THE UNIVERSITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
A Holistic Framework of Institutional Development Plan
(AY 2016-2021)

I. Introduction

As one of the more reputable higher education institutions (HEIs) in Region XI, the University of the Immaculate Conception (UIC) of the Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM) assures its stakeholders that, as an entity of academic prestige exemplified by its Autonomous Status granted by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), it has remained more steadfast in rendering its vision and mission as it embraces all the challenges of the 21st Century learning and on what the World Economic Forum calls the Fourth Industrial Revolution focusing on Artificial intelligence, Automation, Ubiquitous, mobile supercomputing, Intelligent robots, Self-driving cars, Neuro-technological brain enhancements, and Genetic editing.

Amidst the evidence of dramatic changes around us, UIC wishes to still be among the league of Catholic universities carrying out the gigantic and noble task of educating today's learners from which the future leaders of our society would emanate. Recognizing that the road to this dream is not an easy one, the UIC has created a framework designed to combat all the difficulties brought about by the changing educational landscape in the country and the world. These critical factors encompass socio-economic factors, *e.g.,* the access and equity to quality Catholic education; technological advancement, *i.e.,* the supremacy of information technology in the delivery of comforts to humans including their education; discerning customers, *i.e.,* students and parents alike are becoming more selective of the universities to patronize; and this stance brings about tougher competitions among the tertiary schools in the region. On top of all these, there is also the influence of a regulating government body like the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) which urges Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to map out institution-based mechanisms to address problems caused by the implementations of K to 12 paradigms, outcomes-based education, typology-based quality assurance schemes and recently internationalization of higher education in the Philippines.

On the other hand, while struggling to comply with all these imperatives, the University of the Immaculate Conception needs to continue adhering to its "branding," a defining

characteristic which makes the parents entrust the education of their children to this RVM-run academia. Exemplifying the virtues of Mother Ignacia del Espiritu Santo through its RVM education, the UIC as a domain of Christian ideals plays a crucial role in the midst of today's generation. More than ever, this is the time when UIC has to become more vigilant in advancing its intention. The contemporary educational culture necessitates that Catholic schools, in general, and RVM schools of which UIC is one, in particular, convey values and principles to the youth of today which should not stop only at achieving personal growth and psycho-spiritual and social maturity but also contributing for the common good of society.

The educational thrust of the RVM schools involves an integral process towards the intended Transformative Ignacian Marian Education which encompasses inclusive education that promotes and respects diversity in all aspects of life. The ultimate goal of transformative Ignacian Marian education is to be able to transform our students so that they can transform others. We make this possible by guiding our students, in the process of their learning, to understand themselves better for them to change their frames of reference by critically reflecting on their assumptions and beliefs and be able to make meaning of their life experience. Furthermore, transformative education is one in which the student is incrementally invited to engage life, to reflect upon it and, then, to be of service to our world. In our integral formation, we educate and form our students to become women and men of faith and service to their communities to the best of their ability.

Transformative Ignacican Marian Education also involves responsible partnership to sustain national and global leverage to connect students to the different social context and to respond appropriately to contemporary issues for improvement of life especially those favoring the disadvantaged sectors of society.

With these, the RVM 20th Ordinary General Chapter impels RVM educators to grow deeper in the interiority of life and revitalize their passion for engaging in the renewed evangelizing mission of the Church to bring fullness of life in Jesus Christ.

In view thereof, the University of the Immaculate Conception revisited its vision, mission, and goal, and reflected on the RVM Philosophy of Education, so that amidst these

changing landscapes in higher education, it can formulate new strategic plans from which specific operational plans can be developed. These sets of activities can facilitate the delivery of instruction of UIC in response to the demands of today's globally competitive world. Hence, a holistic framework is necessary for UIC to succeed in imparting quality and relevant Catholic education.

II. Our Vision, Mission, Goal, Quality Policy, and Quality Objectives

The University of the Immaculate Conception has earned the trust of many stakeholders from Davao Region because of its defining characteristics as reflected in its Vision-Mission-Goals, Quality Policy, Quality Objectives and Core Values, as follows:

Vision

A globally recognized Catholic university that nurtures faith,
builds passion for excellence and develops lifelong learners
with compassion for service that impacts transformation
in a fast-changing society.

Mission

We commit ourselves to:

1. provide an excellent educational experience to students to help them become globally competitive and adaptive to change;
2. inculcate among students the values of serving others with humility and love, working for justice, promoting peace, and preserving the integrity of creation;
3. engage in research activities in collaboration with local, regional, national and international partners;
4. uphold the dignity of the persons especially the poor;
5. promote and strengthen our Filipino culture and values; and
6. administer the university following Catholic doctrine.

Goal

The University of the Immaculate Conception is a Catholic School that is an instrumentality of the Congregation of the Religious of the Virgin Mary that aims to provide within its community of students and personnel Catholic values. Its goal is to provide an educational program and environment animated by Catholic doctrine, beliefs, teachings,

traditions, and practices, the exercise of which is protected by, among others, Article III, Section 5 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

In order for us to approximate our vision and live our mission, we dedicate all our human resources to transform the members of the UIC family to become enlightened, empowered, pro-active and liberated Christian leaders living in a humane and harmonious community for love of God, country, and the world.

Quality Policy

We, at the University of the Immaculate Conception, commit to provide quality Catholic Ignacian Marian education to mold students to be Ignacian Marian leaders of faith, excellence, and service wherever they are at all times.

