

President Mallari takes oath as AACCCUP Board Chair and President



Tarlac State University President Dr. Myrna Q. Mallari was elected as chairperson and president of the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines, Inc. (AACCCUP) board of trustees and took her oath on July 10, 2020 via Zoom.

CHED Commissioner Dr. Ronald L. Adamat led the induction of

the incoming AACCCUP board of trustees.

He challenged the new officers to maintain integrity and to continue servicing SUCs amid these challenging times.

Pres. Mallari holds the AACCCUP chairmanship since 2017 and has served the agency in various roles since 1997 as recorded in the

AACCCUP website.

The election of the board of trustees was held on June 26, 2020.

The AACCCUP is an accrediting agency of curricular programs of state universities and colleges in the Philippines. It develops a mechanism of, and conducts the evaluation of programs and institutions.

[Jodie Andrea G. Pangilinan]

SOL recognizes top students, continues learning amid pandemic

To motivate students and to provide more avenues to learn in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tarlac State University-School of Law (SOL) awarded scholarship grants to its top performing students and conducted a lecture series using an online platform.

Five full scholarship grants were awarded to deserving recipients according to Atty. Jose dela Rama, Jr., SOL dean, including the Justice Jose C. dela Rama, Sr. Scholarship Fund which was bestowed on the top student of the graduating class. This grant covers review expenses and stipend.

Recipient of the Justice Jose C. dela Rama, Sr. Scholarship Fund is Ms. Jui Provido who topped the fourth-year class. The other grantees

are Ms. Rochelle Del Monte (third year), Ms. Bethina Garcia (second year), and Ms. Vivien Claire Coleen Yalung (first year) who are the top students of their respective year level.

Aside from the scholarship, they will also receive a free foreign trip as incentive.

On July 9 to 10, the SOL also facilitated an online lecture series entitled “Step-by-Step Litigation” under the New Rules of Civil Procedure which is aimed to pursue learning for law students and lawyers amid the pandemic.

It was held via Zoom and Facebook Live with Hon. Maria Filomena Singh, Court of Appeals Associate Justice and 2019 Remedial Law Bar Examiner, as resource speaker.

“[With] our desire to provide the best legal education and to be innovative under the present set up, we have decided to go online, and we have decided to invite the best in this field,” Dean dela Rama said referring to Justice Singh.

The lecture was divided into two modules. The first one covered pleadings, motions, service, and filing, while the second focused on pre-trial, trial, and judgments.

In her message during the second part of the lecture series, TSU president Dr. Myrna Q. Mallari praised the SOL for getting better every year in terms of facilities, books, students, and recruitment of high caliber faculty members through the efforts of Dean dela Rama.

[Maria Adelaida Calayag]

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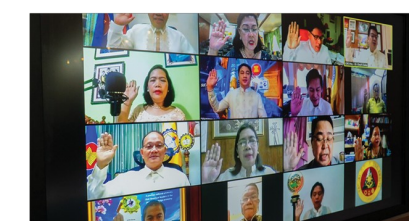
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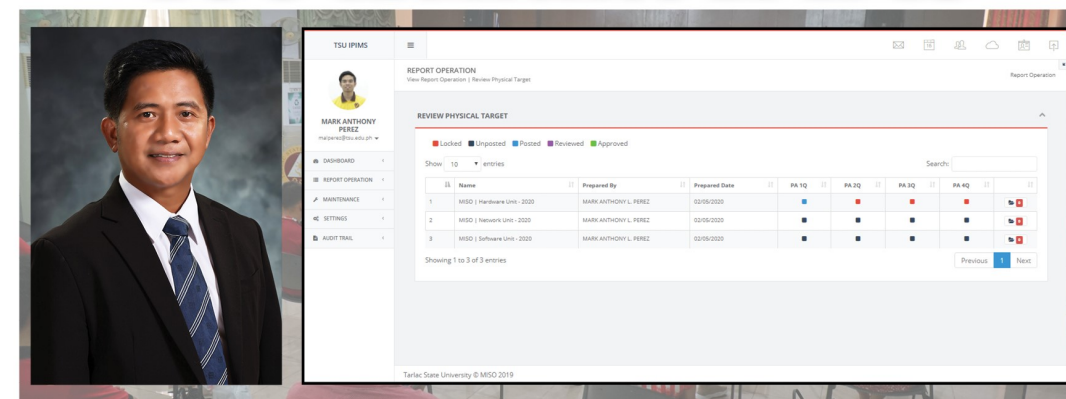
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TSU launches IPIMS



The institutional performance of Tarlac State University will now be easily monitored and updated through the Institutional Performance Information Management System (IPIMS) by 3rd quarter of this year.

