



Rethinking Higher Education in the Philippines in the Post-Pandemic World

Jose Victor D. Jimenez
De La Salle University

Abstract: To ensure the continuity of teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, the higher education institutions (HEIs) were constrained to migrate to and maximize the use of technology-driven educational platforms. As the world prepares to embrace the new normal, the educational leaders should rethink the higher educational system. Employing the descriptive-analytical method, the writer describes the responses of the Duterte administration and HEIs to the pandemic and explores some strategies in enhancing the online learning environment and curriculum design and assessment and upgrading the faculty competencies. The higher education sector should leverage and reinforce the delivery of online instruction and combine the conventional in-person learning format with virtual learning modality. In redesigning the curriculum, the HEIs ought to revisit the existing curriculum and institute a flexible digitally enabled curriculum. In lieu of the traditional assessments, the colleges and universities can prescribe authentic learning tasks that foster knowledge production. Continuing professional development of the faculty members is necessary to upgrade their skills and capabilities in integrating technology into the learning process. The study concludes by posing a challenge to the educational leaders to create a learning system attuned to the realities of the times and adapted to the student's needs, interest, and capabilities.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic; Philippine Higher Education; Blended Learning; Flexible Learning; Curriculum Design and Assessment

Introduction

In a statement released by the World Health Organization (WHO) on January 5, 2020, it was noted that in December 2019, an aggregation of pneumonia cases of undetermined etiology was identified in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. As contained in a situation report dated January 21, 2020, the Chinese government confirmed that the causative pathogen of the respiratory disease was a new strain of coronavirus after the virus isolation by the Chinese scientists on January 7, 2020. In its website, WHO (2020b) officially declared "COVID-19" on February 11, 2020, as the name of the new disease. On that day, the International Committee on Taxonomy of Virus (ICTV) (2020) reported that the "severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) was the novel infectious agent of the Coronavirus Disease 19 and the "species to which

the virus SARS-CoV-2 belongs is severe acute respiratory syndrome-related coronavirus." As the viral disease spread across the world, WHO (2020, June 29) announced on March 11, 2020 that the outbreak of the disease intensified into a pandemic.

On March 9, 2020, two days after the Department of Health verified the first locally transmitted Covid-19 case in the country (Department of Health, 2020, March 7), the Philippine government under the leadership of President Rodrigo Duterte proclaimed a "state of public health emergency" (Office of the Presidential Spokesperson, 2020, March 9). As the number of cases increased dramatically, President Duterte placed the entire island of Luzon under the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), ordering the suspension of classes, and imposing restrictions on the mobility of the people and public transportation (Medialdea, 2020, March 16). Apart



**The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022**

from the ECQ, the government, through the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), adopted and enforced different quarantine classifications based on its assessment of the Covid-19 situation namely, modified community quarantine (MECQ), general community quarantine (GCQ), modified general community quarantine (MGCQ). To curb the transmission of the contagious disease, the IATF laid down safety and health protocols. The government formulated a National Action Plan (NAP) which embodied the strategies to contain the spread of the virus.

To ensure the continuity of learning, the Philippine Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), specifically the University of the Philippines System (UP), De La Salle University (DLSU), Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU), University of Santo Tomas (UST) and Philippine Normal University (PNU) migrated to the fully online learning modes. The University of the Philippines System transitioned to the blended learning platform leveraging the University Virtual Learning Environment (UVLE). The De La Salle University set in motion a teaching modality branded as Lasallians Remote and Engaged Approach for Connectivity in Higher Education (R.E.A.C.H.). The Ateneo de Manila University operationalized the Adaptive Design for Learning (ADL) Framework. The University of Santo Tomas instituted the Enriched Virtual Mode (EVR) of instructional delivery. At the Philippine Normal University, the educational continuity was anchored on its program known as *Kaway-Aralan sa Bagong Kadawyan*.

The pandemic had changed the landscape of higher education in the Philippines. The digital technology had enabled the HEIs to continue the teaching-learning process. As in any organization, the HEIs must adapt to the emerging needs of the times. As they plan for the new normal, the HEIs should rethink the pedagogy and curriculum.

This study considers the question of how the HEIs can adjust to the post-pandemic world. Specifically, the writer endeavors to propound some learning modalities in higher education and present ideas on how the curriculum and assessments can be redesigned to be responsive to the needs of the learners and relevant to the real-world experiences and how the universities can upskill the faculty so that they could thrive in an online learning environment. This paper is prefaced with a general overview of the responses of the Duterte

administration and Philippine HEIs to the pandemic during its early stages.

The writer employs the descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive research entails a description of the phenomenon under consideration. In the analytical research, the research takes a step further, explaining the reasons for a particular phenomenon (Yang, n.d.).

Results and Discussion

The Outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The novel human coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) was the fifth recorded global disease outbreak since the deadly H1N1 influenza strain swept across the world in 1918 (Liu et al., 2020). On December 31, 2019, the WHO China Country Office found out about the aggregation of cases of undetermined origin that broke out in Wuhan City of China (WHO, 2020, January 5). Upon conducting genome sequencing, China CDC disclosed that a new coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was the etiologic agent of the disease (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2020, January 17).

