



New trends in higher education

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**In pursuit of continuing quality  
in higher education  
through accreditation:  
the Philippine experience**

**Adriano A. Arcelo**



International Institute for Educational Planning

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the Philippine experience

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AACCUP	Accrediting Association of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines
ACSC-AA	Association of Christian Schools and Colleges Accrediting Agency
ACSCU	Association of Christian Schools and Colleges and Universities
ACSCU-AA	Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities-Accrediting Agency
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALG	ALG and Associates
ARPA	Automatic Radar Plotting Aids
CAR	Cordillera Administrative Region
CEAP	Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines
CEM	Center for Education Measurement
CHED	Commission for Higher Education Development
DECS	Department of Education, Culture and Sports
DNV	Det Norske Veritas
FAAP	Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines
FAPE	Fund for Assistance to Private Education
GNP	Gross National Product
HEDF	Higher Education Development Fund
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HERO	Higher Education Regional Office
IDAP	Institutional Developmental Assistance Programme

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IG	Instructor's Guides
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INQAAHE	International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
ISO	International Standards Organization
KCUE	Korean Council of University Education
MARINA	Maritime Industry Authority
MIS	Management Information Systems
MSU	Mindanao State University
NAT	Nursing Aptitude Test
NCR	National Capital Region
NEAT	National Elementary Achievement Test
NMAT	National Medical Admission Test
NSCT	National Scholastic Aptitude Test
PAASCU	Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities
PACU-COA	Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation
PAFTE	Philippine Association for Teacher Education
PAMI	Philippine Association of Maritime Institutions
PAPSCU	Philippine Association of Private Schools, Colleges and Universities
PASUC	Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges
PCER	Presidential Commission on Education Reform
PCSPE	Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education
PDK	Phi Delta Kappa

PHEI	Private Higher Education Institution
POEA	Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
PRC	Professional Regulation Commission
RVM	Religious of Virgin Mary
SCUAAP	State Colleges and Universities Accrediting Agency of the Philippines
SO	Special Order
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea
STCW	Standards for Training, Certification and Watchkeeping
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TUP	Technological University of the Philippines
UP	University of the Philippines
USC	University of San Carlos
UST	University of Santo Tomas
WB	World Bank



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## ABSTRACT

Higher education in the Philippines is both highly diversified and pluralistic, where Catholic private institutions coexist with private and non-sectarian establishments of Protestant affiliation, as well as with institutions in the public sector. This segmentation is a legacy of the colonial history of the Philippines where structures for higher education were established consecutively under Spanish, American and Filipino rule.

The accreditation movement in the Philippines began in 1951, through the initiative of a group of educators from private higher-education institutions who were convinced of the importance to enhance quality in higher education through a system of standards, continuous monitoring of implementation, and self-assessment done on a voluntary basis. The system of higher education in the Philippines adopted accreditation as a means of achieving high-level quality on a voluntary basis. It was also envisioned that through accreditation, appropriate guidance could be provided to parents and college-bound students. The accrediting association likewise heightened cooperation among higher-education institutions. From the 1950s to 70s, three accrediting bodies were formed: the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU); the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities – Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA); and the Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities – Accrediting Agency (ACSCU-AA). Each of the associations has its own accrediting instruments and standards.

In striving towards common standards and instruments, the Federation of Accrediting Agencies in the Philippines (FAAP) – an umbrella organization of accrediting agencies – was established in 1976. FAAP serves as the co-ordinating body of the three accrediting

associations. With the formation of the accrediting agency for state colleges and universities, a fourth accrediting body was formed – the Accrediting Association of Chartered Colleges and Universities of the Philippines (AACCU). AACCU is mainly for members of the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC), and PAASCU is mainly for Catholic schools (PACU-COA for non-sectarian groups, and ACSCU-AA for the Protestant sector.) The system of accrediting bodies is not restrictive, however: some institutions, members of PAASCU, are from the non-sectarian or Protestant groups, and/or from the state sector, whereas certain sectarian schools are accredited by the PACU-COA.

Accreditation is a quality-management mechanism that occurs in adjunction to the minimum requirements of quality that are stipulated for institutions and programmes, and verified by the Commission for Higher Education Development (CHED), a national buffer in charge of higher education. Moreover, many professions have also established entry requirements, which ensure the professional competences of higher-education graduates. The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) conducts these examinations. In consequence, accreditation is only one of the mechanisms for *quality assurance* in Philippine higher education.

All Philippine accreditation agencies have opted to focus on programme accreditation, for which they have developed a considerable number of specific instruments. The process leading to accreditation complies with the generally accepted dual process of a self-study and site visit. The accreditation agency decides whether a programme will be granted accreditation, but the umbrella body (FAAP) that acts as a meta-evaluation agency, must certify that the accreditation decision conforms to its own quality requirements. Due to the variations of quality, it was also decided to offer accreditation at four different levels, each entailing specific benefits

both in terms of administrative autonomy and access to incentive funds. The higher the level of accreditation, the more the autonomy granted to the institution.

Accreditation has been successful in the Philippines as a scheme utilized by the government in the supervision of the higher-education system in the country. This is consistent with the provisions of the Philippine Constitution, in which the state recognizes "... the complementary roles of public and private institutions in the educational system" and affirms that it "... shall exercise reasonable supervision and regulation of all educational institutions."

The success of accreditation can also be gauged through its impact on the quality of higher education in terms of performance indicators such as employment, income levels of new graduates, and percentage of passes in professional board examinations.

In the light of the importance of an accreditation system in the enhancement of quality in higher education in the Philippines, this paper has the following objectives:

- to trace the history of the accreditation system;
- to relate the system to the development of higher education in the country;
- to identify its critical issues;
- to analyze problems, issues and solutions in the implementation of accreditation schemes;
- to evaluate the impact of accreditation on selected institutions and on the entire higher-education system in the country.

When relating accreditation to the development of higher education, a short analysis of the history of both private and state higher education serves as a starting point.



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## **1. HISTORY OF STATE AND PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES**

Higher education in the Philippines is characterized by the diversity of its origin, plurality in its mission and regional accessibility. However, higher-education institutions established during the Spanish period were more monolithic and Catholic in orientation. It was only under American rule that there was diversity, plurality and greater regional accessibility. In the desire to have a sound democratic foundation, consistent with the tenets of democracy, the expansion of state higher education was equally matched by the growth of sectarian-sponsored higher-education institutions of both Catholic and Protestant persuasion. In addition, freedom-loving Filipinos provided a third alternative of non-sectarian, proprietary and totally independent higher-education institutions, free from either government or church control. Though independent of the Church, non-sectarian institutions organize religious activities in their respective campuses to meet the spiritual needs of those that share their Christian faith, the dominant religion of the students. In fact, Catholic churches or other places of worship are found on many non-sectarian school campuses. Some private non-sectarian and proprietary higher-education institutions even have a chaplain.

Because of the above-mentioned positive features and elements of spirituality in private education, this sector has known tremendous expansion to the extent that it has always been the dominant sector and accounts for 75.2 per cent of total enrolment. With this dominance of the private sector in higher education, the government is able to concentrate its resources in the funding of elementary and secondary education. The frenetic growth of higher education and

its diversity brought about heterogeneous quality outcomes, which necessitated the institution of voluntary and internally initiated improvement programmes which conform to the accreditation system in higher education.

Higher education in the Philippines began with the establishment of the University of Santo Tomas (UST) in 1611. With the founding of UST, it can be claimed that private higher education in the country preceded the state higher-education system, which only commenced with the arrival of the Americans in 1898. Besides UST, other private Catholic higher-education institutions were established before the arrival of the Americans: the University of San Carlos (USC), located in Cebu, which was originally founded as the Colegio-Seminario de San Ildefonso in 1595 by the Jesuits Antonio Sedeño, Pedro Chirino and Antonio Pereira; the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, founded in 1804, which eventually became the Ateneo de Manila University in 1959; the Colegio de San Juan de Letran, also located in Manila, was founded in 1620; the Colegio de Santa Isabel, founded by the Daughters of Charity in 1632 in Naga, Camarines Sur; the Colegio de Santa Catalina, founded by the Dominican Sisters in 1696; and the Superior Normal School for Women Teachers, founded by the Religious Community of the Assumption in 1893. The latter two are located in Manila.

With the American investiture, existing Catholic educational institutions owned and operated by religious congregations expanded in various parts of the country. New Catholic religious congregations established additional educational institutions, among which the following: De La Salle Brothers, Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Augustinian Sisters, Order of St. Benedict, Benedictine Fathers, Maryknoll Sisters, Missionary Canonesses of St. Augustine, Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit, Society of Divine

Word, Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, St. Paul Sisters, Marist Brothers, Sacred Heart Brothers, Salesian Fathers and the Vicentian Fathers. In addition, the new Catholic Filipino congregation – the Religious of Virgin Mary (RVM) – was established with a large chain of schools, while Catholic religious congregations without an educational institution took the initiative to establish schools, colleges and universities, such as the Augustinian Fathers and the Recollects. Similarly, various dioceses in the country decided to establish diocesan colleges and universities such as the University of the Assumption in the Diocese of Pampanga, or Urios College in the Diocese of Butuan. All of these Catholic educational institutions were comprised of members of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP). The cluster of educational institutions belonging to the CEAP formed the pillars of the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU), which was established in 1957.

Besides the expansion of Catholic-sponsored educational institutions, the arrival of the Americans in 1898 signalled the establishment of state higher-education institutions. These consisted of the University of the Philippines (UP), founded in 1908 as the first state university that offered various professional programmes; the Philippine Normal University (then called the Philippine Normal School) and various normal schools throughout the archipelago which were established to meet the need for qualified teachers. The Technological University of the Philippines (then called the Philippine School of Arts and Trades) and the chain of arts and trades schools throughout the country were created to cater for the demand for technical skills in the industrial development process; and the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (then called the Philippine College of Commerce) was established to focus on the need for support staff in business and industry. Combined with the expansion

of the governmental operation, and the desire of many politicians to be immortalized as the author of the law at the origin of state colleges and universities, state higher-education institutions also increased in number: by 1998, 98 state higher-education institutions existed in the country. All of these institutions are under the umbrella of the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC). To service the accreditation needs of the members of PASUC, the State Colleges and Universities Accrediting Agency of the Philippines (SCUAAP) was formed in 1987. In 1989, this agency was renamed the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and University of the Philippines, Inc. (AACUP).

In conjunction with the massive establishment of the state higher-education system and the expansion of Catholic-sponsored institutions, the arrival of the Americans marked the establishment of Protestant-supported sectarian institutions under the sponsorship of various Protestant denominations, of which the following were the pioneers: Presbyterians that established the Silliman Institute (now Silliman University); the Baptist Missionary Society, founder of the Jaro Industrial School (now Central Philippine University). The Seventh-Day Adventist, Methodist, United Church of Christ, Union Church and the Filipino-founded Protestant denomination, the *Iglesia ni Cristo* (Church of Christ) established their own chain of higher-education institutions in the country. These Protestant-sponsored educational institutions are affiliated with the Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities (ACSCU). The members of ACSCU established in 1977 its accrediting agency called the Association of Christian Schools and Colleges Accrediting Agency, Inc. (ACSCU-AA).

With massive public higher education being under the supervision of an American-controlled government, and considering the accelerated development of both Protestant- and Catholic-sponsored

colleges and universities, many freedom-loving Filipinos became concerned by the higher-education sector being dominated in this way. For Filipinos could only be totally liberated when their educational institutions were no longer dominated by government or religious groups and, most especially, when freed from the control of Catholic sectarian institutions (still associated with the Spaniards who had governed the country for 300 years and that had culminated with the Philippine revolution) or from the domination of Protestant-sponsored institutions (a reminder of the American rule of the country from 1898 to independence in 1946). As a result, non-sectarian higher-education institutions were established. After the Second World War, this group of educational institutions was very quick in responding to the tremendous demand for places in higher education, to such a degree that they now have the largest share in enrolment in tertiary education. However, they were criticized because, in their haste to acquire a large enrolment, they sacrificed the quality of their educational offerings. To service the needs of the non-sectarian higher-education institutions, the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU) was formed in 1950. For some time it was believed that PACU was itself an accreditation system. In 1977, PACU thus established the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA) to delineate the role of the association from the accreditation system.

State colleges and universities are government sponsored by regular annual funding to the extent of 80 to 90 per cent of their operating costs. In addition, these institutions receive large portions of land to facilitate their development, as well as an annual allocation for capital expenditures. However, government support to the private higher-education sector represents just a very low percentage (estimated at 1 per cent) of the total budget of this sector. This is very little, considering the fact that the private institutions engulf a

75.2 per cent share of total enrolment in higher education. Thus, private higher-education institutions have no other recourse than to depend on student tuition fees, which cover 80 to 90 per cent of their total operating costs. The remaining funding requirements are provided by donations and other private funding sources such as income-generating activities or benefactors. Protestant-sponsored institutions receive a significant amount of both financial and manpower support from their respective institutions in the USA: the Central Philippine University from the Southern Baptists, Silliman University from various Protestant philanthropic institutions; the chain of Seventh-Day Adventist institutions and the Episcopalian Church in the Philippines from their respective American communities. As for Catholic-sponsored institutions, these also draw support from the corresponding religious congregations (both manpower and funding). Apart from Filipino-founded congregations, the Catholic institutions have centres of operation in both Europe and America that provide significant levels of financial and manpower aid. American Catholic missionaries, financed by their respective congregations and country of origin, are instrumental in the growth of Jesuit-sponsored and/or Notre Dame educational institutions in the Philippines. Belgian missionaries of the Catholic Church are credited for the growth of CICM-sponsored institutions and the German fathers of SVD educational institutions. The Augustinians, Dominicans, Recollects and Capuchins obtain their manpower and financial support from their counterparts in Spain. The government of the country of origin of the respective congregations also channels financial support to Catholic-sponsored educational institutions. As many higher-education institutions have matured, however, because of both the economic crisis that affected the financial situation of the international headquarters of many congregations and the pronounced need of less fortunate regions of the world (Africa, etc.), the support accruing to sectarian institutions

in the Philippines has been significantly reduced. The recent, more common trend is for members of the religious community of sectarian higher-education institutions to send missionaries to less developed regions of the world.

As a result, private non-sectarian institutions depend on financial support from stockholders, and unlike sectarian higher-education institutions, derive partial returns on their investment – even though restricted, however, due to limitations that are imposed by the government. Only 10 per cent of tuition fee increases can return to owners of private educational institutions. In reality, it is close to impossible to generate operating surplus because of the restriction on tuition fee increases – the student body has to be consulted before effectuating an increase. Moreover, 70 per cent of the tuition fee increase should be allocated for salary increases and 20 per cent for maintenance and operating expenses, which leaves private-school owners with only 10 per cent for investment. Through the management of school-related businesses such as school uniforms, bookstores, canteen and dormitories, private educational institutions manage to generate certain operating surplus. This differentiation in the mechanism of funding is at the origin of some variation in institutional outcomes. Higher-education institutions with better sources of financing, or that can charge higher tuition fees, improve the outcomes in terms of employment of graduates and in the pass ratio in professional board examinations and other indicators of quality. This is one aspect of the diversity of higher education in the country.



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## **2. HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES AT PRESENT**

### **The structure**

Philippine education is divided into three levels: elementary, secondary and tertiary. Elementary education is of a six-year period, and secondary of four years. After high school, a student may enrol in a non-degree technical/vocational educational cycle or proceed to higher education. Except for accountancy and engineering, which require five years of study, all collegiate courses are four-year programmes. However, both law and medicine require the completion of a bachelor's degree prior to admission. In medicine, a bachelor's degree should be in the field of science.

