

Good Governance Principles in Decision-making of a State Higher Education Institution's Governing Body

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Abstract

This study determined the satisfaction of the stakeholders in terms of the good governance practices of the governing body and analyzed documents of the results of the different internal and external auditing bodies or measures. The study was a descriptive-exploratory research using a validated instrument with Cronbach's alpha .942 to get the satisfaction level of the decision-making of the governing body. Existing documents of the office performance commitment and review, customer feedback, AACUP, ISO 9001, COD, PRIME-HR, finance, OPCR, and stakeholder's satisfaction were analyzed. Results show that stakeholders' level of satisfaction in the eight principles was very much satisfied, and that the university has achieved most of its annual targets for the specific performance indicators for the seven major final outputs which include higher education program, advanced education program, research program, technical advisory extension program, support to operations, general administration and support services, and good governance conditions. On the other hand, there are specific targets for FY 2018, FY 2019, and FY 2020 that were not met. The non-attainment of targets for these years resulted in the ineligibility of the university on the incentives in 2018, and the exclusion of major offices responsible for the non-attainment of the target on the incentives given in 2019.

Keywords: Good governance, quality assurance, customer feedback, organizational success, leadership

Introduction

Good governance is related to good administration. There is fast organizational development with good governance because it generates reliability, predictability and accountability essential for any organization's success. The administration of public higher education institutions or state colleges and universities (SUCs) and

their governing body called the board of regents, play an essential role in serving its stakeholders, bringing their passion, commitment, skills, and experience to the university.

There are many good practices that SUCs have instituted through the years to better manage their growing organizations.

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The first good practice is the strategic performance management system that links employee performance with organizational performance to enhance the compensation system. It ensures that the employee achieves the organization's objectives, and the organization, on the other hand, achieves the objectives that it has set as its strategic plan (Civil Service Commission, 2021). The heads of an office/unit are evaluated according to the office performance commitment and review major or final output with its targets and measures. There are three functions that organizations need to respond: first is strategic priorities which are outputs that implement and deliver the mandates of the organization as identified in its strategic roadmap. The second is the core functions that deliver the main services and products of the organization. The third is the support functions which provide the necessary resource to enable the organization to effectively perform its mandate.

Another good practice is getting the customer's feedback. Customer feedback is information provided by stakeholders about whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with a product or service and general experience they had with the organization. Collecting customer feedback shows that the university and its units value the opinions of their stakeholders. By asking the stakeholders' feedback, the SUC communicates that their opinion is important to the administration. Their involvement helps the university create relations with them. This participation can help the university with its innovation, product development, marketing, operations, and build a loyal customer base. The main reasons why feedback is important is to evaluate and get things better.

Yet another best practice of SUCs is its

quality assurance measures with AACCCUP, ISO, ISA, COD/COE, PRIME-HRM, APCR, and watch-bodies---accrediting, auditing or mandated overseeing external bodies evaluating the concerned mechanism and its operation. Each of these bodies follows a set of standards which are cross-checked against the operation of the organization. All of these measures are crucial to the levels awarded to any SUC in the Philippines. At present, the study locale is a state HEI, a Level III SUC based on CHED Memo Order No. 9 s. 2019. SUC levelling measures the university's or college's institutional performance covering areas relative to programs, functions, and operations focusing on instruction, research, extension and management capability. The prescribed four KRAs are assigned specific points and weights are similarly assigned not exceeding the total point allocation of each KRA. These KRAs represent the major indicators that would measure the stages of development and institutional performance. Putting all of these measures successfully together will result to high SUC level for the university and to more government funding which raises the reputation of the organization through its linkages.

Like any state HEI, this SUC follows the principles of good governance which include participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law (UNDP, 2011). The reasons why the university follows good governance aside from being its mandate is because it can create sustainable change where engaged stakeholders help inform decisions and provide the support the organization needs for long-term sustainability (Hendricks, 2020).

Hence, it was the aim of the present

study to determine the satisfaction of the stakeholders in terms of the good governance practices of the governing body and analyze the documents of the results of the different internal and external auditing bodies or measures to include the OPCR, customer feedback, ISO certifications, AACUP levels, CODs, PRIME-HRM, finance, APCR being monitored by DBM, RDC, NEDA, COA, amongst others, so that this HEI can determine what is in its future as an educational institution.

Framework

This study is anchored on stewardship theory in that the governing body acts like stewards that as defined by Idowu, Capaldi, Zu and Gupta (2013) is the group that takes on the responsibility of caring for the organization on behalf of a group of persons. Hence, stewardship theory is a framework where people are intrinsically motivated to work for the organization to accomplish the tasks and responsibilities with which they have been entrusted. This is significant to the present study as this espouses the concept of good governance as governing boards acting as stewards for an organization provides effective management and monitoring of essential state resources allowing the board to fulfill the role of protector and manager.

Good governance is transparent, accountable, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, consensus-oriented, responsive, consistent with the rule of law, and participative (UNDP, 2011). It is a way of measuring how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in a preferred way (UNESCAP, 2009). The UNDP elaborates these eight principles into the following: participation refers to the opportunity for

active involvement by all sectors in the society in the decision-making process regarding all issues of interest; rule of law is the principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and consistent with norms and standards; transparency exists where the process of decision-making by those in power can be scrutinized by concerned members of society; responsiveness exists where institutions and processes readily serve all stakeholders in a prompt and appropriate manner so that interests of all citizens are protected; consensus orientation ensures that the existing systems serve the best interests of society; equity and inclusiveness exist where everyone has opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being, where all members especially the most vulnerable are taken into consideration in policymaking; effectiveness and efficiency exist where processes and institutions make the best use of resources to produce results that meet the needs of society; and accountability is based on the principle that every person or group is responsible for their actions, especially when their acts affect public interest.

Good governance is especially significant in higher education because a university is a complicated organization and governance in higher education must provide for a truly variegated group of stakeholders. The role of good governance is to enable universities to manage relations among these stakeholders and to ensure that sustainability is achieved. Good governance informs and facilitates decision-making that enables a university to grow and prosper. Coupled with accountability and transparency, governance allows a university to be sustainable in the long-term

(Rathod, 2020; Jongbloed, Vossensteyn, van Vught, & Westerheijden, 2018)

Within the Philippine setting, there is a race to restructure and reform higher education institutions to help accelerate development. SUCs are granted autonomy with the hope that increased management flexibility will expedite development of SUCs in order to pursue greater economic growth. SUCs have to respond to common problems of quality, access, and equity (Asian Development Bank, 2012). That is why good governance principles are seen in such measures as AACCUP, ISO, COD/COE, PRIME-HRM, ISA, finance, APCR, and other public/private auditing bodies.

The findings of the study is important to the management of this SUC because the governance arrangements that demonstrate probity, strategic vision, accountability, awareness and management of risk, and effective monitoring of performance will be indicative of its development. Thus, it can be said that SUCs provide quality, access, and equity which are components to the roadmap for public higher education reform (CHED, PASUC & DBM Roadmap). These components help maximize the SUCs' contribution towards developing competent and high-level human resources who generate knowledge and technologies needed for advancing the country's national development and competitiveness.

Research Problems

This study answered the following questions: (1) what is the stakeholder's level of satisfaction with the university's governing board in terms of transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, equity and inclusiveness, consensus-oriented, responsiveness, rule of law, and participation? and, (2) in what ways has

the university exhibited good governance principles in terms of the QMS (APCR and OPCR), Financial Management, Customer's Feedback, ISO, AACCUP, COD, and PRIME-HRM?

Methodology

This was a descriptive-exploratory research using an instrument to delve into the satisfaction level of the decision-making of the governing body. The questionnaire items were taken from the UNDP (2011), Price (2018), and The Global Development Research Center's good governance principles. In addition, existing documents like results of the office performance commitment and review, customer feedback, AACCUP, ISO 9001, COD, PRIME-HR, finance, APCR, and stakeholder's satisfaction were analyzed. These data came from 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020 documents. The research locale was a state HEI in Region X, Philippines, with its employees and stakeholders from the wider community as research participants.

The instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts. After it was revised, approval to pilot test the questionnaire was sought. It was administered to 30 try-out participants representing the different groups of stakeholders. Reliability statistics using Cronbach's alpha resulted to .942 which has a high reliability factor. To respond to the ethical policies of the university, permission was asked from the administration and the informed consent from the 832 research participants. The Institutional Research Ethics Board approved the conduct of this study and so procedures like authorization, voluntary participation, and confidentiality were closely followed. The research participants were the university employees,

students, alumni, and community stakeholders.

