A smiling Student Regent faced around 500 protesters minutes after the Board of Regents (BOR) adjourned its meeting last September 28 at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) building.

Student Regent James Mark Terry Ridon related that the revised policy report prepared by the Office of the Student Regent (OSR) was presented to the BOR for further analysis of the effects of implementing Tuition and other Fee Increases (ToFI). Possible suspension of the implementation of ToFI was also tackled in the meeting.

In addition, Ridon said he and UP President Emerlinda Roman will “talk” about the decline of qualifier turnouts in all UP units after the implementation of ToFI.

Awaiting the bat

Students lined up in Humanities building for the University Student Council (USC) and the Samahan ng Kabataan para sa Bayan’s (SAKBAYAN) “Armed and ready” armband wearing campaign and henna tattooing to protest against ToFI.

College of Development Communication Student Council chairperson Karen Lapitan was one of the students who lined up for henna tattoo.


The USC also organized a snake rally that toured the lower campus to encourage students to attend the protest.

Moreover, a student congress was held last September 20 at the Makiling Ballroom Hall where Ridon was guest speaker.

Participants of the congress also raised issues such as the jeepney rerouting, eviction of ambulant vendors, tambayan phase out, ban on fraternities and sororities, and the proposed start of classes in September. Ridon encouraged students to discuss these issues with the administration.

The pitch

At 7 a.m. on September 28, students assembled at the Humanities building before marching to Carabao park for a short program. The crowd then trooped to APEC while jeepney drivers staged for a transport holiday on the same day of the BOR meeting (see related story on p.4).

Some protesters were able to enter the APEC premises unchallenged. Succeeding batches were blocked by the University Police Force, citing security concerns. Through negotiation by the USC and the All UP Academic Employees Union President...
Velasco firm on ambient vending, rerouting issues

by Angelica Mendoza and Harriet Melanie Zabala

Chancellor Luis Rey Velasco stands firm in his decision regarding the eviction of ambient vendors and rerouting of Public Utility Jeepneys (PUJs) in the campus.

Although Velasco had earlier given vendors verbal permission to sell goods at Freedom Park, he changed his decision and presented in his letter of response six memoranda prohibiting ambient vending inside the campus.

Velasco also said that the end of the dry run of the re-routing is yet to be announced.

Ambulant no more

The University Student Council (USC) received a letter of response from Velasco last September 25 regarding their proposals to allow ambulant vendors to sell their goods inside the campus.

In the letter, Velasco said he could not favorably act on the USC's request because he wants to adopt the six memoranda issued by former UPLB chancellors. (See Table 1.) Meanwhile, USC Councilor Christine Macabetcha said, “Sinabi na ni Chancellor dun sa dialogue nung August 31 na payag na mga estudyante, dapat magbantay tayo sa mga ginagawa ng administrasyon,” Macabetcha added.

Following a series of protests, a mass up calling for Velasco to reconsider his response was held last October 10 at Freedom Park during the Loyalty Day.

Transport holiday

To protest the implementation of PUJ rerouting, the Los Baños-Calamba Transport Federation (LBCTF), in charge of all jeepneys along the Los Baños – Calamba route, launched a transport holiday last September 28 disabling all forms of public vehicular operations from Junction to UPLB premises.

In a meeting with the LBCTF drivers held last September 23, the USC confirmed the support of 90 to 100 percent of drivers on the transport holiday.

Originally, a transport strike was planned but was aborted because a police officer said it was illegal.

A day before the transport holiday, a police officer who introduced himself as PO1 Villamayor dissuaded drivers from joining the said activity and even threatened them with charges of illegal assembly if students did not participate in the transport holiday.

An LBCTF driver who refused to be identified said the actual plan was that the transport holiday would last for a day, but Los Baños Vice Mayor Copie Alipon ordered it stopped by 10am. However, the LBCTF drivers were able to negotiate for extension until 12 p.m.

After the mobilization by around 500 students during the UP Board of Regents meeting, students marched from Humanities Steps to Junction at around 1:30pm. At Junction, PO1 Villamayor gave them only 30 minutes to hold the program. Representatives from the USC, Anakbayan, Samahan ng Kabataan para sa Bayan (SAKBAYAN), Center for National Studies, UP OHKS, League of Filipino Students, and other student organizations expressed their support to the drivers who participated in the transport holiday.

Zhenchin Geri Pormento of Salbayan said, “Parang yung sinasabi nga nila na dry run, ay nagdalot talaga ng malaking abala sa mga estudyante, maraming mga estudyante ang nagrehistro na nahuhuli sila sa kaniyang mga klasé…ispa pa, hindi sya naaayon sa demokratikong konsultasyon…pangalawa, sa skerning ito, binabali niya yung oportunyayos ng UP sa pagiging makasaysay – hindi lang naman mga estudyante ang konstitusyon ng university, anyan yung mga vendors at drivers…yung isyu nitong mga drivers ay hindi natin mahih爪wala sa isyu nating mga estudyante…”

Maria Elena Carlos of Anakbayan said, “Ang pagasama sa mga ganong protesta ay nagapakita lamang ng militanny sa mga estudyante ng UP…sabi nga, ang UP ay inang komunidad, so kung ano man ang nakakapadepa sa iha pagi momyrong ng komunidad at alam naman na ‘yung mga bata na ipinapasa ay hindi nakalabi para sa kanila ay dapat lang tutuluan…”

“Although academic organization kami, nakikita namin na mahalaga din na tumaiklo yung isyu nitong mga drivers sa laban ng mga freshmen kasi kapwa natin estudyante yun…nakikita din ng org namin na talagang represibo yung TOFI, pagpapala sa mga manunindang at pagbabago ng ruta ng jeep…” said Allan David Carandang from UP OHKS.

Mark Velasco from League of Filipino Students said, “Maraming dahilan kung bakit pumunta ang mga estudyante dun sa Junction…bilib na mga iskolar ng bayan, nakikita sila na parawagan na malin ikalik ang dating rata ng jeep, kasi, buhol sa nahirapan sila, nawaaw din sila na mga driver na bumahalblor, (Sa…)”

The protest yielded positive results as drivers were able to seek the help of the Los Baños Mayor Cesar Perez, who was before reluctant to involve himself on the rerouting issue. Perez said he will mediate between the UPLB administration and the drivers on the issue.

Meanwhile, Velasco set conditions for the old route to be returned in a letter dated September 14.

These conditions include slashing student fare to four pesos and decreasing the number of jeepneys entering the campus to eliminate noise and air pollution.

Moreover, USC Councilor Rayan Brozula said the USC will continue asserting to stop the implementation of the jeepney rerouting. Since the implementation of the jeepney rerouting, the USC has launched a signature campaign that has been gaining support from the students and other sectors in UPLB.

“Sempre ayaw natin ng rerouting kasi unang-unang hindi sya dumaan sa demokratikong proseso, walang konsultasyon na maganda…at isa pa, mula ng pinapad ng sana August 1, nahirapan na yung mga estudyante…at saka, hindi talaga malinaw kung bakit binago yung ruta,” Macabetcha added.

Meanwhile, the LBCTF sent three letters to the UP administration proposing a new route that let them pass through the Institute of Biological Sciences building.

In addition, the LBCTF warned the administration that drivers will continue to launch protest actions such as non-renewal of their stickers that serve as gate pass to the university, prohibiting them from entering the campus premises. If this will push through, the university is set to lose a source of income. The stickers cost about Php200 each.