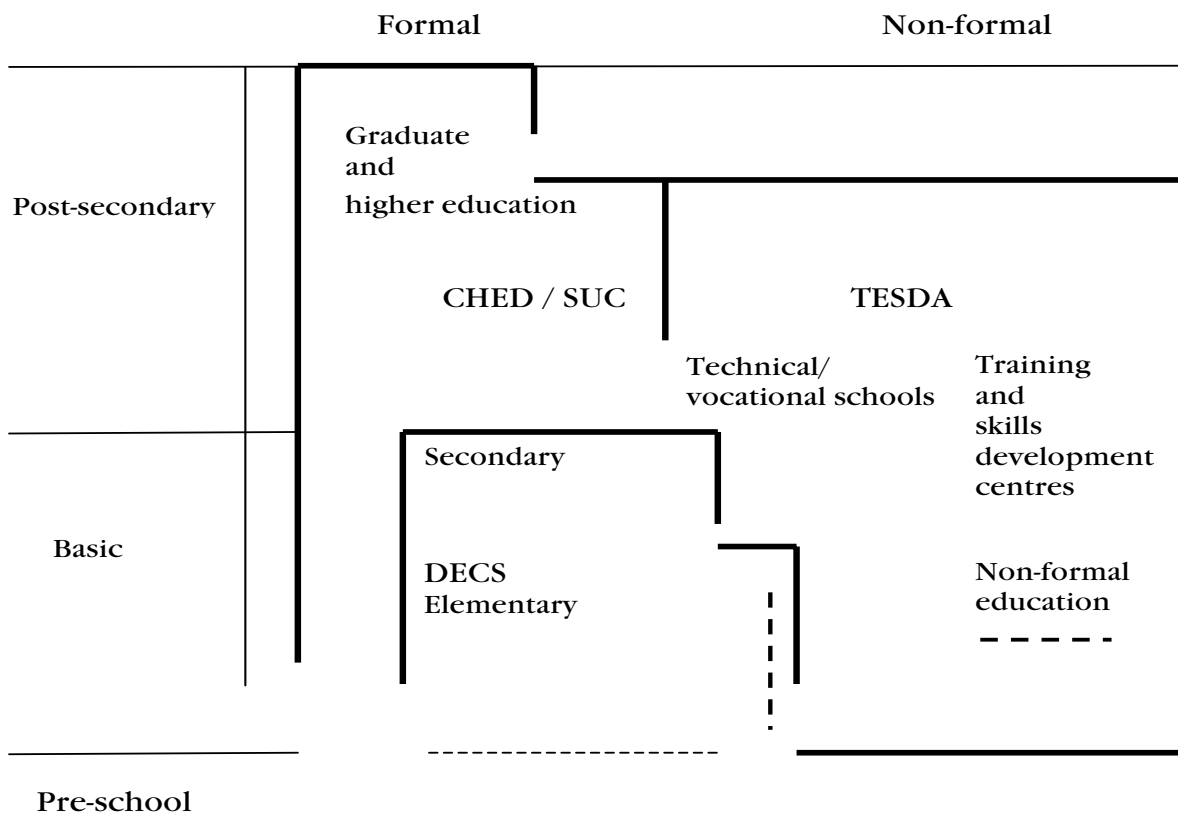
It was previously required to pass the national entrance examination prior to enrolment in higher-education courses. With its abolition in 1994, each higher-education institution now administers to applicants its own admission test. Many institutions, however, use the results of the admission test to enter students in the appropriate academic programmes for which they are best qualified. Medical schools use the National Medical Admission Test (NMAT) – which is performed by a university – for admission purposes, each medical school determining its eliminatory score. NMAT is a government-mandatory testing programme administered by the Centre for Education Measurement (CEM), a private testing agency. CEM's testing programme preceded the national entrance examination and the agency has been administering various tests for many educational institutions in the country for more than 25 years. Quite a number of higher-education institutions are using the CEM

battery of tests for admission purposes, diagnostic and aptitude analyses, and personality and IQ testing. More than 500 educational institutions are affiliated with the CEM testing programme. Besides NMAT, CEM member institutions utilize other forms of tests for professional academic programmes, such as nursing, where the Nursing Aptitude Test (NAT) is used to screen students enrolling in that field. A test for admission to engineering and graduate school is also used, but not as extensively as in nursing and medicine.

An admission test in higher education is crucial in selecting students who are adequately prepared to take collegiate courses, most especially in the light of the weak foundations of elementary and secondary education. As of 1998-99, the achievement level of those from the public-school level had a mean score of only 48.96 per cent in the National Elementary Achievement Test (NEAT), while private schools had a mean score of 62.09 per cent. The performance varied across regions: the Central Mindanao Region exhibited the worst performance of only 40.76 per cent, the Caraga region had 45.92, and Southern and Northern Mindanao scored 47.04 and 47.31 per cent, respectively. In the National Scholastic Aptitude Test (NSAT) in high school, the average achievement level was also low, with public high-school students having less than a 50 per cent achievement level (43.36 per cent in 1998-99), whereas high-school students from the private sector obtained a score of 52.1 per cent. There are exceptions, however, in these scores of achievement, coming mainly from sectarian elementary and secondary schools where the performance of students is higher than the national average. In the public sector, central elementary schools and provincial (science) high schools performed outstandingly well. Nonetheless, the average academic foundation of those that proceed to higher education is relatively weak.

Considering the weaknesses of basic education, it was envisioned to divide the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) into three structures: elementary and secondary-education sectors under the supervision of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports focus on the institution of quality-enhancement programmes; technical/vocational education at the post-secondary level and courses - non-collegiate in nature and more industry-oriented - under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the higher-education structure, managed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Private and state colleges and universities still have vertical integration within this structure, which permits a co-relation between the basic private education sector and state colleges and universities, under the supervision of the three structures: DECS, TESDA, and CHED. This is illustrated by *Figure 1* (see below).

**Figure 1. Tri-focalization of the education sector\***



\* Indicative only, not drawn to scale

Because of the tri-focalization of the education sector, supervision and management are problematical, not only for the higher-education sector, but also for DECS, TESDA and CHED, as shown in the succeeding discussions.

### **Mission, goals and objectives**

As stated in the *Batas Pambansa 232*, called the 'Education Act of 1982', the objectives of higher education are the following:

1. To provide a general education programme that will assist each individual in the development of his/her potential as a human being, as an active citizen in the basic functions of society, and to promote in each student a sense of national identity, cultural consciousness, moral integrity and spiritual vigour.
2. To train the nation's manpower in the required skills for national development, and to instil and foster appropriate and relevant attitudes, skills, and knowledge to enable each individual to become a useful, productive and gainfully employed member of society.
3. To develop and maintain the integrity of professions or disciplines that provide leadership for the nation.
4. To advance the frontiers of knowledge through research work, and apply the technology gained for improving the quality of human life and responding effectively to changing societal needs and conditions.

### **State higher education**

While there is commonality of mission, goals and objectives in higher education as shown above, there are variations in the typology throughout institutions. The original thrusts of state colleges and universities are along the following streams.

■ *Comprehensive and research-oriented universities*

The University of the Philippines (UP) and the Mindanao State University (MSU) would fall under this category. However, UP assumes the status of a national university, whereas MSU has its geographical focus in Mindanao and services the need of cultural communities in that region, and most especially of the Muslim community. In terms of facilities and diversity of research, and concerning the quality of faculty members, UP stands out as the leading institution in the country.

In various regions, certain state universities attempt to approximate the comprehensive nature of an institution, e.g. the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial University, the Cagayan State University, the Central Luzon State University, UP-Los Baños, Bicol University, West Visayas State University, University of Eastern Philippines and Visayan State College of Agriculture, Western Mindanao State University, Central Mindanao State University, University of Southeastern Mindanao, Mindanao State University, and Benguet State University in CAR.

■ *Arts and trade schools and technology-oriented state colleges and universities*

As stated in the 1970 report of the Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education (PCSPE), the apex of arts and trades programmes and technological education is the Technological University of the Philippines (TUP), along with various arts and trade schools throughout the country that form part of the TUP system. However, over time the arts and trade schools have been converted into either state universities or colleges. The emphasis on arts and trades remains the main thrust, and by virtue of their new state university/college status, these institutions developed other

academic programmes such as computer education, business administration, engineering, nursing, criminology and maritime education.

■ *Agriculture-oriented state colleges and universities*

The government has established many agricultural colleges to meet the needs of this sector. In the PCSPE Report, the foremost of the agricultural colleges is UP Los Baños, including all of its affiliated colleges. With the decline in enrolment in agriculture, these colleges were forced to divert into such programmes as computer education, business administration, and nursing. Over the years, they have aspired to become state universities or colleges and were transformed into such. However, many of these state colleges still possess a main line in agriculture.

■ *Teacher education-oriented state colleges and universities*

The PCSPE Report identified the Philippine Normal University as the apex of the teacher-training programme, with various normal schools throughout the country (established during the American regime) that form part of the national network of teacher education. However, they have since been converted into state universities or colleges with added emphasis on various academic programmes such as business administration, nursing, and computer science.

Within all of the above-mentioned streams of higher-education institutions, the notion of vertical integration of education is present. Almost all state colleges and universities have both a grade and high school. With an often considerably high level of enrolment in basic education, state colleges and universities are forced to deviate from their original priority to accommodate the needs of the basic education sector (see above: *Section 2.1*).

Selective admission is widely practiced in state colleges and universities – most especially in the UP system – which has led inadvertently to economic elitism as per the student profile: the nature of the test results is closely correlated to the socio-economic level of students. Thus, the student profile in UP, as well as in many state universities and colleges, does not reflect the economic profile of the country (World Bank and ADB, 1999; Sanyal, 1981). Necessarily, state colleges and universities (e.g. UP), where the student profile is just as elitist as in exclusive private sectarian institutions, must respond to the needs of their clientele if they intend to remain a client-oriented institution. This client orientation should be reflected in the schools' mission, goals and objectives as well as in their institutional strategies.

In terms of financing, state colleges and universities are provided with yearly subsidy from the national government to the extent of approximately 80 per cent of the total costs of operation. With this support, it is a yearly ritual for state colleges and universities to present their budget both to the Department of Budget and Management of the executive arm of the government and to the Committee on Appropriations of the Congress of the Philippines and Senate. The chairman of the Board of Trustees of all state colleges and universities is also the chairman of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), with members coming from the House and Senate Committee on Education. Through this process, national developmental concerns and, in some instances, some community concerns of politicians are incorporated in the thrust of the state colleges and universities.

### **Private sectarian higher-education institutions**

By the very nature of religious private sectarian higher-education institutions, their mission is distinguished by components of religion

and formation of values, especially on spirituality. In many Jesuit institutions within the country, the mission statement puts emphasis on three aspects: (1) abiding faith in God, (2) being a Catholic institution in the service of God and country, and (3) adherence to the philosophy of St. Ignatius de Loyola (a man for others). In spite of this emphasis on religion and spirituality in many Catholic-supported and -owned institutions, members of cultural communities are allowed to enrol and adjustments are made to accommodate and respect their religious beliefs.

The orientation to service, of sectarian institutions, is reflected in the extension to community services, which are of great importance to these institutions. This is especially true for the Seven-Day Adventist-supported institutions that are located in areas far from urban development. Many of them are engaged in and offer agriculture programmes. For example, the Mountain View College of the Seventh-Day Adventist Group located in Bukidnon is an integrated community that possesses a large farm, on which are employed both its students and residents of the community, a hydro-electric power system for the whole community, a hospital and community, student and faculty housing in an academic setting.

Similar to the state higher-education sector, private sectarian higher-education institutions have academic programmes from pre- to graduate schools, which is a good illustration of vertical integration.

While private sectarian institutions are dependent on tuition fees to cover 80 to 90 per cent of operating costs, these institutions also receive financial and other forms of assistance from various church congregations and/or religious benefactors. To a great extent, the mission of sectarian private higher-education institutions reflects the main drive of their stakeholders, and is heavily influenced by the founders of the religious congregations (see above).

### **Private non-sectarian higher-education institutions**

Non-sectarian higher-education institutions focus the multiplicity of options in various academic programme offerings, in an atmosphere of total freedom from religious and political interference – usually in such disciplines as teacher education, business administration, liberal arts, various majors in engineering (civil, chemical, electrical, mechanical, electronics and communication), criminology, maritime education, nursing, physical therapy, computer science, architecture, law, medicine, pharmacy, optometry, medical technology, dentistry, midwifery, and x-ray and radiologic technology.

These non-sectarian institutions do not receive substantial subsidy from external sources, and can only subsist invariably on a self-reliant basis. A large enrolment is mandatory in these institutions to allow them to not only operate within the economies of scale, but to generate surplus for the financing of quality-enhancing programmes, or to pay dividends to stockholders when finances warrant. However, a certain number of non-sectarian institutions have become both non-stock and non-profit foundations, in which all surpluses are ploughed back to finance academic operations. In view of this characteristic, closer links are formed between the owners and the foundation-type institution, which allows them to channel operating surplus to developmental needs of the institution.

Existing on a self-reliant basis and operating within the economies of scale, are both beneficial and attractive to students – tuition fees not being as high as in other institutions interests students from lower-income groups. Furthermore, by virtue of competition among higher-education institutions, they weigh their tuition fee increases commensurate to the quality of their educational offerings and according to the paying capacity of the students. In the light of this kind of operation, private non-sectarian institutions emphasize, as

part of their mission, both the enhancement of educational opportunities and the preferential option for the defavourized and, most especially, those from the lower-income group who could not enrol in highly elitist institutions, or in highly selective state colleges and universities.

This specific variation in mission, goals and objectives of higher-education institutions in the Philippines also has a corresponding variation in government and management.

### **Governance and management of the higher-education sector**

The higher-education sector, comprising state colleges and universities, private sectarian and non-sectarian higher-education institutions is organized and managed in the following way.

Until the establishment of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in 1994, the higher-education sector was under the supervision and management of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS). With the Filipino Constitution making provision for academic freedom, the supervision and management of higher education had to be differentiated from basic education. It was also a way of isolating higher-education institutions from undesirable political interference. These were the main arguments for the establishment of CHED. By virtue of the Republic Act 7722 entitled the 'Higher Education Act of 1994', the powers and functions of CHED are as follows:

1. devise and recommend development plans, policies, priorities, and programmes on higher education and research;
2. recommend priorities and grants on higher education and research to the executive and legislative branches;

3. set minimum standards for programmes and institutions of higher learning recommended by panels of experts in the field, and subject to public hearing, enforce the same;
4. monitor and evaluate the performance of programmes and institutions of higher learning for appropriate incentives; impose sanctions such as, but not limited to, diminution or withdrawal of subsidy, recommendation on the downgrading or withdrawal of accreditation, programme termination or school closure;
5. identify, support and develop potential centres of excellence in programme areas needed for the development of world-class scholarship, build and develop the nation;
6. recommend the budgets of public institutions of higher learning as well as general guidelines for the use of their income to the Department of Budget and Management;
7. rationalize programmes and institutions of higher learning and set standards, policies and guidelines for the creation of new ones as well as the conversion or elevation of schools to institutions of higher learning, subject to budgetary limitations and the number of institutions of higher learning in the province or region where creation, conversion or elevation ought to be made;
8. develop criteria for allocating additional resources such as research and programme development grants, scholarships, and other similar programmes (provided that these shall not detract from the fiscal autonomy already enjoyed by colleges and universities);
9. direct or redirect purposive research by institutions of higher learning to meet the needs of agro-industrialization and development;
10. devise and implement resource development schemes;
11. administer the Higher Education Development Fund (HEDF), which will promote the purposes of higher education;

12. review charters of institutions of higher learning and state universities and colleges, including the chairmanship and membership of their governing bodies and recommend appropriate measures as the basis for necessary action;
13. promulgate such rules and regulations and exercise such other powers and functions as may be necessary to carry out effectively both the purpose and objectives of this Act;
14. perform such other functions as may be necessary for its effective operations and for the continued enhancement, growth or development of higher education.

While the powers and functions of CHED are development-oriented, the actual performance, however, has not been highly satisfactory. As stated in the 1999 Report on Higher Education in the Philippines prepared for the World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB): “the original intention was to make CHED a development agency. It has turned out to be a regulatory agency without much emphasis on strategic planning for the system. As a consequence of the confused governance structure, CHED lacks strategic direction itself and has failed to provide strategic direction for the system of higher education .../... the staff of CHED sense a rudderless organization.”

For CHED to provide strategic direction, it must be visionary – always scanning the environment for opportunities, continually aware of any possible threats and conscious of its inner strengths and weaknesses. In order to effectively accomplish this task, CHED must be furnished with data and information that form a factual basis in policy formulation and decision-making; CHED also needs in-depth knowledge of its clientele. Higher-education institutions must be customer-focused and in possession of holistic knowledge of educational processes which could be the basis for system-wide

analysis in view of minimizing gaps and overlaps, and especially to create opportunities for a continuing improvement of the system to meet the challenges of the impact of globalization and advancement in science and technology on higher education.

### **Governance and management of state colleges and universities**

With the passage of the law entitled the 'Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997', the appointment of officials, faculty and staff of state colleges and universities is vested in its governing board, which is either called the Board of Trustees or Board of Regents and is chaired by the chairman of CHED. The board consists of representatives from both the House Committee on Higher Education and Senate Committee on Education, with both alumni and student representatives of the institution, and prominent citizens in the community. Since CHED is a supervisory body over the country's public and private higher-education institutions, it is quite incongruous for this institution to be on the governing board of state colleges and universities. Moreover, the presence of representatives from the Filipino Congress and Senate, which provide yearly appropriation to state colleges and universities, keep these institutions reliant on financial support, which may dilute the academic freedom and independence of state higher-education institutions.

The president is appointed by the governing board of state colleges and universities and is the chief executive officer. He/she implements the institutional policies, programmes and projects. Placed under the president are the vice-presidents for academic affairs administration (a vice-president for planning and development and/or student affairs may also be necessary in large institutions). Under the vice-president for academic affairs are the academic units

of the institutions; various units in support of the academic operation second the administrative vice-president.

### **Governance and management of private sectarian institutions**

The governance of private sectarian and non-sectarian institutions is covered by Article VIII, Section 39 of the 1992 *Manual of Regulations for Private Schools* which states: that “every private school shall have a governing board which shall exercise general supervision, have exclusive control and direction of all funds, prescribe policies, make rules and regulations and establish practices consistent with law for the governance and direction of the school. .../... The control and administration of educational institutions shall be vested on the citizens of the Philippines. Trustees or directors of educational institutions shall possess at least a bachelor’s degree.”