To answer problem #1, descriptive statistics specifically frequency, and mean with the scoring qualifiers were used to summarize the data. To answer problem #2, document analysis was done for the office performance commitment and review (OPCR), customer feedback, AACUP, ISO 9001, COD, APCR, finance, and PRIME-HR. Specifically, trend analysis was used for the OPCR and customer feedback in the last three years.

Results and Discussion

Stakeholders' level of satisfaction with the university's governing board in terms of:

- a) transparency,
- b) accountability,
- c) effectiveness and efficiency,
- d) equity and inclusiveness,
- e) consensus-oriented,
- f) responsiveness,
- g) rule of law, and
- h) participation.

Transparency. Table 1 is on the stakeholders' level of satisfaction of the governing board based on the good governance principle of transparency. These 832 stakeholders included students, parents, alumni, employees of the university, and LGU representatives. For transparency, the highest mean are items *'there are decisions of the governing body which are provided in an understandable and accessible format, typically translated through the media (e.g., printed memos, JAACs' minutes of meetings, radio broadcasts, annual reports, university website, etc.)'*, and *'the governing body ensures that the university is transparent and stakeholders are informed of whom the*

contact person is who can answer questions and explain reports, if necessary (e.g., Information and Publication Services, VPs, etc.)', qualitatively described as very much satisfied.

Table 1

Stakeholders' Level of Satisfaction on the Governing Body's Transparency

Items	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
Transparency		
1. There is access to the means and manner in which decisions are made, especially if the concerned individual or unit is directly affected by such decisions (e.g., executive management committee, JAACs, grievance committee, Brace D'Link, etc.)	4.33	Very Much Satisfied
2. There are decisions of the governing body which are provided in an understandable and accessible format, typically translated through the media (e.g., printed memos, JAACs' minutes of meetings, radio broadcasts, annual reports, university website, etc.)	4.43	Very Much Satisfied
3. The governing body ensures that the university is transparent and stakeholders are informed of whom the contact person is who can answer questions and explain reports, if necessary (e.g., Information and Publication Services, VPs, etc.)	4.43	Very Much Satisfied
Average Mean	4.40	Very Much Satisfied

The university records and disseminates information to and from the governing board through memorandums, minutes of meetings of the joint academic and administrative council, grievance committee, Brace D' Link, annual reports, university website, and many other mediums. From the Office of the President are memorandums that inform the academic

community of policies, designations, and other information. Joint academic and administrative council meetings are also another way where employees and students raise matters to the governing board, and where the latter's decisions are also circulated. In addition, the board mandates the university to be transparent, and this is why in the university website regular articles are published with the names of the vice presidents, deans, and other officers so that the community may know whom to contact to answer their queries. There is also the Information and Publication Services and dxBU radio station for mass dissemination of news to the community. In fact, Jongbloed, Vossensteyn, van Vught and Westerheijden (2018) reported that reliable information and transparency on the benefits that higher education institutions offer their students, funders and communities are key to their legitimacy, their funding and their competitiveness. With the result in the present study the stakeholders acknowledge the diverse information needs of a wide variety of stakeholder groups.

Accountability. In terms of the good governance principle of accountability, Table 2 indicates that the highest mean is on *'the governing body keeps an eye on the way the university uses public money or private donations, thereby safeguarding the interests of all (e.g., rules and regulations of DBM, COA, etc.)'* The stakeholders know that the governing body watches over the university's use of government money, just as there are government agencies that oversee the use of funds like the policies of COA and/or DBM and other government offices which act as financial gatekeepers.

In the past, there was a public outcry for better accountability of resources consumed for higher education. Hence, legislators responded with performance criteria and

mandates for accountability. It is hoped that through these measures, universities will become better custodians of public funds leading to better and more efficient utilization of limited resources (Doost, 1998). The university is mandated to the rules on government accounting, Anti-red Tape Act of 2007 (RA No. 9485), Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees (RA No. 6713), Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM), etc.

Table 2

Stakeholders' Level of Satisfaction on the Governing Board's Accountability

Accountability	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
1. The governing body is ultimately accountable to the people and one another (other government agencies, civil society, and the private sector) (e.g., reports to CHED, NEDA, RDC, DBM, CSC, COA, etc.)	4.39	Very Much Satisfied
2. The governing body monitors the university in terms of reporting its decisions and their consequences (e.g., BOR quarterly meetings and/or emergency meetings)	4.43	Very Much Satisfied
3. The governing body keeps an eye on the way the university uses public money or private donations, thereby safeguarding the interests of all (e.g., rules and regulations of DBM, COA, etc.)	4.44	Very Much Satisfied
Average Mean	4.42	Very Much Satisfied

Effectiveness and Efficiency. Efficiency is the state of attaining the maximum productivity with the least effort spent, and effectiveness is the extent to which

something is successful in providing the desired result (Surbhi, 2018). In terms of the board's efficiency and effectivity, Table 3 shows that *'the governing body ensures that the social investments and natural resources are maintained for future generations (e.g., University Museum, Cultural Studies, Binukid course in most programs, green engineering in architectural design of new buildings, botanical garden, etc.)'* and *'the governing board encourages the university to move towards governance management software solutions (i.e., e-governance, MIS, etc.)'*.

A few years ago, the university built the University Museum that houses the indelible ink of the province's ethnic tribes where the Cultural Studies with the Binukid language was later transferred. Moreover, with the 'Build Build Build' slogan of the government the university was granted funds for capital outlay because of its effective budget utilization rate for fiscal performance (DBM no. 2018, s. 2018), architectural design in its campuses followed some characteristics of green engineering as appropriate, creation of the botanical gardens, and other projects.

ICT also improved the management in e-governance and information system, like the HR Logix for automated log-in system, employees records, flexible learning system for instruction, QAMIS for evaluation of faculty by students, kiosks for students' online grading access, student information system, and others.

Output-based funding rules and independent evaluation by external agencies are positively related to efficiency and effectivity of public tertiary education (St. Aubyn, Pina, Garcia, & Pais, 2008). This is reflected in the recent moves of the university as it became re-certified in ISO 9001: 2015, ongoing AACUP accreditations through the decades, as of

this writing, preparation for ISA, obtaining awards for two Centers of Development, and many more.

Table 3

Stakeholders' Level of Satisfaction in the Governing Board's Efficiency and Effectivity

Effectiveness and Efficiency	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
1. The governing body oversees the sustainable use of resources to meet the needs of the university and the communities it serves (e.g., financial review of all business transactions of government money, feasibility studies of proposed programs, etc.)	4.45	Very Much Satisfied
2. The governing body ensures that the social investments and natural resources are maintained for future generations (e.g., University Museum, Cultural Studies, Binukid course in most programs, green engineering in architectural design of new buildings, botanical garden, etc.)	4.47	Very Much Satisfied
3. The governing board encourages the university to move towards governance management software solutions (i.e., e-governance, MIS, etc.)	4.47	Very Much Satisfied
Average Mean	4.46	Very Much Satisfied

Equity and Inclusiveness. Under the principle of equity and inclusiveness of the governing board, Table 4 reveals that the highest mean is on *'the governing board*

encourages the stakeholders to use their voice to share the latter’s experiences, opinions and philosophies to enhance and broaden discussions (e.g., stakeholders’ fora, Brace D’Link, clubs and organizations, etc.)’.

During the stakeholders’ fora that typically invite alumni, parents, students, student supreme council, business people, LGU and industry representatives, and industry representatives, their voices are heard reflecting their backgrounds, philosophies, and values. These are then incorporated within the VMG of the university, curricula of the various academic programs, in researches and extension projects, and other activities. Brace D’Link that is a forum for students to air their concerns through which concerned office representatives give their responses is a venue for gaining a level of satisfaction regarding students’ issues. Clubs and organizations are important features of university life because it provides a way for students, faculty, and personnel to belong to a group which is an avenue for them to express their competencies and interests. Accomplishments and issues are indirectly monitored by the governing board through the three vice presidents.

The principle of equity and inclusiveness is necessary for without them, only some people in the universities would be able to progress, acquire knowledge and skills, fulfill their potential, and fully participate in society. Without equity and inclusivity, inequality in society is reinforced and perpetuated (Schleicher, 2014).

Consensus-oriented. Consensus-oriented describes the process of making decisions together. The governing body is composed of people representing CHED, NEDA, DOST, business, alumni, student government body, president of the faculty association, and the

university president. As a group they work collaboratively in coming to a decision.

