



Statement about Filipino Language Requirement in Higher Education

- We support the Supreme Court's decision, insofar as it:
 - Gives higher education institutions (HEIs) the choice to teach Filipino, English, and other local and foreign languages at their discretion. It upholds academic freedom and equality among languages.
 - Does not prevent HEIs from teaching Philippine literature.
 - It keeps the number of required subjects to a manageable level, giving students more room to take subjects aligned to their interests, needs, and career goals.
- We support CHED's respect of the rule of law.
- We appreciate CHED Chairman Popoy De Vera's courage to act in a fair and balanced manner, taking into account multiple perspectives on the issue.
- We support academic freedom of higher education institutions, a constitutional right.
- We support greater flexibility of language policy in higher education, giving HEIs and students more choice over what languages are taught/learned and how they are integrated in degree programs.
- We believe the *imposition* of one language, native or foreign, is not harmonious with ideals of 21st century democracy, justice, equal opportunity, and sustainable national development in a multilingual, multicultural society.
- On the other hand, we are against any policy that would *prevent* universities from teaching or using Filipino, English, or other languages that are significant to the Filipino people.
- If ever language/literature subjects are made mandatory again, we support an inclusive implementation in which all native Philippine languages and literatures are eligible.
- In other words, if a language requirement is reinstated, it should be a **general "Philippine language" requirement**, not restricted to the national language. Thus, students would have the option to fulfil it by taking some units of the national language (i.e. Filipino) AND/OR some units of another Philippine language (e.g. Cebuano, Ilokano, Hiligaynon, Maranao, etc.), depending on the student's interests and the university's offerings.
- Similarly, Philippine literature subjects should reflect the literatures of all regions, and can be taught in Filipino, English, **or any other language** as originally indicated in CHED Memo 59, s. 1996.
- To minimize curricular and financial burden on students, it would be prudent to limit the possible language and literature requirements to a combined total of 6 units.
- We assert that there are a variety of views on this issue, and no group should pose as representing all Filipino people. People have the right to agree with the Supreme Court decision without being attacked as unpatriotic. Likewise, they have the right to question policies that favor Filipino language without being branded as traitors to the country. Love for national language and love for country, culture, and community are not the same. In fact, the Supreme Court's decision is arguably in the best interest of the Filipino nation, for reasons expounded below.