At as press of time, the LBCTF is yet to schedule a dialogue with Los Baños Mayor Cesar Perez. [P]

Table 1. Memoranda issued by former Chancellors regarding ambient vending in UPLB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMORANDUM</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPLB Memorandum No. 30 S. 1989</td>
<td>Amendment to the Memorandum of Operations of Private Concessionaires and Ambulant Vendors at UPLB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPLB Executive Order No 1, S. 1990</td>
<td>Policies and Guidelines on the Operation of Food Stands/Kiosks in the UPLB Campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPLB Executive Order No. 2, S. 1993</td>
<td>Policies and Guidelines on Food Retailing an Vending inside UPLB Campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPLB Vice Chancellor for Administration Memorandum No. 18, S. 1997.</td>
<td>Ban on Issuance of Business Permits within UPLB Campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPLB Memorandum No. 090, S. 2003</td>
<td>Implementation of Security Measures at UPLB.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Letter to USC Chairperson Leo XL Fuentes from Chancellor Luis Rey Velasco dated September 25, 2007
On Along’s case
Court denies accused APO members’ petition for bail
by Remeliza Joy Sacra

The case on the death of BS Agricultural Economics '04 student Marlon "Along" Villanueva is done with the presentation of the prosecution's evidence last Sept. 19 at the Branch 36 Regional Trial Court (RTC), Calamba City.

Villanueva died Jan. 14, 2006 allegedly of hazing during the initiation rites of Alpha Phi Omega (APO) Fraternity, UP Los Baños Chapter. Confirmed APO members Dandy Dungo and Gregorio Sibal Jr., alleged suspects in the case, are detained at Philippine National Police-Calamba.

Petition Denied
During the June 5 hearing, the court dismissed the petition for bail filed by the accused, since the prosecution has presented “strong evidence” against Dungo and Sibal.

Presiding Judge Medel Arnaldo Belen said, “The court ruled [that] the evidences are admissible, and consequently decided [that] there was strong evidence to deny the bail.”

The prosecution offered 28 exhibits with statements, including pictures of Villanueva taken during the medical investigation. Also included in the exhibits are the accounts of 10 people as filed in the documentary and statement of 14 witnesses in the testimony.

On the summary of the given testimony, Dungo and Sibal were both confirmed to be APO member and officer, respectively, after they have given false names as Jericho Paril for Dungo and Brandon Gonzales for Sibal. Also, the two matchsticks recovered from the clothes during the autopsy of Villanueva's cadaver were found engraved with words “Alpha Phi Omega, International, Collegiate Service.”

Furthermore, the prosecution included the autopsy and medical records proving that the injuries suffered by Villanueva were really caused by hazing and not by a car accident or mauling incident. The records of Dr. Ramon Masilungan, medico-legal officer of the Philippine National Crime Laboratory, Region IV at Camp Vicente Lim, Calamba City, showed that Villanueva has undergone hazing as shown by "the location, symmetry, and extent of the injuries" in his body.

Waiting for formal offer
After the prosecution presented their evidence, the accused were given 15 days of preparation from their last hearing for objections and comments. However, until now, the court is yet to schedule the start of another hearing for the defense.

Belen said the “defense has also 15 days to file motion for recall and prosecution has 15 days from receipt to file comment and objection.”

After the presentation of evidence, the formal offer of the prosecution will be presented in court. And once the court ruled the offer of the prosecution admissible, the defense has the right to file a “demur.”

“Right now, any discussion of the demur is premature because the prosecution has not submitted the formal offer [yet],” said Belen.

Meanwhile, if the demur was granted to the accused, then the accused would be freed and the case would end there. It means that the prosecution's formal offer is insufficient to find the accused guilty of the crime. However, if the demur were not granted, the defense shall present evidence that they are not involved in any act of hazing which caused Villanueva's death.

Roman to frats and soro: justify your continued existence
by Caroline Ann Diezmo and Harriet Melanie Zabala

UP President Emerlinda Roman issued Administrative Order (AO) No. 07-80 last September 10 requesting UP fraternities and similar organizations to submit a justification of their continued existence not later than October 19.

The AO was issued upon the recent death of Cris Anthony Mendez, Student Council Representative of National College of Public Administration and Governance in UP Diliman (UPD), and BS Agricultural Economics student Marlon Villanueva from UPLB last 2005.

Roman said the fraternities involved in the two deaths, allegedly from hazing, have to cooperate with the UP administration so that they and the families of the victims “can arrive at the truth.”

She also stated in the AO that “courage, loyalty and integrity are not tested on number of paddles a person can endure but instead they were measured by the ability to admit a committed wrongdoing and to be able to face all of its consequences.”

Lack of respect for human lives, she stressed, has no place within an environment of academic excellence like UP.

In connection to this, the University Student Council (USC) and Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC) held a dialogue with fraternities and sororities in UPLB last Oct. 10 at the Makiling Ballroom Hall.

The 32 fraternities and sororities present during the dialogue agreed to hold the passing of requisites set by AO No. 07-80 unless a dialogue with Roman has been conducted.

Paul Manuales, Secretary General of IFC said, “May mga vague points kasi dun sa AO, katulad ng dahilan kung bakit hininhiing ‘yung justification, ano ‘yung mga criteria at kung sino ‘yung mga taong magsasabi kung enough na ba ‘yung nakalagay dun sa justification.”

Manuales said, however, that the said order could be an eye-opener and a challenge for fraternities and sororities.

“This is an opportunity for frats and soro lalo na dito sa UPLB para patunayan na dapat pa rin silang mag-exist,” he added.

He also identified the consequences of the said order. He said if they will not be recognized, they will not have the right to use university facilities and they will just exist as underground organizations and continue to hold their activities even without the permission from the UP administration.

However, Manuales said that USC's recognition of students' freedom to organize will be enough reason for their fraternities to exist.

Meanwhile, UPLB students expressed different views regarding this matter.

A member of Beta Sigma fraternity who requested for anonymity said, “Tutul kami sa paghingi nila ng justification kasi alam namin nila na sobra ang naalunang mga frats at soro at saka mas matanda pa ang frat namin kay Roman, institusyon na ang mga frat kaya hindi na kailangan pang i-justify ang existence nila.”

Marcial Buladarco II, BS Agricultural Chemistry student batch '07 said, “Hindi naman yata tama iyon. Sana bigyan pa nila ng mas mahangang panahon ang mga fraternities para dito.”

“Mas okay na yung patakaran na ‘yun. Organisado at mas mayawasan na ang mga illegal na gawain at karahasan at ibang mga teror,” said Mark Dominic de Mesa, BS Computer Science student batch '07.

Meanwhile, fraternities and sororities in UPD held a dialogue with Roman to clarify their questions regarding the said AO. In the dialogue, Roman said she only wants to see the good side of the said organizations and that there will be no sanction for late submission or nonsubmission of justification.

“May mga vague points kasi dun sa AO, katulad ng dahilan kung bakit hininhiing ‘yung justification, ano ‘yung mga criteria at kung sino ‘yung mga taong magsasabi kung enough na ba ‘yung nakalagay dun sa justification.”
NSTP takers may face added components
by Rogene Gonzales and Mary Rose Toledo

In the coming semesters, the Department of National Defense (DND) may add programs to Literacy Training Service (LTS) and Civil Welfare Training Service (CWTS) course outlines.

In a symposium organized by the Department of Military Science and Tactics (DMST) of UP Los Baños last September 21 at the Maliling Ballroom Hall, environmental and disaster preparedness components were proposed to be added to the National Service Training Program (NSTP) courses (see sidebar).

Incorporated Components

UPLB Students need not worry of any drastic changes in NSTP courses according to Dr. Jose Medina, UPLB Director of Ugnayan ng Pahinungod, a university-mandated institution that facilitates CWTS and LTS courses.

He said that the components suggested were designed for colleges and universities that do not yet have a stable NSTP program.

“Kasi kung trinigant natin ‘yung concept, [the time allotted for the component] is too long,” he said in reaction to the number of hours required for the course.

