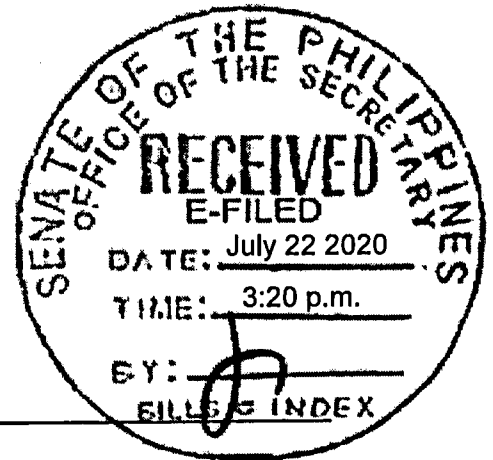


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*Second Regular Session* )

**SENATE**  
**S. No. 1716**



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Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

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**AN ACT**  
**MANDATING THE INCLUSION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH, AS AN ELECTIVE COURSE IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

*Explanatory Note*

In 2013, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued Memorandum Order No. 20 referring to the General Education Curriculum (GEC) for the tertiary level. While the GEC met controversies for making Filipino and English language subjects optional, it also opened freedom and flexibility to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the offering of language programs<sup>1</sup>.

While learning the Philippine language connects us to our history, culture and identity as Filipinos, learning foreign languages also has its own set of advantages.

Foreign language skills is an important 21<sup>st</sup> century social skill that fosters intercultural and international awareness, knowledge, and understanding, critical thinking, and effective communicative skills. Moreover, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) said that "global competence requires numerous skills, including the ability to: communicate in more than one language; communicate appropriately and effectively with people from other cultures or countries; comprehend other people's thoughts, beliefs and feelings, and see the world from their perspectives; adjust one's thoughts, feelings or behaviors to fit new contexts and situations; and analyze and think critically in order to scrutinize and appraise information and meanings." By providing an avenue for Filipino learners to learn a foreign language, we are making them locally and internationally competitive.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2019/07/03/sc-rules-language-subjects-are-optional-in-college/>

It also expands their global opportunities for employment, travel, cross-cultural exchange, diplomacy, international education, and business.

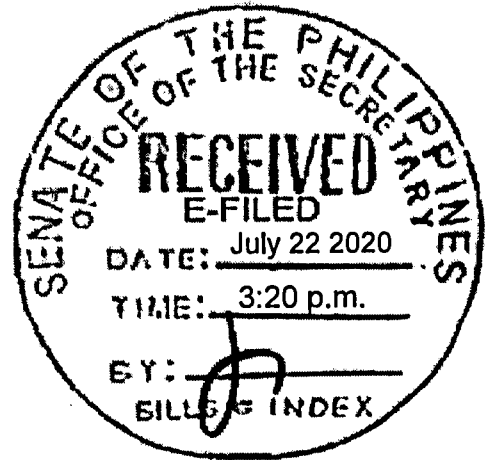
This measure seeks to institutionalize the integration of foreign languages, other than English, as an elective course in the Higher Education curriculum. This shall be a 3-unit beginner course taught by accredited foreign language teachers as recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is a must.

  
GRACE POE

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
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*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1           Section 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Foreign Language  
2 Education Act”.

3           Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes the fast growing global  
4 economy and the need for Filipinos to remain competitive in the global arena that is  
5 composed of different people, cultures and languages. It shall therefore be the policy  
6 of the State to include foreign language education, other than English, as an elective  
7 course in the higher education curricula, with the goal of equipping Filipinos with  
8 sufficient aptitude and skills to be more competitive and thereafter, enjoy better job  
9 opportunities, travel, business, education, among others, globally.

10           Sec. 3. Foreign Language Education. – The teaching of a foreign language other  
11 than English, as an elective course, shall be included in the curriculum of higher  
12 education. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), pursuant to its mandate  
13 under Republic Act No. 7722, otherwise known as the “Higher Education Act of 1994”,  
14 shall determine the specific foreign languages, the start of the integration, and other  
15 necessary guidelines and policies to implement this Act.

1           The foreign language elective course shall be a basic course for beginners and  
2 shall be designed as a three (3)-unit subject to be offered in all higher education  
3 institutions.

4           Sec. 4. Foreign Language Teachers. – To attend to the needs of foreign  
5 language teachers in higher education, CHED shall promote a field of specialization in  
6 each of the identified foreign languages. CHED shall coordinate with education offices  
7 or similar offices of foreign embassies in formulating the foreign language training  
8 programs and curricula for Filipino teachers.

9           Teachers and college graduates who will take up a Master's degree in the  
10 corresponding foreign language shall be accredited as foreign language teachers.  
11 CHED shall also include the teaching of foreign languages as a field of study in the  
12 teacher education program.

13           Sec. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within sixty (60) days from the  
14 effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall issue the rules and regulations as may be  
15 necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

16           Sec. 6. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or  
17 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected shall remain  
18 in force and effect circulation.

19           Sec. 7. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, decrees, instructions,  
20 rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with any provision of this Act are  
21 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

22           Sec. 8. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
23 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general.

*Approved,*