URDANETA CITY UNIVERSITY STRENGTHENS COMMITMENT TO SDG 5 WITH POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION AGAINST TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS
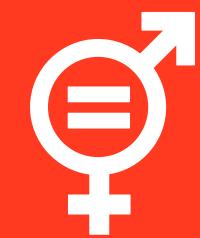
In its continued pursuit of inclusivity and equality, **Urdaneta City University (UCU)** reinforces its support for the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5): Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls** through the implementation of its **Policy on Non-Discrimination Against Transgender Individuals**. This initiative affirms UCU's dedication to creating a **safe, respectful, and discrimination-free campus** where every individual—regardless of gender identity or expression—is valued and given equal opportunity to thrive.

The newly established policy underscores UCU's proactive stance in promoting **gender inclusivity and equality** within its academic and professional environment. It ensures that all students, faculty, staff, and visitors experience **fair treatment, respect, and dignity**, consistent with the university's core values and its mission to uphold human rights and diversity.

Under the policy, UCU guarantees **equal access to education, employment, and campus resources**, while strictly prohibiting any form of **harassment, bullying, or exclusion** based on gender identity or expression. The university likewise promotes respect for individuals' **preferred names and pronouns**, ensures **confidentiality of personal information**, and supports access to **inclusive facilities** such as restrooms and common spaces aligned with each individual's gender identity.

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(075) 600 - 1507
San Vicente West, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan, Philippines
ucu.edu.ph | externalaffairsandlinkages@ucu.edu.ph

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Furthermore, the university commits to **ongoing education and awareness programs** that foster understanding of gender diversity among students, faculty, and staff. Through training and dialogue, UCU aims to build a campus culture grounded in empathy, acceptance, and equality—values that are central to achieving SDG 5.

"The university's commitment to gender equality extends beyond compliance—it is about nurturing a community where everyone feels seen, safe, and supported," stated the Office of External Affairs and Linkages, which leads the policy's implementation in coordination with the Human Resources and Gender and Development (GAD) Office.

By enacting this policy, **Urdaneta City University** reaffirms its role as a **champion of gender equality and inclusion**, ensuring that its campus remains **a discrimination-free environment** where all individuals are empowered to reach their fullest potential. Through sustained advocacy and institutional reforms, UCU continues to advance the principles of **Sustainable Development Goal 5**, proving that true education goes hand in hand with respect, dignity, and equality for all.

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Policy on Non-Discrimination Against Transgender Individuals

Purpose

In strong alignment with **Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality)**, **Urdaneta City University (UCU)** reaffirms its commitment to promoting equality, inclusivity, and respect for all individuals. This **Policy on Non-Discrimination Against Transgender Individuals** underscores the university's dedication to creating a campus environment where **diversity is valued, gender equality is upheld, and all individuals—regardless of gender identity or expression—enjoy equal rights and opportunities** in academic, professional, and social spheres.

Scope

This policy applies to all **students, faculty, staff, administrators, contractors, and visitors** within the UCU community.

Policy Statement

Consistent with UCU's commitment to **SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**, the university **prohibits any form of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion based on gender identity or gender expression**. UCU promotes a culture of **respect, acceptance, and empowerment**, ensuring that transgender individuals are fully supported in their academic, professional, and personal endeavors. Acts of discrimination or harassment will be addressed promptly and fairly in accordance with university regulations.

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Guiding Principles

1. Equal Access and Opportunities

UCU ensures equal access to academic programs, employment, campus facilities, and extracurricular activities for all, regardless of gender identity or expression. This includes equitable access to scholarships, student services, and university resources.

2. Respect for Gender Identity and Expression

The university recognizes and respects each individual's **self-identified gender, preferred name, and pronouns**. Reasonable accommodations will be made in official records, documentation, and interactions to honor these preferences

3. Zero Tolerance for Harassment or Discrimination

UCU maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** for harassment, bullying, or discrimination based on gender identity or expression. Actions creating a hostile or unwelcoming environment will result in disciplinary measures.

4. Confidentiality and Privacy

UCU upholds the **confidentiality and privacy** of all transgender individuals' personal information and records, ensuring that disclosures regarding gender identity are handled with sensitivity and discretion.

5. Inclusive Facilities and Accommodations

The university provides access to facilities—such as restrooms and locker rooms—that correspond to each individual's gender identity. Where possible, UCU will also develop **gender-neutral facilities** to further support inclusivity.

6. Education and Awareness

To advance **gender sensitivity and awareness**, UCU will conduct continuous **training and educational programs** for students, faculty, and staff. These initiatives promote understanding, respect, and inclusion, strengthening the university's commitment to **SDG 5**.

7. Fair and Inclusive Admissions and Hiring Practices

UCU ensures that **admission, employment, and promotion** decisions are free from bias related to gender identity or expression. All applicants are assessed based solely on qualifications, competence, and merit.

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Reporting and Resolution

Members of the UCU community who experience or witness gender-based discrimination or harassment are encouraged to report incidents to the **Office of Academic and Student Affairs** or the **designated Gender and Development (GAD) Officer**. All reports will be treated confidentially and resolved through fair and transparent procedures.

Policy Implementation

The **Office of External Affairs and Linkages**, in coordination with **Human Resources** and the **GAD Office**, is responsible for implementing, monitoring, and reviewing this policy. Regular assessments will ensure that UCU's practices continue to reflect its support for **gender equality, inclusion, and SDG 5 objectives**.

Accountability

Every member of the UCU community shares the responsibility of upholding this policy and contributing to a culture of equality and respect. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in university guidelines.

Conclusion

Through this **Policy on Non-Discrimination Against Transgender Individuals**, **Urdaneta City University** demonstrates its active role in advancing **Sustainable Development Goal 5** by fostering a **safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environment** for all. UCU remains steadfast in its mission to empower individuals—regardless of gender identity—to reach their fullest potential in an atmosphere of **dignity, respect, and equality**.

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