But Medina agreed that the Program of Implementations (POI) for environmental and disaster preparedness were concentrated on developing the skills and preparedness of students during actual disaster situations.

He added that he is yet to receive notice from the Administration to implement the proposed changes in the LTS and CWTS next semester. But if given the go-signal, he suggested incorporating the POIs through six hours of disaster training component and 10 hours for Green Philippines Program (GPP) which could be integrated into LTS 2 and CWTS 2.

Medina stated however that there are already specific groups in the Pahinungod, both LTS and CWTS, that are already classified as GPP curriculum.

He believes that the Pahinungod, having been around for more than five years now, should still stick to its current program that aims to promote social awareness to students through community service and literacy training. Its efficiency as an NSTP program can be seen in the way students approach activities in their respective non-Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (non-ROTC) courses.

Medina said it is already a required practice of the Pahinungod to submit the names of non-ROTC graduates concealed as serial numbers to the DND.

He is also aware of the reason that graduates of non-ROTC shall comprise the National Service Reserve Corps (NSRC) (see sidebar).

Separate Curriculum

DMST-UPLB Head Col. Bonifacio Pollo said that the POIs were presented since he observed that the LTS and CWTS have no proper programs regarding disaster training as of now.

He also stressed that the main purpose of the POIs is to prepare the youth for security and socio-economic eventualities.

The three NSTP components are supervised by the DND. Pollo said that the DND has observed the lack of skills training in non-ROTC courses required for the NSRC.

Based on the assessment of the CWTS and LTS programs presented September 21, DMST found out that the decline of enrollees in ROTC is due to the perception that CWTS and LTS are more convenient and easy since these courses consume less hours, there are no drills, and uniforms are not required.

Moreover, some private educational institutions promote CWTS and LTS because of monetary benefits (100 percent of tuition in LTS and CWTS goes to the school which decides where to spend the money).

According to ROTC advocates, non-ROTC courses can also compromise national defense due to decrease in reserved officers, bring about a lack of pool for community-based projects, and make students more critical of the government.

Pollo clarified, however, that the ROTC has already incorporated the POIs on disaster training and environmental awareness as part of their course.

“Separate curriculum kasi ang non-ROTC, Inongganize na lang sila kaya lang kung utilization, wala ulit skills kaya nag-initiate ‘yung nasa taas [DND] na i-introduce ‘yung subjects na ganoon for them to be trained,” Pollo explained.[P]

Proposed Environmental Component: Executive Order 579 encourages the formulation and implementation of Green Philippines Program (GPP) through the NSTP that has the following objectives:

• Taking back our forests and replenishing fallen trees with new, protected forests;
• Beautifying our barangays and cities;
• Building more urban parks and recreation areas;
• Purifying our water; and
• Cleaning up industrial sites.

At least 36 hours per semester or 72 hours in case of one summer program should be allotted to the GPP.

Proposed Disaster Preparedness Component: This course includes survival, rappelling & high angle rescue having the following general objectives:

• Train the student in basic and applicable safety, rescue, relief and survival skills necessary during disaster situations;
• Train the students at a level of competence so he may impart the same skills to others.

At least 16 hours per semester is the allotted time for this component.

The National Service Reserve Corps

Section 11.a of the Revised Implementing “Rules of Regulations” of the NSTP specifically states that:

“Graduates of the non-ROTC components of the NSTP shall belong to the National Service Reserve Corps (NSRC) and could be tapped by the State for literacy and civic welfare activities, especially in times of calamities through the joint efforts of DND, CHED and TESDA, in coordination with DILG, DSWD, and other concerned agencies/associations.”

The Guidelines for the Establishment of the NSRC indicates that the Central offices of CHED/TESDA shall submit official national master list of registered NSRC members, with corresponding centrally-determined serial number to National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) through DND per school year.

Roman bans smoking in UP

by Mailyn Ann Yancy Falcunlan

UP President Emerlinda Roman issued last September 5 a memorandum imposing a systemwide ban on smoking, tobacco sales and tobacco advertising to protect and instill health consciousness among university constituents.

Roman also urged all chancellors to take an immediate action and implement the said memorandum (Administrative Order 07-70) in their respective campuses.

The memo is in support of the World Health Organization’s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and Republic Act 9211 or the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003 that limits tobacco sales and smoking in the country.

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The memo is in support of the World Health Organization’s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and Republic Act 9211 or the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003 that limits tobacco sales and smoking in the country.

UP units in Diliman, Los Banos, Iloilo, and Mindanao were required to submit a cessation plan implementing a smoking ban to be executed in their campuses in three years’ time.

According to the memo, the implementa-
**Summary of the Office of the Student Regent policy review on the tuition and other fee increases**

Based on the official enrolment and initial socialized tuition and financial assistance program application data, freshman perception surveys, and informal student consultations, we have observed the following:

1. Low enrolment in almost half of courses in UP Diliman, particularly in low important courses with perennially low enrolment courses relative to the course quota, notwithstanding continued low enrolment relative to the course quota in BS Fisheries in UP Visayas (UPV) among others.

2. In some of the courses in UPV, low enrolment relative to the UP College Admission Test (UPCAT) qualifiers were observed, despite the relative market demand for these courses (BS Biology, BS Marketing and BS Accountancy).

With the tuition increase, it can be inferred that UP, instead of being the default university choice to its competitive advantage of low tuition with quality education, might now be in a state of free competition with other schools.

3. Parents and students relied not only on family income but also on outside sources such as salary loans, student loans, OFW remittances and scholarships to finance the students’ enrolment. These measures, especially loans, might be unsustainable if employed throughout the students’ stay in UP. Salary loans necessary decrease the disposable family income for other necessities in the long-term, despite the short-term benefit of facilitating actual enrolment in UP.

4. There were reports by some freshmen about difficulty in accessing the lower STFAP brackets, especially by those with OFW parents with no Income Tax Returns (ITR) and low-income families who do not regularly file their ITRs.

While acknowledging that every working person is obliged to file his/her corresponding ITR annually, UP must further re-evaluate its socialized tuition program to incorporate in its mechanism concrete social realities insofar as poverty and access to education are concerned.

5. In the autonomous units, most of the freshman units are in bracket C, but students in brackets D and E number only in the hundreds in UP units in Los Banos, Manila and Diliman. The low number of grantees might be due to the difficulty in accessing the lower income sections were precluded from entering UP altogether due to a confluence of factors, such as the high incidental costs of education and decreasing basic education standards.

6. Based on the UPD freshman perception survey, 82.8 percent of the 405 freshmen consulted in the survey conducted by the School of Statistics Student Council do not observe in the survey conducted by the School of Statistics Student Council do not observe the following:

7. The reports of De Dios on the tuition structure and Atanacio on the STFAP were also reviewed.

The general policy declaration on greater dependence on other resources than state support as declared by the De Dios report seems misplaced in light of the principle of democratic access to education and widening participation. The UP administration should correctly situate its tuition policy by considering the concrete socio-economic conditions of the Filipino people.

The income bracket D (Php 80,000-Php135,000) and Bracket E (up to Php 80,000) might not constitute much to enable these students to study in UP despite lower tuition in their bracket. UP must therefore reconsider the Php300 per unit tuition in Bracket D as well, in favor, at the very least, if the nominal payment of laboratory and miscellaneous fees. Bracket C (P135,001-P500,000) is observed as a catch-all bracket which includes very different employment profiles in its low and top end. At the P135,000 income level, students’ parents might be the low-salaried government employee earning around P11,000 a month. At the P500,000 income level, students’ parents might be middle-management officers in private corporations.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. A reaffirmation of the fundamental principles of democratic access and widening participation must be done through:
   a. Official twice-a-semester UP administration-student institutions congressional lobbying for a higher UP budget.
   b. Proactive student in the committees-n-charge if annual UP budget proposals

2. A suspension of the implementation of the new tuition policy for the second semester of 2007-2008, pending a comprehensive review of UP’s financial health, the following are proposed:
   a. Conduct a comprehensive and independent internal audit.
   b. Form a multi-sectoral University Committee to further review the internal efficiency of UP.
   c. Institutionalize a comprehensive donations system where projects and programs available for pledges and donations are prioritized for funding.