The Filipino citizenship requirement does not hold true for schools established by religious groups and mission boards by virtue of the constitutional provision which states that: “Educational institutions, other than those established by religious groups and mission boards, shall be owned solely by citizens of the Philippines or by corporations or associations, at least sixty per centum of the capital of which is owned by such citizens. The Congress may, however, require Filipino equity participation in education institutions.”

In private sectarian institutions, the governing board consists of a chairman and members. In many Catholic higher-education institutions, the chairman is a distinguished layperson, while the majority of the members are from the congregation that owns the institution. In some cases, however, the institutional chairperson is the superior-general of the order or, as in the case of diocesan

institutions, the bishop of the specific province. In Protestant higher-education institutions, the members of the board, who are generally part of the religious denomination, elect their chairman. If the higher-education institution is owned by two religious denominations, the chairmanship is rotated between the two groups. The governing board, in turn, elects the president as chief executive officer of the institution. In many charters of sectarian institutions, there is a provision that the president should come from their own religious congregation.

The *Manual of Regulations for Private Schools* (1992) defines the duties and responsibilities of the president or chief executive officer of an institution and the corresponding qualifications. As to duties and responsibilities, the president or chief executive officer shall be: “responsible for the efficient and effective management and realization of both goals and objectives of the institution he serves.” To discharge such duties and responsibilities, the president or chief executive officer of a higher-education institution must: “(1) be a Filipino citizen; (2) possess at least a Master’s degree or a professional licence requiring at least a bachelor’s degree; (3) have adequate teaching experience, managerial competence and technical expertise in school management, or have a background of demonstrated service and competence in his previous field of endeavour and (4) be of good moral character. For schools with course offerings at the tertiary level, possession of an earned doctoral degree or its equivalent is preferred.”

Under the president, the same pattern of qualifications also applies to vice-presidents, deans, and other officials as that of the state colleges and universities.

## **Governance and management in private non-sectarian institutions**

The governing board of private non-sectarian institutions is also ruled by the provision of the *Manual of Regulations for Private Schools* (1992) as stated above. However, membership in the governing board comprises stockholders in the case of a stock corporation, and when concerning either a foundation or a non-stock higher-education institution, the board must be to its majority either from the family that established the institution, or members of the non-stock or founding higher-education institution as provided for in its by-laws. In many non-sectarian higher-education institutions of the foundation type, prominent citizens or distinguished leaders of business and industry are invited to sit on the governing board. The chairman is elected and the president is appointed as chief executive officer from among the board members.

The president, in turn, appoints with the concurrence of the governing board the required vice-presidents, deans and other key officials of the institutions that manage their operation.

The governing board, president and various officials of higher-education institutions organize the implementation of various academic programme offerings.

## **Academic programmes**

For several decades, and in spite of diverse economic problems of the country, enrolment in business administration and commerce has been the highest in all fields of specialization. This was true in 1988, where student enrolment in business administration stood at 357,400 or a 27.7 per cent share of the total tally, and in 1998 at 532,600 or 27.8 per cent of the total. The major reason for this is the

flexibility of the commerce curriculum. Just by taking 18 additional units in education, commerce graduates could become teachers – moreover, they could be entrepreneurs. Enrolment in engineering also maintained its second rank with 288,800 or a 20.8 per cent share in 1988 and 316,500 or a 16.5 per cent share in 1998. While the aggregate enrolment increased, its share in total enrolment went down from 20.8 to only 16.5 per cent. What also increased, with even greater significance, was the enrolment in education. In 1988, enrolment in education was fourth in rank with 188,600. This went up to 306,300 in 1998 with the corresponding improvement to third rank or 16 per cent of total enrolment. The main reason for enrolment to have increased in such a way is the improvement in the teachers' total annual compensation from Ps.30,060 in 1988 to Ps.81,216 in 1996, which attracted students to enrol in education programmes. The total teachers' annual compensation constantly went up from Ps.30,960 in 1988 to Ps.35,668 in 1996. The following table (*Table 1*) shows more details.

**Table 1. Rank order of enrolments in higher education by subject, 1988 and 1998**

1988				1998			
Subject	Enrolment ('000)	Total	Rank (%)	Subject	Enrolment ('000)	Total (%)	Rank
Business	357.4	27.7	1	Business	532.6	27.8	1
Engineering/ Architecture	286.8	20.8	2	Engineering/ Architecture	316.5	16.5	2
Health-related sciences	209.0	16.2	3	Education	306.3	16.0	3
Education	188.6	14.6	4	Art/Sciences	284.8	14.9	4
Arts/Sciences	187.4	14.5	5	Health-related sciences	150.1	7.8	5
Legal	32.5	2.5	6	General	90.1	4.7	6
Agriculture	22.8	1.8	7	Agriculture	68.2	3.6	7
Theology	3.0	0.2	8	Legal; Mass Comm.	28.8 23.3	1.6 1.2	8
Other	22.4	1.7	9	Other	113.3	5.9	9
Total	1,287.1	100.00		Total	1,914	100.0	

'Other' in 1998 includes home economics, theology, criminology etc. In 1988, theology was a separate category. Arts and sciences category includes fine and applied arts, humanities, social and behavioural science, natural science, mathematics, and computer science.

Source: Johanson, R.K. 1999. *Higher education in the Philippines* (Technical Background Paper No. 3). Manila. Asian Development Bank. p. 3.

Academic programmes offered in higher-education institutions in the country are instructed by Faculty with quite divergent academic preparation and various qualifications, as discussed in the following paragraph.

## Faculty

While the minimum academic qualifications for faculty of higher education is a master's degree, according to the *Manual of Regulations*

for *Private Schools* (1992), in 1996-97, only 26 per cent of the faculty members as of 1996/97 have a master's degree and 7 per cent a Ph.D., or a total of 33 per cent. In private institutions, only 21 per cent of faculty have a master's and 5 per cent a Ph.D., or a total of 26 per cent, while in state higher education it is slightly higher - 34 per cent have a master's and 11 per cent a Ph.D., or a total of 45 per cent. In terms of the number of faculty with doctorate degrees, only 7 per cent of the total teaching force possesses such qualification in public higher education, with state higher education having a higher percentage of 11 per cent and in private higher education, 5 per cent. As to the master's degree, the overall proportion is 26 per cent. However, public higher education has a higher percentage of 34 per cent compared to only 21 per cent in private higher education. Though there is a higher proportion of faculty in public higher education with a master's or doctorate degree, the proportion of faculty with bachelor's degrees is lower - 55 per cent - compared to 70 per cent in private higher education. The following table shows this (*Table 2*).

**Table 2. Academic profile of faculty of higher-education institutions in the Philippines**

Degree	Public		Private		Total	
	Number ('000)	Share (%)	Number ('000)	Share (%)	Number ('000)	Share (%)
Doctorate	3.6	11	3.0	5	6.6	7
Master's	10.6	34	12.4	21	23.0	26
Bachelor's	17.2	55	40.9	70	58.1	65
Other	0.1	0	1.9	4	2.0	2
Total	31.5	100	58.2	100	89.7	100

Source: CHED *Statistical Bulletin*. 1997. Tables 14, 14A, 14B.

As to the student/teacher ratio, the overall figure is 24.75 students per teacher, 17.46 in the public sector, compared to 26.7 in the private higher-education sector.

With the above-mentioned academic profile of faculty of higher-education institutions in the Philippines, one may conclude that teachers without a master's degree are predominant among faculty in Philippine higher education. This conclusion is corroborated by graduates' assessment of the educational inputs in higher education, which showed that faculty has the lowest rating of all variables with 2.85 out of a 5-point scale. The variable that received the highest ratings are: course content with 3.62, followed by science laboratory, 3.52, computer laboratory, 3.4, classrooms, 3.41 and library, 3.19 (World Bank and ADB, 1999: 50; Arcelo, 1998).

Faculty members with low qualifications teach students with less-than-ideal pre-collegiate preparation, as shown in the analysis of student and enrolment profile (see below).

### **Students and their entry profile**

Pre-collegiate education lasts an average of ten years: six years in elementary and four in secondary. However, there are exceptions, e.g. in sectarian institutions where two years of pre-school is a requirement for entry into grade 1, and grade 7 is necessary for high school. This exception accounts for a very small segment of the college-bound student population. Nonetheless, ten years of pre-collegiate education is the most common. Because of the structural nature of education in general in the Philippines, the first two years of college education are equivalent to a senior high-school level in other countries. Moreover, where the achievement levels of high-school graduates is less than 50 per cent, the first two years of college serve simply to review the high-school education to broaden the general foundation of students in view of further superior learning. Students in private secondary education have better achievement levels than high-school students in the public sector, as shown by the

following results of the National Scholastic Aptitude Test (NSAT) from 1994-95 to 1998-99 (*Table 3*).

Higher education is accessible to a greater number of students in the Philippines than elsewhere. According to UNESCO statistics, the country ranks number 24 in terms of students per 100,000 (population in 1995), putting the country ahead of ASEAN countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand and such developed countries as Sweden and Switzerland (UNESCO, 1998).

**Table 3. Mean percentage score in NSAT by type of high school**

Year	Overall means	Public	Private	Private/Public ratio
1994/95	38.94	35.63	46.28	1.30
1995/96	44.94	41.96	50.64	1.21
1996/97	45.62	42.68	51.48	1.21
1997/98	48.66	45.72	55.24	1.21
1998/99	46.12	43.36	52.10	1.20

*Source:* National Education Testing and Research Centre, Department of Education, Culture and Sports.

Regarding 'gender', the Philippine situation is very accommodating of female students. In 1996-97, 59.87 per cent of enrolment in private higher education was female, and 59.03 in the public sector. In private higher education, the largest proportion of female students was in home economics - 99.68 per cent; teacher education - 80.82 per cent; mass communication - 80.66 per cent; business administration - 75.63 per cent; medical and allied sciences - 73.27 per cent; social and behavioural sciences - 71.71 per cent; natural sciences - 62.81 per cent; mathematics and computer science - 59.22 per cent; and humanities - 55.94 per cent. However, in masculine-oriented fields of specialization, the percentage of males

is dominant. These are in fine and applied arts where male enrollees have a share of 51.09 per cent; religion and theology – 90.01 per cent; law and jurisprudence – 59.44 per cent; engineering – 83.06 per cent; architecture and town planning – 78.02 per cent; and agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary medicine – 53.68 per cent. In public higher education, the female dominance is in such fields of specialization as home economics – 87.45 per cent; medical and allied sciences – 80 per cent; teacher education – 75.9 per cent; mass communication – 73.07 per cent; business administration – 69.43 per cent; natural sciences – 68.86 per cent; humanities – 67.8 per cent; social and behavioural sciences – 67.55 per cent; mathematics and computer science – 60.65 per cent; and fine and applied arts – 52.42 per cent. The male dominance is in law and jurisprudence – 55.55 per cent; engineering – 74.18 per cent; and architecture and town planning – 66.78 per cent.

Concerning socio-economic status, a tracer study of graduates (Arcelo, 1998: 29) showed that 37 per cent of the graduates of private higher-education institutions are from families with a total income level of less than Ps.100,000. But such family-income level is within the average family income of those in the National Capital Region (NCR) of Ps.274,823; in Region 3 (Central Luzon), Ps.133,831; Region 4 (Southern Tagalog), Ps.132,212; Region 1 (Ilocos Region), Ps.112,595; and Region 2 (Cagayan Valley), Ps.102,741. All other regions in the country have average family-income levels much lower than Ps.100,000, such as in Caraga with only Ps.71,806 and ARMM with Ps.74,729. Students in these regions have less financial means for higher education.

On the other hand, state colleges and universities provide the alternative of much lower tuition fees, accounting for only 20 per cent of total operating costs, but also with stringent admission criteria,

based mainly on an entrance examination, which favours candidates from better income levels since examination results are closely correlated to socio-economic status. For example, the rejection rate in UP is 95 per cent, whereas UP has a 'socialized tuition fee scheme' – admission is based on academic capabilities and student fees are fixed according to paying capacity. This does not solve the problem, however, of those who could not enter UP. In Central Luzon State University, 75 per cent, and in the University of Southeastern Mindanao in Davao City, 90 per cent (World Bank and ADB, 1999: 23) of the candidates are refused. Thus, enhancing opportunities in higher education is closely linked to both the financing and the provision of educational logistics.

## **Financing and educational logistics**

### **Policy on educational finance**

Policy on educational finance is provided for in Section 33 of the Education Act of 1982, which states: "It is hereby declared to be state policy that the national government shall contribute to the financial support of educational programmes pursuant to the goals of education as declared in the Constitution. Toward this end, the government shall:

- (a) adopt measures to broaden access to education through financial assistance and other forms of incentives to schools, teachers, pupils and students;
- (b) encourage and stimulate private support to education through fiscal and other assistance measures."

In Section 42 of the Education Act, the policy on tuition fees and other school fees states that: "Each private school shall determine its rate of tuition and other school fees or charges. Rates and charges

adopted by the school, pursuant to this provision, shall be collectible, and other application or use authorized, subject to rules and regulations promulgated by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports.” With this provision, the policy clearly stipulates that each private educational institution has the right to determine the rate of tuition and other school fees. However, its use is subject to the rules and regulations of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports for elementary and secondary education, to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority for post-secondary, non-collegiate technical-vocational education programmes; and to the Commission on Higher Education Development for all collegiate programmes. An example of regulation on the use of fees collected is the requirement that 70 per cent of tuition fee increases be used for salary increases of school personnel, except officials and personnel who are stockholders of private educational institutions. The 30 per cent balance is for return on investment, research, maintenance and operating expenses. This regulation is highly restrictive and renders the financial support of the two other major functions of higher education, i.e. research/extension and community services, quite inadequate.

A law providing for government assistance to students and teachers of private education was passed in 1989 (Republic Act 6728). It is enunciated that: “It is the declared policy of the state in conformity with the mandate of the Constitution, to promote and render quality education accessible to all Filipino citizens. The state hereby recognizes the complementary role of public and private educational institutions in the education system and the contribution that has been made and will be made in the future by private schools to education. For these purposes, the state shall provide the mechanisms to improve quality in private education by maximizing the use of existing resources of private education – recognizing in the process

the responsibility of the government to give basic elementary and secondary education precedence over higher education.”

The Republic Act 6728 specifies that assistance is granted to private institutions in elementary and secondary education through a contracting scheme: students that were not admitted in public schools were allowed to enrol in the private sector, their tuition fees being defined by the State Assistance Council, and provided by the government. In higher education, assistance took the form of scholarship programmes and tuition fee supplements, as well as college faculty development programmes.

It should be noted that the provisions made by both the Education Act of 1982 and the Republic Act 6728 stipulate that this assistance had the objective of financing educational programmes and not educational institutions. This is a way of avoiding conflict between Church and State since many private educational institutions are either Catholic- or Protestant-sponsored. In addition, educational programmes that are thus supported must comply with defined standards of quality that will contribute to national developmental objectives.

### **The amount of funding for higher education**

The financing of education in the country in relation to the Gross National Product (GNP) is quite respectable. This is mainly due to the share of the private sector in the funding of education. In 1994, the share of the private sector as a percentage of GNP was 2.85 per cent, which was higher than the government's 2.75 per cent. In 1986, this share of funding was at 2.33 per cent of GNP compared to 2.53 per cent from the government. In 1994, government share rose to 2.7 per cent of GNP, but still not as high as the private sector – 2.85 per cent. In 1997, the government share of educational funding reached the

highest of 3.96 per cent of GNP, while that of the private sector was also at its highest at 2.95 per cent. As a whole, the country spent 4.86 per cent of GNP for education in 1986, which increased to 5.6 per cent in 1994 and 6.91 per cent in 1997 – the highest level (see *Table 4.*)

**Table 4. Education expenditures as a percentage of GNP**

Sources of funding (%) (%)	1986 (%)	1993	1997
1. Government			
1.1 Central government	2.33	2.75	3.66
1.2 Local government	0.20	0.23	0.23
1.3 Total government	2.53	2.75	3.96
2. Private sector	2.33	2.85	2.95
3. Total	4.86	5.60	6.91

*Source:* Maglen, L. and Manasan, R.G., 1999 (Table 5.7).

As far as higher education is concerned, the largest support of financing is from the private sector: in 1986, it was situated at the level of 0.86 per cent of GNP, compared to only 0.46 per cent for the central government. In 1994, the private sector's funding for higher education went up to 1.03 per cent of GNP, while central government's support was only 0.53 per cent. The private sector's funding for higher education went up to a further 1.16 per cent of GNP in 1997, while central government support increased only to 0.68 per cent of GNP and the local government had a 0.01 per cent share. Thus, for the percentage share of total funding for higher education, the private sector accounted for 63.49 per cent in 1986, 66.03 per cent in 1994 and 62.7 per cent in 1997. Such a share in funding is not commensurate to the share of private higher education in total enrolment of 78.65 per cent in 1994-95 (see *Table 5*).

