

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



20 APR 27 11:58

SENATE

P. S. RES. NO 375

RECEIVED BY: *[Signature]*

Introduced by **SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA**

**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION TO AUTHORIZE AND ENCOURAGE ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO END THE CURRENT SEMESTER OR EQUIVALENT ACADEMIC PERIOD BY APRIL 30, 2020 AND TO ADOPT A "PASS" OR "DROP" GRADING SYSTEM**

**WHEREAS**, On March 16, 2020, President Rodrigo Duterte placed the entire Luzon on Enhanced Community Quarantine effective from March 17 to April 13, 2020, which resulted in the suspension of classes and/or temporary closure of some higher education institutions, and a shift to online or alternative modes of learning for some universities;

**WHEREAS**, On April 7, 2020, the President further extended the duration of the Enhanced Community Quarantine to April 30, 2020, thereby expanding the educational exigencies that resulted from the same;

**WHEREAS**, On April 13, 2020, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued CHED COVID Advisory No. 6, authorizing all higher education institutions to end their semester by April 30, 2020 (if they are using the old academic calendar (June to May) or to extend their semester for a maximum period of one month after the lifting of the enhanced community quarantine (if they are using the new academic calendar). The same Advisory also allowed HEIs to "undertake alternative assessments and remediations and consider student assessment and computation of grades to be based on current student records and school academic policies;"

**WHEREAS**, Due to the extraordinary situation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, students from various schools have called for the early termination of the current semester, trimester, quarter or equivalent academic period, as well as for mass promotion;

**WHEREAS,** In a statement, the National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP) stated that the “[t]he [COVID-19] crisis makes no exemptions. Students stand on the same side as everyone on the receiving end of financial, psychological, and emotional stress brought about by the pandemic. To add academic stress to the pile would only make for a burden even more difficult to bear.” Among others, NUSP advocates for the “immediate termination of the current semester and the mass promotion of students;”<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS,** Universities have started adopting revised academic calendar and policies to cope with the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the Board of Regents of the University of the Philippines decided to end the second semester of the academic year 2019-2020 on April 30,<sup>2</sup> and to give the students until May 2021 to complete the requirements of their enrolled courses this semester. Meanwhile, the Ateneo de Manila University has decided to end the semester on May 8, 2020 and to give a “P” (pass) mark to all its students.<sup>3</sup> For its part, De La Salle University decided that no students will fail this trimester, and students who cannot participate in online learning will have a period of one year to complete the course requirements;<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS,** Some universities have also started exploring the possibility of cancelling the offering of summer classes, and moving the start of the academic year 2020-2021 due to the pandemic. Others are also exploring ways to comply with social distancing measures once classes for the next academic year start;

**WHEREAS,** As of August 8, 2019, there are 1,963 higher education institutions in the Philippines, with more than 3.2 million students and 136,186 faculty members. Most, if not all, of them have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, due to various reasons, such as, a loved one who has been infected, or a parent who has been displaced from work;

**WHEREAS,** Experts even fear that aside from COVID-19, another health concern confounding the healthcare system right now is the mental health of the people affected by the pandemic;

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<sup>1</sup> Official Facebook Page of NUSP. Available at <https://www.facebook.com/NUSPPhilippines/photos/rpp.143512959788/10158533878394789/?type=3&theater> (date last accessed: April 20, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> No mass promotion: UP to end semester on April 30, defer grading. Available at <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/16/20/no-mass-promotion-up-to-end-semester-on-april-30-defer-grading> (date last accessed: April 20, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> 2020, April 7. Ateneo shortens second semester; students to receive passing grade. Manila Bulletin. Available at [https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/04/07/ateneo-shortens-second-semester-students-to-receive-passing-grade/?\\_\\_cf\\_chl\\_jschl\\_tk\\_\\_=9d9dd75d0885f3aa7c4c88c0399030750bcf62d9-1587355724-0-ASB9mEe4aykbl7Jscv1mgEER9wpxCc8iiWJPCjzxi5VrWuHGk49Fxpuckqscw4wtV\\_8bBZZXJDAqy8NHrpPJBgt4R-McS3TMNds8kR-9ZgpCu4Xddo3Uimt4eVaTUadXmZB34xxRs1OnxoMKNn-gM6RR4cswpuPeqK\\_Pix8GUtkCmCcNc\\_5\\_3UsIIAenrgcFOnuH5RspLmpsl6YlyHx1dNYI4k15YpWFlN7i2\\_IK3BZn\\_p-YrYnct0wczBiQ8Aa4eXcNIAqVPxCNBziHcsks4UMIJ4MпкиAonGgMpCTDIAM15Retw61i6JI4J2NfNM2JSsul8SvUfaC8WJ8NJoTo6cXy7HI3PX73fKm8Wsk29Lx\\_CopcYjDPir6jV0kqFgNQ](https://news.mb.com.ph/2020/04/07/ateneo-shortens-second-semester-students-to-receive-passing-grade/?__cf_chl_jschl_tk__=9d9dd75d0885f3aa7c4c88c0399030750bcf62d9-1587355724-0-ASB9mEe4aykbl7Jscv1mgEER9wpxCc8iiWJPCjzxi5VrWuHGk49Fxpuckqscw4wtV_8bBZZXJDAqy8NHrpPJBgt4R-McS3TMNds8kR-9ZgpCu4Xddo3Uimt4eVaTUadXmZB34xxRs1OnxoMKNn-gM6RR4cswpuPeqK_Pix8GUtkCmCcNc_5_3UsIIAenrgcFOnuH5RspLmpsl6YlyHx1dNYI4k15YpWFlN7i2_IK3BZn_p-YrYnct0wczBiQ8Aa4eXcNIAqVPxCNBziHcsks4UMIJ4MпкиAonGgMpCTDIAM15Retw61i6JI4J2NfNM2JSsul8SvUfaC8WJ8NJoTo6cXy7HI3PX73fKm8Wsk29Lx_CopcYjDPir6jV0kqFgNQ) (date last accessed: April 20, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> DLSU FAQs for Term 2, AY 2019-2020. Available at [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1LbUcV16-V7HPL4-Z0SrnqWShUsCBfqGWjv7\\_Te-u49c/edit?fbclid=IwAR38G4XM314n\\_4f10qzRanxtCm73Wc\\_CvVHQwh\\_kbW0gyvHVrg4PJq4tIXI#slide=id.g83429398db\\_0\\_183](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1LbUcV16-V7HPL4-Z0SrnqWShUsCBfqGWjv7_Te-u49c/edit?fbclid=IwAR38G4XM314n_4f10qzRanxtCm73Wc_CvVHQwh_kbW0gyvHVrg4PJq4tIXI#slide=id.g83429398db_0_183) (date last accessed: April 20, 2020).

**WHEREAS**, Considering the impact of the outbreak to the students, faculty and staff of various higher education institutions across the country, it is imperative that CHED step in and issue an advisory on the most expeditious way of immediately ending the current semester, trimester, quarter or equivalent academic period of academic year 2019-2020. CHED must also encourage these higher education institutions to adopt a "Pass" or "Drop" grading system, rather than the usual numerical grade, and allow students to complete the course requirements within one year, with special provisions to allow graduating students to graduate this semester, trimester, quarter or equivalent academic period. Further, students who are unable to meet the course requirements within such period must be given a "Drop" mark, instead of a failing grade;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate, to urge the Commission on Higher Education to authorize and encourage all public and private higher education institutions to end the current semester, trimester, quarter or equivalent academic period by April 30, 2020, or as soon as possible, and to adopt a "Pass" or "Drop" grading system for this period.

Adopted,

  
**SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA**