



# The 4th Student Assembly

*The official legislative arm of the SAMAHAN.*

**SAMAHAN Act No. 005-2425**

## **AN ACT ESTABLISHING A YEARLY FORUM FOR STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES FROM VARIOUS CULTURAL AND IDENTITY GROUPS TO ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE, ADDRESS CONCERNS, AND FORMULATE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS INITIATIVES THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSITY**

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### **ARTICLE I General Provisions**

**SECTION 1 Short Title.** This Act shall otherwise be known as the "Ateneo Diversity and Inclusion Yearly Forum Act of 2025."

**SECTION 2 Declaration of Policy.** The Student Assembly of the Samahan ng Mga Mag-aaral ng Pamantasang Ateneo de Davao (SAMAHAN) remains steadfast in its constitutional mandate to provide a multi-sectoral dialogue open to all university members and to encourage free discussion on cultural, religious, and social issues. To further this goal, this Act establishes a dedicated annual forum that convenes student representatives from diverse cultural backgrounds, identity groups, and other sectoral communities in an intensive, collaborative setting. Thus, this act aims to strengthen representation, enhance cross-cultural understanding, and ensure that diversity and inclusion legislative initiatives are informed by lived experiences, thereby helping create a university where every student is genuinely represented in institutional decision-making.



# The 4th Student Assembly

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**SECTION 3 Scope.** This Act shall apply to the following student groups and communities within the university:

- a. Indigenous/Native communities;
- b. International Students
- c. LGBTQ+ individuals and communities;
- d. Religious communities;
- e. Representatives from ethnic and cultural communities;
- f. Students with disabilities;
- g. Women; and
- h. Other underrepresented groups as may be determined by the Student Assembly.

**SECTION 4 Definition of Terms.** For the purposes of this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

- a. Student Assembly refers to the legislative body of SAMAHAN.
- b. Diversity Forum refers to the annual gathering established by this Act where representatives from various cultural and identity groups engage in structured dialogue and policy formulation.
- c. Representatives refers to students chosen to speak for their respective communities that are appointed and recognized as stakeholders within their identity groups.
- d. Policy Recommendations refers to proposals presented during the Diversity Forum that address concerns, overcome barriers, or enhance inclusion opportunities for represented communities.
- e. Underrepresented Groups refers to groups whose participation in decision-making bodies or access to institutional resources is disproportionately low relative to their presence in the university community.
- f. The Executive Committee refers to the designated leadership body responsible for managing and coordinating the Diversity Forum, composed of incumbent presidents or chairpersons of sectoral organizations, as well as appointed representatives when necessary.
- g. Sectoral Organizations refer to a recognized student-led body advocating for the rights and interests of a specific identity-based or cultural group within the university.



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## ARTICLE II

### Purpose and Other Preliminary Provisions

#### SECTION 1 Objectives.

- a. To provide a dedicated platform for representatives from diverse cultural and identity groups to voice their concerns, experiences, and perspectives on matters affecting their communities within the university;
- b. To facilitate constructive dialogue that addresses misconceptions, builds cross-cultural understanding, and identifies shared priorities among different student communities; and
- c. To develop evidence-based policy recommendations that address barriers to inclusion, enhance representation, and promote diversity initiatives for consideration and potential endorsement by the Student Assembly.

#### SECTION 2 Administration and Implementation

- a. The sectoral council of the current student assembly shall be the governing body that shall oversee its implementation and its management.
- b. The responsible body that will manage the event shall create different committees to make the implementation of the event efficient.
- c. The responsible body should create a specific committee that is in-charge in marketing the event in social media platforms.
- d. The event shall be properly documented for record-keeping and reference purposes.
- e. The Student Assembly shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, adopt and publish the implementing guidelines for the first Diversity Forum, in accordance with the mechanisms and internal procedures outlined herein, subject to amendments as needed.
- f. The first Diversity Forum shall be conducted within the academic year of the Act's approval. In the event that approval occurs during the final quarter of the academic cycle, the forum may be held in the following academic year but no later than one academic year from approval.
- g. The SAMAHAN Central Board shall allocate necessary funds for the initial implementation of the forum from its existing budget. For



# The 4th Student Assembly

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subsequent forums, funding shall be incorporated into the regular annual budget planning process.

h. The initial executive committee for the Diversity Forum shall be composed as follows:

1. Incumbent presidents or chairpersons of officially recognized sectoral organizations representing ethnic and cultural communities, LGBTQ+ individuals, religious minorities, students with disabilities advocates, gender equality groups, international students, and Indigenous/Native communities;

2. In the absence of a recognized organization for any of the above sectors, the Student Assembly shall, within thirty (30) days of the Act's effectivity, either:

i. Directly appoint a student who self-identifies as a member of the unrepresented sector and demonstrates a proven commitment to relevant advocacy, with verification of a clear community mandate; or

ii. Conduct an open application process with clear, publicly posted selection criteria (including academic standing, demonstrated commitment to diversity advocacy, and endorsements from community organizations) to identify suitable candidates.

