

**IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF THE UNIFIED STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM FOR
TERTIARY EDUCATION ACT (UniFAST)
(R.A. No. 10687)**

Pursuant to the authority vested in the UniFAST Board under Section 27 of "Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education," the following Implementing Rules and Regulations are promulgated:

RULE 1.

TITLE, POLICY, OBJECTIVE, DEFINITIONS OF TERMS, SCOPE, AND COVERAGE

Rule 1.1 **Title.** – These rules shall be known as the "Implementing Rules and Regulations of the UniFAST Act."

Rule 1.2 **Declaration of Policy.** – It is the declared policy of the State to promote social justice. Towards this end, the State shall allow its citizens full access to quality education by providing adequate funding and implementing mechanisms to increase enrollment in tertiary education, especially among poor but academically proficient and highly motivated students. This policy should enable them to successfully pursue and complete tertiary education programs in quality institutions, thereby promoting equitable and rationalized access to quality tertiary education.

The existing publicly-funded national government programs for scholarships, grants-in-aid, and student loans for tertiary education are hereby unified and harmonized to improve their efficiency and to ensure that poor but deserving Filipinos are given equitable access to educational opportunities.

Rule 1.3 **Objectives.** – The objectives of the Act are as follows:

- (a) to properly allocate and utilize all government resources intended for students through effective beneficiary-targeting;
- (b) to ensure consistency, continuity, and efficient coordination of student financial assistance policies and programs;
- (c) to ensure equity in the distribution of student financial assistance slots to the regions;
- (d) to produce through talent-based scholarships, a pool of proficient and competent graduates and technical experts who will contribute to the country's high-level labor force;
- (e) to facilitate access to quality education through grants-in-aid for students belonging to marginalized sectors; and
- (f) to assist through student loans students with liquidity issues.

Rule 1.4 **Definition of Terms.** – For the purpose of these Implementing Rules and Regulations, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (a) **UniFAST Act** refers to Republic Act No. 10687, otherwise known as Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education;

- (b) **Beneficiary** refers to the recipient of any modality of Student Financial Assistance Program (StuFAP) in tertiary education;
- (c) **Cost of tertiary education** refers to (1) tuition, miscellaneous and all other school fees; (2) educational expenses; and (3) the cost-of-living allowance;
- (d) **Educational expenses** refer to expenses related to the education of a student, such as those required for the purchase of books, school supplies, and electronic devices necessary for education, but excluding tuition and miscellaneous and other school fees;
- (e) **Grantee** refers to the student beneficiary of a Grant-in-Aid program;
- (f) **Grant-in-Aid** refers to a modality of financial assistance which generally requires a minimum level of competence from poor but eligible students to enable them to complete tertiary education;
- (g) **Higher education** refers to the stage of formal education, or its equivalent, requiring completion of secondary education and covering programs of study leading to bachelor and advanced degrees, including associate degrees;
- (h) **Higher Education Institution (HEI)** refers to an institution of higher learning primarily offering bachelor and advanced degree programs;
- (i) **Instrumentality** refers to any agency of the National Government, not integrated within the department framework vested with special functions or jurisdiction by law, endowed with some if not all corporate powers, administering special funds, and enjoying operational autonomy, usually through a charter. This term includes regulatory agencies, chartered institutions, and government-owned or controlled corporations;
- (j) **Other school fees** refer to those fees which cover other necessary costs supportive of instruction, including, but not limited to, medical and dental, athletic, library, and laboratory fees;
- (k) **Qualifying Examination System for Scoring Students** refers to the appropriate annual examination and assessment of potential beneficiaries, which may be separately designed for post-secondary, undergraduate and graduate students as adopted by the Board for all prospective applicants to any of the modalities of StuFAP mentioned in Rule 4.2(h);
- (l) **Rationalized access** refers to the improved efficiency in the implementation of UniFAST pursuant to the principles of increased participation of the economically disadvantaged and marginalized sectors, equity in the regional distribution of economic resources, congruence of the qualifications of tertiary education graduates and labor market needs, and relevance to the country's national development and global competitiveness, among others;
- (m) **Registry of Programs and Institutions** refers to quality-assured academic, research and TVET programs, as well as tertiary institutions which have been certified by the Commission on Higher Education or the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority as compliant with CHED, TESDA and acceptable standards;

