021 (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-70). CUs were free to determine the composition of the committee, but it had to include the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA), the CU representative to the SCRL, a senior and

respected faculty member, and college representatives for smaller CUs.

Before AY 2020–2021 started, the OVPAA and the SCRL organized the Taking Stock and Gearing UP for Remote Learning and CU-Wide Dialogues. The objectives of these webinar-workshops were to:

- (1) Connect and reach out to our faculty system-wide and provide a safe space for them to share their experience and concerns;
- (2) Share the plans of the University related to the implementation of remote learning in the coming academic year; and
- (3) Give the faculty the opportunity to ask questions regarding the academic plans for AY 2020–2021.

Remote learning was still in play for AY 2021–2022, and continued in its second year. However, unlike the first year of implementation, the SCRTL proposed that this assessment and planning be undertaken with the VCAAs, college deans, department heads or institute directors, and program directors. The objectives of the workshop were to (1) reflect on the implementation of remote teaching and learning in AY 2020–2021, and (2) plan for AY 2021–2022. Before the workshop, academic units came together to discuss and review their implementation of remote teaching and learning. The VCAAs then presented the output of these discussions during the workshop. The discussions were used to form the policies for the AYs 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 and served as a kick-off to program redesign.

Given the limitations of remote learning, academic units were enjoined to rethink their programs and courses. For AY 2020–2021, the programs were redesigned for every year level. The first semester was dedicated to lecture courses. Meanwhile, the second semester

was devoted to “laboratory and studio classes, on-the-job training, and fieldwork” (OVPAA Memorandum 2020-100, Section 4.2.3.2). It should be noted that this exercise did not entail an overhaul or revisions of the curriculum. However, it was carried out to:

- (1) Determine whether changes are necessary in the sequencing of courses in the curriculum of degree programs, in the mode of delivery of specialized courses, in the delivery of the married courses (i.e., courses with a combination of lecture and laboratory components);
- (2) Prioritize the redesign of courses to be offered in the first semester; and
- (3) Ascertain the additional resources that academic units need in the delivery of their degree program (e.g., teaching assistants, teaching fellows, lecturers, software, etc.) for budgeting purposes (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-68a).

To support the implementation of remote learning, OVPAA called for submissions of resource requirements in order to understand how these resources align with each unit’s plan for program redesign; to assess and justify the corresponding budgetary needs; and to explore and encourage opportunities to consolidate common resource requirements (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-68B). This call for submissions was done during the first semesters of AYs 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-116).

After the identification of courses to be offered in the first semester of AY 2020–2021, the next matter entailed course preparations. Faculty were required to prepare course packs. These were distributed to the students either through the learning management system (for those who have a stable internet connection and gadget), flash drives (for those who have gadgets but have a limited to no internet connection), and printed copies (for those who do not have any gadget and internet connection). According to

OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-68A, course packs were expected to include “a course guide with a detailed syllabus of the course, learning resources [e.g., readings, multimedia resources, etc.], activity guides, and assignment guides.”

To help the faculty, they were encouraged to collaborate in the course pack preparation and/or agree on the minimum student competencies and to share modes of delivery. Furthermore, a subcommittee of the SCTL developed a short course, Course Redesign 101, which was made available on the LMS of the CUs. The UP Diliman Office for the Advancement of Teaching also organized a webinar, where Associate Professor Portia Padilla (2020) of the College of Education shared how she prepared her course pack following the six-step guide provided in the short course.

The OVPAA also released OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-91, which guides faculty in including copyrighted works in course packs. The memorandum also asserts the copyright of faculty over the course packs. Moreover, the UP Technology Transfer and Business Development Office (TTBDO 2016) created a copyright guide, together with a technical working group, and published it on their website. The OVPAA also released Memorandum 2020-105 for the “suggested notices and statements to be incorporated in the course packs.”

Moreover, the SCRTL created the “Apart but Together: The UP Remote Teaching and Learning Expo,” which served as a platform for faculty to showcase, through videos, simple, practical, innovative, and effective remote learning strategies that they implemented in the first semester of AY 2020–2021. The committee also set up the *Pagbabahagi Blog*, another virtual, communal space where faculty can articulate ideas and insights, as well as share practices and strategies for teaching, learning, and living amid the pandemic.

The University gave the faculty, including lecturers, a monetary incentive for the course packs they prepared for AY 2020–2021 and

the first semester of AY 2021–2022. Nine thousand pesos (PHP 9,000.00) was given for every complete course pack for a three-unit course, prorated among faculty members involved in the preparation. In instances where there were five or more faculty members involved in the preparation of a course pack, an incentive of PHP 15,000.00 was given prorated among them. Furthermore, the faculty may opt for a credit unit incentive of 1.5 units per course pack prepared for a three-unit course. This was for instances where they still needed to fulfill the required total teaching load credit for the semester.

Continuous “monitoring and review of the remote learning experience of the University” were needed to guide the implementation of remote or blended learning in the following semesters (OVPAAM Memorandum No. 2020-100). The SCRTL designed student and faculty surveys and deployed them in both semesters of AY 2020-2021. The results of these surveys were presented and shared to the System and CU committees which served as guides in planning for policies and programs in relation to teaching and learning. Aside from this, CUs held several virtual *kumustahan* with their faculty to check on their current state.

The university planned to open its campuses for limited face-to-face (F2F) activities in the second semester of AY 2021–2022, but only for courses that entailed F2F meetings or community-based or workplace-based activities, and for individuals that were permitted to complete course requirements (e.g., laboratory experiments for thesis/dissertations). The OVPAAM requested the CUs to submit a list of courses requiring F2F activities for AY 2020–2021 and the first semester of AY 2021–2022. In the said list, CUs had to document the number of students who would attend to those onsite activities. These lists were then submitted to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for review, inspection, and approval. Later on, HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) were informed that they should coordinate with their CHED Regional Offices (CHED RO) and local government units (LGUs) for the inspection and approval of

limited F2F activities. The CUs, mainly UP Diliman, UP Los Baños, UP Mindanao, and UP Visayas, coordinated with their respective CHED ROs and LGUs. UP Diliman and UP Los Baños were given the green light to start their limited F2F starting January 2022 after full compliance with the requirements (i.e., the retrofitting of facilities and protocols that conform to minimum public health protocols).