Table 4

Stakeholders’ Level of Satisfaction on the Governing Board’s Equity and Inclusiveness

Equity and Inclusiveness	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
1. The governing body ensures that all the members of the university even the communities the university serves feel included and empowered to improve or maintain their well-being, especially those individuals and groups who are the most vulnerable (e.g., stakeholders fora, university’s FB for All Personnel, faculty association, students’ clubs and organizations, etc.)	4.42	Very Much Satisfied
2. The governing board encourages the stakeholders to use their voice to share the latter’s experiences, opinions and philosophies to enhance and broaden discussions (e.g., stakeholders’ fora, Brace D’Link, clubs and organizations, etc.)	4.44	Very Much Satisfied
3. The governing board ensures that no one feels left out or feel that their opinions have less meaning than others (e.g., stakeholders’ fora, Brace D’Link, clubs and organizations, etc.)	4.39	Very Much Satisfied
Average Mean	4.42	Very Much Satisfied

In Table 5, the highest mean is on item ‘the governing body makes decisions made in a manner that reflects a deep understanding of the historical, cultural, and social context of the university and communities the latter serves (e.g., University Museum, Cultural Studies, Binukid subject in the curricula of most programs, etc.)’.

Since there is more than one actor in the board and there are many viewpoints in the group, good governance requires

mediation of the different interests of the members to achieve a consensus so that the best decision can be achieved for the whole group (Sabandar, Tawe, & Musa, 2017). This practice of good governance is evident in the way the board makes suggestion and/or advice that reflects their deep understanding of the background of the university.

Table 5

Stakeholders' Level of Satisfaction in the Governing Board's Consensus-orientation

Consensus-oriented	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
1. The governing body seeks to mediate between the many different needs, perspectives, and expectations of a diverse citizenry (e.g., Brace D'Link fora, clubs and organizations, BOR quarterly meetings, etc.)	4.38	Very Much Satisfied
2. The governing body makes decisions made in a manner that reflects a deep understanding of the historical, cultural, and social context of the university and communities the latter serves (e.g., University Museum, Cultural Studies, Binukid subject in the curricula of most programs, etc.)	4.44	Very Much Satisfied
3. The governing body hosts robust discussions which result in the best decision (e.g., executive management committee meetings, JAACs, clubs and organizations, etc.)	4.42	Very Much Satisfied
Average Mean	4.41	Very Much Satisfied

Responsiveness. Responsiveness in higher education, according to Stoessel (2016), is the ability of colleges and universities to be internally focused, responding to the direction and needs of a constantly changing enterprise. This means that at certain times, needs change hence the university must respond appropriately.

Table 6 shows that the highest mean is 'the governing body mandates the university's

offices and their processes to serve all stakeholders (e.g., customer feedback, Brace D'Link, stakeholders' fora, etc.). This is why the university has come up with ISO external audit, Brace D' Link, stakeholders' fora and the like, to not only respond to the needs of the different groups who make up the stakeholders of the academic community but also to plan how to serve them well. Quality customer service delivery is the process by which an organization delivers superior value to the target customers (Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders, & Wong, 2002). This is the reason why the governing board mandates the university to serve all its stakeholders efficiently and effectively.

Table 6

Stakeholders' Level of Satisfaction in the Governing Board's Responsiveness

Responsiveness	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
1. The governing body through the university responds to their stakeholders within a reasonable time frame (e.g., executive management committee, JAACs, grievance committee, etc.)	4.37	Very Much Satisfied
2. The governing body responds to crises and controversies in ways that enable them to provide honest answers to the direction of the organization (e.g., executive management committee, JAACs, grievance committee, etc.)	4.38	Very Much Satisfied
3. The governing body mandates the university's offices and their processes to serve all stakeholders (e.g., customer feedback, Brace D'Link, stakeholders' fora, etc.)	4.45	Very Much Satisfied
Average Mean	4.40	Very Much Satisfied

Rule of Law. Table 7 indicates the item 'the governing body is fair, impartial in their collaborations and in their decision-making (e.g., JAACs, grievance committee, NBC criteria, etc.)' has the highest mean. Rule

of law in this instance is just and judicious decisions of assigned people in the university based on policies of the universities, and laws of the land like PD 1445 (Auditing Code of the Philippines), DBM issuances, Government Accounting Manual (GAM) and many other memorandums that govern the management of SUCs.

Table 7
Stakeholders’ Level of Satisfaction in the Governing Board’s Rule of Law

Rule of Law	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
1. The governing body protects the human rights and civil liberties of all its stakeholders, particularly the minorities (e.g., equal access to education, affirmative action, etc.)	4.48	Very Much Satisfied
2. The governing body is fair, impartial in its collaborations and decision-making (e.g., JAACs, grievance committee, NBC criteria, etc.)	4.45	Very Much Satisfied
3. The governing body acts ethically, honestly, and with utmost integrity (e.g., ethics board for researches, elsewhere the decisions are based from the committees going up to JAACs, executive management committee, president and finally the board of regents).	4.45	Very Much Satisfied
Average Mean	4.46	Very Much Satisfied

Participation. Table 8 indicates that the highest mean is on the item ‘*the governing body values multiple perspectives through the inclusion of a variety of people, skills, talents, abilities, and experiences (i.e., the body has representative from the LGU, student body, business, alumni, faculty association, SUC president, NEDA, RDC, etc.)*’. Based on this indicator, it reflects that the university acknowledges the participation of the different stakeholders as they help in the decision making of the university. The participation of the different stakeholders

with their multiple views will lead to a better process, and greater community support. These are the people who have a strong interest in the efforts of the academic community.

Table 8
Stakeholders’ Level of Satisfaction in the Governing Board’s Participation

Participation	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
1. The governing body requires that all internal and external stakeholders, particularly those most vulnerable, have direct or representative access to the university (e.g., student body organizations, Brace D’Link fora, etc.)	4.44	Very Much Satisfied
2. The governing body ensures that there is strong civil society/ community and citizens within the university with freedom of association and expression (i.e., presence of organizations like teaching and non-teaching personnel organizations, student clubs, etc.)	4.43	Very Much Satisfied
3. The governing body values multiple perspectives through the inclusion of a variety of people, skills, talents, abilities, and experiences (i.e., the body has representative from the LGU, student body, business, alumni, faculty association, SUC president, NEDA, RDC, etc.)	4.46	Very Much Satisfied
Average Mean	4.44	Very Much Satisfied

Summary

Table 9 is the summary of the stakeholders’ level of satisfaction with the governing board’s good governance principles. It shows that the grand mean is qualitatively described as ‘very much satisfied’. Hence, the eight principles of transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, equity and inclusiveness, consensus-oriented, responsiveness, rule of law, and participation are all practiced by

the board and reflected in the PPAs of the whole university. This implies that processes produce results that meet the needs of the university and the community it serves while making the best use of the resources at their disposal (UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2009).

Table 9

Summary of the Stakeholders' Level of Satisfaction in the Governing Board's Good Governance Principles

Items	Mean	Qualifying Descriptor
Transparency	4.40	Very Much Satisfied
Accountability	4.42	Very Much Satisfied
Effectiveness and efficiency	4.46	Very Much Satisfied
Equity and inclusiveness	4.42	Very Much Satisfied
Consensus-oriented	4.41	Very Much Satisfied
Responsiveness	4.40	Very Much Satisfied
Rule of law	4.46	Very Much Satisfied
Participation	4.44	Very Much Satisfied
Grand Mean	4.42	Very Much Satisfied

Good Governance in Terms of QMS (APCR and OPCR), Financial Management, Customer's Feedback, ISO, AACCUP, COD, and PRIME-HRM

Good governance is exemplified in the organization's best practices in handling its quality assurance mechanisms including its Quality Management System (APCR and OPCR), and the upkeep of the status of its financial management, customer's feedback, ISO certification, and AACCUP, COD, and PRIME-HRM accreditations.

One of the best practices is the establishment of the university's Strategic Performance Management Systems (SPMS) that links individual performance vis-à-vis the agency's organizational vision, mission, and strategic goals embodied in its QMS. The SPMS as one form of performance

evaluation/appraisal system aims to strengthen the culture of performance and accountability in the government service and is a requirement of the national government. This mechanism ensures that the employee achieves the objectives set by the organization and the organization, on the other hand, achieves the objectives that it has set itself in its strategic plans (CSC Memorandum Circular No. 6, s. 2012).