IPIMS is a web-based system that collates and keeps track of targets of different colleges and offices within the university allowing the Office of Planning, Performance Monitoring, and Evaluation Office (OPPME) to access and review these reports by simply navigating the system online.

This paperless process will improve TSU's recordkeeping and documentation, as well as enhance the ability to identify and track areas of concern allowing the administration to react in a timely manner and develop needed interventions for unmet targets.

According to OPPME director Dr. Jay R. Pabustan, it is imperative for a public funded institution like TSU to be able to monitor its defined targets as mandated by law and its governing bodies such as the General Appropriations Act (GAA), Performance Based Bonus (PBB), and SUC (State Universities and Colleges) Levelling.

“Integration of processes is key to ensuring efficiency in the delivery of service,” he said in an online interview.

This project has been the first of his priorities since becoming the director of the Institutional Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Office (IPMEO) in April 2019. This development is in partnership with the Management Information Systems Office (MISO) spearheaded by Dr. Heidilyn V. Gamido and Engr. Marlon V. Gamido with Mr. Mark Anthony L. Perez as the main developer.

“The IPIMS is a centralized repository of performance information of different offices and units of TSU. Currently, we are at Phase 1. After the initial tests and implementation, the system will evolve to its 2nd and 3rd phases wherein ‘Planning and Monitoring’ and ‘Risk Management’ will be integrated respectively,” said Perez.

By 2021, the IPIMS will be expanded to accommodate the monitoring of individual targets found in the Individual Performance Commitment and Review form (IPCR).

Starting June 1, 2020, the Institutional Planning and Development Office merged with the Institutional Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Office creating the Office of Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation.

[Jodie Andrea G. Pangilinan]

CCS welcomes freshies with online meet and greet

To help incoming freshmen become familiar with the university's flexible learning modality and their new university life amid this pandemic, the College of Computer Studies organized an online meet and greet via Microsoft Teams on July 10, 2020.

Around 113 freshmen attended the said online activity which is regarded as an informal orientation of the college.

Prof. Valarie D. Simbol, CCS associate dean, initiated the meet and greet. According to her, the aim is to lessen the problems the college may encounter during the first week of classes especially on the use of Microsoft Teams.

"Marami din kasi nagtatanong sa TSU CCS page kaya [nagkaroon ng ganitong activity] para minsanan na lang ang discussion," she added.

CCS dean Engr. Marlon V. Gamido presided over the online activity. He reminded the students that learning is always a two-way process wherein effort must be exerted by both students and faculty members.

During the discussion, Dean Gamido presented the basic university and college information including the university flexible learning modality, avenues to get university and college announcements, and the college's facilities.

An open forum was conducted after the presentation.

CCS program chairpersons Prof. Jerome Legaspi and Dr. Theda Flare Quilala also attended the online event.

The college officials announced that another freshmen orientation will be held when classes officially start.

Aside from CCS, the Psychology and Fine Arts departments of the College of Arts and Social Sciences and College of Architecture and Fine Arts, respectively, also facilitated an online kumustahan and kwentuhan with their students on July 28, 29, and 31.

[Jazzel Llanelli M. Manabat]

TSU holds online 31st Commencement Exercises



Tarlac State University held its first ever online commencement exercises on June 29-30, 2020 via Facebook Live through the official page of the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) sending off a total of 1,105 graduating students.

The production, spearheaded by OPA director Ms. Jazzel Llanelli M. Manabat, is in compliance with Section A.1.f of the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) COVID Advisory No. 7 which prohibits higher education institutions (HEIs) from conducting mass gatherings including graduation ceremonies.

The online graduation followed the traditional program of the annual exercises where University President Dr. Myrna Q. Mallari virtually conferred the degrees of 509 graduates on the first day and 596 graduates on the second day.

In place of the distribution of diplomas, college deans and respective department chairs announced the names of the graduates one by one which are then flashed on screen.

The valedictory address by Micha M. Aguilar, AB Communication graduate, was delivered from the comfort of her home.

Meanwhile, Tarlac 2nd district representative Hon. Victor A. Yap also sent a video of his commencement speech from the House of Representatives.