As guidance for HEIs, CHED and the Department of Health (DOH) released the Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021-004, “Guidelines on the Implementation of Limited Face-To-Face Classes For All Programs of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Areas Under Alert Level System for COVID-19 Response.” Prior to this, UP issued on 12 September 2020 the OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-108: UP System Guidelines for Face-To-Face Activities and Other Residential Activities Exempted from the University Policy on Remote Learning in the First Semester AY 2020–2021.

Academic Policies

In light of the ongoing remote learning set-up of the University and following the principle of compassion, academic policies were either suspended or adjusted to accommodate the different circumstances of the faculty and students.

- (a) The first and second semesters of AY 2020–2021 were shortened to 14 and 15 weeks, respectively, while the midyear term in 2022 was extended to 7 weeks (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-143; OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-68). The extension of the midyear term from the regular five-week schedule to a seven-week schedule aimed to enable the spread out the student load across a longer timeframe. It also serves as a time for bridging activities for current students as well as new graduate students. The 15–15–7 semestral schedule was followed in AY 2021–2022 (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-122).

- (b) A one-week **reading break** was integrated into every semester since the first semester of AY 2020–2021. It can be a one-week break for programs following a semestral schedule or a three-day break per quarter. During the break, students may either read in advance or take some time off from their studies. The faculty may also consider this period as “a time to further reflect on adjustments to be made in course delivery and assessment” (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-61, Section 5). During this break, “there should be no synchronous or asynchronous activities and assessments,” as well as deadlines for course requirements (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-117, 2021-91, 2021-122, 2022-09).
- (c) **Attendance** in synchronous classes was not made mandatory due to “the unequal access of students to reliable internet providers and the country’s limited internet infrastructure vis-à-vis those of its ASEAN neighbors” (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-61, Section 4). Faculty were enjoined to make their synchronous class recordings available to the students for the whole semester (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-61, 2020-143, 2020-139, 2021-122). If there are examinations or assessments set during the class, “alternative arrangements for students who miss the same should be made” (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-61A, 2021-91, 2022-09).
- (d) The recommended maximum **class sizes** for an undergraduate course is 25. Meanwhile, graduate courses should admit up to 15 students. Class sizes are subject to the faculty resources of the academic unit and the nature of the course (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-19, 2022-09).
- (e) If students are enrolled in a prerequisite course during the second semester of the AY 2019–2020 and during the whole AY 2020–2021, they are allowed

to enroll in a latter course that have prerequisite courses for credit in the subsequent semester, despite having a “deferred grade” or INC in the prerequisite course (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-19, 2020-143, 2020-139).

- (f) For both AYs 2020–2021 and 2021–2022, the rule on the **regular load of students** was suspended. The regular academic load was 12 units during the regular semesters, and up to 9 units during the midyear term (OVPAA Memo 2021-89, OVPAA Memo 2021-19, OVPAA Memo 2020-143, OVPAA Memo 2020-139, OVPAA Memo 2020-92).
- (g) On the other hand, the **regular load of faculty** for the whole AY remained at 24 units in any combination of teaching, research, administrative, and extension load credit. Each faculty member was expected to be available for consultation at least 10 hours a week during regular office hours, according to the University Code (OVPAA Memo 2022-09). Meanwhile, the **cap on the number of units taught by lecturers** is suspended (OVPAA Memo 2021-89, 2022-09).
- (h) In the second semester of AY 2019–2020, students were given a numeric grade if the faculty had enough basis to assess their academic performance. Otherwise, they were given a deferred grade. Students who received a deferred grade had until 31 May 2021 to comply with the course requirements. Otherwise, if their status for the course was failing, and they did not comply with the requirements, they were dropped. However, no student was given a grade of 4.0, 5.0, or INC (incomplete) under the no-fail policy. The numeric grades given during this semester are not included in the computation of the general weighted average (GWA), and honorific scholarships were suspended (OVPAA Memo 2021-19, Implementing Guidelines of the UP System Policy on the Second Semester AY 2019-2020 in the Time of COVID-19).

The following academic year, the established university **grading system** was applied—numeric grades were given. However, under the no-fail policy, faculty were neither allowed to fail any of the students nor give a grade of 4.0. Instead, they could drop students that did not perform well in the course or give an INC if they did not satisfy all course requirements and they had a failing standing. While students enrolled in courses that require face-to-face activities had their grades deferred in consonance with OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-19A, a numeric grade may be given, provided that academic units communicated alternatives to requirements that require face-to-face interactions following OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-57. Graduating students who complete the requirements of a course with a deferred grade were recommended for graduation during the term when students enrolled in that course.

From the second semester of AY 2019–2020 up to the end of AY 2020–2021, drop (DRP) marks were annotated “due to the COVID-19 pandemic” (OVPAA Memo 2021-19, OVPAA Memo 2020-143, OVPAA Memo 2021-91, OVPAA Memo 2021-89, OVPAA Memo 2021-61A, OVPAA Memo 2021-61, OVPAA Memo 2021-19, 2022-09).

- (i) Students were allowed to **cross-register** courses in other CUs while they were enrolled in their home unit. This was facilitated by remote learning’s flexibility (OVPAA Memo 2020-99).
- (j) The second semester of AY 2019–2020 and both semesters of the AYs 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 were not counted towards the **maximum residency rule** of the university, considering that students are in distance learning for the first time (OVPAA Memo 2021-89, OVPAA Memo 2020-143, OVPAA Memo

2020-139, OVPAA Memo 2020-92; Implementing Guidelines of the UP System Policy on the Second Semester AY 2019-2020 in the Time of COVID-19).

- (k) The **rules on residency**, as stated in Articles 408 and 412 of the University Code, were revised, stating that a “student must have been in residence in the semester of graduation” (OVPAA Memo 2021-89).
- (l) **Rules on scholastic delinquency**, specifically warning, probation, dismissal, and permanent disqualification, were suspended from the second semester of AY 2019–2020 to the academic year 2021–2022 (OVPAA Memo 2020-143, Implementing Guidelines of the UP System Policy on the Second Semester AY 2019-2020 in the Time of COVID-19).
- (m) **Degree program retention rules** were suspended from the second semester of AY 2019–2020 up to AY 2021–2022 (OVPAA Memo 2021-89).
- (n) **Off-hour rates for teaching** were suspended in the first and second semesters of AY 2020–2021. This suspension, however, was lifted in Midyear 2021 (OVPAA Memo 2020-92, OVPAA Memo 2021-91).
- (o) The **deadlines for dropping and filing of leave of absence** were suspended in the first semester of the academic year 2019–2020 and both semesters of the academic year 2020–2021 (OVPAA Memo 2021-61A; Implementing Guidelines of the UP System Policy on the Second Semester AY 2019-2020 in the Time of COVID-19).