Annual Performance Commitment Report. The organization's APCR is the basis in determining whether or not an agency performs within the periphery of promoting integrity, transparency, accountability, proper management of public affairs and public property, as well as, establishing effective practices aimed at the efficient turnaround of the delivery of government services and prevention of graft and corruption (IATF-HNGPMIRS, Memorandum Circular No. 2020-1). The results of the APCR is also the basis of the granting of Performance-Based Bonus (PBB) of government agencies nationwide. The APCR is a document containing the criteria and conditions translated into targets in the following areas: good governance, Congress-approved performance targets, support to operations, and GASS targets to which a government agency has to satisfy.

Table 10 shows the assessment of the university's performance for the last three years 2018-2020. The table indicates that the university has attained its physical targets for the seven major final outputs in 2018, 2019, and 2020, except for the technical advisory extension program in 2020. Within the physical targets of Technical Advisory Extension Programs are indicators such as number of active partnerships with LGUs, industries, NGOs, NGAs, SMEs, and other stakeholders as a result of extension services, number of trainees weighted by the length

Table 10

Summary Table of Physical Performance for 2018-2020

Major Final Outputs	Accomplishment					
	2018	Description	2019	Description	2020	Description
Higher Education Program	109.75%	Attained	110.75%	Attained	114.82%	Attained
Advanced Education Program	237%	Attained	142.75%	Attained	141%	Attained
Research Program	239.33%	Attained	100%	Attained	100%	Attained
Technical Advisory Extension Program	275%	Attained	131%	Attained	85.74%	Not Attained
Support to Operations	100%	Attained	100%	Attained	100%	Attained
General Administrative Support Services	100%	Attained	100%	Attained	100%	Attained
Good Governance Conditions	100%	Attained	100%	Attained	100%	Attained

of training, number of extension programs organized and supported consistent with the SUC’s mandated and priority programs, and percentage of beneficiaries who rate the training courses and advisory services as satisfactory or higher in terms of quality and relevance. The non-attainment of the physical target in this area was due to the cancellation of scheduled trainings in compliance to Proclamation Order No. 922 declaring a state of public health emergency throughout the Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In terms of the other MFOs, the following are the sub-indicators. Under higher education program, the sub-indicators include percentage of first-time licensure exam-takers who passed the same, percentage of graduates (two years prior) who are employed, percentage of undergraduate student population enrolled in CHED-identified and RDC-identified priority programs, and percentage of undergraduate programs with accreditation. Under advanced education program, the sub-indicators are percentage of graduate

school faculty engaged in research work applied in any of the following: percentage of graduate students enrolled in research degree programs, and percentage of accredited graduate programs. For research program, its sub-indicators are number of research outputs in the last three years utilized by the industry or by other beneficiaries, number of research outputs completed within the year, and percentage of research outputs published in internationally-refereed or CHED-recognized journal within the year. Under support to operations, the indicator is posting of ISO 9001 Quality Management System Certificate. For general administration and support services, its indicators include budget utilization rate, public financial management reporting requirements of COA and DBM, and procurement requirements. In good governance, the indicators are transparency seal, PhilGEPS posting, and citizen’s charter. Overall, this university is able to achieve all its targets for the past three years, except during 2020 when the world-wide health crisis affected almost all operations in

the university particularly the delivery of academic services and extension projects which are two of its important mandates.

Office Performance Commitment Review Ratings. Similar to the APCR, the university also maintains the OPCR as a check and balance mechanism to determine the performance of the delivery units in the university. Table 11 shows the performance ratings of the various delivery units of the university for the last three years. Significantly, Table 11 shows that there were few delivery units in 2018 than there were in the succeeding years because in 2018, the university set forth the Guidelines on Ranking Delivery Units and Individuals as basis for granting the Performance-Based Bonus (PBB), which were and still is consistent with the Executive Order 201, s. 2016 of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Harmonization of National Government Performance Monitoring Information and Reporting System. The university's guidelines resulted to the identification of 19 delivery units in 2018 which were directly responsible for the deliverables, cascaded as Major Final Outputs (MFO) as prescribed by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). In the succeeding years however, the top management including the Performance Management Team (PMT) felt the need to strengthen the performance-based incentive in recognition of those government personnel who play a greater role and carry a heavier responsibility in attaining the university's targets. Hence, the decision to include all units and/or offices in the university as part of the ranking of the delivery units was unanimous. Moreover, in 2019 and 2020, there were units that had no ratings as a result of the creation and/or merging, and abolition of various offices as the university

continued to address the challenges in those years in its quest for continual improvement.

From Table 11, almost all offices gained an overall rating higher than 4.50 in two rating periods for the past three years. This means that various offices consistently performed their best by delivering what was expected of them especially in terms of each unit's deliverables. These results imply that the delivery units had achieved their targets set for each rating period more than the minimum, but with some offices as an exemption. One striking result, for example, of the office that repetitively performed the lowest is the Business Affairs Office (BAO), which is under the direct supervision of the OVPAPD. BAO is responsible for the income generation of the university that is directly accountable for the increase of the return of investment as one of its major final outputs. Unfortunately, the 2015-2019 IGP records of the financial position of the university indicated a decreasing sale that was attributed to the decrease in number of enrollees beginning 2016 due to K to 12 implementation. It resulted to low demand of services like production of instructional materials, graduation package, souvenir programs, and the like; hence, the decrease in sales. This factor including other unachieved targets could explain the low rating of the office especially in 2018 and 2019. Fortunately, during the last quarter of 2019, the university's IGPs generated sufficient cash flows for expansion in support to instruction and the university's strategic directions as a whole. Nonetheless, the BAO has yet again faced a major setback during the last two quarters of 2020 due to the lockdown brought about by the COVID 19 crisis. As an office that relies so much on the presence of the students to fully operate, whether or not the office will be

Table 11

Office Performance Commitment Review Ratings of the University’s Delivery Units for Three Years

Office/Delivery Units	2018		2019		2020		Average		Over All
	1 st Rating	2 nd Rating	1 st Rating	2 nd Rating	1 st Rating	2 nd Rating	1 st Rating	2 nd Rating	
OS			5.00	4.55	4.90	4.90	4.78	4.90	4.84
QA			4.36	4.80	4.95	4.80	4.58	4.88	4.73
PO			4.60		4.80		4.60		4.60
IPS			4.85	4.38	3.99	4.70	4.62	4.35	4.48
IAS			4.82	4.8	4.50	4.35	4.81	4.43	4.62
Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs	4.70	4.80	4.82	4.78	4.8	4.86	4.77	4.81	4.79
CON	4.96	4.88	4.95	4.70	4.70	4.76	4.87	4.78	4.83
CSDT	4.84	4.98	4.90	4.85	4.65	4.47	4.80	4.77	4.78
CAS	4.83	4.93	4.88	4.84	4.40	4.60	4.70	4.79	4.75
COE	4.88	4.87	4.88	4.90	4.55	4.60	4.77	4.79	4.78
COB	4.82	4.74	4.88	4.50	4.55	4.53	4.75	4.59	4.67
COL	4.90	4.35	4.90	4.43	4.52	4.40	4.77	4.39	4.58
COA**					4.48	4.65	4.48	4.65	4.57
OSS	4.69	4.65	4.77	4.67	4.4	4.80	4.62	4.71	4.66
REGISTRAR	4.34	5.00	4.26	4.22	4.48	4.75	4.36	4.66	4.51
LIBRARY	4.74	4.75	4.99	4.17	4.64	4.8	4.79	4.57	4.68
NSTP			3.58	4.80	4.68	4.80	4.13	4.80	4.47
ESC			4.91	4.51	4.15	4.36	4.53	4.44	4.48
GUIDANCE			4.94	4.90	4.42	4.90	4.68	4.90	4.79
DENTAL			4.90	4.92	4.65	4.90	4.78	4.91	4.84
MEDICAL			4.69	4.60	4.65	4.40	4.67	4.50	4.59
DORMITORY			4.64	3.90			4.64	3.90	4.27
CITL**					4.8	4.65	4.80	4.65	4.73
Office of the Vice President for Administration, Planning and Development	4.98	4.86	5.0	4.94	4.55	4.7	4.84	4.83	4.84
CAO-FINANCE	5.00	4.90	4.91	4.90	4.72	4.95	4.88	4.92	4.90
PPMO	4.79	4.96	4.82	4.71	4.36	4.57	4.66	4.75	4.70
ICT	4.94	4.80	4.73	4.88	4.80	4.32	4.82	4.67	4.75
BAO	3.70	4.09	3.78	4.15	4.21	4.34	3.90	4.19	4.05
MAINTENANCE/PPMU	4.13	4.16	4.42	4.58	4.30	4.12	4.28	4.29	4.29
HRDU	4.40	4.83	4.94	4.85	4.47	4.74	4.60	4.81	4.71
CAO ADMIN	4.50	4.90	4.92	4.90	4.70	4.40	4.71	4.73	4.72
PLANNING & DEV'T			4.60	4.80	4.90	4.90	4.75	4.85	4.80
DRRM					4.80	4.80	4.80	4.80	4.80
ACCOUNTING					4.80	4.78	4.80	4.78	4.79
BUDGET					4.90	5.00	4.90	5.00	4.95
CASHIERING					4.90	5.00	4.90	5.00	4.95
Office of the Vice President for Research, Extension, and International Affairs	4.86	4.76	4.91	4.96	4.8	4.86	4.86	4.86	4.86
BSC			4.88	4.96	4.80	4.90	4.84	4.93	4.89
DXBU			4.91	4.53	4.80	4.65	4.86	4.59	4.72
EXTENSION UNIT			5.00	4.95	4.80	4.90	4.90	4.93	4.91
IMDC			4.94	4.96			4.94	4.96	4.95
RESEARCH UNIT			4.94	4.87	4.80	4.66	4.87	4.77	4.82
STATISTICAL CENTER			4.39	4.86	4.80	4.70	4.60	4.78	4.69
IPTU**					4.80	4.75	4.80	4.75	4.78
GAD			4.91	4.95	4.55	4.90	4.73	4.93	4.83

