

**UCU Office of the Center for Research and Development Champions Academic Freedom for Students and Faculty**



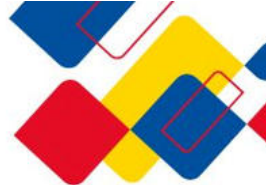
*Urdaneta City, Philippines* — The Office of the Center for Research and Development (OCRD) at Urdaneta City University (UCU) recently convened a gathering of students and research coordinators to reaffirm its commitment to academic freedom. This initiative supports students and faculty in selecting, exploring, and publicly sharing their research topics, ensuring an open academic environment that encourages innovation and critical thinking.

**Empowering Students and Faculty in Their Academic Pursuits**

The event, led by OCRD Director Dr. Guevara brought together participants from various fields of study to emphasize the importance of academic freedom and the university’s dedication to fostering a supportive research culture. UCU’s OCRD is focused on enabling researchers to pursue inquiries without limitations, encouraging diversity in research topics, and promoting the open exchange of ideas within the academic community.



“Academic freedom is essential for the advancement of knowledge and the integrity of education,” Dr. Noel Guevara explained. “At UCU, we believe that students and faculty should have the autonomy to explore areas of research they are passionate about and contribute to the global body of knowledge without external restrictions.”



## Creating a Platform for Open Discussion and Collaboration

The gathering served as a platform for students and research coordinators to share their research interests, discuss emerging trends in their fields, and address challenges they face in their studies. Students were encouraged to select topics that align with their personal and professional goals, with OCRD offering guidance and resources to support their research journeys.

UCU's commitment to academic freedom also includes encouraging researchers to speak publicly about their findings and engage with the broader academic community. By providing opportunities for students and faculty to present and discuss their research at conferences, workshops, and forums, OCRD aims to foster an academic culture that values transparency, critical inquiry, and public engagement.



## Supporting Academic Freedom with Policy and Resources

In addition to promoting a supportive research environment, OCRD has introduced policies that reinforce academic freedom, providing students and faculty the right to select research topics that address both local and global issues. UCU's research policies prioritize the intellectual independence of its researchers, allowing them to pursue areas that may challenge conventional perspectives or address pressing societal needs.

The university also offers resources such as research grants, mentorship, and access to academic networks to assist students and faculty in their research initiatives. These resources ensure that researchers have the support they need to pursue innovative studies and contribute valuable insights to their fields.



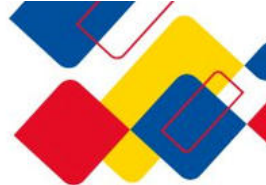
## Encouraging Critical Thinking and Intellectual Growth

The gathering also emphasized the role of academic freedom in cultivating critical thinking, creativity, and intellectual growth among students. By allowing students to explore diverse subjects, UCU aims to prepare them for careers that require analytical skills and an openness to new ideas.

"Academic freedom is not only a right but also a responsibility," said one student participant. "We are encouraged to think critically, question assumptions, and explore ideas that could make a meaningful impact. UCU's support for our research freedom gives us the confidence to pursue these goals."







### Looking Ahead: A Commitment to an Open and Inclusive Academic Culture

Moving forward, UCU's OCRD is planning additional initiatives to further support and protect academic freedom, including research workshops, interdisciplinary collaborations, and forums for sharing findings. These efforts are aimed at strengthening UCU's reputation as a progressive and inclusive institution where academic freedom is not only encouraged but celebrated.

Through the work of OCRD, UCU is taking meaningful steps to create an academic environment that respects individual perspectives, supports intellectual exploration, and values the contributions of each researcher. This commitment to academic freedom ensures that UCU remains a dynamic hub for knowledge, growth, and discovery.

As UCU continues to promote an open and inclusive academic culture, the university reaffirms its role as a leader in advancing both the freedom and responsibility of education, empowering students and faculty to make impactful contributions to their fields and society.