Within a short time, the virus had spread quickly beyond China and reached 18 countries. On 30 January 2020, the WHO Director General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, heeding the recommendations of the IHR Emergency Committee (EC), announced that the “outbreak constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)” (WHO, 2020, February 12). Excerpts from the Statement of the WHO Director General (WHO, 2020, January 30) read:

There are now 98 cases in 18 countries outside China, include 8 cases of human-to-human transmission in four countries: Germany, Japan, Viet Nam and the United States of America.

.....
.....
.....

For all of these reasons, I am declaring a public health emergency of international concern over the global outbreak of novel coronavirus. The main reason for this declaration is not because of what

The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022

is happening in China, but because of what is happening in other countries.

Our greatest concern is the potential for the virus to spread to other countries with weaker health systems, and which are ill-prepared to deal with it.

On February 11, 2020, WHO (2020, February 11) officially declared “COVID-19” as the name of the viral illness in conformity with the “guidelines previously developed with the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).” Consistent with “best practices,” WHO (2020, June 29) explained that “the name of the disease was chosen to avoid inaccuracy and stigma and therefore did not refer to a geographical location, an animal, an individual or group of people.”

On that day, ICTV (2020) proclaimed that the virus was designated as “severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2),” recognizing the virus as “genetically related to the coronavirus responsible for the SARS outbreak of 2003. While related, the two viruses are different.” (WHO, 2020a).

On March 11, 2020, WHO (2020, March 11) declared the COVID-19 outbreak had reached pandemic proportions:

There are now more than 118,000 cases in 114 countries, and 4,291 people have lost their lives. Thousands more are fighting for their lives in hospitals. In the days and weeks ahead, we expect to see the number of cases, the number of deaths, and the number of affected countries climb even higher. WHO has been assessing this outbreak around the clock and we are deeply concerned both by the alarming levels of spread and severity, and by the alarming levels of inaction. We have therefore made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic.

The Philippine Government’s Response to the Pandemic

In the Philippines, President Rodrigo Duterte suspended classes in all levels in the National Capital Region from March 10 to March 14, 2020 as the number of Covid-19 cases increased to 24. In a press briefing after a meeting with the IATF in Malacañang, Duterte said: “We have decided to...the clamor also of the mayors probably much worried than so it is a consensus by the body that classes will be suspended in NCR beginning tomorrow and it will end on March 14.” The president suspended the classes “to ensure the health and safety of students and establish a benchmark on the increasing number of Covid-19 cases in the country” (Parrocha, 2020).

After the Department of Health had confirmed the “local transmission” of the Covid-19 case in the country, President Duterte, invoking Section 15, Article II of the Philippine Constitution, issued Presidential Proclamation No. 922 on March 8, 2020, “placing the entire country in a State of Public Health Emergency.” Duterte hoped that such a proclamation “would capacitate government agencies and LGUs to immediately act to prevent loss of life, utilize appropriate resources to implement urgent and critical measures to contain or prevent the spread of Covid-19, mitigate its effects and impact to the community, and prevent serious disruption of the functioning of the government and the community.”

Pursuant to Proclamation No. 929, signed by President Duterte on March 16, 2020, the entire country was placed under a state of calamity for six months as the number of cases increased further. and the people in Luzon were kept in Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) from March 17, 2020, until April 12, 2020. The proclamation could provide “the National Government, as well as LGUs (local government units), ample latitude to utilize appropriate funds, including the Quick Response Fund, in their disaster preparedness and response efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19 and to continue to provide basic services to the affected population.”

From that time on until September 21, 2021, the IATF had rolled out four tiers of quarantine namely, the Enhanced Community Quarantine, Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine, General Community Quarantine and Modified General Community Quarantine (Inter-

The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022

Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases, 2021, September 23).

In its effort to curb the transmission and cushion the impact of Covid-19, the Philippine government drew up and implemented a National Action Plan (NAP) against Covid-19, which is “characterized by a people-centered, LGU-led, and nationally-enabled approach in operationalizing its three major areas of work, namely, Response, Vaccination and Recovery” (National Action Plan against Covid-19, Phase 3, n.d., p. 4). The first phase of the action plan, which was carried out from March to June 2020, involved the prevention, containment, and elimination of Covid-19 while mitigating the social, economic, and security impacts of the pandemic” (National Action Plan against Covid-19, Phase 3, n.d., p. 5). Covering the period July 2 to September 2020, the second phase of the NAP concentrated on carrying out “measures to keep the COVID-19 fatalities low while also enacting measures to foster the economic recovery of the country” (National Action Plan against Covid-19, Phase 3, n.d., p. 5). For the third phase, which would run from the fourth quarter of 2020 until the first three months of 2021 (Kabagani, 2020), the government targeted “risk management as it sustains the gains from the previous phases while providing an equilibrium both on health safety and economic recovery” (National Action Plan against Covid-19, Phase 3, n.d., p. 5).