**Table 5. Percentage of support across levels of education**

	Elementary			Secondary			Tertiary		
	1986	1994	1997	1986	1994	1997	1986	1994	1997
<b>1. Government</b>									
<b>1.1 Central</b>									
% of GNP	1.59	1.48	2.22	0.27	0.49	0.72	0.46	0.53	0.68
% Share	62.85	56.48	64.72	25.47	35.77	46.45	36.51	33.97	36.76
<b>1.2 Local</b>									
% of GNP	0.16	0.15	0.19	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.01
% Share	6.32	5.73	5.53	3.77	2.92	3.87			0.54
<b>1.3 Total</b>									
% of GNP	1.75	1.63	2.41	0.31	0.53	0.78	0.46	0.53	0.69
% Share	69.17	62.21	70.26	29.25	38.68	50.32	36.51	33.97	37.30
<b>2. Private sector</b>									
% of GNP	0.78	0.99	1.02	0.75	0.84	0.77	0.80	1.03	1.16
% Share	30.83	37.79	29.74	70.75	61.32	49.68	63.49	66.03	62.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.53</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>1.37</b>	<b>1.55</b>	<b>1.26</b>	<b>1.56</b>	<b>1.85</b>

*Source:* Maglen, L. and Manasan, R.G., 1999: 96.

With the above-mentioned magnitude of funding in relation to GNP, the cost per student in the higher-education sector varies according to the typology of institutions. In state colleges and universities, cost per student in 1998 is classified as follows: Ps.195,481 at the Mindanao State University (the highest), Ps.102,658 at the Technological University of the Philippines, Ps.77,390 at the University of the Philippines, Ps.19,828 at the Philippine Normal University, and those institutions with low costs per student such as Central Visayas Polytechnic College with Ps.5,633, which is the very lowest, Northern Mindanao State Institute of Science and Technology with Ps.8,644, and Bulacan State University with Ps.9,606. The overall average cost per student in all state colleges and universities in 1998 is Ps.24,777.

There is variation in the cost per student across regions in state colleges and universities. In the private education sector, the overall average cost per student is Ps.8,067, which is just 32.56 per cent of that of state colleges and universities. The cost per student is the highest among Catholic colleges and universities, followed by the lowest found in Protestant sectarian and non-sectarian institutions.

Since cost per student is also a proxy of quality, there are forcibly disparities in quality in educational institutions and regions in both the private sector and in state colleges and universities. One can imagine the quality of education in an institution that has a cost per student of only Ps.5,411.97 (the Caraga region), compared to that in NCR with Ps.27,865.68.

The above-mentioned costs per student in both state and private higher education are far below those of the general world estimates (UNESCO, 1998). The average cost per student in developed regions is estimated at US\$5,936, the world average at US\$3,370; that of developing regions at US\$967, and least advanced countries, US\$252. At the prevailing exchange rate of Ps.50 to US\$1, the equivalent per-student cost in the Philippines of state colleges and universities is US\$495.40 or only 14.7 per cent of the world average cost per student and 51.23 per cent of the cost per student in developing regions, but 96.65 per cent higher than that of the least advanced countries. On the other hand, the cost per student in private higher education, amounting to only US\$161.34 annually, accounts for 4.79 per cent of the world cost per student, 16.68 per cent of the average cost per student in developing regions and 24.34 per cent of the rate in the least advanced regions. Except in some few selected state and sectarian higher-education institutions, the cost per student of higher education in the Philippines is not even at par with those of the developing countries to which the country belongs. The following comparative table (*Table 6*) illustrates this situation.

**Table 6. Comparative cost per student in the Philippines and in the world, 1995**

Philippines	Ps.	US\$
State colleges and universities	Ps.24,770*	US\$495.40
Private higher education	Ps. 8,067*	US\$161.34
Developed regions		US\$5,936**
World average		US\$3,370
Developing regions		US\$967
Least advanced regions		US\$252

(The peso-US dollar conversion rate is at Ps.50 to US\$1.00.)

\*\*UNESCO (1998): *Higher education in the twenty-first century: vision and action*.

Source: World Bank and ADB, 1999: 21.

The history of Philippine higher education (see above) reputed as being highly accessible, placed the country twenty-fourth in the world ranking in terms of enrolment per a population of 100,000. Other heterogeneous features contributed to its world renown: qualitative and quantitative inputs (e.g. students), faculty, financing and additional educational logistics. The structure of higher education in the Philippines is dynamic at all levels of the education system because of the strong participation of the private sector in terms of its share in both enrolment and financing, as well as the academic freedom enjoyed by higher-education institutions, as discussed below.

### **Mechanisms for ensuring minimum quality standards**

As provided for in the Philippine Constitution, higher-education institutions are given academic freedom, which means that they are free to decide on both what and how to teach, who should teach and who should be admitted to higher-education institutions. In spite of

the constitutional academic freedom provided, and prior to the passage of the Higher Education Modernization Act (Republic Act 8292, 1997), many state colleges and universities are obliged to secure approval from the Civil Service Commission on the appointment of faculty and from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for budgetary items. With the ratification of the Higher Education Modernization Act (1997), the board of state colleges and universities has the following rights: to approve the appointment of faculty, academic, instructional or research programmes and community extension activities; to fix salaries of employees and tuition fees after consultation with the students; to manage efficiently institutional resources; to receive, manage and disburse funds consistent with auditing rules and regulations. In short, with the 1997 Higher Education Modernization Act, state colleges and universities enjoy full academic freedom and fiscal autonomy.

While state colleges and universities and private higher-education institutions both achieve and benefit from full autonomy and deregulated status as per the CHED Memorandum (25 September 2001), all other private higher-education institutions must secure recognition for a particular education programme or course of study. Even when courses have been duly recognized, the private institution should comply with both the curriculum of CHED and its directives on curricular matter, laboratory and physical facilities requirements, faculty load, library holdings and the whole operation of a higher-education institution. Upon completion of the academic programme, a special order from CHED is required for a student to graduate. It is only after several years of recognition by CHED that a higher-education institution may start accreditation work and after obtaining accreditation status by any one of the accrediting agencies, is entitled to the benefits of voluntary accreditation and the consequential

deregulation in academic and financial operations, most especially in the waiver of CHED special orders.

Before the establishment of CHED, the officials and staff of the Bureau of Higher Education of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) in the central and regional offices are preoccupied by the routine of evaluating submissions for approval of curricular programmes from over a thousand higher-education institutions, as well as by the issuance of special orders for more than 200,000 graduates a year. Their task also covers the review and monitoring of tuition-fee increases, implementation of scholarship and student loan programmes, monitoring of overseas students and other similar activities. Moreover, new institutions seek recognition. With the integration of all staff and officials of the Bureau of Higher Education of DECS in CHED, it is possible for the Commission to accomplish its task and CHED has thus become a regulatory agency.

### **Compliance with minimum standards**

Consistent with the 1982 Education Act, the *Manual of Regulations for Private Schools* was issued in 1992. Section 3 of the manual states that: "... the standard or criteria provided for in the manual are the minimum required for government recognition, and schools may adopt higher standards or criteria consistent with laws, rules and regulations" (DECS, 1992: 1).

The manual contains all facets of academic operation such as faculty qualifications, requirements for the opening and recognition of academic programmes, library and facilities standards, student admission, grading system, graduation requirements, university status, and conditions for recognition or withdrawal of university status.

## **Policy on establishment of higher-education institutions**

Section 16 of the manual states that: "... all private education institutions shall be established in accordance with law and shall be subject to reasonable supervision and regulation by the department. No private school shall be established nor shall it operate any educational programme, whether formal or non-formal, except pursuant to law and in accordance with this manual."

In addition, the manual contains policies, rules and regulations on administrative matters such as the internal organization of higher-education institutions, school calendar, size of enrolment, sites and buildings, school records, school discipline, terms and condition of employment of personnel, finance and financial assistance.

## **Professional Regulations Commission (PRC)**

In addition to the above-mentioned mechanisms for quality control, exists the Professional Regulations Commission. Its role is to provide assurance that students having completed their professional training are competent and prepared for performance within the different professions. The PRC oversees the development of professional board examinations and administers what is called a 'licensure examination' in approximately 40 professional fields.

It is recognized that only a relatively small percentage of graduates successfully passes the various licensure examinations. In 1999, only 37 per cent or 313,199 of all examinees passed the various licensure examinations, with the majority of 526,949 or 63 per cent experiencing the frustration of failing. Pass rates vary throughout professional programmes. The category of physicians has the best results (75 per cent) followed by other professional programmes situated in the top 10: landscape architecture - 67 per cent, pharmacy - 66 per cent, environment - 64 per cent, geology - 62 per cent,

metallurgical engineering and nursing - 57 per cent, midwifery - 54 per cent, optometry and social work - 52 per cent, electronics and communication engineering, library science, medical technology and sanitary engineering, all with 50 per cent pass rate, and criminology with 49 per cent (Arcelo, 2000c: 21).

The other professional programmes for which pass rates are above the 37 per cent national average are: agricultural engineering, nutrition and dietetics with a pass rate of 47 per cent, naval architecture - 44 per cent, x-ray technology - 43 per cent, chemistry, radiologic technology and veterinary medicine - all 42 per cent, forestry, geodetic engineering and occupational therapy - 41 per cent, interior design - 40 per cent, and mining engineering - 39 per cent (Arcelo, 2000c: 21).

Professional programmes with pass rates in the lowest 10 consist of: in fourth place, marine engineering, mechanical engineering and architecture with a pass rate of 35 per cent, chemical engineering and electrical engineering - 34 per cent, civil engineering - 31 per cent, marine deck engineer and physical therapy - both 29 per cent, elementary education teacher's licensure examination - 26 per cent, dentistry - 25 per cent, aeronautical engineering - 23 per cent, master plumber - 20 per cent, accountancy - 17 per cent, and custom's broker examination with only 10 per cent, which is the lowest.

The above-mentioned percentage of passes in various professional board examinations indicates the problems of quality that are faced in the professional sector of higher education. Since the licensure examination can be considered as an output indicator, it certainly confirms that a considerable number of higher-education graduates are not considered competent for the profession for which they apply.



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### **3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ACCREDITATION IN THE PHILIPPINES**

The importance of providing and maintaining a continuous mechanism with a view to raising academic standards, in addition to improving minimum standards, was the rationale for the establishment of the accreditation system in the Philippines. This was seen to be of great value to stakeholders of higher education and students and parents are assured of the quality of instruction in accredited institutions. The employment of graduates from accredited institutions is beneficial for these graduates are capable of making meaningful contributions to the world of work. An institution of proven academic standards is provided with greater operational flexibility by various regulatory bodies. Benefactors, foundations and donors of higher-education institutions are willing to support institutions with accredited programmes and thus established quality, and a community is bound to be proud of having an accredited institution in its locality.

Accreditation in private higher education has a longer history than in the public sector. The distinction is made between private institutions that have only complied with the minimum requirement for authorization of establishment, and those that voluntarily joined the accreditation system in pursuance of continuing excellence in higher education.

## **The Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU)**

Founded in 1957 by 11 private Catholic educational institutions, the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) began the procedure with the development of accreditation instruments, training accreditors and performing public information campaigns to convince the academic community of the value of voluntary accreditation and the continuing process of self-improvement.

In 1965, PAASCU launched the accreditation of high schools, in 1968, two colleges and seven high schools were given accreditation status and joined PAASCU. The accreditation was slow in pace because of the absence of governmental incentives. In 1968, the Department of Education officially recognized PAASCU by issuing an exemption of the required special order to graduating students, and by granting greater autonomy to accredited higher-education institutions

In 1969, PAASCU received a five-year grant of Ps.250,000 from the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE), a foundation that had been established to assist private education in the country. With this funding, PAASCU was able to accelerate accreditation work. It was also in 1969 that the Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education (PCSPE) submitted a report that specified the importance of a voluntary self-improvement mechanism through accreditation as a way to enhance excellence. In this light, the PCSPE Report recommended that the Department of Education encourage the establishment of accreditation agencies that should eventually be federated.

With the PCSPE Report, the Association of Christian Schools and Colleges (ACSC) and the Philippine Association of Colleges and

Universities (PACU) submitted a request to FAPE for financial support to accelerate accreditation activities. In response, FAPE gave a five-year grant to finance the accreditation work of these two associations. In addition to financial support to the three accrediting agencies, FAPE provided both leadership and financing for the establishment of the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP), which was eventually formed in 1977.

When FAAP began its operations in 1977, PAASCU was composed of 18 grade schools, 25 high schools and 70 academic programmes in 25 higher-education institutions (all having received accreditation.) Within a 10-year period (1977-87), accreditation work experienced tremendous expansion, covering 58 grade schools, 64 high schools and 161 academic programmes in 58 higher-education institutions. In 1997, the number of accredited bodies went up to a total of 98 grade schools and 113 high schools, and 221 academic programmes in 66 higher-education institutions.

PAASCU decided to operate a scheme of programme accreditation and has progressively developed accreditation instruments for accountancy, agriculture, commerce, computer science, education, engineering, grade school, graduate school, high school, liberal arts, medical technology, nursing, pharmacy, sciences and social work. Instruments that are currently being developed are in architecture, fine arts, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

PAASCU is a member of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

## **The Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities – Accrediting Agency (ACSCU-AA)**

The ACSCU-AA launched its accrediting work in 1971 with a five-year grant from FAPE. During this period, ACSCU-AA was able to develop and validate its accreditation instruments in such a way that in 1976, four institutions were given accredited status of one or several of their programmes: the high-school department and liberal arts programme of the Central Philippine University, the high-school department of Southern Christian College and the liberal arts programmes of both the Philippine Christian University and Trinity College of Quezon City.

Similar to PAASCU, the growth of accredited institutions is closely linked to both the support of FAPE and the government. When FAAP was founded, its support contributed to accelerate accreditation activities. As of 1977 and with only four institutions accredited, ACSCU increased to 27 institutions, including 42 academic programmes. This number further increased in 1997 to 88 institutions and 123 academic programmes.

ACSCU also resembles PAASCU in its focus on programme accreditation. Its accreditation instruments were implemented in accountancy, arts and sciences, business administration, education, elementary education, graduate school, high school, nursing, pre-school and secretarial administration.

Members of ACSCU may request accreditation in academic programmes available in PAASCU, as a PAASCU member may also be accredited by ACSCU-AA.

## **The Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities – Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA)**

In the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU), accreditation has been an internal policy. However, it was not until 1967 that accreditation work intensified with the publication of the PACU *Handbook of Rules and Standards of Approval and Accreditation of Private Schools and Universities*. In spite of intensified efforts and with a five-year grant from FAPE, only six institutions with nine academic programmes were accredited in 1977. In 1987, the increase was not dramatic: only one institution. From 1987 to 1992, accreditation work accelerated at such a pace that 24 higher-education institutions with 71 academic programmes were accredited. The momentum was sustained in 1997 with a total of 42 institutions and 149 programmes.

The accreditation instruments of PACU-COA are in accountancy, criminology, dentistry, education, information technology/computer science, maritime education, medical technology, nursing, optometry, pharmacy, secretarial administration and veterinary medicine.

## **The Accrediting Association of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACCUP)**

The AACCUP was initiated as the accrediting agency of the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC). In 1989, AACCUP was formally established as an independent accrediting body to service mainly the needs of the members of PASUC. Even before the establishment of AACCUP, there had already been a linkage with FAAP since 1984.

Being the latest accrediting agency that joined FAAP, it has the least accredited institutions, with only 48 as of 1997.

## **The Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP)**

Considering the ongoing activities of the three accrediting agencies, FAPE encouraged them to adopt a common standard in enhancing excellence through the establishment of a voluntary, non-profit and non-governmental accreditation body. Eventually, with the full support of the five major private educational institutions (ACSCU, CEAP, PACU, the Philippine Association of Private Technical Institutions (PAPTI), and PAPSCU), under the Co-ordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (COCOPEA), the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) was launched in 1977 with the three agencies accrediting private schools as members. AACCUP became a member in 1995. On 4 January, 1979, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports officially recognized FAAP as: "... an umbrella body to co-ordinate with the Ministry on government policies, programmes, standards and procedures on accreditation of educational institutions and course offerings, towards the upgrading of the quality of education in the Philippines" (FAAP, 1997). In 1984, the Department of Education designated FAAP as the official certifying agency for accrediting decisions.

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## **4. ACCREDITATION AS A DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED INSTRUMENT IN GOVERNMENTAL SUPERVISION OF HIGHER-EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

### **The legal basis for accreditation in the Philippines**

Before 1979, the waiver of the required special order prior to the issuance of a diploma is the only privilege granted by the government to accredited institutions. The 1982 Education Act makes provision for the Ministry to: "... encourage the organization and operation of voluntary accreditation systems." Consistent with the provision of the Act, the Ministry of Education issued the MECS Order No. 36, Series of 1984, entitled 'Utilizing Voluntary Accreditation for Deregulation Purposes'. This order categorized educational institutions into four levels with the corresponding benefits defined for each level, the most significant of which were the grant of deregulation status to accredited institutions and the allotment of an annual budget from the Ministry of Finance for programmes and projects in accreditation.

