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Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

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OVPAA Memorandum No. 2021-61

For: Department Chairpersons
Institute Directors / Program Coordinators
The Faculty

Through: The CU Chancellors
The Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs
C I L T

From: Maria Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista
Vice-President for Academic Affairs

Re: Reminders on University Policies Related to Remote Teaching and Learning Implementation

In this period of continuing uncertainty and relentless challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently, by Super Typhoon Bising in Eastern Visayas, we are sharing with the UP Faculty the following reminders that were discussed in the meetings of the UP System Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) consisting of the Assistant Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs and Vice Chancellors for Research and Extension/Development; as well as the President's Advisory Council (PAC) composed of the Chancellors, PGH and BGC Directors and the EXECOM of the UP System.

1. Stringent Deadlines

Given the extraordinary stresses we are all experiencing at this time, please:

- a. allow students to submit work after the deadline until the end of the semester, through the LMS and/or through email; and,
- b. on a case-to-case basis, grant consideration to students who are unable to meet deadlines due to their particular contexts.

2. Feedback

The faculty is reminded that providing feedback to their students is an important aspect of learning. While isolated, there have been instances of students complaining to CU

officials or through social media about receiving neither feedback for their coursework nor responses to their emails or messages. Please make sure to:

- a. provide timely feedback through the learning platform/s or through email;
- b. give timely responses to any email/message that students send;
- c. reach out and consult students regarding their current status; and,
- d. be available for consultation (faculty availability for consultation is expected to have been indicated in the course guides).

3. Academic Requirements

Guided by the expected learning outcomes of the course, faculty members are enjoined to review the course requirements for the remainder of the semester and **ensure that only those that are most essential are required.**

Some students opted to enroll in 18 to 21 units this semester, even when the regular student load was reduced to 12 units. Please urge students who seem unable to cope with their workload to seek advice from their adviser/instructor. They may opt to drop the course. 'DRP' will be annotated in the Transcript of Records as a grade obtained in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Optional Attendance for Synchronous Classes

The faculty is reminded that **attendance in synchronous classes should not be required** given the unequal access of students to reliable internet providers and the country's limited internet infrastructure vis-à-vis those of its ASEAN neighbors. Recordings of the synchronous classes should be made available to students for the whole semester. **No graded activities should be held during synchronous classes.**

5. Reading Break

The reading break is meant to allow students to catch up, focus and understand the course learning materials given them. They may do advance reading or simply take a break from grappling with heavy course demands, on the one hand, and a high level of COVID19-induced anxiety, on the other. For faculty members, this break may be a time to further reflect on adjustments to be made in course delivery and assessment, if any, or to rest from close monitoring of learning among students. **During the Reading Week, there should be no synchronous sessions and no asynchronous activities or assessments. There should also be no deadlines for course requirements due this week.**

6. No Fail Policy

Since the COVID-19 pandemic has not abated, the no-fail policy applied during the First Semester AY2020-2021 will be implemented during the Second Semester AY2020-2021. A faculty member may DROP a student whose status is failing or whose performance is unsatisfactory, but **no student shall receive a grade of 4 or 5** for the

Second Semester AY 2020-2021. As stated in 3 above, 'DRP' will be annotated in the Transcript of Records as a grade obtained in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We thank our faculty, faculty administrators and non-academic support staff for their fortitude and for being one with UP's commitment to uphold the general welfare of its students and the practice of compassion and flexibility during these difficult times. Their efforts in carrying out the University's responsibility to ensure continuity of learning despite the demands of remote teaching and the anxiety resulting from the surge in COVID-19 cases are laudable.

However, surviving the challenges of life and work in the midst of a crisis, whose resolution remains uncertain, entails the steadfast support of a caring academic community that kindly watches out for its members. For this reason, we urge the Departments and Institutes, as the smallest units of the University, to check on each member regularly, foster collaborative teaching efforts to lighten each other's load and help those adversely affected by the crisis. In turn, the bigger units in the CUs are urged to organize virtual activities for sharing academic best practices and, equally important, for enhancing the emotional resilience and well-being of their constituents.

As the country's National University, we will make every effort to ensure that we will thrive under difficult circumstances.

Thank you and keep safe.