The Philippine Higher Education Institutions’ Responses to the Pandemic

To ensure the continuity of learning, Philippine HEIs shifted to digital platforms. It is instructive to describe the virtual learning environment of five universities namely, the University of the Philippines (UP), De La Salle University (DLSU), Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU), University of Santo Tomas (UST) and Philippine Normal University (PNU) migrated to the fully online learning modes.

Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) Maria Cynthia Rose Bautista issued UP Academic Roadmap for AY 2020-2021 together with OVPAA Memorandum No. 2020-100. The “operational principles” that governed UP’s policies and initiatives in response to the COVID-19 pandemic were as follows: “Protect the UP community from the pandemic; Sustain the continuity of instruction and learning; and Consider equity concerns.” The administration of the UP System had decided to

adopt remote learning as the delivery format for instruction in the first semester AY 2020-2021. Remote learning encompassed:

both asynchronous or non-real-time communication between teachers and learners—from text-based (basic email, FB messenger, Viber group, etc.) to online discussion boards in different platforms (UP’s Learning Management System such as UVLE, UP Manila’s VLE, Canvas, Google Classroom, Edmodo, etc.)—and synchronous communication between teachers and learners (e.g. lectures, webinars, and teleconferences using such platforms as Zoom and Google Meet) (Bautista, 2020).

The De La Salle University deployed the “alternative mode of education” which is “technology-enabled or blended learning.” The alternative learning mode was called Lasallians Remote and Engaged Approach for Connectivity in Higher Education (R.E.A.C.H.). It “emphasizes the importance of engagement between faculty and students.” Compared to the “fully machine-assisted online learning,” the institution’s “remote learning” was faculty-directed and facilitated using an online platform to ensure quality education.” The modes of delivery of the educational content consisted of “1. fully online; 2. hybrid courses; and 3. face-to-face.” All learning resources were configured and uploaded into the web-based learning management system (LMS), Animo Space. It “integrates sites and programs already being used by DLSU, such as: Turnitin, an internet-based plagiarism detection service; Studio, a video-based learning and collaboration tool; Google Drive; and DLSU Library online resources” (De La Salle University, n.d.).

The Ateneo de Manila University adopted the Adaptive Design for Learning Framework. The ADL was “rooted in the emerging philosophy of online Jesuit education that we have come to call AteneoBlueCloud, which also stands for the virtual campus that we are building for our online community of learners and educators” (Adaptive Design for Learning, n.d.). ADL fused three formats of instructional delivery: “(1) online, and, whenever possible, (2) blended, and (3) face-to-face; and offers uniquely designed courses that suit faculty style and respond to learner’s needs and contexts” (Joaquin et al., 2020).

Exploiting the power of Blackboard, the University of Santo Tomas launched the Enriched Virtual Mode (EVR) of instructional delivery at the opening of Academic Year 2020-2021 through its course management platform, UST Cloud Campus (Alejandrino, 2020, May 27). Under this set-up, the faculty members could pursue “both online and offline remote learning strategies” as this instructional mode “promotes dialogue and ensures accessibility and flexibility in learning” (Alejandrino, 2020, May 27). The “enrichment strategies” for this particular model involved “collaboration – among teachers, with industry partners and alumni, with community partners, and with foreign partner institutions – acknowledging the rich opportunities for learning with others and maximizing technology in breaking the boundaries of space and distance” (Ujjin, 2021, November 11).

In fulfillment of the mandate of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Philippine Normal University formulated a “Continuity Plan which embodied “information about the University’s Programs, Activities and Projects (PAPs) without compromising its major functions of instruction, research, extension, and governance.” “Curricular modification and implementation” were integral to the “continuity plan.” In consideration of the findings of the “university survey on the readiness of faculty and students for online learning,” the institution built a “framework for flexible learning” that transcended “online learning” and embraced “offline remote learning.” The university designed a “program on *flexible learning in the new normal*, translated as *Kaway-Aralan sa Bagong Kadawyan* in the Filipino language.” The Flexible Learning Delivery (FLD) entailed a fusion of the “principles of online learning, distance education, and blended learning,” aimed at the building of “communities of practice where learning takes place with peers through guided study and facilitation” (Tuga, Jocson, & Mabunga, 2021).

Revisiting Higher Education in the Post-Covid-19 Era

The Post-Covid-19 New Normal

In the context of the 2008 financial crisis, the phrase “new normal” signified the dramatic economic, cultural and social transformations that caused precariousness and social unrest, impacting

collective perceptions and individual lifestyles” (Corpuz, 2021, p. e344); El-Rian, 2010). Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the phrase pertained to “how it has transformed essential aspects of human life” (Corpuz, 2021, p. e344). In the field of education, the term, as conceptualized by Hinssen, denotes a phase in the digitalisation of society, now about halfway complete, where technologies will not be framed as technology, but rather part of everyday life” (Norberg, Dziuban & Moskal, 2011, p. 207).