In spite of the merit of the MECS Order No. 36, it contained a proviso that was contested by the Philippine Accrediting Agency of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU). This stipulated that FAAP should be the transitory body prior to the organization of a unique national accrediting body. With the installation of President Aquino, consecutive to the 'People Power Revolution', and the appointment of Dr Lourdes R. Quisumbing as Minister of Education, Culture and Sports, this provision of FAAP being a mere transitory body prior to the organization of a national accrediting body was deleted by virtue of the issuance of DECS Order No. 37, Series of

1987. In addition, DECS Order No. 37, Series of 1987, defined: "... a policy environment which supports and enhances the private and voluntary character of accreditation and protects the integrity of the accreditation process." The concrete manifestation of these policy decisions was the passing of Republic Act 6728, which granted accredited institutions fuller financial support.

With the change in leadership by the appointment of Isidro Cariño, the DECS Order No. 54, Series of 1991, was issued which stated that: "... accreditation status of schools/programmes shall be subject to review by the single accrediting agency being envisioned for implementation as soon as possible." In addition, DECS Order No. 137, Series of 1991, identified 'excellent schools' that should be given full deregulation for two years starting in school year 1992-93. While the said order does contain criteria, accreditation status is not at all considered.

With the start of President Fidel V. Ramos's presidency in 1992 and the appointment of Armand V. Fabella as DECS Secretary, the 1992 *Revised Manual of Regulations for Private Schools* was issued through the DECS Order No. 92, Series of 1992. This was followed by the issuance of DECS Order No. 93, Series of 1992, which amended DECS Order 54, Series of 1991, with the deletion of the provision for a single national accrediting body. In subsequent DECS orders, FAAP has been consulted in the formulation of policies. One significant policy document is the DECS Order No. 76, Series of 1993, which defines the set of 'Minimum Quantitative Standards for Collegiate Courses' for bachelor's degree programmes offered by higher-education institutions.

Republic Act No. 7722 (1994), which created the Commission on Higher Education, is a landmark in legislation for FAAP. One of the provisions of this Act is the creation of the Board of Advisers, which

includes in its members the President of FAAP. A year after its creation, CHED issued Order No. 31, Series of 1995, which: "... encourages the use of a voluntary non-governmental accreditation system in aid of the exercise of its regulatory function."

The above-mentioned issuances form the basis for governmental use of accreditation as an instrument for supervising the quality of higher-education institutions. Section 28 of the 1992 *Manual of Regulations for Private Schools*, consistent with the provisions of Section 29 of the 1982 Education Act, provides government policy: "... for private schools which desire to meet and surpass the minimum standards of quality required for government recognition. In addition, in aid of the regulatory functions, the Department encourages the use of the mechanism for voluntary accreditation. Towards this end, it shall (1) maintain a policy environment which enhances the private and voluntary nature of accreditation and protects its integrity; (2) establish a scheme for progressive deregulation of qualified schools or specific programmes or courses of study in such schools" (DECS, 1992: 18).

Voluntary and non-government accreditation as practised in the Philippines covers higher-education institutions that have complied with the minimum standards set by the government and that have already been, therefore, duly recognized. Accreditation, which imposes higher standards than those set by government, is a voluntary continuous self-improvement mechanism to ensure the public of compliance with, and even beyond, minimal required standards.

The accreditation policy of the government is further enunciated in the law that is at the origin of the Commission on Higher Education (Republic Act 7722 enacted in 1994), which mandates that: "... the Commission shall provide incentives to institutions of higher learning, public and private, whose programmes are accredited or

whose needs are for accreditation purposes.” Moreover, Republic Act 7722 reiterated the constitutional guarantee of academic freedom with its proviso that: “...nothing in this Act shall be construed as limiting the academic freedom of universities and colleges. In particular, no abridgement of curricular freedom of the individual educational institutions by the Commission shall be made except for: (a) minimum unit requirements for specific academic programmes; (b) general education distribution requirements as may be determined by the Commission; (c) specific professional subjects as may be stipulated by the various licensing entities. No academic or curricular restrictions may be made upon private educational institutions that are not required for chartered state colleges and universities”.

With the establishment of the Commission on Higher Education, Order No. 31, Series 1995, was issued (25 September 1995), which contains the following policies on accreditation:

- (a) “It is the declared policy of the state to encourage and assist, through the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), those Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that desire to attain standards of quality over and above the minimum required by the state.
- (b) For this purpose, the CHED encourages the use of voluntary non-governmental accreditation systems in aid of the exercise of its regulatory functions. The CHED will promote a policy environment that supports the non-governmental and voluntary character of the current accreditation mechanism and protects the integrity of the accreditation process.
- (c) CHED recognizes the pioneering work and efforts of the accrediting agencies now federated under the Federation of

Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP), namely: the Association of Christian Schools and Colleges Accrediting Agency (ACSC-AA), the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU), the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA) and the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities of the Philippines (AACCUP).

- (d) The CHED hereby authorizes the FAAP as the agency that would certify the accredited status of programmes granted by the different accrediting agencies and in accordance with its own standards, as accepted by CHED, for purposes of granting progressive deregulation status and other benefits as contained in No. 3 of this Order.”
- (e) The CHED demands responsibility and accountability from FAAP for its certification of the quality of education offered in accredited programmes/institutions.

### **The creation of four levels of accreditation**

When the MECS Order No. 36, Series of 1984, was first adopted, it was pointed out that there were more than 500 higher-education institutions in the country, among which less than 200 academic programmes offered by only 100 higher-education institutions were accredited. In conformity with the above-mentioned legal basis for accreditation, four levels of accreditation were identified in order to both make the distinction between higher-education institutions already operating and duly recognized by the government, and to facilitate accreditation for a majority of higher-education institutions. With the creation of four levels of accreditation, academic programmes and the corresponding benefits brought to a higher-education institution with accreditation status, are made public.

The procedure of moving from one level to the next is also defined. With clearly defined levels and corresponding processes, it was expected that higher-education institutions would be hastened on their path towards accreditation. Consistent with this expectation, between 1987 and 1997, the number of higher-education institutions and academic programmes to be accredited increased significantly. From the experience of PAASCU, only 58 higher-education institutions and 161 academic programmes were accredited in 1987 – whereas in 1997, this total increased to 66 institutions and 221 academic programmes. The PACU-COA had also a similar experience, progressing from only 7 institutions and 16 academic programmes to be accredited in 1987, to 42 institutions and 149 academic programmes in 1997. In ACSCU-AA, 12 higher-education institutions with 42 academic programmes were accredited in 1987. In 1997, the number of institutions totalled 23, with 123 academic programmes.

All of the four agencies of accreditation use the same process, which consists of a self-study to be conducted by the department under the accreditation process, followed by an on-site review carried out by a team of accreditors. The primary vehicle for institutional self-study for all accrediting agencies is a survey, which is tailored to the particular requirements of the programme to be reviewed for accreditation. The basic methodology is the same but the requirements vary at the different levels (I, II, III, IV).

### **Comparative analysis of the areas of accreditation standards used by the agencies**

The above-mentioned description of the processes used in accreditation applies widely to all four accrediting agencies. The agencies engage qualified faculty members and professionals to develop detailed criteria specific to each programme or course of

study. The criteria may differ from one agency to another, as might their application, but the scope of the review based on the areas covered by the standards of each agency is almost identical (see *Table 7*).

**Table 7. Comparative tabulation of areas evaluated by accrediting associations**

ACSC-AAI	PAASCU	PACU-COA	AACUP
Purposes and objectives	Purposes and objectives	Purposes and objectives	Mission, goals and objectives
Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty
Instruction	Instruction	Instruction	Curriculum and programme studies
Library	Library	Library	Library
Laboratories	Laboratories	Laboratories	Physical facilities and laboratories
Physical plant and facilities	Physical plant and facilities	Physical plant and facilities	
Student personnel services	Student services	Student personnel services	Students
Social orientation and community involvement	Social orientation and community involvement	Social orientation and community involvement	Extension and community
Organization and Research administration	Administration	Organization and administration	Administration

*Source:* Phelps, 2001.

Judgements made on quality are based mainly on input measures that are expressed in the form of detailed, prescriptive evaluation criteria/standards. For example, a list of accreditation standards for science programmes evokes precisely equipment and materials required for the laboratory components of programmes. Another example of required standards relates to classroom management,

which is evaluated on the basis of such factors as punctuality of faculty, daily roll calls and maximum class size. Criteria for evaluating libraries include specific requirements for the amount of space that must be provided between carrels. The criteria are very specific and pre-designed in character, and thus mirror CHED's minimum standards for programme recognition.

## **How to attain the accreditation levels**

Accreditation in the Philippines is conceived as a process that leads to the different levels of accreditation and thus favours the commitment of institutions to continuous improvement.

### **Level I: Applicant status**

For a higher-education institution to reach Level I status, it must go through the following specific process.

The *completion of a self-study report* by the institutional accreditation team is to be duly agreed upon by the team members to serve as the status of the academic operation of the higher-education institution and to be fully endorsed by the management and Board of Trustees of the institution.

The production of the self-study report is an activity of the institution that forms a self-study committee – consisting in general of a chairman and two to three members – that treats the following areas:

Area I	Philosophy and objectives
Area II	Faculty
Area III	Instructions and research
Area IV	Library
Area V	Laboratory

Area VI	Plant and facilities
Area VII	Student personnel services
Area VIII	Social orientation and community involvement
Area IX	Administration and organization
Area X	Financial operation

There will be as many subcommittees as there are programmes to be accredited. For example, if teacher education, liberal arts and commerce programmes are being accredited in the same institution, three sets of subcommittees will be formed. However, joint committees may suffice where some commonalities exist, such as in the areas of philosophy and objectives, administration and organization, or financial operations. In the event that each of the colleges has totally independent operations, individual subcommittees should be created.

The preparation of a self-study report requires compliance with a format prescribed by the accrediting association and consistent with the accreditation instrument. Each academic programme has its own accreditation instrument. However, there are some similarities between items. Based on the evaluation of the institutional self-study committee, a ranking on a five-point scale is made for each of the major items, five being the highest. Because of the tedious process of preparing the self-study report, the preparation may take a year, discussions with many officials, faculty and staff to be able to report on the actual academic operation, strengths and weaknesses of the institution, as well as the identification of opportunities and threats in the light of the changing environment in which the institution is operating, all being time-consuming procedures.

Upon completion of the self-study report, it is presented to the academic council and board of trustees which officially act on the findings: allocation of funding and provision for institutional resources to improve the operation of the institution.

At the conclusion of the final self-study report, the private higher-education institution is ready to invite a team of accreditors from any one of the accrediting associations, i.e. PAASCU, PACU-COA or ACSCU-AA for the private higher-education sector and AACUP for state colleges and universities.

The accrediting association selects members of the team from the pool of trained accreditors. An accreditor must have undergone a two to three-day training course to acquire full knowledge of the processes of accreditation. Prospective accreditors are generally drawn from the core of faculty and officials of higher-education institutions. In the private higher-education sector, the three associations conduct jointly regular training of accreditors in order to have an available trained pool.

Recognized officials in higher education generally head the team of accreditors of, usually, five members, each member being assigned a particular aspect of the self-study report. Their task commences with a meeting with both officials and members of the institutional self-study team to discuss the objectives of their visit, their activities, the role of each member and the expectation from the counterpart of the self-study team.

After the meeting, each accreditor may visit any part of the campus of the higher-education institution, without prior notice, to conduct inquiries (library, accounting, laboratory, guidance and counselling office, etc.). The accreditor may also proceed to unannounced interviews of students, faculty, officials and other personnel in the institution or observe ongoing classes. Accreditors may also select some students at random to answer certain questions with respect to the philosophy, mission and/or vision of the institution and other aspects of accreditation.

On the last day of the visit, the accreditors will conduct an executive session with the officials and members of the institutional self-study team to discuss their major findings across all areas covered by the self-study report. During this session, there may be some clarification as to some aspects of the findings.

Upon completion of the institutional visit, the accrediting team submits a report to the officials and board of trustees of the association. The board will deliberate on the report and take appropriate action. In the presence of major weaknesses that may take more than two years to be remedied, appropriate advice is sent to the institution. It is stipulated that the consecutive visit of accreditors can only take place once the problems are resolved. However, if the board of trustees is satisfied that the weaknesses of the institution can be solved within a period of two years, a recommendation for Level I status is sent to FAAP. The Board of Trustees of FAAP, in turn, reviews the documents submitted and if found to be in order, certification is sent to the Commission on Higher Education Development. If unsatisfactory, however, the documents are returned to the accrediting association with indicative pointers to help the institution satisfy the requirements for accreditation. This is seldom the case because the accrediting association reviews thoroughly all documents before their transfer to the FAAP Board of Trustees for endorsement.

Upon receipt of the communication of FAAP, the presiding commissioners may grant Level I status to the said institution, which is therefore entitled to exemption from prescribed administrative-operational requirements such as the approval of class and teacher's programmes, a trimestrial or semestrial submission of enrolment lists, and a report on student promotions. Moreover, Form IX (CHED) may be submitted without the previously required documents and authority to grant teaching overload in meritorious cases.

## **Level II: Accredited status**

Higher-education institutions earn Level II status after the completion of the following process:

1. The institution submits the self-study report for Level II status which indicates that all shortcomings of the operation of the institution and all recommendations of the accreditors contained in the Level I report have already been complied with.
2. The team sent by the accrediting association follows the same process as for Level I. During its visit, the Level II team validates the findings of the self-study report for Level II status as the reflection of the institutional academic and organizational operations.
3. The board of trustees of the accrediting body acts on the report of the accreditors and, therefore, the said institution is entitled to accreditation status. Once accreditation status is granted, the FAAP Board of Trustees reviews the action taken by the board of trustees of the accrediting body and, if it is found to be in order, endorses the institution for Level II status to CHED.

Upon evaluation by CHED and by the presiding commissioners, Level II status with three-year validity may be granted to the institution, which is then entitled to the following benefits:

1. Full administrative deregulation, provided that reports of promotion of students and lists of graduates remain at all times available for review by CHED.
2. Financial deregulation in terms of tuition setting and other school fees and charges.
3. Partial curricular autonomy which includes the authority to revise curricula without CHED approval provided the minimum requirements and guidelines stipulated by the Professional

Regulatory Commission, where applicable, are complied with and the revised curriculum is submitted to CHED's regional offices.

4. Authority to graduate students from accredited courses or programmes of study at the accredited levels without prior approval of the CHED and without need for special orders.
5. Priority in terms of available funding assistance for scholarship, library materials, laboratory equipment and other development activities.

A good example of the implementation of this benefit is the provision in the Republic Act 6728 (providing assistance to students and teachers in private education) which states that: "... within such reasonable time as established by the state assistance council, it is guaranteed under the Private Education Student Assistance Programme that students shall be enrolled in schools that either have accredited programmes or are applying for accreditation as determined by the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines."

6. Priority for government subsidy for faculty development.
7. Right to use in its publications or advertisements the word 'Accredited' pursuant to CHED policies and rules.
8. Limited visitation, inspection and/or supervision by CHED supervisory personnel or representatives.

### **Level III: Accredited status**

A higher-education institution will earn Level III status after having been re-accredited. To obtain a re-accredited status, the institution must produce a self-study report for re-accreditation that reflects significant achievements in its academic operation since the previous accreditation. The process as in Level II will ensue. Upon validation of the self-study report for re-accreditation by the team of accreditors

in its visit to the institution, the board of trustees of the accrediting body will act on the report of the accreditors and, when found to be in order, a re-accreditation status is granted. For the PAASCU, this status is tenable for five years; for the other accrediting agencies it is valid for an additional three years. FAAP will again review the action taken by the board of trustees of the accrediting body and, if found to be in order, will endorse the institution to the Commission on Higher Education Development for the grant of re-accreditation status. If the CHED commissioners are satisfied with the documentation submitted, re-accreditation status is granted.

During the period of re-accredited status, the higher-education institution may apply for Level III status and produce a self-study report in view of this. The institution will have to comply with the following mandatory requirements:

1. A reasonably high standard of instruction as manifested by the quality of its teachers.
2. A highly visible community extension programme. A description of the programme(s), nature and extent of student, faculty and staff involvement, and other details shall be required documentation for this indicator.

In addition to the above-mentioned mandatory requirements, the institutions must satisfy any two of the following:

1. A highly visible research tradition. Evidences in support of this requirement are provision for a reasonable budget, quality of completed outputs, measurable results such as publications, involvement of a significant number of faculty members, visible, tangible and measurable impact on the community.

2. A strong staff-development tradition as evidenced by an appropriate budgetary allocation and/or systematic plan for staff-development programmes.
3. A highly creditable performance of its graduates in licensure examinations over the past three years, where applicable.
4. Existence of working consortia or linkages with other schools and/or agencies.

Documentary evidence shall include description of the nature, mechanism, working agreements and other details of the consortia.

Level III institutions shall enjoy, in addition to the benefits granted to Level II, full curricular deregulation, including the authority to offer new courses allied to existing Level II courses, without need for prior approval provided that CHED, through the appropriate Higher Education Regional Office (HERO), is duly informed before such new programmes are effectively offered.

