

## **To the community of the Mapúa schools,**

After two and a half months of the pandemic, we, the Mapúa community, are very thankful that we have come through medically unscathed. We hope that it remains this way in the months to come.

As you may already know, we have helped wage the fight against COVID-19.

*Designing & creating.* We have used our 3D printers and laser cutter to make thousands of face shield frames for the frontliners. We also 3D-printed air splitters for ventilators. We developed and deployed a mobile disinfection chamber. We are developing contact tracing apps that will be useful as the quarantine is slowly lifted.

*Donating.* The Mapúa Central Student Council has joined forces with the student councils and organizations of other schools in a donation drive dubbed Team Respire to help the Lung Center procure PPEs and other supplies and to support infected individuals. The school has donated chlorine and face masks to hospitals and neighboring and other partner barangays.

*Supporting & informing.* With the participation of students, we have used our websites to pay tribute to the frontliners. We have written letters of support to COVID patients. We have given online advisories and case tracking information to the public.

*Researching.* Our mathematics departments in the 3 tertiary schools are developing epidemiological models to help the authorities manage their response. We have applied for DOST support for the following research projects:

- Assessment of the Severity of COVID-19 in the Philippines Using Survival, Hospitalization, and Fatality Patterns (ASSESS-PH)
- Flu Screening System Using Facial Feature Recognition and Thermal Scanning
- Detection and Treatment of SARS-CoV-2 in Wastewater via Adsorption and Disinfection Using Agricultural Residues
- Mobile Health Tools to Support Pandemic Surveillance and Contact Tracing in the Philippines
- Development of a Store Finder Mobile-App and Web-Portal with Real-Time Inventory for COVID-19 Outbreak and Other Disasters in the Philippines

Although the existing COVID situation may be expected to persist for some time, I now wish to already acknowledge the efforts of various sectors of our community to keep our schools operating. Their successes in the past two and a half months augur well for the future of the Mapúa schools as they cope with more of the same, and then some, going forward.

I wish to thank our non-teaching staff for having continued to render service from home to students, the public and fellow employees to the greatest extent possible using online tools. Our guidance counseling offices remained open and ready to serve as did our medical offices, whose services we beefed up with an institutional subscription to KonsultaMD. I wish to thank all faculty members for rising to the occasion in the quick shift from blended learning to fully online mode. There have been many challenges, but basically I believe that we have fulfilled our obligation to assure the academic progression of our students. I wish to thank our officers for remaining at station, figuratively, and being even more busy videoconferencing and making decisions amidst much uncertainties around them. I wish to thank, most especially, our students for being with us, with admirable frankness, grace and grit, through this tough time.

I believe that our early and pioneering adoption of digital and outcomes-based education has enabled us to meet the lockdown with institutional equanimity & resilience. Digital education enabled us to overcome the space constraints of the quarantine. OBE enabled us to overcome the time constraints towards attainment of course outcomes. Both educational elements are the bases of the "Can Pass; Cannot Fail" policy that has enabled the progression of the great majority of students along their academic journey and that guarantees that everyone will have a chance to finish his program of studies in due time. In order to further improve on what we are already able to do online, we, along with our sister schools under iPeople, continue to negotiate with the telcos for better data packages for students.

With classes remaining suspended under GCO, we still have to go fully online. Once class suspension is lifted we shall shift to blended learning mode with flipped classes. The classes will be 1/3 face-to-face and 2/3 online. Each student comes to class only once a week for learning sessions, teacher-guided practice or projects. The division of classes into 2 groups for the face-to-face sessions is the way by which we will satisfy distancing requirements inside the classroom. For students who are still concerned about coming to the campus at that time, we shall provide at least one fully online section, or a fully online option within a blended learning section, for the various courses of the school. This we call **Digital Choice**.





Malayan Colleges Laguna  
A MAPÚA SCHOOL

Given present regulatory and other structural constraints, schools are currently hard pressed to significantly lower the cost of online education. Faculty, or tuition, costs are the same. Only certain portions of laboratory and miscellaneous costs can be refunded or discounted as we did. Savings on utilities cost will be generated and shared as we will. Among significant laboratory spending in the coming terms will be the procurement of virtual and simulated laboratory software.

Only if an old school can be reconfigured, or a totally new school built, to have nothing but a small office and a very lean faculty teaching massively large classes can the cost of online education truly be brought significantly lower vis-à-vis the face-to-face system. We believe enough in the richness of the learning experience in online education - with its very large databases of educational materials and with incorporated microcredentials from reputable global institutions - that we shall continue working with various sectors towards increasing its accessibility.

Meanwhile, as the fight against the coronavirus goes on, we have to remain ever vigilant. We should not let it rob us of opportunities for individual and institutional advancement. More than this, we should come out of this situation stronger and better able to face a new emerging dispensation.

*Ingat pa rin po tayong lahat!*

  
**Reynaldo B. Vea, Ph. D.**  
**President & CEO**