3. UP should allocate funding for system-wide popularization campaigns of less known courses through information drives.

4. UP must provide UPCAT qualifiers sufficient information on available public/private scholarship grants and the full mechanics of the STGAP and UP student loans.

5. UP should abrogate annual automatic tuition fee increases based on the prevailing inflation rate, but instead employ a review every five years with student consultations.

6. Without prejudice to the fundamental contents of the Office of the Student Regent on the new STFAP, the following policy changes are proposed:
   a. Simplify access to STFAP, where bracket access shall be given to the students based on the submitted ITR pending full assessment of their socio-economic profile.
   b. Review the STFAP mechanism, including but not limited to the formula on determining the brackets and the entire process of application and inclusion in the brackets.
   c. Recategorize the lower income brackets for the democratic access and widening participation.

   i. Shift the default STFAP bracket B to bracket C, as the latter bracket generally represents the annual family income of majority of UP students without prejudice to possible adjustments of the income levels (P135,000-P500,000) covered by bracket C itself.
   ii. Afford bracket D students free tuition and either subsidized or full-payment of miscellaneous fees.
   iii. Increase annually the Php22,000 stipend to the students under bracket E.

**BOR...from p1**

Professor Ted Mendoza, students were eventually allowed to enter the APEC grounds where they held a program in front of the building.

Hannah Mae Dormido, Katipunan ng mga Sanggunian ng mga Mag-aaral sa UP Secretary General from UP Diliman, said protests were also staged in Palma Hall at UP Diliman, simultaneous with the BOR meeting in UP Los Banos.

Angel, a BS Computer Science ’07 student who attended the protest said, “Sumali ako dito kasi naniwala ako na maali ‘yung pagtaas ng tuition. Nawala na yung pagla-State University ng UPLB.”

**First base**

After the meeting, Ridon shared the results of the regents’ discussion to the students. It was agreed upon that he and UP President Emerlinda Roman will “talk” to “thresh out a clean agreement in the entire policy.”

Ridon said the meeting focused on the decrease in this year’s qualifier turnouts after the implementation of ToFI.

“Yang situation sa UP Visayas, 10 lang ang nag-entrol sa BS Fisheries, considering na yun ang flagship program nila. For this program, it is quite insubstantial. Hindi pwedeng ganun. At the end of the day, the academic integrity of the University of the Philippines is compromised,” Ridon stressed.

**Gunning for a homerun (?)**

Ridon said the next BOR meeting will be held in UP Diliman. He added that this next meeting may decide whether the ToFI will be “junked” or not. Also, he said that there is no definite date yet for the meeting, but shared that it may be held at the third week of October.

“Hindi kayang ko ang laban na umala sa BOR meeting sa UP Diliman kahit na nakakayaon na, upang ipagpatuloy ang laban kontra ToFI,” he said [P]
VetMed student’s death accidental, parents say

by Rhodora Ogrimen

“Jekjek never committed suicide nor did he intend to drink the chemical. It was an accident and unintentional.”

This is the claim of Mark Chester (Jekjek) Lanzanas’ parents, Roger and Esther Lanzanas, in a statement aimed to Perspective for cleaning spreading rumors that their son died because of suicide.

Jekjek, who was a Batch 2004 Doctor in Medicine, student, reportedly drank the formaldehyde (formaldehyde) by accident while conducting an experiment in his room in their residence, last Oct. 5, Friday.

Jekjek who was said to be fond of bringing his school laboratory exercises at home, had put his glass of drinking water close to the ‘unabeled’ drinking glasses which he used as containers (including the glass containing the formaldehyde). It was also said that he was unable to distinguish his drink because the gas molecules of formaldehyde have already diffused in his room.

After the ‘accidental drinking’ he went out of the room at once because he felt a burning sensation in the throat; and had difficulty in breathing. He was also quoted saying, “Mommy nakainom ako ng formalin na matatalo ko ang mukha mo!”

In an interview with the Perspective, his mother said that neither did she had scolded him nor had he had some quarrel with his girlfriend prior to his death.

Meanwhile, Rex Albert Espinas, a childhood friend and a co-member of Jekjek in the Knights of the Altar, has made a stand, as well, that it was an accident.

Lastly, Espinas answered all the rumors with “Balata sa hamot ang natatanglaan kun kita ni Jekjek alam niyon hindi nia gugawa ‘yan!”

On the other hand, Dean Conrado A. Valdez and the faculty members of the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) were also shocked, at same time, saddened by the news of his death.

Valdez said that the college is planning to form a committee that will aid students with their academic problems, and deal with such cases.

The body of Lanzanas lay in his residence at Oland Compound, Maahas and his interment was on Oct. 14. [P]
A ng Universidad ng Pilipinas ay kilala bilang isang Pampublikong Universidad. At bilang isang pampublikong unibersidad, inaasahang maliliw lamang ang tuition na binabayaran dito. Subalit dahil sa biglaang pagtaas ng tuition ngayong taon (P1000 per unit), maraing mga estudyante ang hindi tumuloy sa pagpapaksa sa UP kahit na sila ay nakapasa sa University of the Philippines College Admission Test (UPCAT). Ang Socialized Tuition Fee Assistance Program (STFAP) ay isang programa kung saan hinarap ang mga estudyante batay sa kanilang natatanggap ng kanilang pamilaya bawat taon. Mahirap ang proseso ng pagdaadanan ng tulong maiprubahan ang STFAP. Dagdag dito, ilang estudyante lamang ang kabilingan sa maaasa na bracket at marami ang nag-aapply para sa Student Loan Board (SLB), isang programang nagpapautang sa mga estudyante para ipantustos sa kanilang tuition. Lubhang naging mahirap para sa mga freshman ang pagpapaksa sa unibersidad dulot ng pagkaraming balakid na umahangmahang sa kanilang daan.
UP Los Baños was able to re-establish its promise – to provide quality education for those who seek it regardless of age, sex, class and political beliefs. The ability of the university to pick itself up after countless adversities is one of the reasons for its prestige.

It is now almost a hundred years since the university was built. UPLB nearing its 100th year of existence is a milestone that is very much anticipated and planned on. But behind all the enthusiasm and the grand celebrations is a plea: to save the education that is once again in danger.

Celebrating to remember, celebrating to forget

During the launching of the UPLB’s Centennial Celebration, the Centennial Committee headed by Chancellor Luis Rey Velasco, promoted excellence, service and leadership in the next 100 years. This is depicted in the Centennial logo unveiled the same day. The logo shows the oblation and a sablay, the traditional graduation accessory, dressed in the university’s colors, maroon and green.

But this celebration a mere diversion from more pressing matters surrounding our country? Is this extravagant commemoration a deliberate ruse to make the people overlook the current status of the university?

There is nothing wrong with spending money on this event. When it comes to this kind of occasion, the people of UP Los Baños go out of their way to make it as memorable and extravagant as possible. Obviously, it is impossible for the university not to celebrate one of the most significant events in its history. One hundred is not just a number, but also a symbol of the school’s growth and progress. One hundred is the representation of the adversities and privileges set upon this community. It is in this span of time that the university gained its prestige.

But as the first century of the university comes to a close, the studentITY is bombarded with issues that compromise its status. With tuition and other fee increases, the Socialized Tuition and Financial Assistance Program re-bracketing, and the poor state of facilities as the pertinent problems of students today, who could, for the most part, focus on celebrating the Centennial Year? How can we be all jolly and festive when we are aware that there are a lot of students who are greatly affected by these issues? The fact that few students attended the launching of the Centennial shows that they have more important matters to attend to.