#### **Level IV: Accredited status**

To date, none of the higher-education institution have been granted Level IV status. According to the guidelines, Level IV institutions are those that have distinguished themselves in a broad area of academic disciplines and enjoy both prestige and authority comparable to that of international universities. These institutions must have met the following additional criteria/guidelines:

1. at least 75 per cent of their programmes must have attained Level III status for a minimum of 10 years, i.e. two consecutive terms of five years each;
2. excellent outcomes in research as seen in the number, scope and impact of scholarly publications in important national and international journals, teaching and learning as proven in the

performance of its graduates and alumni, and continuing assessment of student achievement, community service and impact of its contributions to economic and social advancement, on both regional and national levels, evidence of international linkages and consortia and well-developed planning processes which support quality-assurance mechanisms.

In addition to the benefits of Level III, Level IV institutions receive awards of grants/subsidies from the Higher Education Development Fund for programmes of qualified tertiary educational institutions for the period or duration of its Level IV accredited status, as approved by CHED and in accordance with the HEDF guidelines, as well as a charter of full autonomy for the duration of its Level IV accredited status of the institutions.

### **Granting autonomy and deregulated status**

Since a higher-education institution has not yet been granted Level IV status, CHED issued the Memorandum Order No. 32, Series of 2001 (25 September 2001) entitled ‘Grant of Autonomy and Deregulated Status to Selected Higher Education Institutions with Benefits Accruing Thereto’.

According to this CHED Memorandum Order, the task of supervising 1,200 private higher-education institutions is formidable and demanding. “In view of this, the Commission on Higher Education Development rationalizes its supervision of PHEIs (Private Higher Education Institutions) by granting autonomy and deregulated status to deserving private colleges and universities.” Based on the below-mentioned criteria, CHED granted full autonomy to 30 private higher-education institutions. The conditions were the following.

1. To be established as centres of excellence or of development and/or private higher-education institutions with FAAP Level III accredited programmes.
2. To show outstanding overall performance of graduates in the licensure examinations under the Professional Regulation Commission.
3. To have a long tradition of integrity and an untarnished reputation.

The benefits of private higher-education institutions that are granted full autonomy are the following:

1. Exemption from the issuance of Special Order (SO).
2. Exemption from monitoring and evaluation activities of the CHED. However, identified PHEIs shall submit requested data as part of the data-gathering activity of CHED for its MIS.
3. Entitlement to grant of subsidies and other financial incentives/assistance from the Commission on Higher Education, whenever funds are available.
4. Privilege to determine and prescribe their curricular programmes to achieve global competence.
5. Privilege to offer a new course/programme in the undergraduate/graduate levels without securing a permit/authority from the CHED. However, the higher-education institution must inform the CHED Regional Office concerned of the new course/programme to be offered.
6. Privilege to establish a branch or satellite campus without prior approval of the CHED, but with information concerning its location to the CHED Regional Office.
7. Privilege to offer extension classes and distance-education course/programme to expand access to higher education, and to establish affiliation with recognized foreign higher-education institutions in pursuit of international standards of education.

8. Authority to grant *Honoris Causa* to those deserving, per pertinent provisions of existing CHED issuance on conferment of honorary degrees.

Twenty-two private higher-education institutions were granted *deregulated status*, in addition to higher-education institutions having obtained full autonomy. The *autonomy* and *regulated status* granted to selected private higher-education institutions entered in force and in effect for five school years, as of the beginning of the second semester of school year 2001/2002. The conditions of the grant of autonomy and deregulated status are as follows:

1. Selected and identified private higher-education institutions for grant of autonomy and deregulated status shall still submit to the CHED Regional Officer concerned their enrolment list per semester and graduation list of the current school year for purposes of information, data gathering, and reference.
2. Six months before the expiration of the grant, the CHED Selection Committee shall meet and evaluate the private higher-education institutions granted autonomy and deregulation status.

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## **5. MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT STRUCTURE OF THE ACCREDITATION SYSTEM**

### **Management, organizational structure and staffing of the accrediting agencies**

Each accrediting agency, including the FAAP, has its own board of directors (Board of Trustees), the corresponding set of officials (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) and a secretariat headed by an executive director. The secretariat of PAASCU, for instance, being the oldest accrediting body, has the largest staff. PAASCU services the largest number of educational institutions with 289 members in 1997, implementing 12 academic accreditation programmes; PACU-COA has only 149 members and 11 academic accreditation programmes; ACSCU-AA has 88 members and 10 academic accreditation programmes; and AACCU has only 48 members and the least number of academic accreditation programmes. The accrediting agencies generally share both the training of accreditors, as well as accreditors themselves during their task of accreditation.

The board of directors of all agencies has regular meetings and the agency meets on an annual basis with the members. A joint annual meeting of all agencies with FAAP is also organized to discuss common problems and concerns.

Recruitment of additional staff depends on the needs of the agency. During the peak period of accreditation work, more staff are necessary, most of them part-time coming from colleges and universities. FAAP had a full-time executive director in the past, but

being only a co-ordinating body for the four agencies, the board decided to only keep an executive director on a part-time basis who acts in a concurrent capacity coming from PAASCU.

### **Resources for the accreditation system**

Operating costs of the FAAP/FAPE programme of assistance on accreditation were channelled through FAAP from 1977 to 1980. From 1980 to 1990, FAPE's assistance to FAAP was in the form of programme grants. In addition, FAPE lobbied in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports and in the Congress of the Philippines for budgetary support from the national government. Such government support was regularly provided through FAPE until 1990 when the DECS decided to give the accreditation grant directly to FAAP. Up until this time, FAAP received a grant from the national government through the Commission on Higher Education Development, which FAAP, in turn, redistributes to member agencies.

The accrediting agencies generate funds from the respective member institutions to support the operation. From 1969 to 1990, FAPE provided financial and programme support to accreditation agencies. The financial support was given at first to administrative operation, but was limited afterwards to accreditation activities. In addition, the national government provides annual budget support to accreditation work of the agencies through the FAPE. In the 1990s, accreditation agencies started to receive direct government support, but funds provided by the government are destined towards accreditation activities and not operating expenses of the agencies.

### **Development of accreditation instruments**

The government provides resources, in particular for the development of new instruments for accreditation in response to

the changing needs of the education sector. A good example is the revision made of the maritime education instrument to meet the STCW International Convention of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), of which the Philippines is a signatory. Maritime education is an important sector in the country, supplying throughout the world approximately a third of all seafarers. Particular instruments must be developed to meet new programme offerings in higher education, the latest of which being computer education and information technology.

Through this joint programme among agencies, under the co-ordination of FAAP, synergy is achieved and adoption of common standards is facilitated.

### **Training programmes for accreditors**

Once the instruments are finalized, accreditors are trained for the implementation of a manual consistent to accreditation standards. Prospective accreditors are recruited by nomination from the four educational accrediting associations. All must be either faculty members or officials of higher-education institutions with specialization on certain aspects of the accreditation processes and areas of concern. For example, a librarian is recruited as prospective accreditor in that area. On the other hand, an architect is recruited for training to take care of the physical plant and facilities. An accountant is recruited to be responsible for administration, organization and financial operation of the institutions. Once trained, their names are included in the pool of qualified accreditors of the four accrediting associations. Every time there is a request for accreditation, their names are selected from the pool for submission to the requesting accrediting association.

Qualified accreditors serve on a voluntary basis. However, they are given transportation expenses, food and accommodation and, in some instances, a modest honorarium from the educational association.

From 1977 to 1997 the number of accredited institutions increased from 82 to 398, which resulted in a corresponding need for qualified accreditors who will conduct their task on a regular basis since accreditation status is only valid for three years during the first accreditation and five at the maximum after successful re-accreditation. Moreover, 398 of the total 1,256 educational institutions account for only 31.69 per cent of all institutions in the country that have some academic programmes being accredited. Thus, to service the need for accreditors is a considerable task, especially considering the large bulk of higher-education institutions of more than 800 that are still to undergo programme accreditation. Many more qualified accreditors are needed to conduct initial accreditation processes for these institutions.

There is also discussion under way about the putting in place of a mechanism for institutional accreditation. It is envisaged by CHED that the availability of a given number of accredited programmes in a higher-education institution would automatically lead to accreditation status of the entire institution, such as foreseen under Level IV status. No decision has been reached at present on this issue.

### **Institutional self-study**

The performance of a self-study is crucial for institutions that have no accredited academic programmes. A grant is often indispensable for the implementation of the self-study that entails documenting strengths and weaknesses in all facets of functioning, in its mission, goals and objectives, to evaluate faculty and manpower

resources, financial capabilities, library and laboratory facilities, student services and alumni affairs, research, community and extension services, organizational structure and operating procedures etc. Once the written documentation with supporting evidence is completed, the subsequent accreditation activities are greatly facilitated.

During the institutional self-study, the grant may take the form of the cost of the consultant who will assist the institution in the preparation of the self-survey, a portion of the documentation expenses and cost due to planning of meetings and other developmental work.

### **Institutional Developmental Assistance Programme (IDAP)**

IDAP was once funded and administered by FAPE. Considering FAAP receives a direct grant from the government, IDAP is now being administered by FAAP in support of some component elements identified in the self-study as the weaknesses of the institution. This support may be in the form of a faculty development grant for the institution to comply with the expected requirements for laboratory equipment, library books or postgraduate training for faculty. However, in addition to the FAAP grant, FAPE continues to provide faculty development grants to institutions that are in the process of being accredited.

### **Public information campaign and institutional linkages**

FAAP is engaged in providing its clientele with information on accreditation work. This is done regularly through issuance of bulletins, conducting conferences and meetings among institutional members of all four accrediting agencies and dialogues with members of Congress of the Philippines, officials of DECS, TESDA, CHED and other governmental bodies.



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## **6. AN EXAMPLE OF AN INSTITUTIONAL CASE STUDY**

In order to demonstrate how accreditation functions at the institutional level, the following case study (Institution B) is presented. The way in which the institution copes with the requirements of accreditation and what benefits the institution gains from having been accredited are highlighted.

### **Institutional environment conducive to accreditation**

Institution B offers maritime education and related programmes in business and customs administration. After it gained accreditation status, it added a high school and a graduate school offering a Master's programme. At the time of the self-study, Institution B has, in two campuses where accredited programmes are offered, an enrolment of a little over 4,000. The third campus was not accredited, but it gained Level I accreditation status in 1997.

Institution B is private and has been converted into a foundation, which means that all surpluses in its financial operations are ploughed back to improve faculty salary and facilities of the institutions. The chief executive officer is a dynamic leader with a well-developed vision for his institution. The conversion into a foundation is a symbol for the community of institutional commitment to quality and all financial resources are purposely destined for financing strategic intervention for the enhancement of quality.

### **Academic programmes being accredited**

In Institution B, the two programme offerings that were accredited were the Bachelor of Science in marine transportation and marine

engineering. Institution B was granted Level I status in 1985 and Level II in 1986. In 1990, Level II re-accredited status was granted, and Level III in October 1995. In 2000, the institution was on its way to Level III re-accreditation status. In 1997, Institution B earned the honour of being the first educational institution in the country to be certified as per ISO-9002 Series by Det Norske Veritas (DNV) of Norway.

By virtue of CHED Memorandum No. 32 dated 25 September 2001, Institution B was granted full autonomy, due to it having Level III status in accreditation, being an ISO 9002 certified institution and for its international linkages.

### **Preliminary surveys and results**

Institution B is quite unique in that the accreditation instrument in maritime education was not yet ready when the institution decided to initiate accreditation processes. In fact, the president of the institution who was then the president of the Philippine Association of Maritime Institutions (PAMI) was bold in his initiative to establish an accreditation instrument in maritime education. Under the sponsorship of PAMI and the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines, with funding support from the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE), the maritime education instrument was formulated. When the instrument was pilot-tested, it was performed in Institution B.

Institution B benefited from the pilot-testing stage of the instrument in the same way that the exercise facilitated its institutional self-survey. The institutional self-survey was conducted by the committee chosen by Institution B and completed in 1985. The results across areas of accreditation given by the various committees according to the five-point rating scale are as follows:

1. Administration	4.06
2. Faculty	4.10
3. Instruction	4.12
4. Student services	4.16
5. Laboratory facilities	3.91
6. Library	3.46
7. Physical plant and facilities	4.02
8. Social orientation and community involvement	4.20
9. Average rating	4.015

The institutional self-study committee produced the above-mentioned ratings with the president of the institution as chairperson and nine members as chairmen of the nine subcommittees.

The subcommittees are as follows:

1. Philosophy and objectives - four members;
2. Administration - four members;
3. Faculty - eight members;
4. Instruction and research - eight members;
5. Student personnel services - seven members;
6. Laboratories - seven members;
7. Library - eight members;
8. Physical plant - seven members;
9. Social involvement and community outreach programme - four members.

Each subcommittee produced a report in accordance with the following programme of activities:

- 25 November 1983: Formation of the institutional self-study committee and subcommittees;
- 3 December 1983: General meeting between members of the committee and subcommittees;

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the Philippine experience**

- 7 to 9 January 1984: Meetings of subcommittees;  
10 to 31 January 1984: Committee work;  
7 February 1984: Submission of the preliminary  
institutional self-study report;  
11 February 1984: Faculty meeting to discuss the preliminary  
institutional self-study report.

During the meeting with the faculty, the objectives and impact on the enhancement of quality of accreditation were discussed and the processes were carefully delineated. The expectations from each member of the faculty and staff were also given special focus, including the identification of strategies to communicate the results of accreditation to all members of the academic community. At the end of the meeting the chairman of the committee made an appeal for the support of each for the institution to attain accreditation status.

- 14 March 1984: Meeting with the officers of the student council  
to discuss the preliminary institutional self-study  
report.

Almost the same topics were discussed with the students. The only difference is the discussion on student services that have been quite limited due to low tuition fees. It was impressed on the students that the quality of education being provided was consistent with tuition-fee levels of the institution, and due in particular to the absence of subsidies from government, business and industry. Should they be willing to enhance quality, increases in tuition fees are mentioned as inevitable.

It was the expectation that with the attainment of accreditation status, the institution would obtain both national and international recognition for business and industry – for the shipping industry in particular – to provide more scholarships for students and gainful employment after graduation. In the meantime, the students must

be content with only 5 per cent of the student population benefiting from scholarship sponsored by the institution. In the light of the importance of accreditation, student leaders were encouraged to convey the same message to their colleagues, in support of the accreditation efforts of the institution.

- 15 March to 31 May 1984: Subcommittee work;
- 14 June 1984: Meeting of the institutional self-study committee and sub-committee chairmen;
- 23 July 1984: Submission of the second preliminary self-study report;
- 24 to 31 July 1984: Review of the report by the institutional self-study committee;
- 1 to 25 August 1984: Finalization of the institutional self-study report;
- 8 to 9 August 1984: Visit from consultants of the accrediting association;
- 10 to 25 August: Incorporation of consultants' recommendation on the institutional self-study report;
- 26 August 1984: Submission of the institutional self-study report to the accrediting association.

After the submission of the institutional self-study report to the accrediting association, the visit of the accreditors was scheduled to take place from 24 to 27 September 1984.

A president of a university in Manila, who is also one of the officers of the accreditation association, chaired the team of accreditors. The other members were one officer from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, a maritime industry authority, and two other distinguished accreditors from other higher-education institutions.

Upon arrival, the team of accreditors, the president of Institution B and members of the institutional self-study team met to discuss the purpose of the visit and how to make the accreditation visit both fruitful and successful. The president made an appeal to all members of the institutional self-study team to provide all necessary assistance to the team of accreditors and, at the same time, to keep a certain distance from the work of the accreditors in order to maintain the utmost professionalism of the accreditation assessment that was being conducted. They were only expected to respond when addressed by a member of the team of accreditors.

The schedule of the team of accreditors was as follows:

**First day**

- 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Official call on the president of the institution and meeting with the chairman and members of the institutional self-study team
- 12 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.: Lunch break
- 1.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.: Ocular visit of specific assignments of the member of the team of accreditors, interviews, survey of exhibits and classroom observation.

**Second day**

- 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.: Dialogue with the students randomly selected
- 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Dialogue and discussions with faculty randomly selected
- 12 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.: Lunch break
- 1.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.: Visit to the laboratory site and discussions with the faculty personnel, students and other staff members.

### **Third day**

- 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Dialogue and discussions with the administrators, deans and heads of subject area
- 12 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.: Lunch break
- 1.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.: Continuation of the accreditation survey

### **Fourth day**

- 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Writing of the draft report by the team of accreditors
- 12 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.: Luncheon tendered by the institution
- 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m.: Dialogue with the team of accreditors, the president of the institution and the members of the institutional self-study team.

During the dialogue, the chairman of the team of accreditors presented the main highlights of their findings that were to be reported to the board of trustees of the accrediting association. After the chairman's summary presentation, the team of accreditors took note of the reaction of the institutional self-study team and requested clarification on various facets.

At the end of the meeting, the president conveyed his thanks to the chairman and members of the team of accreditors, with the expectation that a communication from the accrediting association would be forthcoming in less than a month's time.

### **Consultancy services and linkages**

It took Institution B only a year to improve its weak areas in order to obtain accreditation of Level II status. Having identified the weak areas in library and laboratory facilities with the lowest ratings of 3.46 and 3.91 on a five-point rating scale, respectively, the institution

had to improve its collection of books, refurbish facilities and acquire laboratory equipment. As far as the development of the faculty's qualifications was concerned, financial support from donors (such as FAPE) was to be secured for its scholarship programmes and provision was to be made for faculty to earn a Master's degree. To attend to administrative shortcomings, the institution initiated a development programme. Further enhancement of guidance and counselling, rationalization of admission policies and student advising was intensified, which required training of a number of guidance counsellors and personnel in the student services department.