Learning Modalities

The shift to online learning and teaching was accompanied by concomitant problems with instructional modalities. Internet connection and access issues were among the common challenges confronting online education. As Nworie (2021, May 19) succinctly put it: “A large and varied number of faculty and students were unprepared to teach or learn remotely. Lack of access to digital devices, to the internet, and to sufficient bandwidth further exposed the lingering issues of the digital divide.” Employing a “qualitative research design,” the study of Rotas and Cahapay (2020), which involved “purposively and conveniently selected students currently enrolled in a tertiary institution,” confirmed the persisting concerns relative to “unstable internet connectivity.” The educational leaders should seriously consider these issues in the post-pandemic period.

In preparation for the new normal, the Philippine HEIs should decide on the format of the instructional delivery. They might consider four modalities: (1) face-to-face; (2) fully online; (3) blended learning; (4) flexible learning; and (5) hyflex learning.

The conventional face-to-face instruction was the typical learning modality prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. This mode consists of “several elements, including lectures, capstones, team projects, labs, studios, and so forth” and provides opportunity for “significant advantage of face-to-face interaction between the student and educator and the students themselves” (Traditional (Face-to-Face) Teaching, n.d.). Challenging as it may be, the HEIs are mandated to retrofit their classrooms and facilities, which requires “making changes to the facilities” such as “putting up safety barriers, posting signages, rearranging rooms/communal areas, etc” (Commission on Higher Education, 2021, p. 3) when they reopen the

The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022

campuses for the standard in-person learning format.

Online education refers to “educational instruction that is delivered via the Internet to students via their computers, smartphones, or mobile devices” (Xin et. al., 2020, p. 175). Online courses are delivered synchronously and asynchronously. Synchronous learning “means that the instructor and the students in the course engage with the course content and each other at the same time, but from different locations,” whereas asynchronous learning “means that the instructor and the students in the course all engage with the course content at different times (and from different locations)” (University of Waterloo, n.d.) Apropos of the question of when to adopt these teaching methods, the University of Waterloo (n.d.) explained: “Synchronous and asynchronous online learning each have their place, depending on what an instructor is trying to achieve, and the guidance they may have received from their institution, faculty, or department.” The University of Waterloo (n.d.) further clarified how each modality could be applied: “For example, a synchronous (live) presentation allows students to ask questions while the presentation is in progress; an asynchronous (recorded) presentation allows students time to deliberate and reflect before asking their questions, perhaps in an online discussion group.”

Blended learning, which is also referred to as “hybrid or mixed-mode learning,” is defined as “the use of traditional classroom teaching methods together with the use of online learning for the same students studying the same content in the same course” (Commonwealth of Learning, n.d.). Garrison & Vaughan (2008), characterized it as “a thoughtful fusion of face-to-face and online learning experiences” (as cited in Commonwealth of Learning, n.d.) Considered as the “new normal” in online pedagogy (Norberg et al., 2011, as cited in Dziuban, 2018, p. 1), it is “widely adopted across higher education” (Dziuban, 2018, p.1). Blended instructional approach melds face-to-face instruction techniques such as direct instruction or lecture, group discussions, and small-group work” with application of “technology to provide in-class online learning that students can do at home provided they have access to necessary technology” (Ferlazzo, 2020).

By virtue of Commission en Banc Resolution (CEB) Resolution No. 412-2020, series of 2020, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) enacted the Guidelines on Flexible Learning (FL) “to

be implemented by public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).” In view of the suspension of classes, “the herculean challenge was how to continue teaching and learning beyond the usual face-to-face instruction.” It was imperative “to explore other innovative learning modalities that will facilitate migration from traditional to flexible teaching and learning options.” The CHED recognized that “learners are differently situated in terms of time, pace and place.” As such, those choices permitted the learners to “customize” the “delivery modes responsive to students’ need for access to quality education.” Furthermore, flexible learning “shall also give students the option to choose the delivery mode most convenient to them as early as the time of their enrollment.” The flexible learning, according to the CHED, is “a learner-centered approach that is deeply-rooted in the needs of the students.” The flexible learning policy aims “to provide learners with the most flexibility on the learning content, schedules, access, and innovative assessment, making use of digital and non-digital tools.” The modality consists of the use of digital and non-digital technology and covers both face-to-face or in-person learning, out-of-classroom learning modes of delivery, or a combination of modes of delivery,” thereby sustaining “continuity of inclusive and accessible education when the use of traditional modes of teaching is not feasible, as in the occurrence of national emergencies” (CHED, 2020).

The hybrid flexible or hyflex learning model “integrates complementary face-to-face (synchronous) and online learning (asynchronous) experiences in service of intended learning objectives” (Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning, n.d.). According to Beatty (2019), the fundamental tenets on which this course format is based are as follows:

Learner Choice — The course provides alternative participation modes that are meaningful and allow students to choose the mode of engagement that works best for them.

Equivalence — The modes, though not equal, provide equivalent learning outcomes.