"Admittedly today's very different from the traditional modes of graduation ceremonies we have always known, but it is through these kind of moments in history that sets you apart as different from the rest," he said empathically.

University directors Prof. Redemptor G. Toledano and Dr. Grace Anne C. Hasegawa, and student regent Harold Joseph Duane D. Hilario were recognized virtually for their distinguished

services to the university as outgoing officials. Their respective vice presidents accepted the awards of recognition on their behalf. [Jodie Andrea G. Pangilinan]

June 29, 2020	BACHELOR PROGRAMS	GRADUATE PROGRAMS
College of Computer Science	66	
College of Science	21	2
College of Teacher Education	110	35
College of Engineering and Technology	261	
School of Law		14

June 30, 2020	BACHELOR PROGRAMS	GRADUATE PROGRAMS
College of Arts and Social Sciences	122	
College of Business and Accountancy	274	4
College of Fine Arts and Architecture	180	
College of Public Administration and Governance	3	13

TSU leads CHEDRO 3 Thematic Focal for Instructions

The Commission on Higher Education Region III has tapped Tarlac State University to lead the Thematic Focal for Instructions in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 in higher education in Central Luzon.

The Region 3 Education Consortium (R3HEC), who prepares the Regional Higher Education Action Plan (RHEAP) in response to COVID-19, aims to have a direction to move forward and to continue educating students in the new normal.

RHEAP consists of policy recommendations and identification of programs and projects. It is composed of Thematic Focals — representatives from public and

private higher education institutions and the CHEDRO III. These Thematic Focals are divided to five areas namely, Operations, Instructions, Research, Extension and Productivity, and CHEDRO III Operations.

TSU is the lead in the Thematic Focal for Instructions which covers the curriculum, faculty, students, systems and facilities, and health, welfare and safety.

Dr. Erwin P. Lacanlale, Vice President for Academic Affairs, is the team leader for Instructions, together with TSU president Dr. Myrna Q. Mallari.

According to VP Lacanlale, the role of TSU is to seek inputs of the

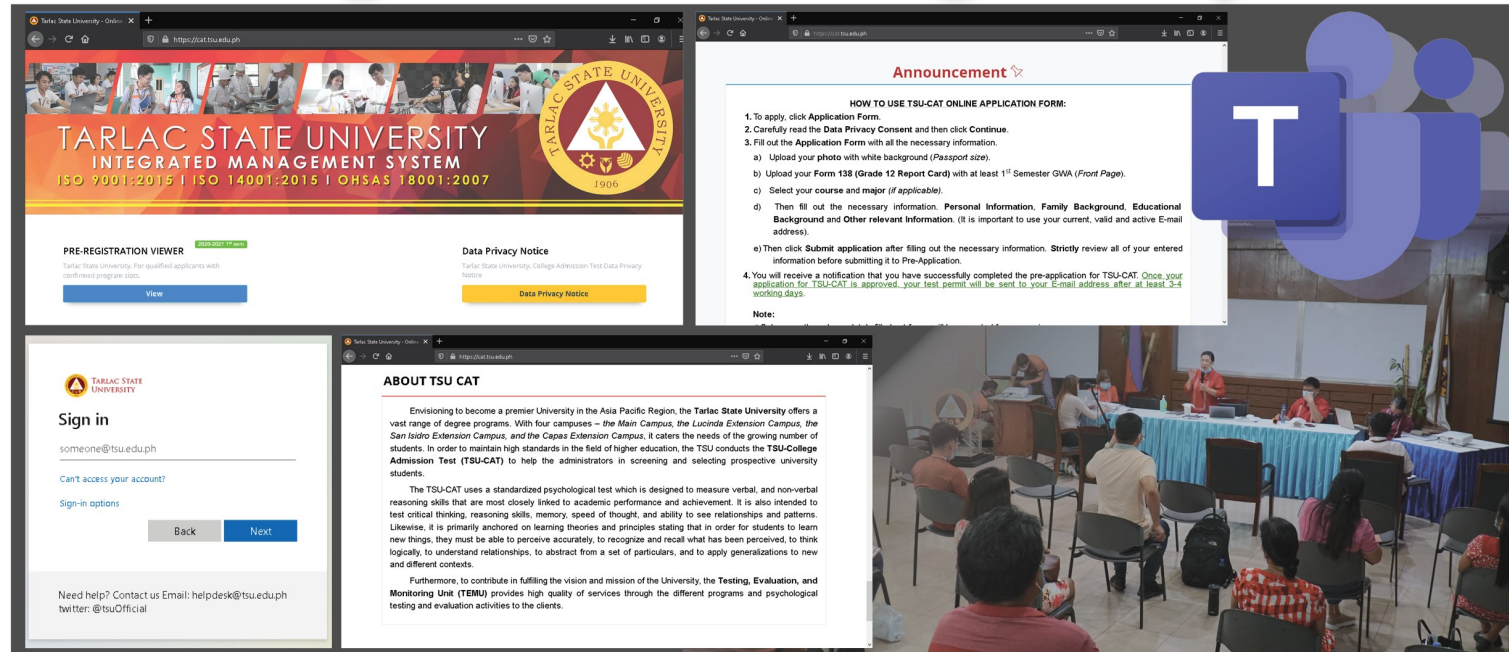
members of the Instructions group in drafting the regional needs assessment instrument for Instruction.