Pillar 4: Student Support

After consulting students, the Office of the Student Financial Assistance (OSFA), together with the Office for Student Affairs

(OSA) in the CUs, developed a roadmap for student affairs, “UP Student Affairs and Services: Roadmap to AY 2020-2021” (OVPAAMemo 2020-100). The said document maps out the adjustments or modifications to student affairs and services to “better meet [the] objectives in a remote learning and teaching context.” The UP Student Affairs and Services (SAS) includes “systems, policies, and programs that provide support and other services to enrolled undergraduate and graduate students of the University” (OVPAAMemo 2020-100, 18). These programs aim to “[s]upport academic instruction; encourage active involvement and leadership; ensure safety, health, and dignity; ensure accountability; and facilitate restorative justice” (OVPAAMemo 2020-100, 18).

“Programs to support academic instruction”
(OVPAAMemo 2020-100, 20–21)

Merit-based financial incentives refer to the financial support that is provided by the University, such as scholarships. The modifications to these incentives covered the program policies (i.e., reviewing the criteria and the amount of benefits to be given to the students), mode of service delivery (i.e., development of “remote application, nomination, and screening workflows”), and the launch of modified programs (i.e., information dissemination) (OVPAAMemo 2020-100, 19). The roadmap included the proposal to form Peer Learning Groups (PLGs) dubbed *Ugnayan* (which means “networking,” “connections,” or “ties”). Students, under the supervision of facilitators, formed part of these PLGs. The PLGs sought to resolve issues with “self-paced/independent learning contexts” in UP and to assist with their “mental health and well-being.” Students may participate in sessions dedicated to “tutorials, special interests, and . . . support.” Furthermore, PLGs also connected with other support and special-interest groups within the UP System. Complementing these

PLGs and networks were adjustments to materials available to students in self-paced learning.

These actions included making materials available in digital form, creating online access portals, and announcing the release of these resources through a website (OVPA Memo 2020-100, 19–20). The Learning Resource Centers (LRCs) and Teaching and Learning Resource Centers (TLRCs) developed an online website that serves as a repository for learning materials (in the case of UP Mindanao), uploaded materials in their LMS (in the case of UP Diliman), and disseminated information through their social media accounts. In addition, the same centers provided peer-mentoring programs and Summer Bridge Programs.

Moreover, Remote Learning 101, a short online course orienting students to remote learning, was deployed in the CUs. Remote Learning 101 aimed to inform the students on the difference between remote learning and the traditional classroom-based instruction, improve their readiness for remote learning, and familiarize them with the LMS of the CU. It was first developed and implemented in the UP Visayas Tacloban College, and was eventually adopted by the other CUs. On its second run in the first semester of AY 2021–2022, a subcommittee of the SCRL adopted, reviewed, and revamped the course. In addition, UPV Tacloban College launched a project, “Sana ALL: Advancing Love for Learning,” a Digifest that served as a platform for students to share their practical, innovative, and effective remote learning strategies. The project aimed to assist UP students in their remote learning journey and foster their love for learning. In addition, UPLB released the *Primer on Flexible Learning* (UP Los Baños 2020b).

Aside from these, there were CU programs/projects/webinars that support or complement academic instruction, such as:

- G Ka Pa Ba Mag-Online Learning (A webinar series on how to take online learning to the next level) (Jonas 2021)
 - Team-Up with #TeamLRC: A Subject Tutorial Series for Currently Enrolled UPLB Students (Jonas 2020)
 - Academic Writing Workshop for Students (UP Mindanao)
 - Surviving (LDR)L: Long Distance/Remote Learning (UP Diliman Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs 2021c)
 - E-Kapihan sa Diliman (UP Diliman, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs 2021a)
 - Creating a Conducive Learning Environment (UP Diliman) (Diliman Learning Resource Center 2020a)
 - How To Be You Po? Tips From UP Achievers (UP Diliman) (Diliman Learning Resource Center 2020c)
 - Writing Techniques (UP Diliman) (Diliman Learning Resource Center 2020d)
- (p) “Programs to encourage active involvement and leadership” (OVPAAs Memo 2020-100, 21–23)

Modifications to these programs aimed to “encourage Student Participation, nurture Student Organizations, and facilitate recognition of Student Innovations and Leadership” (OVPAAs Memo 2020-100, 21). The offices handling these programs

regularly published or posted announcements, through their social media accounts and website, of new scholarships or programs that students may want to participate in. In the case of UP Diliman, the OVCSA created *Sanggawad*, a four-part informational video on the available student services and programs in the University. The OVCSA also provided students with a handbook on COVID-19 that includes “public health measures, applicable laws and guidelines, and support services and programs offered by the University” (OVPAA Memo 2020-100, 21; UP Diliman Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs 2021b).

- (q) “Programs to ensure safety, health, and dignity” (OVPAA Memo 2020-100, 23–27)

To ensure the University was responsive to the needs of the students, it adjusted the policies and the mode of service delivery of primary support services, such as the Student Financial Assistance, Guidance and Counselling services, and student housing. The Student Mental Health and Wellness Program, known as Kalinga (Care) was created to:

- (1) Encourage students and faculty members to be well-informed about the importance of health and wellness through class management and general wellness activities;
- (2) Collect and distribute resource that would help students deal with mental health concerns on their own;
- (3) Establish measures that enable students with mental health issues connect with support-providing entities; and

- (4) Help with students' recovery through arranging continuing care measures (OVPAA Memo 2020-100, 32). This program was guided by the "Healthy and Nurturing University" idea. This states that a "Healthy University" is indicated by "the well-being of the entire student population," while a Nurturing University has "systems that enable timely response and care to reduce the treatment gap and improve the general population's health" (OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-100, 32).

In this connection, the OVPAA and OSFA hosted *Sandigan, Sandalan: Training and Advocacy* programs for Mental Health. *Sandigan, Sandalan* (words that denote sturdiness, support and reliability) aims to strengthen UP's mental health support system and create a Mental Health and Wellness Network. It was a group of individuals and offices that can improve mental health outcomes of UP students. The network provided psychosocial support and services and facilitate referral for treatment and other interventions. The program was composed of the Directory of Mental Health Service Providers, the Training on Mental Health Promotion in the Teaching-Learning Environment, the Training Program for Peer Mental Health Advocates, and the Student Mental Health Advocacy Program (UP Media and Public Health Relations Office).

The Directory of Mental Health Service Providers was a list of institutions and professionals, recommended by the CU Student Affairs units, that can provide assistance to students with varying mental health concerns. This was also helpful for the Student Affairs personnel when referring the students who need treatment and other interventions to an institution or professional within the student's area (UP Office of Student Financial Assistance 2021).

The Training on Mental Health Promotion in the Teaching-Learning Environment was designed to capacitate the “college mental focal persons who can advocate [for] mental health care” in their classes and workplace. The program covered:

- (1) “Essentials of mental health;
- (2) Creating supportive teaching-learning environments; and
- (3) Action points to address the psychosocial concerns of UP students” (UP Media and Public Relations Office 2021a, 2021c).

On the other hand, the Training Program for Peer Mental Health Advocates helped “representatives of various student councils, student organizations, and student groups who can [promote mental health] among their peers.” The program covered:

- (1) “General mental health information;
- (2) Ways on how students can help their peers;
- (3) Promotion of safe and resilient school environments; and
- (4) Participation in MH [mental health] advocacy in the University” (UP Media and Public Relations Office 2021a).

The Student Mental Health Program encouraged students to be active partners of the University in promoting mental health. It also served as a platform to recognize student-led initiatives for mental health promotion (UP Media and Public Relations Office 2021d).

In addition, webinar-workshops on mindfulness and self-care were organized both at the System and CU level, such as:

- Mindfulness and Self-Care: Essentials for Remote Teaching of the UP System (Carandang 2020)
- Mental Health 101 (UP Baguio Ugnayan ng Pahinungód 2021)
- Stress Management Webinar (UP Mindanao)
- Mindful U program (UP Diliman Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs 2022)
- Psychosocial Support Program Peer Support Training (UP Diliman) (UP Media and Public Relations Office 2021b; UP Diliman, Ugnayan ng Pahinungod 2022)
- Virtual Yakap series (UP Diliman Psychosocial Services 2021)
- *Celebrate Life 2021* webinar series (UP Diliman Office of Counseling and Guidance 2021)
- Detoxifying Our Lives: Mental Health, Wellness, and Stress Management for Ourselves (UP Diliman) (Diliman Learning Resource Center 2020b)
- Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (UP Diliman Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs 2021)
- TEETH TALK: Mental Health for Dental Students in time of the Pandemic (UP Manila College of Dentistry 2020a)

Aside from this, infographics and handbooks on mental health were also published online (e.g., UP Mental Health Month Facebook page, UP Diliman Ugnayan ng Pahinungod Psychosocial Support Program Handbook, etc.)

Students qualifying under the RA 10931 (Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act) received accident insurance. Each CU had a designated Insurance Claims Officer to assist students in processing insurance claims.

- (d) “Programs to ensure accountability and facilitate restorative justice” (OVPA Memo 2020-100, 27)

The roadmap included the review of the student disciplinary policies to adapt to the current situation in order to “allow remote deliberation while ensuring the safety and well-being of students” (OVPA Memo 2020-100, 27). The OSFA released guidelines on the remote mode of filing and resolving cases, as well as a mechanism to provide emotional support to students undergoing disciplinary processes.

Included in the roadmap is the development and deployment of the Student Learning Assistance System (Pillar 2). Aside from the SLAS, the campus donor-funded scholarships and student grants, such as the Adopt-a-Student Program, were expanded. The semestral scholarship benefits were retained amidst the shortened class hours and semesters. In terms of tuition loans, the interest for the outstanding loans in 2020 was waived. Student and Graduate Assistants were allowed to work from home provided that remote arrangements are indicated in their work plans.

Another proposal in the roadmap is the creation of the Student Helpdesk, “a One-Stop Center where students can seek advice on Academic Matters, Emergency Concerns (e.g., domestic violence, suicide cases), and Legal Concerns (e.g., abduction, red-tagging)” (OVPA Memo No. 2020-100, 34) even

when they are in the comfort of their homes. All CUs have already implemented the HelpDesk; in the case of UP Diliman, it is called VCConsult.

Pillar 5: Faculty and Staff Capacity Building for Remote Learning

Transitioning to a different course delivery platform entails upskilling both the faculty and staff. Several webinars and webinar-workshops were held at the System and CU levels. Webinars, webinar-workshops, and training programs organized at the **System level** include the following:

- **SCRL/SCRTL/SCTL:**
 - Copyright, Creative Commons, and Fair Use (Bantigue 2020)
 - Mindfulness and Self-care: Essentials for Remote Teaching
 - Online Student Assessment (Ragupathi 2020)
 - Using Applied Improv for Learner Engagement (Añonuevo and Cervantes-Poco 2021)
 - Helping our Students Learn in a Changed Landscape (Salvador 2021)
 - Software Launch (UP OVPA 2020)
 - Webinar on JoVE (Lad 2021)
 - Webinar on Slido (Cameron and Brossart 2021)
 - Webinar on MATLAB (Alferez 2021)
 - Webinar on MATLAB for High School Students (Safwana 2021)
 - Curated resources at <http://bit.ly/up-rtl>

- **OVPA:**
 - NVivo Training
 - SPSS Training
 - Adobe Creative Cloud Training
 - Qualtrics Training
 - ArcGIS Training
 - General Education Program Conversations
- **UP Information Technology Development Center (ITDC n.d.):**
 - Training on the internal systems of the University (e.g., HRIS, UIS, DRS, etc.)
 - Training on Microsoft Teams
 - Basic Information Security
 - Zoom Training
 - Communication tips while working from home
 - Privacy and Digital Security Updates

Webinars, webinar-workshops, training programs, guides, and programs organized at the **CU level** include the following:

(a) UP Baguio

- Course Guide Writing and Production (Department of Communication)
- Moodle Production for Remote Learning (Department of Language, Literature, and the Arts)
- Online Workshop on Migrating Courses to Online Learning (College of Social Sciences)

- Deepening of Knowledge webinar workshop series (College of Social Sciences):
 - Instructional Designs for Online Courses
 - Content Development
 - Tutoring and Student Support
 - Assessing the Performance of Learners
- Peer Support System: CSS Faculty as a Community of Practice in Delivering Excellence in Remote Learning Experience
- UPB VLE Workshop
- Online *Ka-Pehan*: Continuing Science Education and Research in the Midst of the Pandemic

(b) UP Cebu

Webinars

- GLOBAL: Storming, Forming, and Norming (UP Cebu 2020)
- Teaching through the Google Classroom Platform
- Basic IP and Copyright Law webinar & learning sessions and consultations
- A Beginner Teacher Training Program on Flexible and Online Class Delivery
- Building Resiliency
- Empathetic Leadership (Pelonio 2021)
- Climate Change Affects You and Me (UP Cebu Teaching and Learning Resource Center 2021)
- Stress Management in the New Normal (Gilla-Maglasang 2021b, 2021c)

- Smart PLS: A Graphical Tool for Teaching and Learning Data Analysis in Research (Trapero 2021)
- Basic Principles of Psychological First Aid (Saturinas 2021b)
- Integrating Action Research in Remote Learning Context
- Empathetic Listening
- Mental Health Support (Gilla-Maglasang 2021a)
- Caring for Students with Anxiety and Depression (Saturinas 2021a)
- Trello: As a Project Management Tool (Bernardez 2021)
- Integration of Social Media in the Teaching of Literature (Encabo 2021)
- Gaming and Intellectual Property
- Copyright: A Review (Nieva 2021a)
- Safe Spaces at Work & School (Peralta 2021)
- Research Ethics for Teachers and Students (Laus 2021)
- VLE Training (UP Cebu Teaching and Learning Resource Center 202)

Guides

- UPC VLE Training Guide
- University Library Guide

(c) UP Diliman

Webinars

- RemOAT Interactive Learning Conversations (UP Diliman Office for the Advancement of Teaching 2020a)
- Key Strategies for Education Resilience and Continuity in the Time of COVID-19 (UP Diliman College of Education 2020; Buenviaje 2020)
- UPCED Education Resilience and Learning Continuity Webinar Series (UP Diliman College of Education 2020)
- Course Pack Ganern! Where to Start, How to Do It, What to Write (Padilla 2020)
- A sySTEM in the madness: Preparing to Teach STEM Courses Remotely (Monterola 2020)
- True or False or None of the Above: Selecting appropriate assessments for remote learning (Reoperez 2020)
- *Kalinga sa mga Tagapagkalinga*: Parenting in the time of Remote Learning (Jamero, Vidal, and de Guzman 2020)
- *Naitawid!* What We Learned About Remote Learning During the Midyear (Valera et al. 2020a)
- Resisting the Rubric: The Arts and Humanities in Remote Learning (Ick, de la Peña, and Manalo 2020b)
- How to be a Lifeline: Supporting Students in a Remote Learning Context (Bautista 2020)

- National Service in the New Normal: A Webinar on NSTP Remote Learning and Teaching (NSTP UP Diliman 2020)
- Zooming Out: A Midterm Assessment of Best Practices in Teaching Online (UP Diliman College of Arts and Letters, Department of English and Comparative Literature 2020)
- The ABCs of Gen XYZ: Understanding Our Learners webinar (Koo 2020)
- TEEECHtalks: Good Audio Practices for Remote Learning and Online Webinars
- Designing for Teacher Well-being Workshop (in partnership with Habi Education Lab)
- Working from Home | Cultivating Effectiveness and Wellbeing Workshop
- Teaching Effectiveness Course
- The Orientation for New Faculty Series (UP Diliman Office for the Advancement of Teaching 2021a)

Programs

- *Kalinga Hubs* (K-Hubs) (UP Diliman Office for the Advancement of Teaching 2021b)
- K-hobbies
- K-mmunities
- K-socials
- Vconsult: an Online Consultation Platform
- *LINANGAN*: GE Faculty Development Program (UP Diliman General Education Center 2022)
- ASPIRE: Administrative Staff Program Towards Institutional Resiliency and Excellence

Curated Resources

- Stay Well, Keep Learning: Education Resilience and Learning Continuity in the Time of COVID-19
- UPCEd's Curated Resources for Remote Learning
- *Kabayanihan para sa COVID-19: Lumaban para sa ating kalusugan*
- Tips on How to Make Your (Online) Class a Safe Space for LGBTQ+ Students (UP Diliman Office for the Advancement of Teaching and UP Diliman, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs 2021)
- UVLê self-help videos (Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2020b)
- UVLê '22 Video Tutorials (Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2022)
- Online Class 101: A Guide on Tools for Conducting Classes Online (Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2020f)
 - Guide on Conducting Online Classes (Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2020d)
 - Course Creation via CRS
 - Basics of UVLê Part 1 & Part 2 (Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2020b, 2020c).
 - How to use Vcon applications and other tools (Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2020e)
 - Basics of Teaching with UVLê
 - Basic Features of UVLê

- The Basics on How to Use Moodle Mobile (Interactive Learning Center Diliman 2020a)

(d) UP Los Baños

Webinars

- Google Classroom Workshop for K-12 Teachers
- Parenting in the New Norm: Adaptation and resiliency
- Coping Behavior thru Change and Transition
- Integrating Facilitation Skills in Teaching Values and Right Manners to the Students
- Making Sense of Data: Data Visualization and Basic Data Management & Analysis (Yambot 2020a, 2020b)
- Selecting Strategies and Designing Instructional Materials for Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning
- Utilizing Modules for Flexible Learning
- Teaching with Technology in a Flexible Learning Mode
- Providing Psychosocial Support for Students in a Flexible Learning Mode
- Designing Assessment Tools for Flexible Learning
- Basics of Audio and Video Editing for Multimedia Lectures (UP Los Baños College of Economics and Management 2020a)
- Using Landline/Mobile Phone, Facebook Messenger, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter (Villoriente 2020)

- Using Zoom and Google Meet/Hangouts (Centeno 2020)
- Using Google Classroom, Edmodo, Facebook Classroom and Moodle (UP Los Baños College of Economics and Management 2020b)
- How to Convert your Learning Materials for Flexible (Remote) Learning (Garcia 2020)
- Training Workshop on Podcast Development
- Training Workshop on Audio and Video Editing
- Canvas Training Workshop
- ILC Training Series (Pabro 2021)
 - Interactive Learning and the Paradigm Shift in Tertiary Education
 - Edmodo Social Learning Platform
 - Canvas
 - Learning object development
 - Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment
 - Podcast Development
 - Audio and Video Editing
- Invention to Commercialization: How to Transfer Your Technology (Sarol 2021)
- Mindfulness for Health and Being webinar (Balaguer and Mejia 2021)
- S.H.A.P.E UP! Thursday (Hermosa-Ebron and Jonas 2021)
- Health Orientation on Problems from Emotional Stress (Mejia 2021a)
- Sandigan, Sandalan: UPLB Training Program for Peer Mental Health Advocates (Mejia 2021b)

- The Scientific Career System for REPS: Inspiration and Strategies (Arana 2020a)
- Training-workshops series for disaster resilience (Arana 2020b)

Programs

- ASPIRE: Administrative Staff Program Towards Institutional Resiliency and Excellence (Araguas 2021)

Curated Resources

- Training Microsite for UPLB GE course module (re)developers
- Resources on Canvas: <http://bit.ly/UPLBCanvasResource>

(e) UP Manila

Webinars

- VLE Workshop
- Overview of Authentic Assessment (NTTCHP)
- Creating Safe Spaces in the Workplace
- Telehealth Innovations in Education, Policy, and Practice
- The Home and Family as a Safe and Nurturing Refuge
- Conversations on Remote Teaching & Learning in the Health Sciences
- Global Health Nursing Leadership 2021 (in partnership with Peking Union Medical College – School of Nursing)
- Information Literacy Webinar Series (UP Manila, University Library 2021)

- Mainstreaming Online Teaching and Learning (NTTCHP)
- Celebrating Life, Hope Can Happen
- Training Workshop on Principles of Health Research and Good Clinical Practice (NIH)
- Teaching Laboratory and Clinical Skills in Online Platforms (NTTCHP)
- Virtual Health Professions Education Expo 2020 & 2021
- Online Interuniversity Workshop: Enhancing Teaching Skills in Online Platforms (NTTCHP)
- Developing Teleconsultation Skills in Health Sciences Students (NTTCHP)
- Maintaining Interactivity in Synchronous Classes
- Online Team-based Learning and Other Small Group Activities
- Information retrieval for Evidence Synthesis Studies in Health Professions Education
- Education Systems in the New Normal: Evolving Landscapes and Changing Dynamics
- Transitioning to Online Teaching and Learning in HPEd
- Effective Clinical Teaching Webinar
- ANSAVVY? Enhancing Online Teaching Skills (Bautistia 2021a)
- WHAT THE PACK? Experiences from a Semester of Course Packs and Remote Instruction (Bautistia 2021b)

- Intellectual Property Consideration in the Academe
- Averting Illegal Examination Supports During Online Written Tests (UP Manila College of Dentistry 2020b)

Courses/Programs

- Teaching Nursing Informatics online course (UP Manila College of Nursing 2021)

Curated Resources

- UP College of Nursing Open Learning (UP Manila College of Nursing, n.d.)

(f) UP Mindanao

Webinars

- Canvas Training
- Google Classroom Training (Session 1 & Session 2)
- Data Privacy and Freedom of Information
- Cloud Computing Seminars (Estremera [2021])
- Webinar on Assessment with Action Research in Remote/Online Learning Context (Vilbar 2020)
- Managing Anxiety

Programs

- Mental Health Helpline (Estremera n.d.)

Curated Resources

- Digital Repository for Remote Learning
- GIYA sa Pagtugon (n.d.-a, n.d.-b)

- Guides on Canvas, Google Classroom, Google Drive, Gmail, and Zoom (GIYA sa Pagtugon n.d.-a, n.d.-b)

(g) Open University

Webinars

- OPEN Talk (UPOU Networks 2021b)
- *Usap-Lusog-Isip: Conversations on Promoting Mental Health* (UP Open University n.d.-c)
- UPOU Multimedia Center Trainings
- Creating Your Own Podcast
- Creating Learning Materials Using Screen Casting
- Producing an Interactive Video Material Using H5P
- Webinars on Mental Health (UP Open University n.d.-b)
- Zoom training (UP Open University 2021)
- Edu-Hack (Podcast) (UPOU Networks 2021a)
- Gearing up for the New Normal in Teaching and Learning (in partnership with PLDT) (UP Open University, n.d.-d)
- Webinar Series on Open and Distance Learning (UP Open University n.d.-a)
- Other webinars can be accessed through the UPOU Networks website

Programs

- Executive Course on Remote Teaching and Learning (UP Open University [2020]a)

- How to Convert Your Classes Online (UP Open University 2020b)

Curated Resources

- MoDeL: Massive Open Distance eLearning
- UPOU Networks
- The Open UP Connect blog

(h) UP Visayas

Webinars

- LMS training (Esquivel 2021a)
- *Sana oL May High Score* (training on utilization of LMS gradebook) (Esquivel 2021b)
- Digital Media, Technology, Society (in partnership with Rappler)
- Mental wellness (Gallos 2021b)
- Series of orientation on quality assurance and program assessment (Famisaran 2021)
- CFOS webinar-workshop to improve public service delivery (Gallos 2021c)
- What's the GIS: An Introductory Webinar on Geographical Information System
- Security Orientation on Cyberthreats and Red-Tagging
- Remote Control: Taking Charge of Teaching and Learning series (UPVTC)
 - Orientation of the New Faculty
 - Video Production Workshop
 - UPVTC Tacloban VLE Summit

Programs

- Communications at the Workplace (Silaya 2022)
- English at the Workplace (Sevillo 2021)
- Teach S.M.A.R.T training (Esquivel 2021c)
- Administrative Staff Program towards Institutional Resiliency and Excellence
- CFOS training needs assessment (Gallos 2021a)
- Monitoring and Evaluation training-workshop (Fernandez 2021)

Pillar 6: Support for Teaching, Research for Teaching Technologies/Innovations

In support of remote learning, the University expanded its Teaching Assistantship Program “to help lighten the load of the faculty while providing graduate students the opportunity to work” (OVPAAs Memo 2020-100, Section 4.2.6). The program began in AY 2015–2016 (UP OVPAAs n.d.).

Teaching assistants are either teaching associates or teaching fellows (TA/TFs). Teaching associates are graduate students enrolled in a master’s program in the university while teaching fellows are students enrolled in a doctorate degree. All TAs and TFs should have a minimum of six units of teaching load and six to nine units of study load per semester. Otherwise, they would receive a prorated stipend if the numbers of their teaching and study units fall below the minimum requirement. TAs and TFs assist the faculty-in-charge (FIC)/teaching mentor, and they may be given supervised teaching duties for undergraduate courses, except for General Education courses. In line with this, the roles of TAs and TFs in the implementation of remote learning are to assist in facilitating discussion sessions of large classes and online discussion forums,

teach laboratory/non-lecture components of courses under the supervision of the FIC, assist in teaching tasks of the FIC (e.g., checking of exams/student work, preparing course materials, tutoring students, prepare assessments, help in using the LMS, etc.), and assist in coordination and organization of team-taught large classes (Peleo-Alampay 2020).

Aside from this, the university also enhanced its Visiting Professorship Program. The Board of Regents approved the revised guidelines during its 1358th meeting on 26 February 2021 (Revision of the Visiting Professor Program Guidelines 2021). The amendments to the program, which are motivated by remote learning, include provisions for virtual engagement of Visiting Professors and the addition of external quality assurance reviewers as Visiting Professors.

Moreover, the SCTL, together with the TTBD0 organized the “Gear UP for Remote Learning: Innovation Workshop in 2020” (OVPA Memo 2020-75). The objective of the workshop was to form multidisciplinary teams of faculty members with a shared interest in developing educational-technological solutions. A total of eight proposals were pitched and were connected to the Emerging Interdisciplinary Research Program of OVPA.

UP and Public Service

As the country’s national university and as stated in its Charter (2008), UP shall “lead as a public service university by providing various forms of community, public, and volunteer service, as well as scholarly and technical assistance to the government, private sector, and civil society while maintaining its standards of excellence” (Republic Act No. 9500, Section 3d).

At the start of the pandemic, UP was at the forefront of combating COVID-19. The Philippine General Hospital (PGH) was one of many dedicated COVID-19 referral centers. As a government institution under UP, both medical and nonmedical staff were at the frontline in delivering comprehensive care. At the start of the pandemic, when everyone was developing testing kits, experts from UP Manila National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Philippine Genome Center (PGC), in cooperation with the Manila HealthTek Inc., produced locally made and low-cost reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) testing kits, GenAmplify (Rola 2020). Moreover, CUs swiftly responded to the needs of the frontliners by fabricating personal protective equipment, hospital equipment (e.g., valves, splitters, ventilators, etc.), swabbing booths, and medical-grade ethyl alcohol, and designing prototype COVID-19 decontamination tent (SaniTents PH) (Lontoc 2020a, 2020b, 2020d; UP Media and Public Relations Office 2020d).

On 30 March 2020, UP-PGH launched its Bayanihan Na! COVID-19 Operations Center. Bayanihan Na! responds to questions regarding COVID-19, donations, and volunteering initiatives. UP-PGH partnered with PLDT and the PGH Medical Foundation Inc. (PGHMF) (Romualdo 2020; Larrauri 2020). UP-PGH has also offered telemedicine and telepharmacy to the public (PLDT Enterprise 2020; Aquino, Garcia, and Ngo 2021, 5).

Aside from PGH, UP Diliman, UP Los Baños, and UP Mindanao were identified as local quarantine centers, and also served as testing centers and local vaccination sites (Magsambol 2020; UP Los Baños 2020a, 2020c; Mindanews 2020; UP Media and Public Relations Office 2020b).

The PGC was also instituted in UP Visayas and UP Mindanao. Aside from the fact that these centers will be used for COVID-19-related testing, they were established to catalyze collaborative genomic research, advance genomic science and its application to

agricultural and medical research, and spearhead the utilization of omics in fisheries and aquatic research in the Visayas and Mindanao regions. Aside from this, the Centers have provided training for medical personnel in their local hospitals. In addition, the UPD National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (NIMBB) trained medical technicians of the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine to perform the RT-PCR test for the detection of COVID-19 (Lontoc 2020e).

In addition, the University and its CUs collaborated and organized other initiatives related to COVID-19, such as but not limited to, information websites, webinars, policy papers, psychosocial support, infographics, online resources, etc.

- Information on COVID-19
 - UP Resilience Institute's EnCOV Dashboard and Yani the EndCOV chatbot
 - UP Cebu's CoVcheck
 - UP Mindanao's COVID-19 Insights
- Curated resources on COVID-19 and remote learning
 - UP Manila Library's Free Resources on COVID-19 (UP Manila University Library 2021)
 - UP Diliman College of Education Resources for Remote Learning (UP Diliman College of Education 2020b)
 - UP Open University's MoDeL: Massive Open Distance eLearning
 - UPOU Networks
 - TVUP website

- The Open UP Connect blog
- UP Manila Health Advisories
- UP Manila Healthscape newsletters on COVID-19
- Webinars/Lectures/Online Fora on COVID-19
 - Stop COVID Deaths: Clinical Management Updates webinars (TVUP in collaboration with UP Manila) (Llaneta 2020)
 - COVIDIZATION 101: COVID-19 Updates in Baguio City and Potential Vaccines (UPB) (UP Media and Public Relations Office 2020a)
 - “Do benefits of vaccines really outweigh the risks of COVID-19?” (UPB)
 - *Katatagan at Pagbangon sa Panahon ng Pandemya* (Resilience and Recovery during the Pandemic)(UPB)
 - Keeping UP with LGU Regulations and Response During COVID-19 (UPC)
 - Vacc to Normal: What We Need to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines (UPC)
 - Understanding COVID-19: Its Prevention and Treatment (UPD)
 - COVID-19: Where We Are and Where We Want To Be (UPD)
 - UP TRAINS (a training assistance program that seeks to augment the number of laboratories capable of performing RT-PCR based testing; UPD)
 - CoVExit: Getting out of the Pandemic | Prospects and challenges (UPD)

- UP Diliman Kanlungan Talk Series
- AGAP Agham II: Continuing Response to the Pandemic Through Research (UP Manila 2021)
- To V or Not To V: a webinar on COVID-19 vaccines (UP Mindanao)
- Bridging the Health Care Gaps in Mindanao through Medical Education online forum (UP Mindanao)
- Other webinars, lectures, and videos on COVID-19 can be accessed through the CUs' Facebook pages and YouTube channels:
 - UP Baguio Systems and Network Office
 - TLRC UP Cebu
 - University of the Philippines Diliman
 - UPLB Official
 - University of the Philippines Mindanao
 - UP Manila Channel
 - UP Open University
 - UP Visayas Information and Publication Office
- Policy papers/Research
 - Policy papers are accessible at COVID-19 Updates website, an online portal of UP COVID-19 news and information
 - UP Resilience Institute's Managing the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines: A Policy Sourcebook

- Physical and Psychosocial Support
 - UP Ugnayan ng Pahinungod Committee on Psychosocial Emergency Services (UP CoPES)
 - UP Diliman Health Service
 - UP Diliman PsycServ
 - Tele-Kumusta, an initiative for COVID-19 patients in PGH to communicate with their families virtually
- Donation drives
 - Community pantries
 - Relief operations
 - Fund drives for frontliners and COVID-19 patients
 - Donation of gadgets to other schools (e.g., UPV donated laptops to local DepEd and DILG, etc.)
- Other support
 - UP College of Law's free legal assistance for victims of discrimination

Conclusion

We are yet to see the light at the end of the tunnel for this global pandemic. The education sector has continuously strived to find innovative ways to cope with the challenges, anxiety, and uncertainty brought by this crisis.