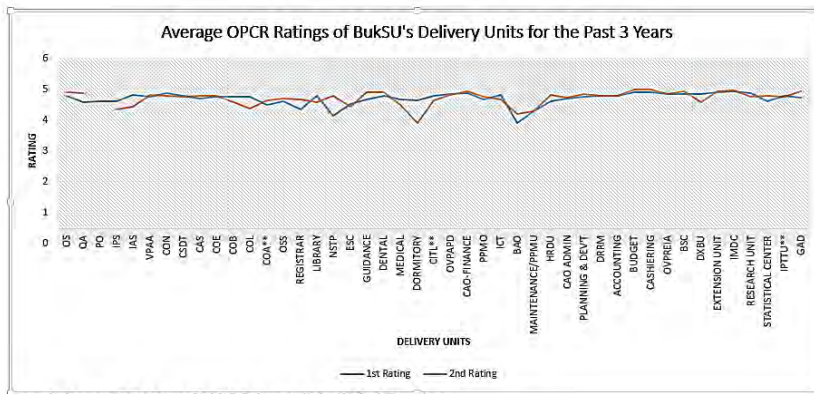
Figure 1.*Average OPCR Ratings for the Past Three Years*

Figure 1. Average OPCR Ratings of BukSU's Delivery Units for the Past Three Years

able to increase the return of investment of the university's IGP and achieve its equally important MFOs in 2021 remains to be seen.

In general, among the three vice presidents, the VPREIA consistently got the highest rating of 8.60 as an average rating for 1st and 2nd rating periods for the past three years, and the VPAPD and VPAA followed respectively as can be seen in Figure 1.

The ratings of the three VPs vary significantly as the VPREIA maintained the same average rating for the two rating periods, the VPAA's average ratings increased in the 2nd rating, while the VPAPD's average ratings decreased in the 2nd rating period. Moreover, the OPCR rating trend of high performance during

2nd rating periods was not the same in all offices. Meaning, there were offices that performed better and there were also those that performed low in the second rating periods because of the nature of the expected deliverables and MFOs per office. MFO performance indicators are a mix of outcome, output, activity, and process indicators that are unique at the unit level (Department of Budget and Management, 2012). Despite this fact however, the results of the OPCR ratings demonstrated a consistently high performance among all the delivery units implying the process owners' resolute commitment to continual improvement of the organization as a whole.

Consolidated Financial Data for FY 2017-2020. Relative to the PBB guidelines

Table 12*Budget Utilization Rate (Fund 101, Fund 164-Main Campus, Satellite Campuses, and IGP)*

	2017			2018			2019			2020		
	ALLOTMENT	OBLIGATION	BUR	ALLOTMENT	OBLIGATION	BUR	ALLOTMENT	OBLIGATION	BUR	ALLOTMENT	OBLIGATION	BUR
FUND 101	375,272,027.31	372,892,067.57	99.37%	447,917,475.00	447,108,814.30	99.82%	568,969,444.77	565,360,143.13	99.37%	420,924,934.23	420,235,518.07	99.84%
FUND 164-MAIN	366,151,535.13	310,512,110.44	84.80%	200,381,927.78	145,455,441.72	72.59%	171,718,695.02	160,391,935.45	93.40%	227,948,749.30	224,222,601.08	98.37%
FUND 164-SC	128,015,062.44	60,028,192.10	46.89%	91,912,222.25	33,629,971.24	36.59%	12,062,667.85	10,955,981.11	90.83%	52,551,923.20	50,136,673.58	95.40%
IGP	15,068,627.77	9,870,031.73	65.50%	20,172,925.28	16,889,308.47	83.72%	12,568,801.98	10,681,113.30	84.98%	1,115,271.18	10,639,529.40	95.72%
TOTAL	884,507,252.65	753,302,401.84	74.14%	760,384,550.31	643,083,535.73	73.18%	765,319,609.62	747,389,172.99	92.15%	702,540,877.91	705,234,322.13	97.33%

Table 13

Disbursement Utilization Rate per Fund of 2017-2020

Fund Source	2017				2018				2019				2020				Average
	PS	MOOE	CO	DUR	PS	MOOE	CO	DUR	PS	MOOE	CO	DUR	PS	MOOE	CO	DUR	
Fund 101	99.88	96.85	66.23	91.07%	99.94	95.61	65.58	88.87%	100.00	85.14	82.54	90.49	98.58	94.42	78.02	94.07	91.13
Fund 164 (Main & SC)	100.00	88.88	65.30	76.27%	100.00	95.84	56.06	83.46%	98.86	83.53	39.95	58.49	100.00	82.46	52.03	68.83	71.76
Fund 164 - IGP	100.00	93.56	34.70	91.48%	100.00	98.69	97.96	98.59%	100.00	95.28	0.33	66.64	100.00	78.63	95.85	85.72	85.61

and ranking of agencies in terms of performance, the fiscal status of the agency is a mandatory target. Specifically, the budget utilization rate, and the public financial management reporting requirements of COA and DBM are among those indicators under the area of general administration and support services. Clearly, this area satisfies the requirement on financial accountability and transparency which are suggestive of good governance.

Table 12 shows the budget utilization of the university from FY 2017-2020 showing the allotment, obligation, and budget utilization rate (BUR). The budget allotment of the university comes from different sources, such as Fund 101 which is from the GAA to pay for personnel services, MOOE, and capital outlay; Fund 164 which is from the income of the university which pays for internal programs, activities, and projects; and IGP that comes from the University Press (UP), Economic Enterprise Unit and other income generating projects which is used to fund the same projects and

additional income of the university.

From FY 2017-2019, the table indicates that for Fund 101 there was an average increase of 24%. However, in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, the university allotment decreased by 26% due to the Congress introduced increases (CII) for later release in FY2020 GAA amounting to P260,365,000.00 that was discontinued. The BUR is nearly 100% which implies that the university was able to implement its projects/programs/activities (PPAs) as planned. Moreover, the BUR for Fund 164-main campus, satellite campuses (SC), and IGP increased from 2018-2020 due to the inclusion of Fund 164 in the evaluation of the university’s performance.

Table 13 indicates the disbursement utilization rate for 2017-2020. The disbursement utilization rate (DUR) for four years was not stable as can be seen in the table. Disbursement is the release of funds to pay the obligation, the amount allocated to pay expenses, for instance, personnel services and the like.

Table 14

Increase (Decrease) of Income Collected from IGPs in 2020 vs. 2017

Account Title Description of Income 1	2020	2017	INCREASE (DECREASE)	
	Income Collected 3	Income Collected 4	5	
			Amount	%
Total Fiduciaries	292,200.00	406,550.00	-114,350.00	-28.13
Total Non-fiduciaries	1,950,748.93	9,876,471.11	-7,925,722.18	-80.25
Total	2,242,948.93	10,283,021.11	-8,040,072.18	-78.19

Table 15

Increase (Decrease) of Income Collected from IGPs in 2019 vs. 2017 (Pre-COVID)

Account Title Description of Income 1	2019	2017	INCREASE (DECREASE)	
	Income	Income	5	
	Collected	Collected	AMOUNT	%
Total Fiduciaries	1,049,495.00	406,550.00	642,945.00	158.15%
Total Non-fiduciaries	13,558,965.82	9,876,471.11	3,682,494.71	37.29%

Among the classification of expenses, the lowest utilization rate comes from the capital outlay (CO) followed by MOOE. This implies that the PPAs funded under CO and MOOE that were obligated on the same year were not paid because of non-completion of projects, incomplete and/or non-delivery of goods and services, or delays in the implementation due to unforeseen reasons.