All trainings, seminars, and workshops to be held will be anchored on the results of the needs assessment which will be presented to different stakeholders.

Through this, the educational institutions in the region will be guided properly in managing the delivery of flexible learning.

"There are some universities that are well prepared, there are some who are not, and there are some who did not prepare. TSU will also be a guide based on our experience in the

TSU strengthens services through online platforms



Tarlac State University has already prepared for its online services years ago sans pandemic threats. Efficient service, through software and web-based systems, is one of the university's targets to better serve its clients.

Among the online services of TSU which shined during the "new normal" scenario are the TSU College Admission Test (TSU CAT) online application and release of results, Microsoft Teams, and the student portal.

First TSU CAT online application

Launched in December 2019, the first online application for the undergraduate students' admission test has become a leap towards making work easier for TSU as it serves as the first of the many online transactions for students.

Aside from the online application, test results were also released online with an embedded data privacy notice. Unlike last year's release of results, applicants need not bear with the long queue to check if they are qualified to enroll.

Both application and release of results are accessed via the TSU CAT website, <https://cat.tsu.edu.ph/>.

Steps and procedures of the online application, as well as the documentary requirements, are also posted on the website to properly guide the applicants. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are also featured to give basic information including the things they need to bring during the admission test proper.

The confirmation of slots for enrollment is also incorporated in the same website

where the incoming freshmen can express their intention to pursue their studies in TSU.

MS Teams' Way

As early as 2017, the university availed of the Microsoft Office 365 subscription which includes Microsoft Teams—the online platform which serves as the university's learning management system (LMS).

The Management Information Systems Office (MISO) has facilitated several Microsoft Teams seminars and trainings to prepare the teaching workforce for flexible learning.

According to Mark Anthony Perez, MISO computer programmer and Microsoft Teams trainer, the university has been targeting to educate the faculty members on how to use the MS Teams even before the lockdown was imposed in Luzon.

Student Portal

With the implementation of flexible learning, the student portal will play a great role in the distance education of the TSUians as this will be their means to view their schedule, log in to Microsoft Teams, and to check their grades.

Aside from Teams, the online payment is also linked to the student portal. Payments of fees, such as the tuition of graduate school students, can be done via the Internet Payment Gateway. Once the payment has been done, a notification will be sent to the TSU system for proper recording and validation.

The university partnered with the Development Bank of the Philippines in 2016 which makes the transactions easier

and more secure.

"Familiarization of tools to be used for flexible learning is a requisite to both students and faculty members to avoid disturbances in the delivery of teaching and learning. This can be done by frequent use of identified tools. Student portal records are derived from the university system; hence students should regularly visit respective portals to monitor grades, and academic records," College of Computer Studies dean Engr. Marlon Gamido said in an interview.

Students are also advised to use strong passwords and, most importantly, must not forget them.

Meanwhile, those who seek tutorials are also advised to check and visit Microsoft Educational Center where they can also have a certificate upon the completion of their tutorials.

TSU Scholarship Online Application

The MISO is also developing a system where students can apply for scholarship programs online. This web application will automate the manual process of the scholarship application. A total of 20 scholarship providers are listed in the system where students can freely choose the scholarship they want to avail.

"Students who need financial assistance may apply by just filling [out] the forms and should upload necessary requirements in the system. Approval of the application will be managed by the Scholarship Unit. Applicants will get a notification whether they are qualified or not," Perez said in a phone interview.