### **Accreditation process and results**

When Institution B had completed the implementation of major developments to comply with the requirements as identified in the self-study, a team from the accrediting agency was again invited; the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACU-COA) sent a five-member team. The chairman of the team was also in charge of organization and administration, while one member was assigned to student services, library, social orientation and community services, laboratory and physical plant and facilities, faculty and instruction respectively. The team spent a total of three days on the exercise. During this period, it conducted dialogues and interviews with certain officials, faculty and personnel, mostly selected at random, in each of the respective areas of assignments in order to verify the findings contained in the self-survey report that was sent to the members of the team previous to the actual accreditation visit.

At the end of the visit, the team had a wrap-up session with the chief executive officer and senior officials of the institution for presentation of its broad overall assessment during the three-day period.

The findings of the team were presented to the Board of Trustees of PACU-COA. After careful deliberations and a one-month delay subsequent to the submission of the team report, PACU-COA sent the official communication informing Institution B that the results of its findings meant it deserved the Level II status. The comparative table of findings between the self-survey and the PACU-COA accreditation team was as follows:

	Self-study ratings	PACU-COA accreditation rating
Administration and organization	4.06	4.01
Faculty	4.10	4.29
Instruction	4.12	4.78
Student services	4.16	4.54
Laboratory facilities	3.91	4.32
Library	3.46	4.57
Physical plant and facilities	4.02	4.48
Social orientation and community involvement	4.20	4.47
Overall rating	4.015	4.43

The communication from the chairman of PACU-COA to Institution B provided the highlights of the findings of the association that formed the basis of the rating as shown above. The major findings in various areas were as follows:

*(a) Purposes and objectives*

The academic community of Institution B, particularly students and faculty members, is well versed on the school's mission statement, which emphasizes discipline and self-fulfilment. In the classrooms, the faculty members stress these elements very well.

*(b) Faculty*

Both general-education and professional faculty members, including subject instructors, exhibit a high sense of openness to creative change and innovation in maritime education and show this in the instructional delivery. The majority of the faculty members have a Master's degree and professional qualifications.

It is suggested that instructors and professional faculty who are on shipboard duty be required to submit a documented report of their experiences of development in shipboard operation.

The rating = 4.29 with 5 as excellent.

*(c) Instruction*

The teaching/learning process is well supported by the most recent educational media and technology in the art, such as radar, ARPA (Automatic Radar Plotting Aids), and a well-equipped SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) and laboratory centre.

The team recommended that there should be a paired-subject method in laboratory courses whereby a particular instructor always has the same laboratory assistant.

The rating = 4.78 with 5 as excellent.

*(d) Library*

The library is sufficient to serve the number of students of the institution; the collection is one of the best in the whole country.

The audiovisual room can accommodate 250 students with facilities such as computers, television set, VHS camera and tapes,

slides, etc. Adjacent to the research library is a second AV room with computer, printer, television set and VHS tapes, all constantly available for the use of students, faculty and alumni.

There is a library in every campus that is maintained and managed by competent and friendly librarians and student assistants.

A Xerox copier is available in the library for the reproduction of reference materials to supplement classroom instruction.

There is an organized library/faculty committee which helps in both book selection and acquisition.

CD-ROMs of various encyclopedias are available for students' use. The library collection is already computerized and uses CDS/ISIS.

It was suggested that there should a linkage between the three libraries of the institution to maximize the use of library resources. This can be done through good information and the Internet network.

The rating = 4.57 with 5 as excellent.

*(e) Laboratories*

The laboratory facilities are the best in the country. However, it is suggested to implement the training for personal survival techniques, as planned in the laboratory site, for the maximum benefit of students. Moreover, the new mock bridge at the laboratory site is provided with more equipment and a chart room. Lastly, it should be mandatory to wear a protective apron while in the laboratory.

The rating = 4.32 with 5 as excellent.

*(f) Physical plant and facilities*

The physical environment, campus atmosphere and surroundings are the product of deliberate processes and sustained efforts of an enlightened and capable leadership. The institution appears to be in a class by itself among the 100 government-recognized maritime education and training institutions in the country today.

However, it is recommended that the publication office be relocated to afford more space for the guidance and counselling office.

The rating = 4.48 with 5 as excellent.

*(g) Student personnel services*

All services to the students are quite adequate. However the possibility to consult a medical doctor should be made available during school hours.

The rating = 4.54 with 5 as excellent.

*(h) Social orientation and community involvement*

The school's commitment to uplift and develop adopted villages is reflected in its programme and activities that are supported by the entire school community. The students are aware of the community needs and voluntarily join the programme, of which co-ordinators direct and supervise all of the activities.

The college is extremely active with the following activities: Red Cross Youth Organization, Youth Community Service Club, Cultural and Choral Group and Band.

The above-mentioned programmes are highly commendable. However, there should be a holistic or integrated institutional community involvement in a community outreach programme at which faculty members, besides students, should actively participate.

The rating = 4.47 with 5 as excellent.

*(i) Organization and administration*

The administration continuously keeps pace with development, particularly of international standards and new technologies applicable to maritime education and industry by introducing corresponding programmes and practices in the school.

The ambitious thrust of the institution for total employment of graduates is observed to be the driving force behind the management and its dedicated officials and staff in adhering to international conventions and standards in human resource development.

An innovative step taken by management, i.e. representatives of ship owners and manning agencies as members on its board of trustees, is bringing greater access to information in global shipping operations and practices.

The rating = 4.01 with 5 as excellent.

Note that the PACU-COA accreditors have been highly satisfied with the findings shown in the self-study. The major reason for this is the extent to which Institution B took action after the self-study. The tremendous improvement in the rating in library and laboratory facilities is indicative of the fact that it is not as difficult to comply with requirements that are both tangible and concrete. However, it is quite challenging to improve the impalpable aspect of operation in higher education – i.e. administration and organization – that went

down in rating from 4.06 in the self-survey to 4.01 in the accreditor's report. In spite of tremendous efforts exerted in faculty development, the improvement in rating was not high – from 4.1 to 4.29.

## **Impact of the accreditation on the institution**

### **Management and institutional impact**

Institution B streamlined its organizational structure in compliance with accreditation requirements. All officials must discharge their functions in accordance with their specified duties and responsibilities. Each of the operating units is made responsible for the execution of expected work assignments. Participatory management has been enhanced and commitment to excellence has been stressed.

### **Faculty and staff**

There has been significant improvement in the qualification of faculty. Their teaching capabilities have improved due to the intensive staff-development programme that was initiated. Commitment of faculty to their assigned tasks has gained significant momentum.

### **Students**

Both student participation in the accreditation process and the massive information campaign on accreditation work being undertaken by the institutions heighten student commitment to quality. With the tremendous development in physical facilities, laboratory equipment and holdings and faculty commitment, the students realized the importance of academic culture.

In the Bachelor of Science programme in marine transportation, the volume of applicants was such that Institution B was obliged to

turn down more than half of the requests, which led to a highly selective admission and to improvement in the quality of students. Scholarships granted to the institution were increased by 2.62 between 1996 and 2000. What is unique with Institution B is the industrial sponsorship of students. Many prestigious shipping companies worldwide initiated student scholarships and offered immediate employment to graduates. Moreover, three professorial chairs were established with funding provided by international shipping companies.

With support from business and industry in terms of employment and scholarship, as well as the increasing enrolment, the financial stability of Institution B improved. The institution now operates at an enrolment level that assures economies of scale. Tuition fees are much higher, but more easily accepted due to continuing quality being guaranteed.

### **Physical facilities and the culture of quality**

The physical facilities of Institution B are conducive for teaching/learning. The institution received a grant for the maintenance of the building in the engine department from the Norwegian Shipowners' Association.

### **Alumni, community, and business and industry**

Institution B takes pride in the positive remarks from leaders in the community on its fine contribution. However, support from business and industry comes more from shipping companies abroad. The institution has a co-operative project with the local shipping industry for on-the-job training of students.

## **Obstacles and difficulties experienced by Institution B**

In spite of many positive impacts, Institution B must still deal with a number of obstacles and difficulties.

### **Institutional commitment and support system**

The impact of accreditation on the institution is not immediate, and its management faced certain difficulties in convincing the members of the board of trustees to approve the required financial, manpower and organizational restructuring in compliance with the requirements of accreditation. Some issues raised by the trustees are the following:

1. Assuming that the positive institutional impacts of accreditation are realizable, what option is available in lieu of accreditation?
2. Has the accrediting body (PACU-COA) the authority to dictate the organizational structure that the institution will adopt? (The prerogative of the highest policy-making body of the institution as a corporation.)
3. How will accreditation enhance the financial stability of the institution?

The management of Institution B had to present satisfactory answers to questions raised by the board of trustees. However, with the positive impact having profited the institution over the years, the respective boards of trustees are now highly supportive of accelerated activities to further enhance quality, which is beginning to be a continuing quest.

### **Financial consideration**

Even with the full support of the board of trustees, the management must generate the required funding to both improve

its physical facilities (e.g. laboratory equipment and library stock), and to enhance and develop the professional training of faculty. It is imperative that management convinces student leaders to agree to regular increases in tuition in support of the accreditation efforts of the institution. To a greater extent, the students are quite cognizant of the impact of the accreditation efforts, and the majority of the members of the student council support the recommendations of management for tuition-fee increases. Even with the available financing, there are still some problems in faculty and staff development.

### **Faculty and staff development**

While the self-study reports have identified the number of faculty and staff that should be sent for further studies, selecting those who will remain within the institution, as dedicated faculty, is problematic, especially for young staff members who have not yet decided on an academic career. Many take teaching duties in the absence of better job offers in business and industry, and when offered better pay, do not have second thoughts in leaving the institution. This problem is serious with Institution B, where the alternative pay of faculty in the shipping industry is more than twice that of the institution. To partly solve this problem, Institution B has introduced an innovative arrangement whereby faculty members will have a three-year stint in teaching, followed by a second three-year position aboard a ship. During the teaching period ashore, salary augmentation is provided to compensate for the diminution in income, compared to the salary received when aboard ship. Even with this augmentation, however, the salary of faculty in the institution could not match the salary aboard the ship.

## **Synchronization of scheduling**

Since accreditors work on a voluntary basis, it is quite difficult to adjust the schedule of the educational institution to their availability. Because of this problem, much accreditation work has been postponed and has suffered consequential delays. This is a perennial problem, and to attempt its resolution, various accrediting associations increase the number of trained accreditors in order to have a large pool of volunteers. In many instances, accreditors who have retired from full-time positions are more readily available to participate as volunteers in conducting accreditation.

## **Time lag in complying with accreditation requirements**

The first hurdle is obtaining full commitment of all sectors of the institution to the accreditation process. Once full commitment is attained, the self-study reports can be prepared at a faster rate. The completion of the self-study report is a relief, for it is indicative that the institution has finally accepted fully its shortcomings. Some sectors in the institution may still remain somewhat reserved on the findings of the self-study – most especially those that are adversely affected – which could still be a hindrance in the accreditation process. Those with full understanding of the content of the report will be influential in exploring possibilities for the institution to comply with the accreditation standards. This is the experience of Institution B wherein, immediately after the completion of the self-study report, all sectors resolved to act decisively and with much enthusiasm to the extent that the survey team's rating of 4.43 was much higher than the self-study rating of 4.015. Except in administration and organization, the study team's rating obtained a better score in all areas of accreditation.

In many institutions, the time lag between the completion of the self-study report and the visit of the accrediting team is considerable. In many instances, the report may even take several years. The major reason for this is that it takes time to improve the status of institutions in the various areas of accreditation, for instance improvement of physical facilities, faculty development, reorganization of the institution to comply with accreditation requirements and/or purchase of books and laboratory equipment. It is common practice for an institution to first solve certain problem areas identified in the self-survey report before inviting the accrediting team.



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## **7. PROBLEMS, ISSUES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS IN THE ACCREDITATION PROGRAMME**

### **Institutional attitude**

The above-mentioned case study on Institution B confirms a general phenomenon. At the outset, there is resistance to accreditation. The following are among questions that are usually raised by institutions. (1) What benefit will the institution derive in undertaking accreditation activities that are quite expensive? (2) My institution has the respect of the academic community and society, of what use is accreditation? (3) Who are these accreditation agencies that pass judgement on my institution? Etc. While these questions may still lurk in the minds of many officials and staff of some institutions, both governmental pronouncement and benefits provided to accreditation activities have negated such attitude. Moreover, accreditation has been used by government, most especially by the Commission on Higher Education Development, both in various deregulation policies and in the supervision of higher-education institutions.

### **Programme accreditation v. institutional accreditation**

In the Philippines, it was decided to focus on the accreditation of academic programmes as opposed to institutional accreditation. In programme accreditation the point of reference is the teaching offer. For example, a college of arts and science, business administration or teacher training may be accredited in an institution, but its engineering college may not be. In programme accreditation, the emphasis is on the curriculum of the academic programme that is

being accredited and how the curriculum is being implemented. However, it does not mean that the institutional and administrative operations are not taken into account in the accreditation process. In fact, the support operation for academic programmes such as student services, alumni, library and laboratory facilities, registrar and admission system, financial operation and organizational structure are the major components that are analyzed in an academic-based accrediting system.

On the other hand, in institutional accreditation the focus of attention is on the characteristics of the whole organization and on the manner in which it responds to the requirements of the various academic units in the pursuit of excellence. The organizational structure, and the officials that occupy various positions, are evaluated in relation to the needs of the academic units. The financial system, physical facilities, library, student services, alumni affairs, community services, etc. are delved into through institutional accreditation.

Since academic programmes in higher-education institutions are closely related to the practice of the profession, professional associations have significant say in the preparation of the accreditation instrument and process. For example, in the groundwork of the maritime education accreditation instrument and the process of accrediting maritime educational institutions, the officials of the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), the Philippine Association of Maritime Institutions (PAMI), the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), coastguard and manning companies were all consulted. Likewise, in the process of accreditation these offices are duly represented to make sure that the quality in maritime institutions is consistent with industrial requirements. In the accreditation of teacher-education institutions,

the Philippine Association for Teacher Education (PAFTE) is also heavily involved in the continuous refinements of the accreditation instrument and in the process of accreditation. Thus, because of the concern to respond to the requirements of the different professions, accreditation in the Philippines puts its focus on accreditation of academic programmes and not on institutional accreditation. Institutional accreditation is only possible if all of the academic programmes are already accredited.

With such a large number of academic programmes in higher education in the Philippines, no institution can immediately undergo accreditation of all programmes. Higher-education institutions generally start with the accreditation of liberal arts, commerce and teacher education where there is substantial enrolment and where they operate close to the market. After these three programmes, other academic programmes such as engineering, nursing, medical technology, etc. may follow.

No accrediting association is equipped with all of the necessary instruments for accreditation in all areas because of the production of each being fairly expensive. Therefore, even if private higher education would aim to have all of its programmes accredited, it would not be possible because of the absence of the accreditation instrument. To this day, for instance, no accrediting association has an instrument in medicine, in specialized fields of engineering such as sanitary engineering and mining engineering, and there are others.

The fact is that the private higher-education system in the Philippines exists on a self-reliant basis and responds continuously to the needs of business and industry and to the practice of the profession. Academic-based accreditation is being implemented by the various accrediting associations, as discussed in the succeeding section of this paper.

Discussion has been initiated recently to consider fixing a specific number of accredited programmes that would then allow Level IV accreditation to be the basis for institutional accreditation. Institutions could thus obtain accreditation if they had a fixed number of programmes with accredited status.

## **Financing**

The accreditation process is tedious and accreditation activities, most especially documentation, involve a significant amount of money. The documents that have to be prepared in all facets of university operation are laborious and personnel must receive an additional honorarium to perform this supplementary duty (Dizon, 1992: 23-25). Meetings are to be conducted for each of the units in the university to discuss its strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. Following this analysis, solutions must be suggested to resolve weaknesses in the academic operation, convert threats into opportunities and define strategies to benefit from opportunities that are presented.

After the identification of weaknesses, funds must be found to augment the capacity of faculty (to meet accreditation standards), improve and purchase laboratory facilities, initiate library development, improve student services and alumni affairs, enhance scholarship programmes, intensify research and development, and expand extension services. In many instances, offices that are not yet provided have to be established – the most common requirement is the establishment of a research and development office with full-time staff.

Understanding the shortcomings of the higher-education institution in relation to the mission/vision/direction of the university is a healthy development. It is attained through a

democratic process of consultation and discussions. In almost all instances, such awareness of shortcomings will lead to voluntary support from everyone within the institution to improve the situation. University officials, faculty and support-personnel become committed partners of the institutions, more dedicated to their work, with a greater sense of fulfilment in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities. With such dedication of almost every official and support from the personnel of the institution, the community and regulatory bodies become more appreciative of its operation. When both students and the parents – the *clientele* of the institution – become aware that the higher-education institution is seriously attentive in improving academic standards, they are more receptive to providing financial support through a reasonable increase in tuition fees.

