

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FOOD, ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

16 May 2017, Hotel Supreme, Baguio City

*Theme: Fostering International Cooperation for Sustainable
Development through Multidisciplinary RDE*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Napoleon B. Imperial, CESO III
Deputy Executive Director IV
Commission on Higher Education

Three key challenges inherent in Philippine agriculture education and related fields

- 1. Persistent poverty and hunger**
- 2. The aging and thinning of the ranks of the farmers, and the not-so-bright prospect of replacements**
- 3. How to make the structure, contents and methodology of agriculture education quickly responsive to these two issues**

The Higher Education Reform Agenda (HERA)

- **Two-fold summarizing thrusts/organizing themes that underpin the agenda of accountability:**
 1. expanded and enhanced students career and life chances and choices of students; and
 2. higher education and its institutions placed in the full service of national development.
- **HEIs as:**
 - an instrument for poverty alleviation;
 - the means for human capital formation; and
 - a vehicle for technologically-driven national development
- **The Commission's Technical Panels for agriculture and related fields are encouraged to evolve curricular programs that are user-led, demand-driven and outcomes-based.**

Some developments and challenges in higher education confronting agricultural HEIs

- Two years after ASEAN 2015, the country's higher education system should now be working hard in catching up with its neighbors.

Two of the starting points of our participation in the open-border ASEAN are the inter-related outcomes-based education (OBE) and the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) for which we have been working with ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF) Committee.

- HEIs which have worked hard to be elevated to the status of the university or have styled themselves as university, what they have embraced is an **accountability** that would be tested and which can be validated by the yardstick of “**external efficiency of its graduates.**”
- Employers demand from graduates not just the traditional “input-based” credentials but **actual learning outcomes.**
- Can our graduates and future professionals clearly and actually demonstrate the desired outcomes in their places of work?

Some developments and challenges in higher education confronting agricultural HEIs

- Graduates do not necessarily have to be in the formal sector. By conducting their instructional efforts and programs within the OBE regime and the PQF, HEIs can better prepare students to become professionals who will do their jobs properly in whatever setting.
- In the larger job market, graduates of agricultural HEIs have to be involved in the extension process, making them real **change frontliners**.

Accountability translates itself to the call for **excellence and relevance**.

- CHED has called for and incentivized new research and development and extension thrusts. To support this, we also promoted international research collaboration.
- Amidst these promotive policy environment, **are we making any dent?**
- A UPLB alumnus posted on Facebook: *“I passed by an early morning fellowship of UPLB retirees. Somebody said that despite the voluminous scholarly work produced over the years, we have failed to elevate not only the status of agriculture but also farmers.”*



**“Science is good but what we need is a science
that serves the people.”**

- Prof. Dr. Edwards Crawley
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
4th International Open Innovations
Forum and Technology Show
October 2015, Moscow, Russia

The call for excellence and relevance

- CHED's modest efforts include putting emphasis on the universities and the knowledge production-innovation loop. This means building, promoting and rewarding institutions that foster academic-community linkages as a strategy running through the teaching, research and extension mandates.
- The university must communicate. Being a venue and processor of the whole gamut of research, development and innovation activities, the university may innovate via the **paths that may markedly differ from the trend of academic life that is helplessly hooked on the "publish or perish" culture.**

Academic Restructuring

- **Thailand**
- **University of British Columbia in Canada**
- **Cornell University**
- **A few universities in Australia and New Zealand**

Desired Outcomes

Desired Outcomes of Agricultural Education	Disciplines that may Contribute to the Outcome	Stakeholders/industry to send representatives
Sustainable environment	Forestry, fisheries, human ecology, agricultural economics	DENR, BFD, CCC, BFAR, BFD
Food sufficiency, safety and health and nutrition	Veterinary medicine, fisheries, crops science, animals science, dairy science, food technology	FNRI, NNC, DA-BAI, DA-BPI, PRC
Agricultural entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation	Agribusiness, agricultural economics, cooperatives development, agronomy, animal science, entrepreneurship	CDA, NAPC, DA-ATI, DA-BPI, DA-BAI, PRC, BFAR
Land systems development	Agricultural engineering, agronomy, soil science, agro-forestry	DA, NIA, DAR, BFAR, PRC, PCA

Desired Outcomes

- **Address the dwindling and aging agricultural manpower**
- **Sustainable environment**
- **Sustainable food sufficiency and security alongside health and nutrition**
- **Enhanced land systems development**

The way forward

Are we now ready for what has been envisioned by the ASEAN 2015 which is supposed to have been inaugurated and translated into consequent and specific accountabilities of every HEI?

If not yet so, do some leapfrogging within the framework of academic freedom to re-think, innovate and implement.

The way forward

Without considering the desired outcomes of higher education, we might miss important preparation for resiliency and the development of coping mechanisms against the big threats to physical survival that are now in our midst.

Thank you.