[Maria Adelaida D. Calayag]

EDITORIAL: Is Academic Freeze a solution?

The deadliest of all recorded pandemics in world history is the Spanish flu of 1918. Based on history.com, the Spanish flu infected an estimated 500 million people worldwide—about one-third of the planet's population—and killed an estimated 20 million to 50 million victims. Today is somehow reminiscent of the 1918 historical occurrence due to the 2019 coronavirus pandemic. Similar to what was initially done in 1918, schools, churches, theaters, and public gathering spaces were shut down to contain the spread of the virus.

As early as June 2020, opinion pieces and online petitions have been circulating regarding the clamor for a freeze in the academic year 2020-2021. This petition is addressed not only to the Commission on Higher Education but also to the Department of Education which allowed classes to open in August via blended and flexible learning modalities despite the inaction of the government to flatten the curve, let alone mitigate the effects of the dreaded virus.

If the 1918 pandemic will be compared with the COVID-19 situation, one element may set them miles apart from each other — the presence of advanced technology.

In the omnibus guidelines issued by the COVID-19 Inter-Agency Task Force on June 3, 2020, CHED recommended that higher education institutions using full online education can open anytime, those which will employ flexible learning (combination of online classes and offline learning) can open in August, while HEIs which will use significant face-to-face (traditional) mode can open not later than September 1st. This shows that education, coupled with technological advancements, is seen to be more probable to proceed in today's generation just like how socializing never stopped with the

use of social networking sites.

Further, CHED chairperson J. Prospero De Vera III issued a statement via the commission's website that they are now crafting guidelines for possible limited face-to-face classes in low risk MGCQ areas as part of the flexible learning system. But according to the CHED Region III office, the resumption of face-to-face learning will still be up to the local government units' discretion.

These sparked the petitions here and there to resort to an academic freeze for the safety and wellbeing of all students citing the underprivileged Filipino families, mental health concerns, and the digital divide.

But what will happen if students will stop the formal kind of learning for five months or more? What will be the repercussion of the academic freeze to education, employment, and economy?

Given that the Philippines is a developing country, piercing through the vicious cycle of poverty is quite impossible but, somehow, manageable. Impossible because of the current condition of the country, may it be economic or otherwise; manageable because of the innate ingenuity and resilience of Filipinos.

Citing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, obtaining quality education is the foundation to improving people's lives, and sustainable economic growth requires societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs. Both education and gainful employment are means to empower people. If academic freeze is the most plausible solution, how could the empowerment of students and educators be maintained, particularly for those who belong to the impoverished sector?

The Philippines may lose young professionals if schools will remain

closed. Educators, mainly those from private institutions, will add up to the ballooning unemployment rate if their schools will be closed. Eventually, the country's economic status will be at its worst — way worse than the recession of today, especially if illiteracy and unemployment will continue to rise. An Inquirer news even claimed that the COVID-19 crisis will cost the Philippine economy P2.2 trillion in losses this year as firms shed profits while millions of workers lose their jobs and income.

To counter the claims to have an academic freeze, the Department of Information and Communications Technology, Congressman Victor A. Yap, and Tarlac provincial and local government units pledged to help students, educators, and schools by installing free Wi-Fi hotspots, creating TechnoHubs, promising to deliver the printed modules to their constituents, and providing laptops and gadgets to support the flexible learning modality. Tarlac State University even shouldered the printing and mass production of modules. All these, and hopefully more, are aimed to be up and running by August to September 2020.

To top it all off, no one was ready for the effects of this pandemic, or the pandemic per se. Solutions, other than the academic freeze, could hopefully surface soon — a solution which will not sacrifice one for the other.

The youth must not be robbed of their right to inclusive and quality education as much as the educators must not be robbed of their right to make a living. If both are robbed of their respective rights due to the academic freeze, the vicious cycle of poverty will persist. Empowerment, as it is widely aimed for, will be faced with much adversity, and Filipinos will then continue to wallow in poverty.

**TSU BULLETIN**
EDITORIAL BOARDMS. JAZZEL LLANELI M. MANABAT
DIRECTOR, OPAMS. MARIA ADELAIDA D. CALAYAG
MS. JODIE ANDREA G. PANGILINAN
WRITERSMR. ALEXRAEL Y. CACULITAN
MS. MA. TERESA D. MADRIAGA
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CONSULTANTS

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VP FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRSDR. ARMEE N. ROSEL
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VP FOR PLANNING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE✉ opaitsu@gmail.com
opai@tsu.edu.ph

☎ +63 45 606-8123

f @opaitsu

**TARLAC STATE UNIVERSITY****Vision**

Tarlac State University is envisioned to be a premier University in the Asia Pacific Region.