The Philippines is one of the countries whose schools remained closed for a long time since the pandemic started, while other countries have gradually opened theirs. Everyone is scared of the virus, but the long-term impact of school closures is more frightening. According to the Philippine National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), the “prolonged school closures could result in

an estimated productivity loss in the Philippines equivalent to EUR 187 billion (USD 219 billion) over the next 40 years, corresponding to an individual's life span in the labor force" (Santos 2021). Furthermore, a United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2021) study in South Asia revealed that "a substantial portion of students and their parents learnt significantly less compared to pre-pandemic levels." Nevertheless, balancing the safety of students and teachers and the provision of quality and accessible education has been onerous for educational institutions and governing bodies.

With the numerous capacity-building initiatives, institutional support, and remote learning strategies in place by UP, which some called "emergency remote solutions," it is too early for us to gauge their effectiveness. It is important to note that the preparation for remote learning was enormous but had to be done in a very short period of time. The time needed for remote-learning preparations became a challenge for all the stakeholders: faculty, students, educational institutions, and the government. Policies were also done iteratively. The success of remote learning "depends on access to learning materials and [their] effectiveness" (Gayares 2021). A study published by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) showed data on access to computers and the internet among lower-middle-income households. "Only 18 percent of households on average have a computer and 41 percent have internet access at home" (Gayares 2021, 5).

In addition, the Philippines has a slower mobile internet speed of 33.69 Mbps (megabits per second) (download) and 8.83 Mbps (upload) than the global download and upload average speed of 55.07 Mbps and 12.35 Mbps, respectively. Likewise, the country's broadband speed is 71.17 Mbps (download) and 71.22 Mbps (upload); slower than the global average speed of 107.50 Mbps (download) and 58.27 Mbps (upload) (Barreiro 2021). Thus, the internet infrastructure of a country plays a huge role in delivering effective online learning.

UP pronounced in multiple webinars and memoranda that the university will not return to the traditional teaching and learning; instead, it will move forward to blended learning, a mix of face-to-face and online instruction. As UP starts to navigate the waters of blended learning, it should capacitate not just its human resources but also its facilities in order to keep up with the demand of this format. Aside from this, the government should also mandate the improvement of digital access and overall internet infrastructure of the country, and promote and implement fair and science-based policies in order to respond more effectively and efficiently to crises. It should also encourage and support the development of local educational technologies and other research and development opportunities.

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- Interactive Learning Center (ILC) Diliman: <https://ilc.upd.edu.ph/>

- Pagbabahagi sa Panahon ng Pagbabago Blog: <https://uprtlpagbabahagi.wordpress.com/pagbabahagi-sa-panahon-ng-pagbabago/>
- UP Baguio Official Website: <https://www.upb.edu.ph/>
- UP Cebu Official Website: <https://www.upcebu.edu.ph/>
- UP Cebu Teaching and Learning Resource Center (TLRC): <https://tlrc.upcebu.edu.ph/>
- UP College of Education's Curated Resources for Remote Learning: <https://sway.office.com/P76viXqDbhZdCOWN>
- UP Diliman Office for the Advancement of Teaching (OAT): <https://oat.upd.edu.ph/>
- UP Diliman Official Website: <https://upd.edu.ph/>
- UP Los Baños Official Website: <https://uplb.edu.ph/main/>
- UP Manila National Institutes of Health: <https://nih.upm.edu.ph/>
- UP Manila Official Website: <https://www.upm.edu.ph/>
- UP Mindanao Digital Repository for Remote Learning: <https://app.schoology.com/login?destination=course%2F2548063581%2Fmaterials>
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- UP Open University Official Website: <https://www.upou.edu.ph/home/>
- UP Remote Teaching and Learning website: <http://bit.ly/up-rtl>

- UP Student Learning Assistance System Online: <https://slasonline.up.edu.ph/>
- UP Visayas Official Website: <https://www.upv.edu.ph/>
- UP Visayas Tacloban College Official: <https://tac.upv.edu.ph/>
- UPOU Massive Open Distance eLearning (MODEL): <https://model.upou.edu.ph/>
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Facebook Pages

- Stop COVID Deaths Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StopCOVIDDeaths/>
- UP Baguio: <https://www.facebook.com/OfficialUPB/>
- UP Cebu: <https://www.facebook.com/upcebuofficial/>
- UP Diliman Health Service Facebook Page - https://www.facebook.com/UPDHealthService/?_rdc=1&_rdr.
- UP Diliman Interactive Learning Center (ILC): <https://www.facebook.com/ilcdiliman/>
- UP Diliman Learning Resource Center (LRC): <https://www.facebook.com/lrc.upd>
- UP Diliman Office for the Advancement of Teaching (OAT): <https://www.facebook.com/oat.upd>
- UP Diliman Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA): <https://www.facebook.com/ovcsa.upd/>
- UP Diliman Psychological Services (PsycServ) Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/updpsycserv/?_rdc=1&_rdr.
- UP Diliman: <https://www.facebook.com/OfficialUPDiliman/>

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- UP Los Baños Learning Resource Center (LRC): <https://www.facebook.com/uplblrc/>
- UP Manila: <https://www.facebook.com/upsystem/>
- UP Mindanao Interactive Learning Center (ILC)/ Learning Resource Center (LRC): <https://www.facebook.com/pg/ilclrcupmindanao/posts/>
- UP Visayas Tacloban College (UPVTC): <https://www.facebook.com/upvtaclobancollege/>
- UP Visayas: <https://www.facebook.com/U.P.Visayas.Official/>
- UPLB: <https://www.facebook.com/UPLBOfficial/>
- UPVTC Teaching and Learning Resource Center (TLRC): <https://www.facebook.com/upvtlrc>

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