- (n) **Scholar** refers to a student recipient of a scholarship based on merit or talent;
- (o) **Scholarship** refers to a modality of financial assistance given to eligible students on the basis of merit or talent, such as exceptional academic performance and special technical proficiencies and skills and intellectual pursuits in the field of research and development, innovation and other creative work;
- (p) **Special Purpose Education Assistance** refers to financial assistance for the conduct of undergraduate and graduate research, scientific studies, including funding assistance for the writing and publication of books, manuscripts, theses, dissertations, scientific and technical journals, or for the production, filming and digital technology documentation of research and studies, or development of instructional and academic materials as well as science prototypes, among others;
- (q) **State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)** refer to public HEIs which are financed and maintained by the national government, and are governed by their respective independent boards of trustees or regents in accordance with law;
- (r) **Student-borrower** refers to a student-beneficiary of the National Student Loan Program, as defined in Rule 2.3;
- (s) **Student Financial Assistance Program (StuFAP)** refers to a system of Scholarships, Grants-in-Aid, Student Loans, subsidies, and other incentives for eligible students;
- (t) **Student loan** refers to a modality of financial assistance consisting of short-term or long-term loans to students facing liquidity problems, regardless of economic status, which shall be paid by the student, or the student's parents, guardians, or co-makers;
- (u) **Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET)** refers to the post-secondary education or training process which produces middle level manpower, and involves, in addition to general education, the study of technical and related fields and the acquisition of practical skills relating to occupations in various sectors, comprising formal (organized programs as part of the school systems) and non-formal (organized classes outside the school system) approaches;
- (v) **Technical-Vocational Institutions (TVIs)** refer to learning institutions offering post-secondary TVET;
- (w) **Tertiary education** refers to the stage of education following the secondary cycle which subsumes post-secondary non-degree diploma, TVET, and Higher Education programs, including graduate education; and
- (x) **Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST)** refers to the harmonized and state-run system of higher education and technical-vocational scholarships, grants-in-aid, student loans, and other modalities of StuFAP under this IRR.

Rule 1.5 **Scope and Coverage of the UniFAST.** - The UniFAST shall consist of all existing national government-funded modalities of student financial assistance programs for tertiary education and special purpose education assistance in both public and private institutions, including scholarships, grants-in-aid, student loans and such other specialized forms of STUFAPs as formulated

by the Board, including the rules and regulations needed for their effective implementation. All government programs in partnership with other stakeholders, whether implemented by national and local government agencies, branches and instrumentalities, shall ensure that all programs conform to the standards and targets set by the Board. A student enrolling or continuing a first TVET, associate, undergraduate, master's and/or doctoral degree, whether in public or private, and national or local institutions, can avail any one or more of the modalities of StuFAP as determined by the Board.

The UniFAST under these Rules shall harmonize, reform, strengthen, expand, rationalize, and re-focus all legislated or ongoing StuFAPs of the government; Provided, that nothing in these Rules shall prevent the continuation of effective programs which shall still be under the jurisdiction of the agencies currently responsible for their design and implementation: Provided, further, that the beneficiary-targeting and standards for selection and retention shall be compliant with policies on quality, sustainability and efficiency set by the Board: Provided, finally, That the relevant government agencies shall submit to the Board an annual report on the implementation of their StuFAPs.

All the other requirements mentioned here shall be complied with upon the approval of these Rules.

RULE 2. MODALITIES OF StuFAPS

Rule 2.1. **Scholarship.** – The Board shall institute a unified, improved, and expanded national government-funded scholarship program to promote an environment conducive to the development of talented students who will serve the public good and enlarge the pool of world-class Filipino researchers, artists, innovators, thinkers, and leaders.

The Board shall formulate policies and mechanisms for the identification of beneficiaries based on objective indicators derived from credible databases: *Provided*, That beneficiaries of the *Iskolar ng Bayan* Act shall be prioritized, subject to the policies and mechanisms for the identification of beneficiaries mentioned above.