Maybe if this celebration is related somehow to the solution of these problems, students will take more notice of commemorating the university that the public holds in such high regard. This Centennial should also serve as an avenue to strengthen the core values and principles of the university.

UP education is bestowed to every anak ng bayan, cries the song. It is unsettling to think that just as the university is about to celebrate one of the most important occasions in UP history, it is also facing major issues. If only the national budget is well allotted, every student could have the education he deserves.

Priorities, priorities

From songwriting and digital film competitions to lifetime achievement awards, the UP system has been every bit positive on its plans for the celebration of its centennial year. The publicity is overwhelming and the hype is building up.

It is unlikely for all these plans to ensue. But if they do materialize, then this must be a sign that the entire body is working as a group to further the excellence of the university.

The Centennial celebration could either get in the way of our awareness of the critical issues in the university, or it could help us be optimistic amid all the troubles surrounding us today. The university is given another century to effect change and to fix what has been impaired by the school’s current problems.

The need for this state university to provide quality and accessible education has not changed, even after a hundred years.

Isang Daan urges us to make change a pathway towards advancement. This celebration of the Centennial Year is not only for the administration, but for the students as well. And as UP students, it is required of us to readily face our challenges – with heads and kamaos held high.\[P\]
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Chairman: Chancellor Luis Rey Velasco
Vice Chairman: Dr. Mimosa Ocampo, Director of the Office of Alumni Affairs

CHE
Chair: Ms. Angelina DR. Felix
Members: Prof. Melissa P. Ferido
Prof. Melanie H. Narcisco
Prof. Rosmundo B. Mendoza Jr
Ms. Jennifer Marie C. Sunga
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Dr. Florence P. Soriano
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Ms. Romelyn Reponte (Chair, CVM Student Council)

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Dr. Orville L. Bondoc, CADO
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Prof. Ernesto C. Malabanan Jr, UPRHS

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Mr. Elmer Harold O. Grande, DDJ

SESAM
Dr. Nicomedes D. Briones
Ms. Maria Luisa G. Mendoza
Ms. Evangeline L. Alcantara

Recently-conducted Centennial Activities
- Freshman Convocation
- CEMplangan, CHE Exposed, CVM Centennial Symposium
- UPLB 19.09 Music Fest
- Alumni Homecoming and Awards Night
- 89th UPLB Loyalty Day and Launching of Centennial Year

Plans of the Centennial Commission for UPLB
- Raise funds for faculty development to supplement the faculty members’ inadequate salaries
- Advance research studies in Agriculture and Biotechnology and develop the PhD program in the College of Veterinary Medicine
- Present lifetime achievement awards to outstanding alumni
- Beautify campus landmarks

Did you know?
- UPLB has the largest land area among all the campuses in the UP system, including a 4,000-hectare forest reserve.
- UPLB has more species of trees than the whole of United States.
- UPLB has more species of trees than the whole of United States.
- UPLB has more species of trees than the whole of United States.
- The oblation in UPLB is made of cast concrete, while in UP Diliman it is made of bronze.
- Baker Hall once served as a concentration camp during the Japanese occupation. A monument stands at the back of the building which serves as a memorial for the soldiers who were imprisoned.
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Filipinos are familiar about former President Joseph “Erap” Estrada being the first president who underwent a formal impeachment trial. After a long wait for justice, finally, a verdict for Estrada arrived. However, one cannot say that people are contented with the given verdict. Read on and take a closer look at what lies behind Sandiganbayan’s decision.

The Fall Of ERAP

by Faith Allyson Buenacosa and Eileen Kae Relao

Blast from the past
On October 2000, Government Chavit Singson accused Estrada of being the “lord of all jueteng lords” saying he received five-million-peso protection money from jueteng operations every month during his term. This, and the worsening political and economic condition, started people calling for Estrada’s resignation. And on November 13, 2000, the House of Representatives filed an impeachment case against Estrada for several counts of bribery, graft and corruption, and betrayal of public trust.

The impeachment trial started December 7, 2000. Supreme court Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. stood as the presiding officer and the 24 Senators as judges. Meanwhile, Clarisse Ocampo, an executive from Equitable-PCI bank testified that Estrada owned a P500 million bank account under the pseudonym “Jose Velarde.”

The controversial “brown envelope” was presented to the court on January 16, 2001. The envelope contains a bank document showing that the P500 million was indeed an ill-gotten wealth and that Estrada had more bank accounts under different names.

Unfortunately, majority of the Senators (11 out of 21) opposed the opening of the envelope. The prosecution saw this as suppression of truth and an early sign of an acquittal. They then walked out of the courtroom along with anti-Estrada spectators. At 11:00 p.m. of the same day, militant groups and civil society led in gathering of a huge anti-Estrada crowd in EDSA Shrine to protest the suppression of the evidence.

After massive protests during EDSA 2, the Filipinos’ craving for justice and overhaul of the Philippine political system catapulted Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to presidency on January 20, 2001. As she took her oath in front of the EDSA Shrine to presidency on January 20, 2001. as President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and overhaul of the Philippine society led in gathering of a huge anti-Estrada crowd in EDSA Shrine to protest the suppression of the evidence.

Unfortunately, majority of the Senators (11 out of 21) opposed the opening of the envelope. The prosecution saw this as suppression of truth and an early sign of an acquittal. They then walked out of the courtroom along with anti-Estrada spectators. At 11:00 p.m. of the same day, militant groups and civil society led in gathering of a huge anti-Estrada crowd in EDSA Shrine to protest the suppression of the evidence.

The present tread
Six years after being ousted, Estrada was sentenced with 20-40 years in prison following Sandiganbayan’s guilty verdict.

The Ombudsman charged Estrada with a P4.097-billion plunder case on April 4, 2001. Moreover, minor charges of perjury were also filed against him for illegally using an alias and underreporting his assets in 1999.

Estrada’s plunder case contained four charges. The charges were the acceptance of P545 million in protection money from illegal gambling, misappropriation of P130 million in tobacco excise taxes, collection of a P187.7-million commission from the sales of shares of Belle Corporation, and amassing and depositing P3.2 billion in the Jose Velarde bank account.

Will the Filipinos make a way to retrieve the presidency? Are we willing and ready to stage a people power all over again?

Another of Arroyo’s predicament is her contradicting perception of people power, when in the first place it was people power that made her president. She tried to eradicate the notion of people power from the Filipinos. Clearly speaking, people power is the collective thought of the mass with a strong determination about a certain matter which is even higher than that of the president’s power to rule over a country.

Retrieved wealth
According to the law, all of Estrada’s ill-gotten wealth, including incurred interest, other incomes and assets including the properties and shares of stock will be handed over to the government. The question here is where all these money and properties will go and who will benefit from these.

Probably, the politicians, who have slier ways of benefiting from the money that should be used for the people, will be enjoying the money. There could be no doubt this wealth will be kept in “good hands” for the second time around.

Estrada’s verdict of 20-40 years of imprisonment serves him right. The only thing Filipinos should ponder about is the so-called “special treatment” accorded to him. Estrada said so himself: he is ready to be imprisoned in Muntinlupa.

Unveiled truth
On the other point of view, the prosecutor may reiterate the filing of perjury again! Estrada since the said case is similar to plunder, in conformity with the given definitions of the cases and for the fact that there is a form of lying in stealing. Moreover, taking for granted that Estrada would be proven guilty with perjury, confusions with the verdict would somehow vanish, or if not, lessen eventually.

Plunder penalizes public officials who amassed immense wealth through a series of criminal acts described in the statute in violation of public trust. On the other hand, perjury is the act of taking advantage of an official position and committing the offense in relation to his office.