Mission

Tarlac State University commits to promote and sustain the offering of quality and relevant programs in higher and advanced education ensuring equitable access to education for people empowerment, professional development, and global competitiveness.

Towards this end, TSU shall:

- 1.) Provide high quality instruction through qualified, competent and adequately trained faculty members and support staff.
- 2.) Be a premier research institution by enhancing research undertakings in the fields of technology and sciences and strengthening collaboration with local and international institutions.
- 3.) Be a champion in community development by strengthening partnership with public and private organizations and individuals

Quality, Environment, and Health and Safety (QEHS)

Tarlac State University is committed to improve continually for:

- Global competitiveness and excellence in the delivery of education, research, extension, training and consultancy services, hotel operation and administrative support services;
- safe and healthy working conditions to prevent injury and ill health of its employees, students, guests, visitors, suppliers and contractors;
- management of environmental aspects towards the prevention of pollution;
- compliant to regulatory and statutory requirements for the utmost satisfaction of its valued customers.

TSU guarantees quality in distance education

To ensure quality in the university's flexible learning modality for the upcoming academic year, Tarlac State University president Dr. Myrna Q. Mallari attended two online quality assurance activities on July 23, 2020.

Both the ASEAN QA Forum 2020 of the ASEAN QA Association and consultative meeting of the Commission on Higher Education for distance education in graduate programs are centered on quality assurance and other essential preparations in the "new normal" mode of education

The forum entitled "Going Digital: How Do We Assure Quality in the Shift" is about how various higher education institutions (HEIs) will handle the sudden shift in education delivery due to the pandemic while maintaining quality in the teaching and learning process.

Different HEIs from all over the world gathered online to discuss the preparation for the digitization of classes due to the pandemic. Choosing of learning management system, using of Zoom application for webinars to reach students, and

training teachers for module writing were among the preparations presented – most of which have already been undertaken by TSU.

"What is nice is we have done most of what was discussed, but we still have to do more," Pres. Mallari said in an online message to the university's administrative council.

The speakers are Ms. Miné de Klerk, Hybrid Learning Project manager at Stellenbosch University (South Africa); Dr. Kiran Kaur, director of Quality Management and Enhancement Centre at the University of Malaya (Malaysia); Dr. Klaus HimpslGutermann, head of the Centre for Educational Technology and Innovation, College of Teacher Education, Vienna University (Austria); and Dr. Thomas Strasser, professor of language methodology and technology-enhanced learning at the College of Teacher Education, Vienna University (Austria).

Based on the letter of invitation sent to the university, the forum will be held in a series of online sessions starting in July and culminating with the main Online Forum in October 2020.

Meanwhile, the CHED consultative meeting focused on the sharing of insights on the offering of distance education and transnational education graduate programs and the recalibration of guidelines for relevance and responsiveness.

This consultation was organized because of the sudden online offering of graduate programs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Normally, the offering of distance education is governed by separate guidelines with its own set of requirements.

"We are allowed to go online now because of the pandemic. After the pandemic, may ibang rules na kapag balak ituloy ang online class," Pres. Mallari said.

She further said that the basic requirement to offer online classes is a level IV accreditation which is already accomplished by the TSU graduate programs.

Pres. Mallari added that along with the preparations for flexible learning, the effectiveness of its implementation must be ascertained prior to the opening of classes.

[Jazzel Llaneli M. Manabat]

From page 2

TSU leads CHEDRO 3 Thematic Focal for Instructions

region. For example, noong midyear nakapagsagawa tayo 'nung flexible learning," VP Lacanlale said in an interview.

VP Lacanlale also cited Microsoft Teams as the learning management system of the university, the cloud-based learning technology of the

College of Computer studies, and the Advanced Manufacturing Training Hub of the College of Engineering and Technology as the preparations of TSU for flexible learning.

TSU has been using licensed Microsoft Office 365 since 2017, particularly MS Teams, and has led

Region III HEIs to use the same.

The university, which did not consider the no-face-to-face interaction as a hindrance, made its way to proceed to the online enrollment and migrated other transactions and activities online.

[Maria Adelaida D. Calayag]