The amounts of the scholarships shall be determined by the Board, taking into consideration the actual costs of various programs in the top public and private HEIs and TVIs: *Provided*, That the amounts of the scholarships shall not exceed the actual costs of tertiary education.

Rule 2.2. **Grants-in-Aid.** – To improve equity and facilitate access to quality education, Grants-in-Aid shall be made available to students belonging to the poor and marginalized sectors of society.

The Board shall formulate the policies and mechanisms for the identification of grantees based on objective indicators derived from credible databases. Identification of grantees should be based on the national government's poverty-based targeting schemes.

The amounts comprising the Grants-in-Aid shall be determined by the Board, taking into consideration the actual cost of various programs in the top public and private tertiary educational institutions listed in the Registry.

Rule 2.3. **National Student Loan Program.** – The Board shall develop a self-sustaining National Student Loan Program (NSLP) which shall provide qualified students short-term and long-term financial assistance for tertiary

education. This plan shall be based on a systematic evaluation of lessons learned from current and past student loan schemes.

To ensure the success of the NSLP, the Board shall create the appropriate organizational setup for the NSLP, whose management shall implement the program, prevent the overfunding of the cost of tertiary education, and establish accountability mechanisms, sanctions, and incentives conducive to the effective and efficient collection of loan repayments.

The Board shall explore different processes, including systematic testing and rigorous evaluation of methods to minimize collection costs and avoid non-repayment of loans. It shall also encourage private sector participation to ensure the delivery of the best possible service suitable to the needs and objectives of the NSLP.

The Government Service Insurance System and Social Security System shall study the feasibility of having an automatic system of salary deduction for student loan repayments of members with unpaid student loans, pursuant to a memorandum of agreement to be executed by the Board with the GSIS or SSS, and in accordance with labor laws on deduction of payments.

The top ten graduates of all public high schools shall be given priority in the grant of student loans: *Provided*, That the loan granted shall be repaid in installment basis after the student graduates or leaves the educational institution: *Provided, further*, That the educational loan shall be sourced from five percent of the total loanable portfolio of the Development Bank of the Philippines, without prejudice to the creation of other student loan programs.

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Rule 2.4. ***Other Modalities of StuFAPs.*** – The Board may develop other modalities of StuFAPs: *Provided*, That nothing in this IRR shall preclude the implementing agencies, HEIs, and TVIs from adopting other forms of StuFAPs, such as private scholarship or sponsorship programs, and student or graduate assistance programs, in accordance with the standards and guidelines set by the Board.

RULE 3. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS AND TERMS OF AVAILMENT

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Rule 3.1. ***Minimum Qualifications of Applicants.*** – The Board shall promulgate the qualification criteria of applicants for student financial assistance, which shall include the following minimum qualifications:

- (a) Applicants must be Filipino citizens: *Provided*, That the Board may grant exemptions to foreign students based on reciprocal programs that provide similar benefits to Filipino students, such as student exchange programs, international reciprocal Scholarships, and other mutually beneficial programs;
- (b) Applicants must be Senior High School graduates or its equivalent from duly authorized institutions conforming to the K to 12 program, college/TVET students and/or first-time enrollees for Master's and Doctorate programs;
- (c) Applicants pursuing TVET must have at least ten years of basic education or its equivalent;
- (d) Applicants must possess good moral character with no criminal record based on conviction by final judgment: *Provided*, That this requirement shall be waived for programs which target learners in conflict with the law and those who are undergoing or have undergone rehabilitation;

- (e) Applicants must be admitted to the HEI or TVI included in the Registry of Programs and Institutions: *Provided*, That applicants may begin processing their applications within a reasonable time frame set by the Board to give the applicant sufficient time to enroll;
- (f) Applicants in TVET programs shall, in addition to the criteria referred above, pass the initial TESDA screening / profiling or assessment procedure, trade test, or skills competency evaluation;
- (g) Applicants must declare if they are already beneficiaries of other student financial assistance, including government StuFAP: *Provided*, That if at the time of application of the scholarship, grant-in-aid, student loan, or other modalities of StuFAP under this IRR, the amount of such other existing grant does not cover the full cost of tertiary education at the HEI or TVI, the applicants may still avail StuFAPs under this IRR for the remaining portion;
- (h) Applicants for scholarship must obtain at least the score required by the Board for the Qualifying Examination System for Scoring Students and other qualifying scholarship examinations for specific courses;
- (i) Applicants must possess such other qualifications as may be prescribed by the Board.