Moreover, if one is accused of plunder, then most likely, one could also be accused of perjury, and vice versa. Hence, in the case of Estrada, people may say that the verdict, guilty of plunder, ordered upon him last September 13 was not unlike an oxymoron, a conjunction of two words which could really turn out to be very contradicting.

Therefore, why did the verdict turn out that way? Was it a sigh that the government, once again, was just playing a folly with the Filipinos?

The greater evil
For all we know, Estrada was the first president of the country formally convicted with plunder. It should never be taken for granted that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo are currently facing issues concerning various anomalies.

For instance, Arroyo is said to be involved with the construction of the overpriced Diosdado Macapagal Airport and Diosdado Macapagal Avenue. She is also involved in ZTE Broadband deal with China. And who would forget the Gloria Scandal (“Hello, Garci” issue)? There are also unresolved political killings that already claimed the lives of 800 activists and journalists. In fact, this has caught the attention of the international community. On the other hand, the First Gentleman is also associated with different scandals, starting the Juaneting Payola Scandal. People keep on wondering why it seems that justice is not given whenever the Arroyos are the ones involved.

Perhaps, after all the visible and evil transgressions Arroyo inflicts the country with, most of us are already questioning her presidency. In fact, Crispin Beltran of Analogpie recently filed a three-page impeachment complaint to the Ombudsman against Arroyo. However, Arroyo is yet to undergo formal trial. On the other hand, the impeachment complaint against Arroyo that has been filed to the Ombudsman should turn out to be adequate for it to be pushed through the impeachment process. And as the trial being conducted, Filipinos are the ones to decide again what would be Arroyo’s fate. The truth should be unveiled, thus, Arroyo must be judged rightfully and truthfully not only by the Supreme Court if the country, but also by the Filipinos.

The Philippines needs a thorough renewal of its whole political system. Arroyo should face all the consequences of her flaws. This requires the Supreme Court to be just in all its decision-making.

Filipinos cannot refrain from reacting on Arroyo’s mishaps. Thus, it is probable that people will wrestle to oust Arroyo. [P]
Behind the Scenes

LOYALTY DAY: Festive

by Rogene Gonzales

A festive day is celebrated with a showcase of parades and exhibits. Alumni guests of honor and UPLB students today are reminiscing the virtues of ‘loyalty and patriotism’ concepts.

Advocates of 1918 was evident and no compromise can be achieved as long as it was celebrated based on its original historical context.

On the same year, student councils of UPCA attempted to abolish the holiday because it was said to be established with vestiges of imperialistic ‘puppetry’ or subservience to colonial powers. According to militant students, the Philippines in 1918 was still under American regime and commemorating the mass enlistment contradicts ‘loyalty and patriotism’ concepts.

As resolution, the event was even renamed “Araw ng Diwa ng Los Baños” which brought about more controversy since objection was not only name-based but was deeply rooted in the event’s historical significance.

The 1918 volunteers supposedly rallied to the wrong country. And since the year count started on the National Guard Day, the question of “Loyalty to UP or Loyalty to the US?” surfaced.

Cast of Characters: Uncertain

Decades past, tradition buried deep roots in the consensus that the event’s historical significance.

But before you do any, the question slaps on your pimpled face and academically-draped mind - “What is it all about?”

Epilogue: 89 Years Later

With the theme “Celebrating a Heritage of Distinctive Excellence in Science and Technology” this year, does Loyalty Day indeed epitomize our ‘love for our country and Alma Mater?’

With the drastic fall of enrolment rate because of Tuition and Other Fee Increases, policy shifts such as jeepney rerouting and the proposed start of classes in September, one must feel that UP no longer serves its purpose?

At the end of the day, do we not yearn our generation and for the next ones to have equal opportunity for a firm existence–far greater than a Christmas fiesta or an awe-struck night sky moment?

We honor the past not to ignore the present and never to wound the future.


*Not their real names

89th Loyalty Day’s highlight was the UP Centennial launching in UPLB.

He honored the presence of the alumni especially the class of ’57 who are celebrating their golden anniversary. Agbisit also pointed out other activities such as community picnics, sports activities and the fireworks display at night.

Script: ‘Patriotic’ Volunteerism

On October 10, 1918, faculty and students of the UP College of Agriculture (UPCA) mass enlisted to the Philippine National Guard to fulfill Senator Manuel Quezon’s promise of enlisting 30,000 volunteers to the United States Army for World War I.

After undergoing a week long military training in Santa Lucia Barracks of Intramuros, Manila, the volunteers were transferred to Camp Claudio, Parañaque. They, however, were not sent to war because of the peace agreement between Europe and other nations signed a month after. They were eventually discharged from the camp on January 1919.

On October 10, 1919, the National Guard Day was recognized as tribute to the said volunteers.

Two years later, the UP Board of Regents approved the student body’s resolution of transforming the event into “Loyalty Day”, making it an official UPCA holiday. In 1933 it was formally established as the UP alumni homecoming.

Since then, Loyalty Day was celebrated with a showcase of parades and exhibits. Alumni guests of honor exchanged inspirational messages reminiscing the virtues of ‘loyalty and patriotism’ through affirmed oaths to the university.

Plot: American Loyalty?

With the emergence of nationalist and progressive thought that swept UP in the late 1960’s, the true essence of celebrating Loyalty Day has been subjected to skepticism.

An article titled Loyalty Day: Resolved? by Edgar Ticzon in the October 10, 1967 issue of Aggie Green and Gold, the official publication of UPCA, questioned the event’s relevance to UPCA students. The article cited that a generation gap between UPLB and academic concepts.

The offiCiAL STUdeNT PUbliCATioN of The UNiverSiTy of The PhiliPPiNeS loS bAñoS

Unveiling of the UP Centennial seal at DL Umali - one of the highlights of the 89th Loyalty Day.
altering the rules of the game
deifying filipino culture through holiday economics
by Sugar Marie Baula

“May pasok ba sa Monday?”

For the past months, one would always hear people, especially students asking the same question, whenever a usual holiday is coming up.

“Wala na naman.”

And for the past months as well, one would always hear people answer the question in this way.

It seems that having no classes on Mondays became a truth among people ten years ago, and it has only become more prominent as the days pass. It is odd because they do not really see the point of scheduling Mondays as Holidays through the so-called Holiday Economics.

Starting point
The Holiday Economics trend started six years ago when President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo introduced in her State of the Nation Address a policy that will attend to the country’s fading travel and tourism industry.

The practice was soon enacted into law through Republic Act 9492 of 2007, an “act of rationalizing the celebration of national holidays” through Holiday Economics. With this, holidays whose dates do not fall on Monday or Friday, except those of religious importance, will be celebrated on the Monday nearest the original commemoration date. Only a few “unmovable” dates remained; Christmas Day (December 25); New Year’s Eve (December 31); New Year’s Day (January 1); Holy Thursday; Good Friday; Easter Sunday; Eid’l Fitr (October 13) and All Saints Day (November 1).

Call for modernity
Developing countries like the Philippines are heading the path of modernity with an established and stable economy, prioritizing infrastructures, roads and urban development among others. The government sees that Holiday Economics is the country’s key to reach modernity through tourism.

Tourism upshot = Economic growth
Since 2001 and before Holiday Economics became a law, the Philippine government has been adjusting several holidays to extend the weekend. In the same year, October 31 was declared a holiday, extending the weekend to a five-day All Saints’ Day celebration. And come Christmas time, the government announced an 11-day holiday from December 22 to January 1, 2002. Gains on tourism-related industries are being attributed to these long holidays.

