

# An Institutional Blueprint for Transformational Development in the University Of Eastern Philippines

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## Abstract

This paper is an abridged presentation of the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP) blueprint for transformational development plan through academic excellence and governance. Using the Forced-Field Analysis popularly known as SWOT analysis, it showed that the university has more strengths and opportunities to offer to its clientele in the service area. The Strategic Map for UEP's academic excellence and governance has served the detailed guidepost in its implementation, foremost of which is to attain institutional accreditation status by year 2015.

**Keywords:** Institutional blueprint, transformational development

## Introduction

The University of Eastern Philippines as an institution is now 95 years old. Through the years, it has earned pride and honor for being the lone comprehensive and biggest university in the entire Eastern Visayas region. As an old but dynamic institution, it has gone through significant stages of development. With its university status, UEP stands out as one of the nationally known higher institutions of learning in the service of humankind.

In response to the pressing need for manpower development necessary to uplift the socio-economic conditions of the service area, Republic Act No. 4126 was signed into law on June 20, 1964, converting the Samar Institute of Technology (SIT) into the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP). Its mandate is to "primarily give technical and professional training, advanced instruction in literature, philosophy, the sciences, and the arts besides providing for the promotion of scientific and technological researches." The elevation of the school to a university paved the way to a dramatic increase in its academic, research, extension, and community involvement, resource generation, as well as the creation of additional institutes, centers, and offices. As one of the key institutional development actors in the region, the university plays host to national as well as international activities. Through the years, the university has expanded making her as the only comprehensive institution of higher learning in the region. As a vehicle of change that provides development impetus in this part of the country, the university has so much to offer in terms of manpower resource, technological advancement and programs and projects that are directed to the upliftment of the underprivileged sectors of the community.

## Problem Statement

As a growing comprehensive university, there is seemingly a concentration of curricular programs tilted towards the liberal arts, criminology, education, and business courses with secondary options in the sciences, technology, and engineering courses in terms of the trend of enrolment entrants.

Objectively, another issue besetting the institution is the problem affecting the teaching performance of the faculty members coupled with the multitude of task assignments of the mandated functions of the university. As this paper has envisioned a transformational development framework towards attaining academic excellence in the university, it also answered the following questions like: what are the institutional challenges and performance gaps faced by the university; what strategic academic plan and corresponding measurement plans linked to both vertical and horizontal integration; and what structural and organizational policy options and directions of the university academic program can be recommended.

## Significant Insights

As a preparatory hindsight of the paper, the situational analysis of the university academic program was determined using the Forced-Field Analysis popularly known as the SWOT analysis. This analytical tool provided the basis in the development of academic excellence framework which subsequently gave rise in formalizing the strategic map for UEP's academic excellence and governance, the details of which include the following: key results area (KRA), key performance indicators (KPI), strategies, programs, activities, and the corresponding tasks.

In response to the problems, the 12-point action agenda for the university administration was considered like the: 1) Regular curricular review/enrichment of courses offered for the last 5 years; 2) Creation of a

functionally effective Internal Quality Assurance Office; and 3) Aggressive implementation of the 5-Year Faculty Development Program.

The critical situational analysis to determine the university's current position had been determined using the Forced-Field Analysis popularly known as the SWOT analysis. Recognizing the university's strengths, it has a strategic location campus area with complete eco-system. Further, it has a group of highly qualified personnel and has a high institutional credibility.

Furthermore, it various accredited degree program offerings. High performance of graduates in licensure examinations is evident in all colleges. Greater internal resource generation options are observed in the university. On the contrary, challenges surfaced. Some of which are geo-hazard location mushrooming of private schools, inadequate field of specialization, faculty over-loading, and lack of second-liners faculty in technical fields.

To develop academic excellence and instill the value of honesty and integrity, hard work, service, and patriotism among the graduates of the university, it continuously reviewed/enriched the university curricular program to be relevant to the demands of times. It conducted massive curricular campaign strategy among feeder secondary schools in the province and nearby urban centers. Faculty development program along vertically articulated field of specialization was implemented. It motivated the academic community on the value of book writing and other forms of instructional materials production. Faculty and students exchange program at the regional, national, and international levels was promoted. The university's voluntary submission to the accreditation process from independent evaluators encouraged. A regular, periodic In-Service Training (INSET) program in order to continuously improve the faculty teaching performance institutionalized. The establishment of the Open University through distance learning system is underway.

On organizational policy options and directions and as part of the transformational strategy of the plan that contributed to academic excellence, the following organizational changes and directions were done:

1. The organizational re-alignment of the Student Affairs to be within the administrative supervision of the VPAA.
2. Revitalizing the Administrative Services Division (ASD) by taking in administrative supervision on HRMO.
3. The re-unification of the Property and Supply Offices in one operational set-up.
4. The different institutes/schools/center and/or service units created by the University are now transferred to its mother colleges as support to the different curricular program offerings.
5. Creation of a new unit in the university to focus/handle on international academic relations.
6. The policy option for institutionalizing vertical and horizontal measurement integration in meeting organizational vision and mission towards enhancing academic excellence. A measurement guidepost that would cut across the instruction function, registrar, student service, library, property/supply, and publication service as a horizontal integration shall be implemented. Alongside, vertical integration will cover financial measures, enrolment, library service, stakeholders, and alumni measures.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the SWOT analysis and using the parameters on development impact, organization outcomes, and the competencies and competency gaps, the university has more strengths and opportunities to offer. Be as it may, threats and weaknesses such as mushrooming of private schools, lack of specialization on technical fields, the in-breeding of faculty members, and lack of full-time researchers served as challenges to attain her institutional vision and mission.

The Strategic Map for UEP's academic excellence and governance provided the detailed guidepost in enhancing quality education in the next 5 years journey of academic excellence. Foremost to this is enhancing university and existing college/s accreditation status in order to attain institutional accreditation status by the year 2015.

Other key result areas that were considered priority agenda of the plan being ranked accordingly are as follows:

1. Curricular review/enhancement of courses offered for the last 5 years.
2. Enhanced faculty development by sending scholars in recognized HEIs.
3. Faculty and student exchange program.
4. Institutionalizing the INSET program.
5. Faculty book writing and instructional materials production
6. Faculty evaluation system using the quadruple technique
7. Performance in licensure examination through the provision of incentives for high performers.

8. Curricular center of development with College of Veterinary Medicine as the University Flagship College.
9. Institutionalizing the determination of the faculty workload through the 4-mandated functions.
10. Formalization of the Open University.

By and large, the plan has provided new impetus and direction in the UEP's journey towards becoming a world class university. What is needed is a coordinated synergy among the different players and stakeholders in implementing the plan. It needs strong political will, commitment, and unified clear vision among leaders of the university.

#### **Recommendations**

Based on logical reasoning and analysis of the present academic program of the university, the following recommendations are hereby presented:

1. The establishment of the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) as the university flagship college in order to have institutional distinction and pride. UEP-CVM was the second college opened in the country next to UP.
2. The application for institutional accreditation by the year 2015.
3. Conduct of periodic university INSET and the mandatory attendance of low- performing faculty members.
4. The transfer of different institutes/schools/center and/or service units created by the university to its respective mother colleges as support to the different curricular program offerings.
5. Creation of a new unit in the university to focus and handle on international academic relations and other related matters.

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