3. The Student Assembly shall oversee the verification of appointed representatives for the Executive Committee to ensure authentic and meaningful representation across all identified sectors.

i. The Student Assembly shall establish a Policy Recommendation Tracking System within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act. This system shall:

i. Document all policy recommendations generated during each Diversity Forum;

ii. Assign responsibility for approved recommendations to the appropriate Student Assembly legislator;

iii. Set clear timelines for action, implementation, or further review of each recommendation;





# The 4th Student Assembly

*The official legislative arm of the SAMAHAN.*

- iv. Provide quarterly progress reports to both the Student Assembly and forum representatives;
  - v. Include a feedback mechanism that allows forum representatives to evaluate the implementation of their recommendations and suggest adjustments; and
  - vi. Prioritize recommendations based on urgency, feasibility, and potential impact, culminating in an annual review of the forum's overall performance.
- j. If unforeseen circumstances impede the timely organization of the first Diversity Forum, the Student Assembly is authorized to extend the timeline by up to 30 days to ensure thorough preparation.

## **SECTION 3    *Participation and Application of Representatives***

- a. All bona fide students of Ateneo de Davao University may participate, with each recognized sectoral group selecting three (3) representatives.
  - 1. Representatives must be students in good academic standing, actively engaged in their respective communities, and endorsed by sectoral organizations or advocacy groups.
  - 2. Applications shall be submitted via an official online form, detailing:
    - i. The applicant's sectoral affiliation;
    - ii. Proposed initiatives for the forum;
    - iii. A statement of commitment to diversity advocacy.
  - 3. A Selection Committee, composed of the Executive Committee and Student Assembly members, shall evaluate applicants based on:
    - i. Demonstrated leadership within their community;
    - ii. Clarity and feasibility of their proposed initiatives; and
    - iii. Endorsements from recognized organizations or sectoral groups.
  - 4. In cases where an official sectoral organization does not exist, the Executive Committee shall:
    - i. Directly appoint a student who self-identifies with the underrepresented group and has a verified record of advocacy; or



# The 4th Student Assembly

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- ii. Conduct an open selection process, ensuring transparency and impartiality.
- b. The Student Assembly shall extend invitations to key members of the School Administration to attend the forum, facilitating direct dialogue between students and university policymakers.
- c. The entirety of the Student Assembly shall be present to formally receive policy recommendations and integrate them into student governance discussions.

## **SECTION 4   *Presentation and Validation of Sectoral Concerns and Policy Proposals***

- a. Each representative must prepare a structured presentation (max. 10 minutes) outlining:
  - i. Key challenges faced by their community; and
  - ii. Concrete policy recommendations to address these challenges.
- b. Proposed recommendations must align with the broader concerns of their community by obtaining the formal endorsement of:
  - i. The leadership committee of their sectoral group (if applicable); and
  - ii. At least three (3) members of their respective community.
- c. Presentations shall be followed by open deliberations, allowing other sectoral representatives and university officials to engage in constructive discussions.

## **SECTION 5   *Endorsement of Policy Recommendations to the Student Assembly***

- a. Upon the conclusion of the forum, the Student Assembly shall collect all proposed policy recommendations. The Student Assembly shall assess recommendations based on:
  - i. Urgency;
  - ii. Feasibility within the university setting; and
  - iii. Potential impact on the student body.
- b. The Student Assembly shall prioritize and endorse up to four (4) policy recommendations per academic year, ensuring a balance between feasibility and meaningful reform.
- c. Endorsed recommendations shall be developed into formal SAMAHAN resolutions or legislative bills, as appropriate.



# The 4th Student Assembly

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## ARTICLE III Final Provisions

**SECTION 1 *Repealing Clause.*** All other laws, rules, or regulations contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 2 *Separability Clause.*** If any provision of this Act is held to be invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

**SECTION 3 *Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect immediately, following its approval by the Ateneo Blue Knight Parliament and publication in the official student government channels.



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Approved by:

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Chairperson & Chief Convener  
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Signed by:

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*President*

SAMAHAN Central Board