Jaser A. Marasigan, a Manila Bulletin columnist, cited examples of the effects of these long weekends to hotel, resorts and transportation. Resorts in Boracy experienced an occupancy rate of 100 percent, while in 2005, tourists flooded to Baguio City despite the Meningococcemia scare. Land, sea and air transportation were fully booked. Doors were also opened for job opportunities and local industries had a chance to prosper. If these will continue, the country could experience a 3.5 percent growth in Gross Domestic Product, as computed by the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB).

Now tourism is “geared towards attracting more visitors, extending their length of stay, and increasing the attractiveness of tourist products to encourage travelers to spend more.” Said Ms. Ma. Cherry Lyn S. Rodolfo, an economist from the University of Asia and the Pacific. What the country needs now are comprehensive and well-implemented government programs, to make tourism usher in economic growth.

Reality Check
If Holiday Economics was implemented to “encourage travelers to spend more,” the government might have overlooked the fact that the people of this country cannot afford to “spend more” given the impoverished economic situation of the country.

Granting that the government has been successful in its aim to increase consumer spending, will the majority of the locals or just the businessmen who own the hotels, resorts, travel agencies, and malls, really benefit from this?

According to Raul Pangalangan, columnist of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, “Holiday Economics, for sure, caters to the upper middle classes that have disposable money available for these jaunts. For the rest of the nation, whether to go to the beach or stay at home depends not on whether there is enough time, but on whether there is enough money.” This is especially true in a country like the Philippines where every centavo earned by the masses is very important.

Thus, it can be concluded that at the beginning, whether it is boost in local tourism and/or increased consumer spending that the government is aiming at, one would see that it does not really fit in the country’s context.

Holiday What?
According to Holiday Economics, there are two types of holidays, one with “movable” dates and the other with “unmovable” ones. With this, one may see that through this law the very essence of these holidays, especially those that are movable are being diminished. This is because of the idea that the holidays with “unmovable” dates has a precedence over those with “movable” ones.

For example, Independence Day and Christmas Day are both declared as holidays on their original dates and it is agreeable to say that both are just of equal footing in terms of importance. But then Holiday Economics says that if Independence Day was to land on a Tuesday it has to be commemorated on a Monday nearest to June 12. Christmas Day, which is “unmovable”, shall be commemorated only on December 25.

Filipinos are known as people deeply-rooted in their culture. Giving importance to events that molded the nation is a manifestation of it. But now, these events are just being rescheduled for one single reason—economic growth.

HOLIDAYS: New or New and Improved (?)
The perception that holidays are milestones in the country’s history is now a thing of the past.

Holidays are now perceived days to be observed for convenience—mere avenues for greater consumer spending to increase the country’s income. The values of these holidays are degraded to just days without classes for the students and non-working ones for the employed. So, if these days happen to land on a day that is “inconvenient,” meaning on a day not conducive to spending, it is subject to change.

With Holiday Economics, the essence of commemoration, which should be promoted by the government by launching activities and programs that will indeed commemorate the person or the event a particular holiday is dedicated to, is neglected; but the “economic” aspect apparently is prioritized. It is quite obvious that the goal of extending these holidays is not for extended commemoration but rather
UP students define the last days of the semester up to the final stretch of classes as the dreaded “hell week” — full of exams, activities, group projects, and piles of paper works. What makes this difficult is that these things happen simultaneously. Imagine having five classes in one day starting from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. with no breaks, with each class having a long exam, plus papers to submit, and group projects to work on. You would definitely feel you are in hell. Students have even used the terms “nosebleed” and “bloodshed” to describe a difficult test or a high falutin word.

If you are grade conscious, then you must likewise be health minded about it. To whom we can rely on in our unexpected times of bad luck and problems we are facing, there are always people also surprising circumstances that could somehow planned it. Take extra care of your belongings especially during hell week. There are certain things

Hell week is inevitable and we, the iskolars ng bayan, should be aware and open minded about it. [P]
Speech diversity

A s I was looking through the transparent glass window of a car, seeing people pass by, I was reminded of simple memories of past experiences that made me smile out of the tranquility and boredom of the scene.

Ain’t just a maid
If you own a cellular phone you have probably met “Inday” — the chambermaid with an extraordinary mastery in speaking various languages. She speaks English and Spanish, and if you think she has already forgotten her own language, you have to think again. Aside from her consistent fluency in Spanish and English, she has also dug deeper into the Filipino language. Perhaps, she might become a poet.

The Indays we used to know in reality are the probinsiyanas with district accents (Bisaya, Cebuano, etc.). But this interactive Inday of the modern century possesses intelligence and potentials in verbal communication. When asked by her master (who studied the dictionary overnight) with “How would you accept the fact that you are only a mere chambermaid in this extravagant mansion?” Inday responded, “Una carrotera. Eres tan pathetic. La única razón que inscribí tu casa es porque nada esta sucediendo dentro de tu casa casi-gradable. Quisiera traer a una poca clase en este hogar pero conjeturo que no puedo porque esta casa es fca”.

To this, her master replied with an expletive.

One time, when her master refused to include her in their walk to Enchanted Kingdom, she mused: “Don’t limit my capacity to understand unconsciously by ordinary people, made me awestruck. We could hardly understand what modern maids speak foreign languages for. Sometimes those skills eventually boost them up to be highly respected so that one cannot presume that maids are just mere helpers, ignorant and incapable.”

It is funny and quite entertaining, but I don’t see anything wrong. Though Inday’s intelligence was quite exaggerated, it is not surprising that modern maids speak foreign languages for the reason that many Filipinos work abroad as domestic helpers. Sometimes those skills eventually boost them up to be highly respected so that one cannot presume that maids are just mere helpers, ignorant and incapable.

Ambut sa imo!

When I entered UPLB, I met different kinds of people who added color to my life. There are kikay and fashionista girls, cool emo rockers, highly intelligent humans, super outspoken beings, and of course the region-oriented probinsiyanas and probinsiyanas. I enjoyed talking to students with district accents or “puntos”. I have a classmate in Biology 1 who is a native of Batangas. He always says, “Ano ka ate?” and “Ano baga iyan?” I also have a classmate in PE 1 who came from Agusan del Sur, and most probably you know he’s a “bisaya”. The “bisayas” are commonly known forinterchanging the pronunciation of the letters “i” and “e”. Whenever he talks, his district accent becomes very obvious.

Anyong Ha Seo!

Korea is invading our campus! It is apparent that the number of Korean students studying in UPLB is gradually increasing. Basically, they came here to study English. Out of the ordinary crowd of UP students, their physical appearances, language, and even their fashion statements can definitely make an eye-catching and head-turning sight. I remember a time when my friend and I were about to buy sundaes at Ministop, and to our surprise some Korean women are also nearby. “Sundae, fufufu!” said one of them. We, as well as the sellers, were awestruck. We could hardly understand what they were saying. After a short while, our minds began to get the idea - they wanted to buy four sundaes. “Fufufu” meaning four, four, four.

Language is a structure of words and symbols that allows us to communicate with one another. It makes us recognize our differences and similarities. Those simple statements uttered unconsciously by ordinary people, made me realize and understand further the diversity of the people hanging around UPLB.

Guilty Butt

Guilty Butt” while putting a stop to the issue at the same time. And she said, it was all because of “political noise.” Believe us, dear President, we know that.

And now, the deal was cancelled. Nothing next should be expected to happen. Remote barracks will remain remote and poor because the NBN project, which was supposed to connect them with all of the other government offices through state-of-the-art technology, was cancelled. It would, as usual, be very hard for them to voice out their long-ignored-and-forgotten needs and stands on issues. And that’s all because of political noise.

Last October 2, two were murdered—the NBN project and the political noise—by onekker (you know who)—leaving our country dying.
as the semester dumps its last but heavy pounds of shit it can bombard on my baggage but sensual body, I sit in the corner of my room, staring at my reflection on the spoon I hold.