All students are expected to reflect, contribute developing ideas, and interact with their peers in the process of learning.

Reusability — Artifacts from learning activities in each mode

The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022

are captured and can be reused in other modes. Representations of in-class activities (recordings, discussion notes, etc) are available online for all students; activities produced by online students (asynchronous discussions, posted files, etc) connect to and support all students.

Accessibility — Students are equipped with the technological resources and skills to equally access all participation modes. Universal Design for Learning principles are considered (as cited in Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning, n.d.).

The hyflex format relies on the following educational technologies: “an intuitive video conferencing platform; a scalable audio solution; a reliable conferencing camera; interactive boards” (Everything you need to know about HyFlex classrooms, 2021).

Curriculum Design

Technology had developed rapidly in the past couple of decades. The power of technology was harnessed in online education before and during the pandemic. The technological advances also stimulated socio-economic changes. Such advances and changes would present challenges to both the students and teachers in the post-pandemic period. Facing a predicament of the menace posed by Covid-19, students questioned the relevance of the curriculum to their lives. They called for a curriculum that was adapted to their local culture and their needs, interests, and capabilities. A rethinking of the curriculum is imperative to prepare students for real life situations. There is a crucial “need to rethink the standard fare to identify what is most essential for students who will be required to continue learning across their lifetimes, adapting to rapidly changing jobs and social conditions.” The educational leaders would do well to reflect on “whether education can change quickly enough to prepare citizens who can collaborate productively with robotics and AI, adopting and acting with a global mindset, creating new jobs and organizations, forming more mutually beneficial relationships locally and globally, engaging in rational and civil political discourse, and participating constructively in society” (McDiarmid and Zhao, 2022, February 23).

In anticipation of the new normal, the HEIs should redesign the curriculum. Mike Boxall (n.d.), higher education specialist at PA Consulting, recognized the need for the universities to adjust to the changes wrought by the Covid-19:

A global pandemic has few silver linings, but for higher education, it has been an opportunity to show that universities can adapt rapidly. “It has been a challenge to the innate conservatism and inertia the sector is assumed to have, and there’s a feeling we have more agency and scope for change” (as cited in How can higher education thrive post-pandemic? n.d.).

Boxall (n.d.) pointed out the challenge that lies ahead of the universities in the post-pandemic era: “. . . it’s clear that universities need to carve out a new role within the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This means redefining their relationship with technology. Becoming digital should not mean doing away with universities; the student experience is about more than absorbing course content” (as cited in How can higher education thrive post-pandemic? n.d.).

The HEIs should develop a learner-centered curriculum. Dayagbil et. al. (2021) wrote that a learner-centered learning environment should “take into account the demographic profile and circumstances of learners—such as access to technology, technological literacies, different learning styles and capabilities, different knowledge backgrounds and experiences - and ensure varied and flexible forms of assessment.”

In an interview with Higher Education Digest, Prof. Parimal V Mandke, Vice President, NIIT University (2021) spoke of the importance of providing the students with additional skills in order to prepare them for the post-pandemic digital world: “To meet the realities of the post-pandemic world, universities and higher education institutions need to shift their focus on upskilling the students to make them job-ready, and every profession demands a digital skill attached to it.”

Expounding on the educational reforms in the post-Covid-19 era, Zhao and Watterston (2021) pointed out that it is exigent to empower the students with “new competencies for the digital universe” such as being “creative, entrepreneurial,

The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022

and globally competent.” They also referred to “a set of contemporary skills which includes creativity, curiosity, critical thinking, entrepreneurship, collaboration, communication, growth mindset, global competence, and a host of skills with different names,” which are deemed crucial in navigating the digital world” (p. 5).

In another paper, Zhao (2020) proposed the teaching of “global and digital competencies,” which “have long been advocated as important capabilities for the 21st century.” His concept of global competency underscored the nature of interconnectedness and interdependence of humanity in the global world,” bringing to the fore “the ability and knowledge required to understand *global interdependence, global economics, global problems, and global conflicts* as well as the desire and ability to take actions to bring positive changes to the world for all human beings to live in peace and share prosperity.” In explaining digital competence, he made it clear that it “is much more than the ability to use information technology, which children can and do learn on their own. It is a whole set of knowledge, skills, social–emotional capabilities, and wisdom necessary for living, learning, and working in the virtual world” (pp. 195, 196, 197).

Assessment

The shift to online assessments during the pandemic created difficulties for the teachers and students alike. “The appropriation of digital culture in education” resulted in mere reproduction of “the pedagogical experience of sharing knowledge that is packaged and non-interactive, designed for a uniform set of students, to be used at the same time, in the same space” (EDT Partners, 2021, April 20). However, this adaptation of the pedagogical practices to virtual classroom proved to be unsuitable for the prevailing conditions (EDT Partners, 2021, April 20). Struggling with internet connectivity, anxiety and stress, students observed that traditional tests merely required rote memorization as the questions were framed in such a way that they merely regurgitated facts or information. These assessments did not measure what they learned and did not ask them to apply their knowledge and skills or competencies to real-world situations. A compelling issue was how to design “reliable, equitable and valid forms of online assessment that maximise critical thinking, employability, authentic skills such as teamwork and ‘grit,’ digital literacy and global citizenship, all for increasingly large classes and without adding to

already challenging workloads” (The University of Auckland, n.d.). Mention must also be made of the “challenges of equity and inclusion” and “the threat of academic misconduct” (The University of Auckland, n.d.). These concerns cannot be ignored in the post-pandemic period.