In addition, Tables 14 and 15 show increase (decrease) of income collected for the university’s income generating projects (IGP). Fiduciary is the collection of payments for identification cards since the University Press, being one of the university’s IGPs, is the sole supplier/printer of the university IDs. Whereas,

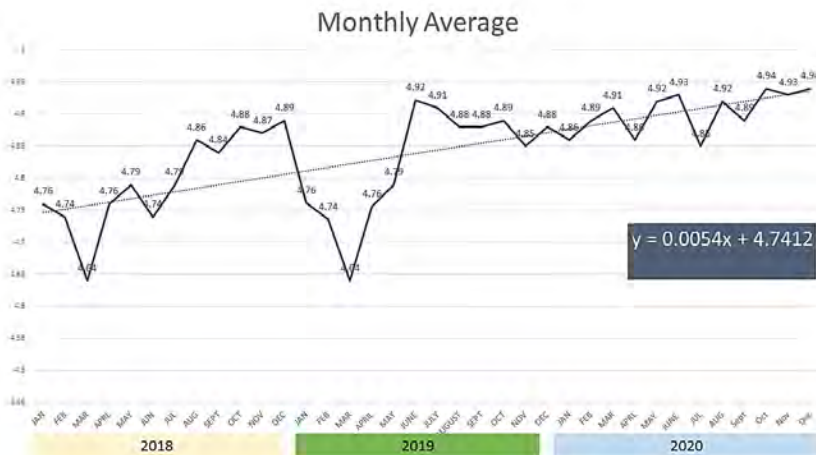
non-fiduciary fees are the collection as payment of services for printing, book sale, PE uniform and the like.

IGP operations were greatly affected by the pandemic, thus its income decreased by 78.19% in 2020 as compared to the pre-COVID years of 2017-2019 that shows an increase in collections by 42.06%.

University Customer Feedback Rating 2018 – 2020. Also an indication of good governance is the positive feedback from both the internal and external stakeholders of the university. Customer’s feedback is a mandatory target for PBB, as well as within the university’s QMS as the university pledged for continual improvement for the highest satisfaction of its clientele.

Figure 2

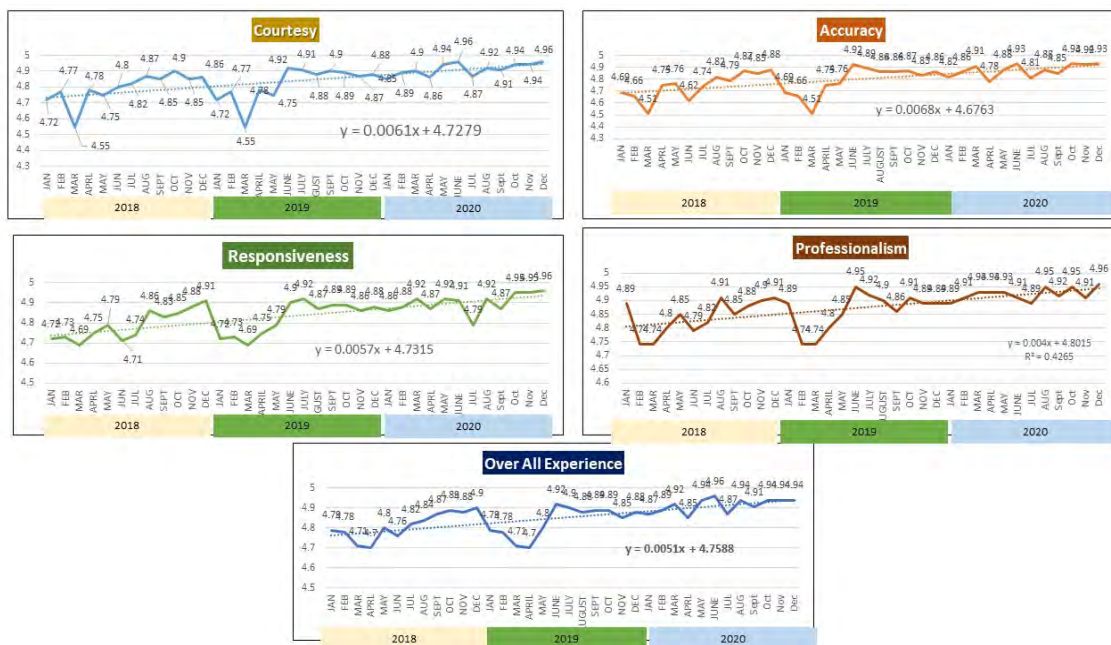
Monthly Average of Customer Feedback Rating for 2018-2020



Note: Scale for customer feedback is as follows: 4.21 – 5.0= Very Much Satisfied, 3.41 – 4.20= Very Satisfied, 2.61 – 3.4 = Moderately Satisfied, 1.81 – 2.6 = Slightly Satisfied, 1.0 – 1.80= Not Satisfied (Source: BukSU Monthly Feedback Report)

Figure 3

2018-2020 Customer Feedback Rating per Rating Area



Note: Scale for customer feedback is as follows: 4.21 – 5.0= Very Much Satisfied, 3.41 – 4.20= Very Satisfied, 2.61 – 3.4 = Moderately Satisfied, 1.81 – 2.6 = Slightly Satisfied, 1.0 – 1.80= Not Satisfied (Source: BukSU Monthly Feedback Report)

As a state university, the university puts premium on the highest satisfaction of its stakeholders. It established its feedback management system to monitor information relating to client perceptions as to whether the university has met client requirements and to provide a documented system to ensure continuous improvement through the management of clientele feedback (QMS, 2015). Delivery units in the university submit a monthly report of customer feedback to the university customer feedback in-charge who in turn summarizes the data to come up with a consolidated university feedback report

Figure 2 shows the monthly average of customer feedback ratings for fiscal year 2018-2020. The generated equation of the trend line that is $y = 0.0054x + 4.7412$ indicates a general upward trend or increasing customer feedback rating from January 2018 to December 2020. It

further shows that there is a 0.0054 monthly increase in the average customer feedback rating within this three-year period. It can be inferred, therefore, that the university clients were generally very satisfied with the services of the university based on monthly average rating between 4.64 – 4.94, which is qualitatively described as *very much satisfied*.

It can be seen further in the figure that there is a significant drop on customer feedback rating in March 2018 and 2019. This can be attributed to the drop in customers/clients in March as this was the month end of the second semester of SY 2017-2018 and SY 2018-2019. Meanwhile, the change in the academic calendar from June to August also contributed to the sudden drop of customer's rating for the month of March 2020. In addition, this was also the month when CHED mandated all SUCs to modify the mode of delivery of

instruction from face-to-face to virtual due to the nationwide lockdown as one measure to prevent the spread of the virus as the health crisis worsened at this time of the year.

In detail, Figure 3 shows the trend for the monthly feedback in the five rating areas, namely, courtesy, accuracy, responsiveness, professionalism, and over-all experience. The results show that there is also a general upward trend in the feedback of clients across the five rating areas. This means that customer feedback rating was increasing from January 2018 to December 2020. Along the five areas, the rating per month was categorized under *very much satisfied*. There was a noticeable drop in the rating of courtesy and accuracy in March 2018 and March 2019. On the other hand, there was also a visible rise in the rating of courtesy, accuracy, professionalism and over-all experience in the month of June 2019.

Based on the generated trend line equation, accuracy has the most rapid increase in rating among all rating areas as indicated by the generated slope of the line of 0.0068. This implies that the university employees perform their tasks consistently as prescribed by their job descriptions and delivered their services with efficiency as expected.

Government service is customer-oriented service. Literature has shown that the increase in client satisfaction can build public trust or confidence and uphold integrity and accountability among government agencies (Reyes, 2013). Delivering high quality services reciprocate better value for taxpayer's money and better allocation of resources in public sectors.