The sepias feel of dawn, shadows emerging from the back of the furniture that accent the room, and handouts resting peacefully on the floor. They all intertwine, creating the perfect ambience to reminisce. I play with the spoon, watching my reflection change every time the spoon is tilted. I think of how much I have changed, how a semester could transform an innocent island boy into a man with a productivity and wisdom homogenously mixed in his bloodstream.

I recall the day I had to give my plane ticket to the clerk. My little brother screams my name. Tears roll down his cheeks, begging me not to leave him. My mother, left with only one breast from the operation she had to undergo last month, having a difficult time handling him. My father stands from a distance, yet I can still see his eyebrows- soaring at him to sleep and take a break. My parents stare at me from the glass window, as if I was the trophy of their success. I laugh inside, still cannot believe they used to be servants of the church. Now here they are, watching the fruit of their “sin” leave to study in the best University in the Philippines, holding the child that fell from the stars for us to cherish and adore.

I wave them goodbye bearing the smile that makes gifts melt. The sexy flight attendant welcomes me aboard the plane. I let her usher me to my seat even though I could find it myself. I think of how much I have started to stitch my own wounds. All that is left are memories that I too have loved, and how social norms prohibited me from loving continuously.

Did I just mention something about society? Wow, I’m really starting to sound like a sociologist major. That’s good, I have to practice for my interview. I bid farewell to programming and algorithms. I have finally realized what I want. I induce myself to a wet dream, despite the confusion, anticipation or annoyance, that next semester is much quirkier, twisted, and inappropriate to say. To say these holidays are merely tools for perpetuated through holidays. To say rather, it should always be gratitude by pressures of an ever-changing society.

I will be saying goodbye to the ones I have once served as my instructor for this semestral break. I will go back to my island with memories that will serve as my instructor for this semestral break. I will be saying goodbye to the ones I have once loved.

To the degree program that I once prayed to meet the quota, may you continue to give rise to technological advancement, and inspire others to shift out of it.

The one who licked off my virginity, saying goodbye to someone who will not be leaving at all is by far the weirdest thing I have done. I let us find out what we seek for ours, and may we find happiness away from each other’s arms. And for the record, I am so over you.

To my teachers this semester who made me masochistic because of their morbidly mind-grinding exercises, a new set of students (as well as my delinquent classmates) will learn from you next sem. Teach well, be objective, and alas, be evil.

To the humdrum existence, my life is no longer dull, for this semester gave me quite a lot of shit and piss.

I am free, off to the island where the land meets the sea. I will wait for the next events that will happen in my life. Foresight tells me that next semester is much quicker, twisted, and suitable to cultivate my neurotic tendencies. I will go back to my island and embrace the child that fell from the stars for us to cherish and adore.

I will be saying goodbye to the one who licked off my virginity, saying goodbye to someone who will not be leaving at all is by far the weirdest thing I have done. Let us find out what we seek for ours, and may we find happiness away from each other’s arms. And for the record, I am so over you.

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No turning back

This semester, vigilance swept the walls of our beloved university. With armbands, placards, and henna tattoos of righteous dissent, the Iskolars ng Bayan, hand in hand with teachers, drivers, vendors, and workers, fought the pressing issues that consigned UP and the country in peril.

Policies are being implemented this semester aligning UPLB to whatever lofty beliefs of its administration. Student evaluations show the incapacity of the large lecture class (LLC) scheme to improve academic excellence of the students or fill in the insufficient number of competitive faculty. Such mechanism only divulges the degrading condition of UP education.

As this semester starts, the UPLB ambient vendors were also prohibited from selling within university premises as per Memo No. 90 issued by the administration. Considering them as “unregistered leasees,” and for purposes such as food and health safety and public security, the administration denied them the opportunity to work decently. Jeepney rerouting in accordance to Memo No. 11 of the Office of Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs was also implemented. While the administration aims for a “smoke-free” and “noisefree” middle campus, the jeepney drivers’ income declined by at least P100 a day. The rerouting also inconvenienced many students and other passengers.

Most alarming is the 300 percent tuition increase that disenfranchised thousands of UPCAT passers the democratic access to UP education. Consequently, the tuition hike contradicted the very essence of UP as the university of the broader Filipino masses. But we never kept silent or pretend to be blind. We seized resistance every time the situation demands us.

However, as we strive to claim our invaluable rights, a political ploy in the form of Human Security Act legitimized any impediment—harassment, torture, and death—to us tagged as “destabilizers.”

In times that our rights as citizens of a country supposedly bounded by sovereignty, we stand on the shoulders of democracy. Militancy has never allowed any UP president, Philippine president, or Human Security Act to silence the Iskolars ng Bayan. The culture of militancy is not only a norm that we must always adhere to. The reason that we never ceased to be militant is we never achieved freedom from this prevailing system dominated by vested interest of the powerful few.

Every end shall be a motivation for us to start anew. As we enter the second semester of this academic year, the freshman populace had surpassed the hall of the finals week; yet as they leave the university, they are still haunted by the next semester’s P1000 per unit tuition rate as they try once more to enter the premier state university of the country.

The ambulant vendors still hope for the administration to reconsider their appeal. The jeepney drivers still solicit support from the local government for the repeal of the rerouting policy. The LLC will still be implemented next semester. The next Board of Regents meeting at UP Diliman this semestral break will tackle the proposal of the Office of the Student Regent to suspend the recent tuition increase. These are the things that call us to endorse the thrusts of UP centennial celebration—“excellence, service, leadership”—by protecting UP from all forms of commercialization and privatization of education and by safeguarding the taxpayers, who pay for our education, from all forms of oppression.

To keep our track straight as we face the challenges of our time, there must be no turning back. [P]

Editorial

Playing Deaf

September 28, 2007 leaves another mark on the century-old history of our university. In what could be the most participated mobilization this year, more than 500 UPLB students marched to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation building, most of them wearing red and black shirts, armbands, and “junk TOFI” henna tattoos.

This is to support the proposal of the Student Regent to suspend the implementation of Tuition and other Fee Increases (TOFI). To express solidarity with the students, jeepney drivers declared a transport holiday while vendors and faculty members also attended the event.

Once more, the studentry proved that they can consolidate to protest against the never-ending threat of TOFI approved by the Board of Regents (BOR) December 15 last year. The new freshmen composed the largest part of the protestor’s population. It was commendable that many of them still possess the essence of being an Iskolar ng Bayan despite the burden of 300% tuition increase they carry. Evidently, the expression of a selfless UP student can never be enclosed in brackets.

Despite strong opposition of the studentry, the BOR, UP’s highest policy-making body, effortlessly passed TOFI. It appears that consultations and even the representation of the Student Regent are just for formality, a cover up for the disintegrating condition of democracy in the university—something that is very hard to accept. Even with the presence of Student and Faculty Regents, it is as if the rest of the regents draw authority only from their private circle. These consultations and so-called concern for the students’ take on university policies are just fancy decorations to actually distract us from their usurpation of power and advancement of their personal gains.

Students took part in every TOFI consultation, and even sudden changes in venue of the BOR meetings were not able to stop Isko and Iska from exercising their right to be heard. The BOR tried holding their meetings in private subdivisions or remote places just to evade student protests, but so far they have failed. The students are more than willing to unite and act as one when it comes to fighting for the betterment of the university and the country. They never hesitated to resist oppression of their rights as students and as Filipinos.

Be it under the heat of the sun or the downpour of rain, the voices of UPLB students still reverberate for change whenever necessary. Though the BOR can pretend that no shout from the studentry can ever be audible enough, the Filipino people will not be fooled. They are still there to listen, and to attend to the cries of their children. Sooner or later the UP administration will hear more powerful voices, the very same voices that united a nation and won back the cherished right to education and freedom of speech. But till then, playing deaf can be fatal. [P]