As the institutions of higher learning gear up for the new normal, they should also rethink the assessment practices. These institutions could exploit the educational technology to reexamine how they do assessments. Steve Masters, Education 4.0 lead at Jisc, explained how technology could recalibrate assessments:

Over the next five years, Jisc argues that universities must embrace technology to transform assessment in five ways: so it is more authentic (preparing the learner for using knowledge in practice or at work), accessible (to those with both long-term and short-term disabilities or mental health issues), appropriately automated (easing teachers’ workload), continuous (adapting to lifelong learning and the changing world of work) and secure (avoiding cheating) (Jisc, n.d.).

Dayagbil et al. (2021) urged the use of authentic assessments in higher education, saying that these types of assessments “have to be intensified to ensure that competencies are acquired by the learners.” The purpose of authentic assessment is to find out if “the student can successfully transfer the knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to various contexts, scenarios, and situations beyond the classroom” (New Jersey Institute of Technology, n.d.). Framed in real-world situations, the authentic tasks include “the major essential projects that measure the enduring learning outcomes like case scenarios, problem-based activities, and capstone projects” (Dayagbil et al., 2021).

Illustrative examples of authentic assessments serve to provide ideas of how authentic assessments can be designed. Nursing students can undertake case study research to formulate a nursing care plan. In commerce programs, student learning and performance may be assessed through a “business/marketing/sales plan for an imaginary (or real) company in a student’s area of interest.” An

The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022

authentic performance in service-learning programs may involve a study of “how a community agency might be impacted by a particular challenge (budget cuts, infrastructure outage, public health crisis, etc.)” (Indiana University Bloomington Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, n.d.).

The Professional Development of the Faculty

The Covid-19 pandemic had compelled the HEIs to shift to online teaching and learning. It is therefore imperative to provide the faculty with opportunities for learning new skills to enhance their engagement with the students. Abhimanyu Saxena (2020), who is the co-founder at InterviewBit and Scaler Academy, explained how the pandemic had redefined the role of the faculty: “From preparing a personalized curriculum for courses to being a content creator to mentoring students on real-world projects to ensure that they are job-proof. . . today’s educators dabble in many things. From being facilitators of learning, educators have also turned to be innovators.” Saxena felt it necessary for the faculty to acquire new competencies: “As the demand for personalized learning and online courses continues to snowball, instructors are required to learn (upskill) as much as, or even more than their students to deal with the new demand for future-proof courses.”

The universities should develop and implement a faculty development program aimed at building the skills and capabilities of the faculty in online course design, delivery, and assessment. There are major considerations that are critical to the success of the program. An important factor would be “institutional support that rewards faculty members with release time, development grants, or other incentives.” The faculty need “support infrastructure” that would assist them in addressing technical issues involving the use of the educational technology. It is important to obtain the support of the faculty for “a positive attitude toward any innovation increases the likelihood of the adoption of the innovation” (Teclehaimanot & Lamb, 2005).

Summing up

The Covid-19 pandemic had propelled the HEIs to rapidly migrate instruction to virtual classrooms. The higher-educational institutions should explore ways on how to enhance the delivery of the educational content. The HEIs would do well to reinvent the curriculum and adopt a technology-

based curriculum that promotes the development of skills that are essential in a digital world. The HEIs should reconsider the traditional assessment methods and integrate authentic assessments into instruction. The faculty should undergo professional development training to learn new skills to provide the students with a meaningful learning experience. The biggest challenge for the higher education sector is to establish a learning system that is responsive to the needs and demands of the changing educational landscape and adaptable to the individual needs, capabilities, and interest in learning of students.

References

- Alejandrino, P. (2020, May 27). UST implements ‘enriched virtual mode’ next academic year; extends financial assistance. <https://tomasinoweb.org/reports/news/ust-implements-enriched-virtual-mode-next-academic-year-extends-financial-assistance/#:~:text=News-.UST%20implements%20enriched%20virtual%20mode%20next,academic%20year%3B%20extends%20financial%20assistance&text=The%20Office%20of%20the%20Rector,classes%2C%20Wednesday%2C%20May%2027>
- Ateneo de Manila University. (n.d.). *Adaptive Design for Learning*. <https://gbseald.online/adl-2020/>
- Bautista, C. (2020, September 2). *Academic roadmap to the University of the Philippines for AY 2020-2021*. https://www.ac.upd.edu.ph/acmedia/images/newpdf/s/Academic_Roadmap_2020.pdf
- Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning. (n.d.). *Hybrid/hyflex teaching & learning*. <https://ctl.columbia.edu/resources-and-technology/teaching-with-technology/teaching-online/hyflex/>
- Commission on Higher Education & Department of Health. (2021). *Guidelines on the gradual reopening of campuses of higher education institutions for limited face-to-face classes during the Covid-19 Pandemic*. <https://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/CHED-DOH-Joint-Memorandum-Circular-No.-2021-001-Guidelines-on-the-Gradual-Reopening-of-Campuses-of-Higher-Education-Institutions-for-Limited-Face-to-Face-Classes-during-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>