The qualification criteria of applicants for student financial assistance shall be subject to periodic review by the Board, which may amend them if necessary.

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Rule 3.2. Disqualifications and Limitations. — Students cannot avail the benefits under the StuFAPs if they fail to comply with the requirement of good academic standing and such other conditions that may be formulated by the Board: *Provided*, That the Board shall consider circumstances which may have an effect on the studies of a beneficiary, such as death, lingering illness of a family member, or other personal reasons, to be evaluated by the Board on a case-to-case basis.

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The Board shall not unduly deprive eligible applicants of student financial assistance: *Provided*, That in order to avail student financial assistance, said applicants may be directed by the Board or the implementing agency to enroll in priority programs or courses identified by the CHED, DOST or TESDA based on the national development plans and labor force demands: *Provided, further*, That the Board or implementing agency shall not deny financial assistance to applicants already enrolled in non-priority courses, especially if the priority courses are not offered in the tertiary education institution of the student's choice.

All beneficiaries must complete their degree or non-degree programs within the prescribed period as provided by rules of the Board.

Rule 3.3. Terms of Availment of StuFAPs. — The Board or implementing agency may, prior to the grant of a scholarship or student loan or other modality of StuFAP, impose reasonable terms and conditions of availment.

Rule 3.4 Return Service - The Board shall issue appropriate implementing guidelines on the obligations to render service in the Philippines at large without prejudice to existing programs that mandate service in the government.

Rule 3.5 Sanctions. — The Board or the implementing agency may impose reasonable sanctions to any beneficiary of a scholarship, grant, student loan, or

other modality of StuFAP who has been found to have violated any of the contract provisions.

Any misrepresentation or false declaration of the beneficiaries will warrant their disqualification from StuFAPs.

RULE 4. THE UniFAST BOARD

Rule 4.1. ***Creation of a UniFAST Board.*** – To carry out the purposes of this IRR, the UniFAST Board, referred to as the Board, shall be composed of the following:

- (a) The CHED Chairperson as *ex officio* Chairperson;
- (b) The Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) as *ex officio* Co-Chairperson;
- (c) The TESDA Director-General as *ex officio* Co-Chairperson;
- (d) The Secretary of the Department of Education (DepED) as *ex officio* member;
- (e) A representative from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) as *ex officio* member;
- (f) A representative from the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) as *ex officio* member; and
- (g) A representative from the National Youth Commission (NYC) as *ex officio* member.

The Board shall be attached to the CHED.

Rule 4.2 ***Powers and Functions of the Board.*** – The Board shall exercise the following powers and functions:

- (a) formulate and approve policies and strategies for UniFAST, and review existing policies to ensure consistency with the policy framework of R.A. No. 10687;
- (b) coordinate with the implementing agencies of existing StuFAPs in the formulation, approval and issuance of guidelines geared towards the development of the UniFAST;
- (c) provide necessary support to implementing agencies, technical or otherwise, to ensure the effective implementation of this IRR;
- (d) prepare, approve, and submit to the CHED its own budget proposal, in addition to the individual budget proposals prepared by the various implementing agencies, including vetting, modifying and integrating all requests for public funding of tertiary education StuFAPs;
- (e) promulgate the minimum guidelines, rules and regulations for determining the beneficiaries of student financial assistance for tertiary education;
- (f) provide the general guidelines for the drawing up of contracts with the student beneficiaries specifying the rights and obligations of the parties that may include a service clause or such other stipulations of cost recovery that the Board may determine to be in the best interest of the public, and consistent with the national, social, economic, and human resources development plans, subject to Rule 3.3;