International Organization of Standardization (ISO) Audit Results 2017-2020. To keep abreast with the

changing landscape of quality assurance world-wide, this university subjected its QMS to ISO certification in 2018 and since then maintained its certification up until 2020. ISO 9001: 2015 is the international standard specifying what a quality management system (QMS) is. The standard is used by organizations to show consistency in providing products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements. The objective of quality audit is to verify the compliance of the department/organization to the defined Quality Management System and the requirements of ISO 9001:2015. Also, it provides the assurance and confidence to the management that the processes of the organization are being complied. Another important objective is to identify and highlight the non-compliance to the required levels within the organization so that they are acted upon promptly.

The findings reveal that there was a significant decrease in the number of minor non-conformity findings within the four-year quality audit period. It was in 2018 where the university was issued a significant number of seven (7) minor non-conformities, but this was attributed to the university's migration to the new ISO standard which is the 9001:2015 version, different from the 9001:2008 version for which the university was certified in 2017. The decreasing number of minor NCs was an indication of the improvement of the university's QMS and a reflection of good governance practices within the university. The findings further revealed that the NCs were mostly raised against the standards on service provisions and document management particularly in the provision of academic instruction. Additionally, the lapses on document management were also seen in the academic departments at

the time of the audit. These imply that the provision of academic instruction that is the primary mandate of the university, as well as the control of documents are two challenging areas in the implementation of QMS.

On the other hand, there was no NC issued to the university in 2020; only observations. In the current scheme of the third party auditors, the SOCOTEC observations are also required to be addressed as these will have the potential to become non-conformity. Hence, the university worked on addressing the observations raised in 2020 surveillance audit in preparation for the re-certification audit in July of 2021. The actions taken to close the NCs were all implemented prior to each audit as these are the first things that the auditors will look for during each audit. More importantly, these actions become the major improvements in the university's operations and no matter how small, it is a reflection of this university's quest to continual improvement for the highest satisfaction of its stakeholders.

Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities of the Philippines. Also a manifestation of the university's good governance is its quest for regular program accreditation through the Accredited Agency for Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACCUP). As part of the quality assurance of the university, all academic programs offered at the university are submitted for AACCUP evaluation. AACCUP is a CHED-recognized external accrediting body that assesses and evaluates academic programs offered by SUCs. AACCUP involves five accreditation levels, namely, preliminary survey visit (PSV), and levels I to IV. Regardless of what accreditation

level is applied for, the program under survey will be evaluated and assessed in the following 10 areas: Area I – Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives; Area II – The Faculty; Area III- Curriculum and Instruction; Area IV- Students Services; Area V- Research; Area VI – Extension and Community Involvement; Area VII – Library; Area VIII – Physical Plants and Facilities; Area IX – Laboratories; and Area X – Administration. Each area has specified parameters that are categorized into systems, implementations, outcomes, and best practices, while each category is itemized with specific benchmark statements and indicators that require explicit evidences to show or prove the existence of a process. The presented evidences determine the rating to be received and the non-existence of supporting evidence(s) would mean zero rating.

In terms of the evaluation scheme vis-à-vis AACCUP, the first three accreditation levels, namely PSV and levels I and II, the evaluation will only take place once. However, levels III and IV re-accredited status requires two phases of evaluations and only awarded to programs under survey after the two phases of evaluation have been undertaken and passed. Phase 1 requires documentary evidences to support all the criteria specified in Areas I to X, while phase 2 requires a narrative profile of the program under survey, compliance report on the findings and recommendations of the previous survey visit, and a 20-minute comprehensive video highlighting the mandatory and optional areas specified in the guidelines for levels III and IV phase 2. After passing phase I evaluation, the program under survey is given one year to prepare for phase 2.

To ensure quality and excellence on academic programs submitted for AACCUP

accreditation, the program under survey is also subjected to an internal evaluation. This internal accreditation serves as a measure to guarantee that all needed requirements and standards are met before the external evaluation will commence.

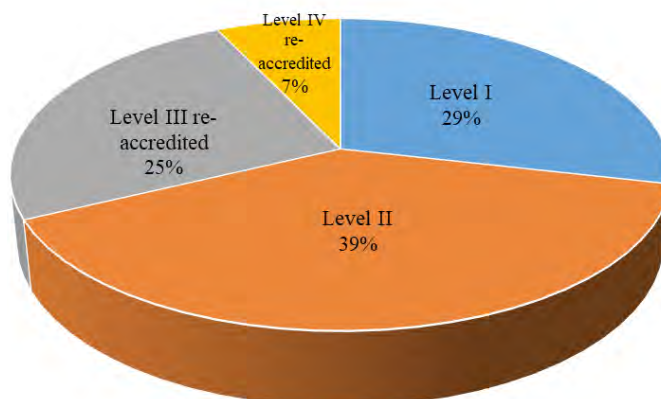
The university offers a total of 35 academic programs, 24 of which are undergraduate programs and 11 are graduate studies. These 35 programs are offered by six different colleges, namely, College of Education (COE), College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), College of Business (COB), College of Technologies (COT), College of Administration (COA), and College of Nursing (CON). All academic programs legible for accreditation are AACCUP accredited except for non-eligible programs due to no-graduates yet. The university maintains an updated status of AACCUP accreditation. Duration of validity is observed as highly significant in the accreditation process because when validity expires, it entails a demerit status of the program and will affect the SUC leveling of the entire university. Hence, before the duration of the validity will expire, the university shall submit the program to the

next higher accreditation level as applicable.

In summary, Figure 4 presents the level of accreditation status. It shows 29, 39, 25 and 7 percentages for levels I, II, III and IV, respectively. Levels III and IV have re-accredited status that indicates that the programs under survey have undergone two phases of survey visits. Likewise, data show that level II accredited status has the largest number of accredited programs followed by level I which is 29%. However, with the present status of accreditation, those seven out of 11 programs with level II accredited status have already applied for level III- Phase II accreditation and are due for survey visit by AACCUP within the year 2021. With the onset of COVID-19 pandemic however, the conduct of accreditation visit for these 11 programs was delayed. Thus, these programs retained their status in level II. This also applies to level III re-accredited status with which three of the academic programs are waiting for the survey visit for level IV. Hence, the university has remained compliant and maintains the level of academic excellence in terms of the standards and requirements set by this external accrediting institution, AACCUP Inc.

Figure 4

The University's Levels of Accreditation of All academic Programs which are Accreditable



According to Kumar (2020), accreditation is a powerful tool of quality assurance since it is used to assess the national system of higher education. Accreditation also ensures that an accredited academic program has undergone an intensive review of external evaluators. Hence, the outcomes of accreditation enhance the excellence in higher education institutions. Likewise, Happe (2015) also stressed that accreditation is important because it helps determine if an institution meets or exceeds minimum standards of quality, assists the HEI in determining acceptability of transfer credits, involves staff, faculty, students, graduates, and advisory boards in institutional evaluation and planning, and creates goals for institutional self-improvement.

The 100% accreditation of programs (with graduates) implies that the university's academic programs have met and/or exceeded the minimum standards of CHED. Subsequently, the students have the credentials to be accepted for transfer to other universities which have the standards especially those which belong to level IV comparable to other HEIs in the ASEAN region. This result also denotes that the university employees participated in the planning and evaluation processes, not least of which were the programs which were accredited.

Center of Development. Another manifestation of good governance is the two Centers of Development awarded to the English Department of the College of Arts and Sciences and College of Education in May 2016. This university is the only HEI awarded with COD status in English in Region X (CMO No. 38, S. 2016) and one of the four HEIs awarded with COD in Teacher Education (CMO No. 17, S. 2016) also in Region X.

As COD for English program, it is the responsibility of its program leaders and faculty to accelerate the development of the English program; to develop quality instruction; to undertake basic and applied research on emerging trends and developments in the field of English; to undertake extension and linkages; and to establish linkages with COEs in English (CMO No. 38, S. 2016). Moreover, the institution's COD in teacher education automatically designates the university's College of Education (COE) as one of the catalysts for world class scholarships, best practices, innovative curriculum, research and extension, and professional development in the field of teacher education. One of the benefits of having the COD status for teacher education is the university's position for availing of financial assistance for a project proposal on the development and improvement of the college. This advantage can include cutting-edge technology in teacher education, among others.

The COD status of the English program and College of Education in the institution is strengthened by its current level IV AACCUP accreditation status that is a manifestation of the robust program profile in terms of instructional quality, research and publications, extension and linkages, and institutional qualifications.

University's PRIME-HRM Accreditation. The pursuit of service excellence is one of the goals of the university. The efficiency and effectiveness of the services that this university offers to its clients largely depends on the performance of its human resources. The growth and success of an organization is attributed to the human resources as one of the most important assets of an organization. Further, the human resources are an indispensable part of all organizations.

Hence, effective management and development of the human resources are big challenges.