(RE)IMAGINING THE ARTS IN THE POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY



The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022

Commission on Higher Education. (2020). *Guidelines on the implementation of flexible learning*. <https://chedro3.ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CMO-No.-4-s.-2020-Guidelines-on-the-Implementation-of-Flexible-Learning.pdf>

Commonwealth of Learning. (n.d.) *Guide to blended learning*. <https://openbooks.col.org/blendedlearning/chapter/chapter-1-blended-learning/>

Corpuz, J. (2021). Adapting to the culture of 'new normal': an emerging response to COVID-19. *Journal of Public Health, 43* (2), e344-e345. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdab057>

Dayagbil, F., Palompon, D., Garcia, L. & Olvido, M. (2021). Teaching and learning continuity amid and beyond the pandemic. *Front. Educ.* <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2021.678692>

De La Salle University. (n.d.). What is Lasallians R.E.A.C.H? <https://www.dlsu.edu.ph/lasalliansreach/#:~:text=is%20Lasallians%20R.E.A.C.H%3F%20What%20is%20Lasallians.at%20home%20for%20many%20weeks.>

Department of Health, Republic of the Philippines. (2020, 7 March). *DOH confirms local transmission of Covid-19 in PH; reports 6th case*. <https://doh.gov.ph/doh-press-release/doh-confirms-local-transmission-of-covid-19-in-ph>

Duterte, Rodrigo. (2020, March 8). *Proclamation No. 922, Declaring a state of public health emergency throughout the Philippines*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/02feb/20200308-PROC-922-RRD-1.pdf>

Duterte, Rodrigo. (2020, March 16). *Proclamation No. 929, Declaring a state of calamity throughout the Philippines due to coronavirus disease 2019*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/03mar/20200316-PROC-929-RRD.pdf>

Dziuban, C., Graham, C., Moskal, P., Norberg, A., & Sicilia, N. (2018). Blended learning: the new normal and emerging technologies. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education, 15* (3), pp. 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-017-0087-5>

EDT Partners. (2021, April 20). Re-thinking assessment. <https://edtpartners.com/re-thinking-assessment/>

El-Erian, M. (2010). *Navigating the New Normal in Industrial Countries Per Jacobsson Foundation Lecture*. <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/53/sp101010>

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. (2020, January 17). *Rapid risk assessment: cluster of pneumonia cases caused by a novel coronavirus, Wuhan, China*. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Risk%20assessment%20-%20pneumonia%20Wuhan%20China%2017%20Jan%202020.pdf>

Everything you need to know about hyflex classrooms. (2021). <https://www.shure.com/en-US/conferencing-meetings/ignite/everything-you-need-to-know-about-hyflex-classrooms>

Ferlazzo, Larry. (2020). *Blended learning in the age of COVID-19*. <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/opinion/blended-learning-in-the-age-of-covid-19/2020/08>

How can higher education thrive post-pandemic? (n.d.). <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/hub/pa-consulting/p/how-can-higher-education-thrive-post-pandemic>

ICTV. (2020). *Information > news: naming the 2019 coronavirus*. <https://talk.ictvonline.org/information/w/news/1300/page>

Indiana University Bloomington Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning. (n.d.). *Authentic assessment*. <https://citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources/assessing-student-learning/authentic-assessment/index.html>

Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases. (2021, September 23). *Omnibus guidelines on the implementation of community quarantine in the Philippines*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2021/09sept/20210923-OMNIBUS-RRD.pdf>

(RE)IMAGINING THE ARTS IN THE POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY

The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022



Jisc. (n.d.). *How has the coronavirus accelerated the future of assessment?*
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/hub/jisc/p/how-has-coronavirus-accelerated-future-assessment>

Joaquin, J., Biana, H. & Dacela, M. (2020). The Philippine higher education sector in the time of COVID-19. *Front. Educ.*
<https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2020.576371>

Kabagani, L. (2020). 2020: Containing Covid-19, mitigating impacts.
<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1125726>

Liu, Y., Kuo, R. & Shih, S. (2020). COVID-19: the first documented coronavirus pandemic in history. *Biomedical Journal*, 43(4), 328-333.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2319417020300445>

McDiarmid, G. and Zhao, Y. (2022, February 23). Time to Rethink: Educating for a Technology-Transformed World. *ECNU Review of Education*.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/20965311221076493>

Mandke, P. (2021). Higher education in the post-pandemic world. *Higher Education Digest*.
<https://www.highereducationdigest.com/higher-education-in-the-post-pandemic-world/>