- (g) monitor, assess and make impact evaluation of StuFAPs and projects for the purpose of determining whether these programs shall be adopted, continued, or terminated;
- (h) adopt a Qualifying Examination System for Scoring Students for merit and talent-based StuFAPs and determine the eligibility of applicants for Grants-in-Aid and other modalities of StuFAPs;
- (i) provide a supportive policy environment for the growth and development of private sector participation for Scholarships, Grants-in-Aid, Student Loans or other modalities of StuFAPs;
- (j) establish and maintain, on the public websites of the CHED and TESDA, a database containing information on StuFAPs and accredited public and private tertiary education programs and institutions;
- (k) take all necessary actions to disseminate information on the database established and maintained under R.A. No. 10687 in order to encourage its use by interested parties and to ensure that beneficiaries are able to maximize the benefits from UniFAST through informed decision-making, giving them the opportunity to choose from among accredited public and private tertiary education programs and institutions;
- (l) design a program to generate funds for the UniFAST;
- (m) facilitate and tap donations, legacies, gifts and other forms of contribution, whether in cash or in kind, as well as utilize the assistance of experts, in accordance with Rule 6.1: Provided, That the donations, legacies, and contributions of cash or property duly received shall be exempt from donor's tax and shall be allowable deductions for income tax purposes in accordance with Section 34-H of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended;
- (n) appoint members of the UniFAST Secretariat upon the recommendation of the Executive Director;
- (o) appoint one or more legal officers with authority to file cases in court upon being deputized by the Office of the Solicitor General;
- (p) set up, maintain and update an official registry of quality-assured academic and research programs and tertiary education institutions in accordance with Rule 1.4 of this IRR;
- (q) approve the appropriate honorarium and per diem of the members of the Board, in accordance with the relevant government rules and regulations;
- (r) develop an efficient tracking system of student borrowers, as well as a system of disbursement and collection of payments of loans granted under R.A. No. 10687, including entering into agreements with the Bureau of Internal Revenue, GSIS, SSS, National Bureau of Investigation, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Bureau of Immigration, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Bankers Association of the Philippines, Credit Information Corporation, private and public banks and banking intermediaries, credit information bureaus, and other government financial institutions, for the purpose of investigating and checking the whereabouts of delinquent student borrowers, and setting up mechanisms for blacklisting of defaulting student borrowers who apply for loans, credit cards, and other credit facilities; and

- (s) perform such other powers and functions as may be deemed necessary and incidental for the effective implementation of this IRR.

Rule 4.3. Meetings- The Board shall hold twelve (12) regular monthly meetings in a year: *Provided*, That four (4) years after the implementation of this IRR, the Board shall determine the frequency of the regular meetings which shall not be less than once every quarter.

The Chairperson of the Board may call a special meeting when necessary: *Provided*, That the members are notified in writing at least three (3) working days prior to the meeting.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Co-Chairpersons shall preside over the Board's meetings on a rotation basis. The members of the Board may also designate a representative in their absence: *Provided*, That in the case of the Chairperson, Co-Chairpersons, and the ex-officio members of the Board, their representatives must be occupying the position of an Assistant Secretary, or its equivalent, or higher. The proceedings of all meetings shall be recorded and the minutes thereof shall be attested to by a simple majority of all the regular Board Members.

At least one (1) meeting of the Board in every quarter must be attended by the Chairperson and Co-Chairpersons which shall be devoted to a review of the performance of the UniFAST in terms of the following:

- (a) total number of current beneficiaries;
(b) number of dropouts from the program, voluntary or revoked, as well as the reasons behind such;
(c) average academic performance by year of study;
(d) breakdown of beneficiaries by field of study;
(e) breakdown of beneficiaries by district and region of origin;
(f) breakdown of beneficiaries by place of study;
(g) breakdown of beneficiaries by sex;
(h) breakdown of beneficiaries by size of family, annual family income, and family livelihood;
(i) completion rate of beneficiaries;
(j) measures of success of financial assistance programs;
(k) breakdown of beneficiaries by age groups;
(m) such other matters relating to any provision of this IRR.

The Board may invite resource persons, experts, and stakeholders as it may deem necessary.

Rule 4.4. Quorum. — The attendance by a simple majority of the Board members is necessary in order for the Board to have a quorum to transact business.