To be able to fulfill their commissioned tasks, the CSC developed programs to integrate competence in the human resources of the country to achieve their vision of becoming a Center of Excellence for Human Resource and Organizational Development. One of the many programs of the CSC is the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM). The PRIME-HRM assesses an agency's human resource management competencies, systems and practices toward HR excellence through three steps: assess, assist and award. The program's main goal is to develop the agency's maturity level from transactional HRM to strategic HRM.

PRIME-HRM is a program to inculcate meritocracy and excellence in the public service human resource management through a program of reward, recognition, empowerment and continuous development. Specifically, the program aims to: 1) assess the human resource management practices and capabilities of agencies; 2) serve as search mechanism for best practices in the human resource management; 3) promote and serve as a venue for exchange and development of expertise in the area of human resource management between and among government agencies; 4) empower agencies in the performance of human resource management functions; and 5) promote and reward excellent human resource management practices.

The components of PRIME-HRM are the Comprehensive HRM Assistance, Review and Monitoring (CHARM), the Continuing Assistance and Review for Excellent Human Resource Management (CARE-HRM), and the Special Program for Evaluation and Assessment as

Required/Requested (SPEAR). PRIME-HRM is used as a tool to recognize agencies with best practices in human resource management. Agency-initiated innovations, enhancements or remarkable development in HR management program and system shall be given recognition to motivate agencies to aspire for excellence. Recognition/status are conferred on agencies according to level of proficiency and maturity vis-à-vis the standards set by the Commission. Proficiency levels are hierarchically categorized into basic, intermediate, advanced, and superior.

Accordingly, maturity levels are tiered into regulated, accredited, deregulated and center of excellence in HRM with the end goal of elevating the HR public sector to a level of excellence for good governance and efficient public service. Each recognition level or status has implication primarily to the granting of authority to take final action on appointments.

Under the program, the CSC assessed the maturity level of this university's competencies, systems and practices in four human resources (HR) systems: (1) recruitment, selection, and placement (RSP); (2) learning and development (L&D); (3) performance management (PM); and (4) rewards and recognition (R&R).

In 2013, the university was awarded the Certificate of Level II accreditation through CSC Resolution No. 1302792 dated December 23, 2013. For five years, the university has maintained the Level II accreditation status. However, in 2018, per CSC Resolution No. 1800887 promulgated on August 16, 2018, along with 54 government agencies in Region 10, the Level II accreditation status of the university was revoked on the bases of failure to comply with the PRIME HRM enhanced maturity level indicators (MC

No. 24-2017) and placed under status quo per CSC Resolution No. 1701679.

Following the enhancement of the PRIME HRM maturity indicators on the four core HRM systems with the technical assistance provided by the CSC regional/field office in addressing the HR gaps identified as a result of the self-assessment and recommended agencies for onsite assessment, the university was subjected to an onsite assessment by the CSC Regional Office on September 3-4, 2019. As a result, the university was found to have met the required HRM systems and compliant with the Civil Service Law and rules in terms of the implementation of the other HR programs and the maintenance of HR records. Thus, the university was recommended to the Commission the conferment of PRIME-HRM Bronze Award and have met the Level 2-Maturity Indicators of all the required systems.

The university is classified as Level II based on the elements in each system as shown in Table 18.

Table 18

Maturity Level of the University in the Four Core Areas

Core Areas	Maturity Level
Recruitment, Selection and Placement (Systems and Practices)	Level II
Learning and Development (Systems and Practices)	Level II
Performance Management (Systems and Practices)	Level II
Rewards and Recognition (Systems and Practices)	Level II

An agency which reaches Level 2 maturity means that it has established a set of defined and documented Standard

Operating Procedures (SOPs) responsive to the agency’s unique needs, and automation is being used to a certain extent. It is characterized by goal-oriented decision making. The university is strong in each pillar across the two levels in the four core areas of PRIME-HRM as identified by the CSC accreditors. Significantly, there are no gaps identified in any of the areas at the time of the accreditation. This implies that the university’s HRM practices, standard operating procedures (SOPs), documentations, and the like are within the bounds of Level II CSC-HRM standards and principles.

Conclusions of this Study

At the helm of this university, the governing board has sound development management practices in terms of the eight principles of good governance which are clearly visible in the sound planning, purpose alignment, tangible benefits that students, employees, and community stakeholders enjoy, the motivation seen in its human resources, and the many positive outcomes in its PAPs.

In terms of the QMS, financial management, customer feedback, ISO, AACUP, COD and PRIME-HRM, the university has complied with regulatory and statutory requirements. Thus, it has adhered to best management practices reflective of its vision and mission. Hence, the governing body has been able to act as stewards for the good governance practices of the university.

Recommendations of the Study

Policy Recommendation: Integrate the concepts of Delphi technique in problem solving and decision making.

Consensus orientation may still be improved with Delphi technique to solve

problems which is an iterative process to get opinions from a group of experts. The results from the first round of questions, when summarized, provide the basis for the second round of questions. Results from the second round of questions feed into the third and final round. The aim is to clarify and expand issues, identify areas of agreement and disagreement, and begin to find consensus.

Policy Recommendation: Improve the implementation of four-stage cycle of the university's Strategic Performance Management System.

The university may revisit its target setting based on the previous year's accomplishment for a more realistic and accurate targets and accomplishments. With the increase of the university's budget due to the increase in number of delivery units, number of personnel and infrastructure projects particularly in the satellite campuses, it is highly recommended that the university strengthens the performance monitoring and appraisal systems as well as improve the process of training the focal point persons.

With the consistent outstanding performance of the different units, the university may take actions to optimize the opportunity to reinforce the existing monitoring scheme for the continual improvement of its quality management system.

Policy Recommendation: Establish a university-wide project monitoring committee which shall monitor program and project implementation.

With the budget utilization rate (BUR) as a mandatory target of university, it

may consider stabilizing the university's disbursement utilization rate (DUR). This can be done through strict monitoring and implementation of PAPs. Infrastructure projects shall be meticulously planned and monitored to avoid request for extra-work so that project phases programmed for the year will be paid within the same year. The process of procurement of goods and services shall also be strictly monitored to avoid the occurrence of incomplete or non-delivery of goods and services which will prevent the university from paying suppliers and consequently decrease the DUR. This section also suggests that the Finance and Management Division (FMD), Building and Estates Unit, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), and the Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO) would strengthen coordination among themselves to achieve a stable DUR. Moreover, to maintain the steady increase of budget utilization rate (BUR), it may further consider including in the budget proposal the PAPs that are implementation-ready and can be implemented within the same year. To mitigate the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the growth of the university's IGP, the university may consider the role of the University Press and the Economic and Enterprise Unit to continue their delivery of goods and services to increase the collection of income.

Policy Recommendation: Conduct a periodic review and annual analysis of the feedback reports to identify areas for improvement.

The university may continue to uphold its service mandate particularly those covered by statutory laws and its quality management system. The university can also do annual analysis of its feedback

reports to identify areas of improvement particularly on months where drops in rating are observed. Finally, a more comprehensive analysis of the customer feedback can be done at the unit level and with corroborating information from stakeholders via qualitative or quantitative data gathering.

All members of the organization are encouraged to understand the policies and objectives of the quality management system and their role in helping to achieve them. To achieve this, people can be made aware that ISO 9001 requires an organization to establish a quality management system in which processes are identified and effective process operation ensured. People should understand their individual responsibilities in achieving effective process operation. Individual involvement and competence development plans should be established for each employee. These plans should define activities, resources, responsibilities, and timeframes to accomplish the objectives, and they should be agreed between the employees, their managers, and leaders. These plans should also be recorded, reviewed, and updated at defined intervals.

Policy Recommendation: Submit programs for accreditation ahead of the expiration of validity, and increase the submission of academic programs for COE/COD.

With the recent crises brought by COVID-19, it is highly recommended that programs under survey shall submit for accreditation way ahead of the expiration of validity to maintain an updated status of accreditation level. The updated status of accreditation is significant particularly in the SUC levelling. Based on the data gathered on COD success indicators, the

university may consider the submission of other programs that are qualified to apply for COE/COD and application be sent as soon as the new guidelines for COE/COD is released.

Policy Recommendation: Utilize a third-party assessment corroborating the results of this study with actual evaluation results by the Civil Service Commission so as to develop new strategies and innovations in the implementation.

The university may continue to engage in translating strategic human resource excellence to public service excellence through working for the achievement of a Silver Award or PRIME-HRM Maturity Level III and Gold Award for Level IV.

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