### **Common standards**

With four accrediting bodies, it is quite hard to guarantee identical standards. As practised, there is uniformity of accreditation instruments, a common pool of accreditors, and uniform accreditation processes. In spite of this, the perception persists that one accrediting body has higher standards than another. Likewise, accrediting bodies may evaluate another's accreditation reports and training of accreditors, as well as judge its interpretation of accreditation variables and implementation of accrediting processes as having certain weak points. Since each accrediting body is independent of each other, it is not feasible for one accrediting body to impose its suggestions for the refinement of the other's accreditation reports. This controversy has reached the point where some members have expressed reservation in being with FAAP. AACCUP has recently resigned from membership of the FAAP.

In view of this problem, the Report of the Presidential Commission on Educational Reform (PCER) as presented to President Estrada on 10 April 2000, made the following recommendations:

1. There should be co-operative restructuring such that it is possible to adopt a common set of accreditation standards, criteria and procedures for each particular programme of all schools. The focus of the accreditation will not be on the entire school, but on its programmes.
2. Industry and business professionals, especially in information technology and engineering, shall be included in the development and implementation of accreditation standards and programmes.
3. Government, through CHED, shall officially recognize the accreditation process, giving it due subsidy. CHED shall have more active oversight of the accrediting system and should be the official certifying agency of programmes accredited by the different agencies.

### **A voluntary and non-governmental *v.* a governmental and single accrediting agency**

Throughout its entire operating time, accreditation in the Philippines has always been both voluntary and non-governmental. The line of reasoning for a voluntary and non-governmental nature is based on the *academic freedom* enjoyed by higher-education institutions and their faculty, which is fundamental to the Philippine Constitution. Moreover, accreditation is beyond the minimum standards for government recognition of higher-education institutions. It is therefore the duty of government, through CHED, to implement the minimum standards and to verify that the academic operation of higher-education institutions is compliant. Voluntary accreditation is beyond minimum standards and there is controversy as to whether governmental bureaucracy should regulate it.

In 1986, the Philippine Supreme Court, in its decision related to the case of Ateneo de Manila University v. the Court of Appeal, and academic freedom of higher-education institutions in general, was promulgated as a principle. The decision stated that: "... this institutional academic freedom includes not only the freedom of professionally qualified persons to inquire, discover, publish and teach the truth perceived in the field of their competence, subject to no other control or authority than to rational methods by which truth and conclusions are both sought and established in their disciplines, but also the right of the school or college to decide for itself its aims and objectives, and how best to attain them."

In spite of the acceptance of the voluntary nature of accreditation, the *Report of the Philippine Commission for Educational Reform* seems to favour the involvement of government when its report said that: "... CHED should have a more active oversight of the accrediting system."

### **Slow process**

The accreditation process is quite slow. It takes at least one year for the institution to prepare the self-study report and further delay is necessary for the institution to gain confidence before inviting the representatives from the accrediting bodies. Furthermore, the self-study may have identified weaknesses that have to be solved before the arrival of the accreditors. The accrediting body is also quite busy and generally depends on the availability of accreditors selected from the pool of accreditors that serve on a voluntary basis.

In view of these shortcomings, the government – in order to hasten the process of accreditation – creates task forces in various academic disciplines, such as agriculture, humanities, social science and communication, teacher training, engineering, information

technology and computer science, health-related sciences, maritime and business education, accountancy, customs administration, science and mathematics. Through the various task forces, development programmes have been designed, the major ones being the identification of centres of excellence and of development: to date, 37 centres of excellence, 24 of which are from the private higher-education sector, and 28 centres of development, 21 of which are private. Each identified centre receives a Ps.3 million grant per year for staff upgrading, laboratory equipment and other strategic developmental programmes for enhancement. There is a sense in which the various task forces enhance accreditation because they take into account accreditation status when identifying centres of excellence and of development.

### **The proliferation of professional or specialized accrediting agencies**

There are many specialized professional associations in the country such as the Philippine Nursing Association, the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, United Architects Association of the Philippines, and others, some of which are desirous of conducting accreditation work. They have not been successful to date in having their own separate accrediting body, but the pressure is maintained and the accrediting bodies should take this into account by having both a linkage and a meaningful relationship with the professional associations when conducting accreditation.

### **Integrity of the process and confidentiality of records and other documents**

Fears have been expressed, though generally unfounded, on the integrity of the accreditation process, and most especially on the professionalism of accreditors. However, accreditors are academics

from reputable higher-education institutions and, furthermore, they are respectable peers who work on a voluntary basis without any personal or professional compensation.

Some institutions maintain that accreditation documents are confidential reports that should only be available to the accrediting body. Proper safeguards have been instituted within the accrediting body to ensure that the accreditation report is not communicated to anyone other than the accreditors. The board of trustees which is elected by the members of the accrediting association has final accountability on the integrity of the accreditation processes and the preservation of the confidentiality policy of the accrediting body.

### **The entry of ISO-9002**

The Philippines' desire for its labour force to be competitive on the world's globalized market led to the adoption of the International Standards Organization (ISO)-9000 series, which is widely practised in both business and industry. As stated earlier, reforms in maritime education focused on this. Other professional programmes such as nursing and computer science are also adopting the ISO-9002 Series. In some ways, it is complementary to accreditation. Institutions that have undergone accreditation will have a better chance of complying with ISO requirements, even though they are more rigorous. The focus of ISO-9002 is more on the process and operation of the institutions. Consistent with ISO requirements is the appointment of a quality-assurance manager in each major unit of the institution, whose duty is to report deviations in the quality-management system to a representative of management. Such deviation has to be acted on immediately to avoid the institution encountering serious non-conformity during the annual visit of the official of the international certifying body recognized by ISO.

The advantage of the ISO-9002 Series is that international comparison is possible for it is widely practised in business and industry. Moreover, once a higher-education institution is ISO-certified, prospective employers, especially those from abroad, will have little reservation in the recruitment of graduates from the said higher-education institutions. Compliance with the ISO-9002 Series is monitored yearly by the certifying body, unlike accreditation which is valid for three to five years, with the visit of the accrediting body only being conducted just before the lapse of the accreditation status – the visit of ISO is yearly and sometimes with surveillance audits.

With a view to monitoring academic processes, detailed Instructor's Guides (IGs) must be prepared for each of the courses being offered. The IGs should be detailed, all of the courses being disaggregated into a certain number of teaching modules (Arcelo, 2000d). Each weekly teaching module should contain the following:

1. Learning objectives;
2. Means to achieve the learning objectives through:
  - (a) reading assignments for students;
  - (b) class discussions;
  - (c) Guide for teachers to render the lesson interesting, and thus motivating;
  - (d) sample lead questions to be asked during class discussion;
  - (e) sample of seat work or exercises for students;
  - (f) suggested student homework;
3. Assessment.

A suggested sample of test questions to determine the learning outcomes for each teaching module and the expected minimum achievement level of students should be prepared.

Faculty members teaching the same subject should review these teaching modules at the end of every semester with a view to their revision, thus further enhancing the learning outcomes of students.

Each faculty member should master the teaching modules that must be implemented thoroughly. When necessary, an institution-wide assessment may be conducted to determine in what way the IGs are being implemented. The IGs are also a good tool for in-house staff development and for training of prospective faculty recruits.

All of the above-mentioned problems and issues, which were made more challenging by the entry of ISO certification, could be handled with a management and support structure for the efficient and effective operation of the accreditation system.



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## **8. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PHILIPPINE EXPERIENCE IN ACCREDITATION**

The following lessons were learned from the Philippine experience in accreditation regarding both the basic methodology and process of accreditation, as well as its impact on the higher-education system.

### **Accreditation can be used as a mechanism to identify institutions deserving autonomy**

The impact of accreditation on the higher-education system is gauged in terms of acceptance by the government of regulatory bodies/agencies in view of the process as a means of supervising higher-education institutions – despite the fact that most agencies are private – as shown through diverse legislation on higher education. Accreditation has always been mentioned as an innovative means of enhancing excellence.

Private higher-education institutions in the country are highly appreciative of the permission of full autonomy to the top 30 institutions and deregulated status to the second tier of institutions, as provided for in CHED Memorandum Order No. 32 issued on 25 September 2001. This will be a significant impetus for the further enhancement of excellence in higher education in the country.

## **Programme accreditation is a predictor for successful licensure examinations and higher income**

In almost all professional board examinations, high-performing colleges and universities are from among accredited institutions. The experience of Institution B showed that approximately 14 per cent of all maritime professionals in the entire country graduated from its establishment.

As shown by the author's research on the tracer study of 1991/95 graduates, the average monthly income of graduates from accredited institutions amounted to Ps.9,089.98, whereas the income of graduates from non-accredited institutions amounted to Ps.8,268.28. In short, graduates of accredited institutions experienced a 9.94 per cent monthly income advantage over other employees. Moreover, the unemployment rate of graduates from accredited colleges and universities is the lowest.

Accreditation is definitely a good scheme to enhance quality in a higher-education system that is already well developed and where there is a proliferation of low-quality higher-education institutions. A voluntary, self-managed system of accreditation generates motivation for continuous improvement of quality.

## **Minimum quality requirements do not suffice to establish a system that strives for continuous enhancement of quality**

If the government is highly selective in granting authorization for the creation of new higher-education institutions, and if it has already prescribed high standards that are much like accreditation standards, with the commensurate provision of adequate funding, then accreditation is of less value. As shown in the history of higher education in the Philippines, there was just too much pressure to

create new institutions, and the government had neither the machinery nor the political will to enact the stringent regulations on their creation. Moreover, the government does not have the necessary resources to establish sufficient higher-education institutions of good quality, as shown by the proliferation of low-quality higher-education institutions both owned and managed by the government itself. As far as the public sector is concerned, both the Congress of the Philippines and politicians in general are quite active in the conversion of high schools into art and trade schools, and the subsequent consolidation and/or conversion of these schools into a state college or university. Over the past few years, local governmental units have established higher-education institutions without complying with requirements that are imposed on private higher education, which has thus brought on a proliferation of low-quality higher-education institutions in the public sector. Consequently, the government cannot close a private higher-education institution, considering the large number of low-quality higher-education institutions that exist in the public sector – both owned and operated by the government. Accreditation is rightly considered to be a scheme for instituting quality improvement in public higher education.

### **A single accrediting body and government-imposed accreditation remain controversial**

There has always been a tendency in the country to create a single accrediting body with uniform standards in higher education; when PAASCU was the only accrediting association there was great pressure to prevent the establishment of other accrediting bodies. In spite of that, PACU-COA and ACSC-AA were formed. Due to the existence of three accrediting bodies, FAAP was established to systematize standards implemented by a common group of accreditors. Even

with the existence of FAAP to implement common standards and accreditors, the desire to form a single national accrediting body was still prominent. It was however resisted by both accreditation bodies and the academic community. This issue continues to be highly controversial and new initiatives have been made in this direction by the government.

### **Fast-tracking accreditation will not do**

Accreditation in the Philippines is criticized for being too slow. Fast-tracking accreditation efforts are considered as a possible solution, but remain controversial. Current accreditation work is a team effort conducted in a democratic process, which is time-consuming. Moreover, self-realization of institutional shortcomings is a painful process and time must be allotted to reach conclusive findings that reflect the reality of the situation. Thus, the preparation of the self-study report requires ample time to put forth institutional self-realization and acceptance of shortcomings, strengths and opportunities in an official written document. Besides, both school personnel and officials that perform the self-study report must assure their full-time work within the institution to which the task of accreditation is added. In some instances, those involved in self-study work may receive either a token honorarium or de-loading of a job assignment. Still, it is not enough to hasten the preparation of the self-survey report.

The completion of the self-study report is followed by the lengthy period of solving problems that the report has identified in order to comply with accreditation standards, which is just as time-consuming as the preparation of the self-study report. It may even take longer, most especially when there are financial and manpower constraints.

While the actual work of the accreditation team may only take four to five days, the ensuing analysis for the presentation of the findings to the board of trustees of the accrediting association may prolong the procedure. After the submission of the accreditation report, the board of trustees may need a considerable amount of time for its examination.

### **Accreditation strengthens institutional stability**

Accredited institutions have demonstrated better performance, as shown above in the discussion on the impact of accreditation. Because of the evident results, accredited institutions enjoy an improved institutional image that attracts more students. As shown in the case study, Institution B now operates at an enrolment level that benefits economies of scale and sets, in fact, an enrolment limit consistent with accreditation standards. In addition to compliance with accreditation standards and an ample enrolment level, accredited institutions achieve financial stability with the corresponding continuing plough-back of operating surplus that strengthens the financial situation. The sound financial foundation of accredited institutions allows for the financing of quality-enhancing activities for the institution to continuously strengthen excellence.

### **Programme accreditation can be supportive of institutional accreditation**

The entire accreditation work in the Philippines focuses on academic programmes. To begin with, accreditation is usually performed in three programmes - liberal arts, education and commerce. There is a common instrument for all of the accrediting associations in these programmes. Subsequently, one finds accreditation programmes in nursing, engineering, maritime

education, graduate education, etc. While accreditation is programme-based, other facets of higher-education operation are inevitably studied, e.g. the administrative and organizational structures, financing etc. Thus, programme accreditation is supportive of institutional accreditation. Unlike in the USA, where institutional accreditation is present in all academic programmes that are accredited, in the Philippine experience, the likelihood of attaining institutional accreditation occurs only when the institution has already attained Level III status and when almost all the academic programmes of the institution are already accredited.

### **Accreditation as a key towards a quality-assurance system and internationalization of Philippine higher education**

Accreditation is a good starting point for a built-in programme in continuous quality assurance for higher-education institutions. However, international comparability is not ensured through national accreditation systems. The International Standards Organization (ISO) Series 9000 and 14001 illustrate the experience in business and industry when international comparability of standards is possible. This system is slowly gaining ground in the education sector. The focus of ISO is on the process and provision of logistics for continuous improvement of excellence, which is not simply a destination but a journey. ISO was first adopted in an academic programme of maritime education - the Philippines is a major supplier of seafarers for the maritime fleet worldwide. With this system, the ISO-certified maritime education institutions conform to standards of worldwide comparability, and the International Maritime Organization (a United Nations body) and international shipping lines are therefore confident that the academic operation of these institutions adheres to world-class standards. In addition to maritime education, other academic programmes are ISO-certified, e.g. nursing, computer education, etc.

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## CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the tremendous expansion of state colleges and universities, accreditation has been found to be an effective scheme to distinguish quality levels among higher-education institutions in the Philippines.

Moreover, the starting point in the accreditation process is the democratic and participatory involvement of the members of the academic community in analyzing strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. This initiative in itself is essential for all stakeholders of higher education, all members of the academic community, as well as society that benefits. It favours the realization of the institutional mission, goals, objectives, and directions in relation to scarce financial resources, manpower and other educational logistics available towards the imperative for the institution to grow and develop as an important partner in the community. As shown in this report, the performance of accredited institutions is quite distinctive, especially in terms of income and employment indicators, and in the degree of success in board examinations. However, it is beset with problems and issues that must be resolved.

Accreditation will continue to play a crucial role in enhancing quality of higher education in the Philippines. There will be greater pressure to accelerate the procedure, especially because most of the higher-education programmes in the Philippines are yet to be accredited. Additional external stress brought on by the phenomenon of globalization will also impinge on higher education, and accreditation is a good starting point in response to the need for world-class standards in higher education. The availability of higher-

education programmes and teaching materials through the Internet will also exert pressure on higher education in the Philippines. Certain twinning programmes or partnerships with higher-education institutions abroad will also exert pressure on many higher-education institutions. A relationship of this type is only successful if both partners have some operational quality assurance programmes in place, which may be a combination of both the activities of accreditation and the certification system of ISO.

The ISO certification system, which has been used successfully in business and industry, as discussed above, is a potential force that could very likely be the basis for 'benchmarking' higher education. However, academic programmes are compelled by the significant demand from abroad, mostly professional sectors such as maritime education, nursing, physical therapy, computer engineering and others. The Philippines, being a supplier of manpower on an international scale, will have to maintain world-class standards of higher education for the surplus of qualified manpower in order to have a competitive edge in the world. To date, the ISO system of international comparability is employed. However, PAASCU is a member of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). The possibility for joint efforts in the present accreditation system with both INQAAHE and ISO may take shape in the continuing quest for world-class higher education in the Philippines.

The Philippine accrediting agencies and FAPE have been hosts to a number of educators from abroad in the field of accreditation. Higher-education officials from such countries as Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, South Korea, Thailand and others, have often been in consultation with local experts in accreditation. A team of educators from Laos spent time in the Philippines to understand fully the

operation of accreditation. On another occasion, a group of higher-education officials from Mongolia were provided with enrichment programmes in accreditation. The Korean Council of University Education (KCUE) has had several discussions with accreditation officials and FAPE on accreditation.

Concern for world-class higher education is more pressing in countries that are in a similar situation to that of the Philippines. These countries must adopt 'pole-vaulting' strategies for enhancement towards world-class quality education. Both the accreditation and the ISO certification systems could be good schemes with a view to rendering these countries competitive on the world market where the forces of free trade and globalization reign.



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