RULE 5. THE UniFAST SECRETARIAT

Rule 5.1. Creation of a UniFAST Secretariat. — A Secretariat headed by an Executive Director shall support the Board in carrying out its functions. The institutional setup, qualifications, and compensation of employees composing the Secretariat shall be delineated by the Board in accordance with existing Civil Service and Career Executive Service rules and regulations, and consistent with the provision of the Salary Standardization Law.

The Secretariat shall exercise the following functions:

- (a) provide technical and administrative support services to the Board's policy-making and implementation functions;
- (b) recommend programs, plans of action, and agenda of the Board, as well as their cancellation, amendment, or modification;
- (c) recommend the programs, plans of action, and agenda of the implementing agencies, as well as their cancellation, amendment, or modification;
- (d) maintain and update a repository of data and information on all StuFAPs for tertiary education, and create and maintain a comprehensive database system on government StuFAPs which is accessible to the public, pursuant to the policy of transparency and good governance;
- (e) recommend to and manage and monitor for the Board the processes of contracting out the implementation of UniFAST activities which would be best accomplished by third-party providers; and
- (f) perform such other powers and functions as may be determined by the Board.

Rule 5.2. **The Executive Director.** – There shall be an Executive Director who shall be appointed by the Board and shall have the rank of an Assistant Secretary. The Executive Director shall have a minimum of seven (7) years managerial experience, be a holder of at least a Master's degree, and be a Career Executive Service eligible. The Executive Director shall perform the following functions:

- (a) Serve as the primary coordinator of StuFAPs for Tertiary Education students being implemented by various government agencies, branches, and instrumentalities;
- (b) Manage relationships with partner agencies;
- (c) Exercise leadership, supervisory, and administrative functions over the Secretariat;
- (d) Ensure the provision of accurate and timely technical inputs and feedback to the Board to guide it in its policy-making functions;
- (e) Ensure the proper dissemination and implementation of Board decisions;
- (f) Submit an annual report on the operations, status of programs funded, and financial conditions of the Secretariat, including recommendations for the budget in the ensuing year; and
- (g) Perform such other duties and functions as may be determined by the Board.

RULE 6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Rule 6.1. **Financial Management and Accountability.** – All public funds allocated to the government StuFAPs for tertiary education shall be managed according to standard government accounting and auditing rules and regulations. In addition, specialized processes and procedures shall be developed to enhance

transparency and accountability suitable to the program or project for which the fund has been provided.

Rule 6.2. Accounting and Reporting of UniFAST StuFAP Funds. – A separate book of accounts shall be kept by each implementing agency for the UniFAST StuFAP Funds. The book of accounts shall follow standard government rules and regulations for accounting. Implementing agencies of the StuFAP Funds, however, may adopt additional measures to ensure its safety, particularly in authorizing payments and processing of disbursements from the funds: *Provided*, That such additional measures shall facilitate a convenient and efficient means of delivering financial assistance to the beneficiaries.

A mid-year and annual report shall be prepared by all implementing agencies and submitted to the Board. The report shall have two parts: a financial statement and a report of operations showing the accomplishments of the fund. These reports, which shall be endorsed by the Board and submitted to Congress and the Department of Budget and Management, shall be made accessible to interested parties within reasonable office hours. Interested parties shall also have access to the list of beneficiaries and the amount of financial assistance received by them during reasonable office hours.

Rule 6.3. Responsibility of National Government Agencies Implementing StuFAPs. – The agencies and instrumentalities implementing StuFAPs are required to submit reports, make their selection process transparent to the public, and comply with the requirements that the Board may impose to ensure that these programs are in line with the national policy framework on student financial assistance.

It shall be the responsibility of the implementing agencies to ensure the political neutrality and avoidance of political labelling of all modalities of StuFAPs in accordance with the policies set by the Board.

Rule 6.4. Performance Monitoring and Impact Assessment. – The UniFAST shall be evaluated rigorously by the Board in terms of its impact on desired results and its progress towards efficiency, equity and social relevance. Impact evaluation shall be measured against, among others:

- (a) education outcomes such as but not limited to enrolment in level IV-accredited HEIs, and number of graduates (by type of study program);
- (b) economic indicators such as income and employment of beneficiaries after graduation; and
- (c) indicators for contributions to community service and public good.

