

# BREAKING BARRIERS: UCU'S NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY UPHOLDS EQUALITY FOR ALL

**Urdaneta City, Philippines** — Urdaneta City University (UCU) continues to strengthen its reputation as a leader in inclusive education with the official implementation of its **Non-Discrimination Policy**, a landmark initiative promoting equality, respect, and fairness for every member of the university community.

Aligned with the principles of the **Gender and Development (GAD) Program** and the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**—particularly **SDG 5: Gender Equality** and **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities**—this policy reinforces UCU's unwavering commitment to providing a learning and working environment free from bias, prejudice, and discrimination of any kind.

## A Commitment to Equality and Inclusion

The newly established policy ensures that **no individual at UCU shall be denied access, opportunity, or fair treatment** on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity and expression. By integrating inclusive practices into all aspects of university life—from student admissions to faculty recruitment, classroom learning to campus activities—UCU reaffirms its dedication to building a culture of equity, empathy, and mutual respect.

"UCU's Non-Discrimination Policy represents not only a legal compliance but a moral commitment to uphold human dignity and inclusivity at every level of the institution."

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## Key Features of the Policy

The Non-Discrimination Policy lays down specific provisions designed to ensure fairness, equality, and protection across the university community:

- Equal Access to Opportunities: All students, regardless of background or identity, are guaranteed equal access to academic programs, scholarships, research, training, and extracurricular activities.
- Fair Recruitment and Employment Practices: Faculty and staff hiring, promotions, and appointments are conducted based on merit and competence—ensuring equal treatment for all applicants and employees.
- Protection from Harassment and Discrimination: The policy enforces strict measures against all forms of harassment, bullying, and discriminatory acts. Confidential reporting channels and support mechanisms are available for individuals seeking assistance.
- Respect for Gender Identity and Expression: The university recognizes and affirms individuals' self-identified names, pronouns, and gender expressions. Inclusive facilities and reasonable accommodations are provided where possible.

Promotion of Inclusive Culture: Through GAD-led seminars, advocacy programs, and campus-wide initiatives, UCU fosters awareness, empathy, and respect for diversity within the academic community.

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## Aligning with National and Global Standards

UCU's Non-Discrimination Policy aligns with both **national gender and human rights frameworks** and **international commitments** to equality. It supports the Philippine government's GAD directives and the global movement toward inclusive education and equitable development.

"The implementation of this policy demonstrates UCU's proactive stance in ensuring that equality is practiced, not just preached," said **Dr. Sonny Soriano**, Director for External Affairs and Linkages. "It's about creating a safe and supportive campus where differences are celebrated and every individual can thrive."

## Building a Culture of Respect and Empowerment

Through ongoing education, mentorship, and awareness programs, UCU is fostering a campus culture where discrimination and bias have no place. The university continues to review its policies and practices to ensure they reflect evolving standards of inclusivity, equity, and social responsibility.

As **Urdaneta City University** moves forward, it stands as a **beacon of diversity and inclusion** in Philippine higher education—championing not only the academic growth of its students and staff but also their right to dignity, equality, and belonging.

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