Medialdea, Salvador. (2020, March 16). Memorandum from the Executive Secretary.
<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/03mar/20200316-MEMORANDUM-FROM-ES-RRD.pdf>

National Action Plan against Covid-19, Phase III. (n.d).
<https://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/4148/National-Action-Plan-against-COVID19-Phase-III.pdf>

New Jersey Institute of Technology. (n.d.). *Authentic assessment*.
<https://www.njit.edu/ite/authentic-assessment>

Norberg, A., Dziuban, C. & Moskal, P. (2011). A time-based blended learning model. *On the Horizon*, 19 (3), 207-216.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/10748121111163913>

Nworie, J. (2021, May 19). Beyond COVID-19: What's Next for Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education?
<https://er.educause.edu/articles/2021/5/beyond->

[covid-19-whats-next-for-online-teaching-and-learning-in-higher-education](https://er.educause.edu/articles/2021/5/beyond-covid-19-whats-next-for-online-teaching-and-learning-in-higher-education)

Office of the Presidential Spokesperson. (2020, March 9). *Palace announces state of public health emergency in PH*. <https://pcoo.gov.ph/OPS-content/palace-announces-state-of-public-health-emergency-in-ph/>

Parrocha, A. (2020). Duterte suspends classes in NCR as Covid-19 cases climb to 24. *Philippine News Agency*.
<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1096052>

Rotas, E. & Cahapay, M. (2020). Difficulties in Remote Learning: Voices of Philippine University Students in the Wake of COVID-19 Crisis. *Asian Journal of Distance Education* 15(2).
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1285295.pdf>

Saxena, A. (2020). The changing role of the educator in the new normal. *Higher Education Digest*. <https://www.highereducationdigest.com/the-changing-role-of-the-educator-in-the-new-normal/>

Teclehaimanot, B., & Lamb, A. (2005). Technology-rich faculty development for teacher educators: the evolution of a program. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education* [Online serial], 5(3/4). <https://citejournal.org/volume-5/issue-3-05/current-practice/technology-rich-faculty-development-for-teacher-educators-the-evolution-of-a-program>

Traditional (Face-to-Face) Teaching. (n.d.).
<https://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/teaching-format/traditional-face-to-face/>

Tuga, B., Jocson, J. & Mabunga, R. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on a Philippine university: Challenges and responses towards a new normal in education. *Asten Journal of Teacher Education*, Special issue no. 1.
<https://po.pnuresearchportal.org/ejournal/index.php/asten/article/download/1707/480>

Ujjin, Banjong. (2021, November 11). Redefining enriched virtual mode of instruction amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic: The UST Experience.
<https://www.aunsec.org/news/defining-enriched-virtual-mode-instruction-amidst-covid-19-pandemic-ust-experience>

The University of Auckland. (n.d.). *Why rethink assessment?*
<https://www.rethinkingassessment.auckland.ac.nz/>

(RE)IMAGINING THE ARTS IN THE POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY

**The 15th De La Salle University Arts Congress
March 29-31, 2022**



University of Waterloo. (n.d.). *Synchronous and asynchronous online learning.*

<https://uwaterloo.ca/keep-learning/strategies-remote-teaching/synchronous-vs-asynchronous-online-learning>

World Health Organization. (2020a). *Naming the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the virus that causes it.*

[https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-\(covid-2019\)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-(covid-2019)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it)

World Health Organization. (2020b). *Timeline: WHO's COVID-19 response.*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/interactive-timeline>

World Health Organization. (2020, January 5). *Covid-19-China.*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2020-DON229>

World Health Organization. (2020, January 21). *Novel coronavirus (2019-nCov) situation report-1.*

<https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200121-sitrep-1-2019-ncov.pdf>

World Health Organization. (2020, January 30). *WHO Director-General's statement on IHR Emergency Committee on novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).*

[https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-statement-on-ih-emergency-committee-on-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)](https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-statement-on-ih-emergency-committee-on-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov))

World Health Organization. (2020, March 11). *WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 11 March 2020.*

Retrieved March 25, 2022, from <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19--11-march-2020>

World Health Organization. (2020, June 29). *Listings of WHO's response to COVID-19.*

<https://www.who.int/news/item/29-06-2020-covidtimeline>.

Xin, X, Siau, K. & Nah, F. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic – online education in the new normal and the next normal. *Journal of Information*

Technology Case and Application Research 22 (3), 175-187.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15228053.2020.1824884>

Yang, Y. (n.d.). *Chapter 1 Basic concepts of research in economics.*

<https://www.csus.edu/indiv/y/yangy/145ch1.htm>

Zhao, Y. & Watterston, J. (2021). The changes we need: education post COVID-19. *Journal of Educational Change* 22, 3–12.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-021-09417-3>

Zhao, Y. (2020). Tofu is not cheese: rethinking education amid the COVID-19 pandemic. *ECNU Review of Education* 3(2), 189–203.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2096531120928082>