Performance and progress shall, in addition, be measured with regard to: (i) number of students covered by Scholarships, Grants-in-Aid, Student Loans, or other modalities of StuFAPs; (ii) type of study program; (iii) level of HEI enrolled in; and (iv) initial economic status. Tracer studies and survey data for experimental and quasi-experimental analyses shall be undertaken to produce credible impact evaluation studies, as may be determined by the Board: *Provided*, That major programs of the Board are to be evaluated within five years from the date of their implementation.

Rule 6.5. Report to the Congressional Oversight Committee. – The Board shall be required to submit to the Congressional Oversight Committee, on a periodic basis, the financial statements, policy statements, issuances and other documents and information of the Board, subject to existing laws and regulations.

APPROPRIATIONS

Rule 7.1. **Appropriations.** The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of the Act, specifically for the creation of the Board and the Secretariat and the initial implementation of the Act, shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the CHED.

The Board through the Secretariat shall set up a process for the development and review of StuFAPs budget proposals to ensure consistency with the policies established by the Board. The process shall provide a venue for exchange of ideas and resolution of implementation issues of the different StuFAPs.

Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the continued operation of this Act, including the budgetary requirements for the administrative operation of the Board and the Secretariat shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act of the CHED to which the Board is attached.

On the other hand, the funds for the implementation of existing StuFAPs and heretofore, any modality that may be established, shall be included in the Annual GAA of the implementing agencies.

Rule 7.2. **Other Sources of Funds.** – Other sources of funds such as grants, donations, and other forms of assistance from local and foreign donor agencies, other public or private entities, and other private domestic and international sources may be tapped by the Board to support the StuFAP, subject to regular auditing guidelines and procedures: *Provided*, That the acceptance of donations from foreign sources shall be subject to existing government rules and regulations.

All donations, grants, endowments from various sources and other contributions given to specific agencies for StuFAPs shall be retained by the donee agency for that specific purpose in accordance with government auditing rules and regulations.

Cost-sharing or counter-parting schemes among national government and local government units shall also be encouraged to support the implementation of the UniFAST.

RULE 8. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Rule 8.1 **Transitory Clause.** – For individuals pursuing their first undergraduate degree, this IRR covers all possible definitions of the term "high school graduate", including 4th year / Grade 10 graduates prior to K to 12 implementation, but only until the academic year 2018-2019. After this transition period, the provisions in Rule 3.1.b of this IRR shall take full effect.

Rule 8.2 **Separability Clause.** – If, for any reason, any provision of the IRR is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining parts of the IRR which are not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Rule 8.3 **Non-Impairment Clause.** – Nothing in the IRR shall be construed as to diminish, impair, or repeal rights recognized, granted, or made available to disadvantaged, marginalized, or specific sectors under existing laws.

Rule 8.4 **Repealing Clause.** – All provisions of existing implementing rules and regulations, circulars, department issuances, and other procedures corresponding to laws and any other law or parts of law specifically inconsistent with the IRR are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Rule 8.5 **Effectivity.** These Implementing Rules and Regulations shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in the newspaper of general circulation.

The IRR shall be registered with the Office of National Administrative Register at the University of the Philippines Law Center, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

Approved and signed this 11th day of May 2016.

UniFAST Board



PATRICIA B. LICUANAN, Ph. D.

Chairperson, Commission on Higher Education
Chairperson, UniFAST Board



HON. MARIO G. MONTEJO
Secretary, DOST
Co-Chairperson, UniFAST Board



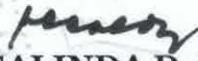
HON. IRENE M. ISAAC

Director General, TESDA
Co-Chairperson, UniFAST Board

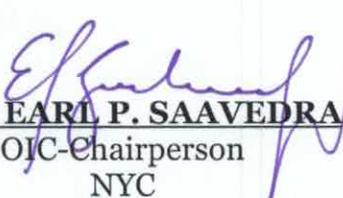
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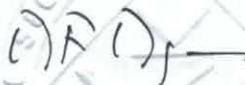
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HON. EARL P. SAAVEDRA
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HON. EMMANUEL F. ESGUERRA
Acting Director General
NEDA