We commit to collaboratively comply and maintain an effective quality management system by periodically reviewing and validating the processes and services in line with the quality objectives and standards for continual improvement.

Quality Objectives

1. Intensify transformative quality Catholic Ignacian Marian education towards service for the common good
2. Enrich the RVM Curriculum thrusts to promote justice, peace, and integrity of creation
3. Establish responsible and extensive partnership to improve and sustain the quality of life
4. Cultivate integration of students, individuals, and organizations with diverse backgrounds to promote intercultural understanding
5. Create opportunities to access the world's resources and share the university's best ideas, services, and talents
6. Provide greater accessibility of education to the poor

III. Instruction

In general, the University of the Immaculate Conception integrates the RVM Pedagogy. Founded on the Theory of Constructivism, the RVM Pedagogy is a way in which teachers journey with the learners towards their integral development and growth as productive citizens through interactive learning processes that lead to the realization of learning goals, unfolding of learning standards, and eventual demonstration of learning outcomes. Specifically, the pedagogic strategies to dominate the classrooms of UIC in the following five years (2016 – 2021) are those which will develop among learners the so-called 21st Century skills such as critical thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, Information literacy, Media literacy, Technology literacy, Flexibility, Leadership, Initiative, Productivity, and Social skills and produced graduates who are equipped with skills for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

With the aid of technology, our spectrum of blended learning courses integrates face-to-face activities with online platform called e-Learning Management System (eLMS) at UIC, to transform the way students learn on, and increasingly, off campus. In a blended-learning course, students attend a class taught by a teacher in a traditional classroom setting, while also independently completing online components of the course outside of the classroom. In this case, in-class time may be either replaced or supplemented by online learning experiences, and students would learn about the same topics online as they do in class—i.e., the online and in-person learning experiences would parallel and complement one another.

Moreover, online learning may be a minor component part of a classroom-based course, or video-recorded lectures, live video and text chats, and other digitally enabled learning activities may be a student's primary instructional interactions with a teacher. In some cases, students may work independently on online lessons, projects, and assignments at home or elsewhere, only periodically meeting with teachers to review their learning progress, discuss their work, ask questions, or receive assistance with difficult concepts. In other cases, students may spend their entire day in a traditional school set-up, but they will spend more time working online and independently than they do receiving instruction from a teacher.

Thus, UIC students must be taught the principles of cooperative learning to promote an interactive atmosphere in the classrooms. To address the imperatives of Department of Education (DepEd) and CHED such as the implementation of K to 12 and Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), the University of the Immaculate Conception will promote student-centered learning with an emphasis on the capability of the students to demonstrate their knowledge as a measure of their performance. Moreover, UIC will implement various mechanisms to strengthen research culture among students and faculty to address the needs for program accreditations, ISO certification, typology-based quality assurance scheme, and internationalization. The University has created a separate Strategic Internationalization Plan as this need was just recently mandated by CHED last AY 2017-2018.

Another consideration is the ASEAN 2015 Labor Mobility Framework, which will have a significant impact on the instruction, curriculum, and programs of UIC. The K to 12 paradigms would trigger the offering of specialized vocational courses in UIC to fill the vacuum for two years; hence, graduates of these short-term programs must be provided with opportunities to work in Southeast Asian Nations with freer labor movements without the fear of illegal and irregular migration. Likewise, curricular offerings in the undergraduate programs have integrated relevant tech-voc qualifications, so that graduates of respective program will also earn National Certification of the related qualification.

Ultimately, UIC advocates cross-border education, which involves mobility of students, faculty and researchers, and programs. In support of the plans mentioned, UIC will recruit exchange students, faculty and researchers preferably from the existing institutional linkages, for short to medium term learning, teaching and research positions for the sharing of resources, knowledge, and expertise.

IV. Research

The restructuring of the Research and Publication Center (RPC) into Research, Publication, and Innovation Center (RPIC) was done to promote consciousness among the UIC faculty and student researchers that the technologies produced from their research studies must be protected as registered intellectual properties for future commercialization and utilization. The university has established the Innovation and Technology Support Office (ITSO) to help realize the vision of the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL), which is to generate more innovations and inventions for the economic development of the country.

To assure that all researches done in UIC are scientifically valid and ethically sound, the UIC Research Ethics Committee (UIC-REC) was also established to facilitate the thorough review of the proposals to address technical and ethical issues. UIC having been recognized by the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB) and was awarded the PHREB Level 2 Accreditation, validates the efficiency of the institutional review of all research protocols done by the university.

In the publication, the UIC Research Journal has been renamed International Journal of Education Research for Higher Learning (IJERHL) to uplift the journal management to international standards. To expedite the online publication of the Graduate School (GS) researches, RPIC has coordinated its efforts with the GS office in the establishment of a Book of Abstracts (BOA), to be named "Tin-aw," which will showcase all the abstracts of the Masters and PhDs starting from 2017 graduates to compose Volume 1 of the journal.

As regards the networking and linkages, UIC Research, Publication, and Innovation Center (RPIC) will push for the concretization of plans as outlined in the Memorandum of

Agreement (MOA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UIC and its partners such as the government agencies (DOST-PCHRD-PCIEERD-RHRDC, CHED, DENR-EMB, DOH), non-government organization (Interface Development Interventions IDIS), private research organizations such as DACUN, DACS, PAGE, PAMJE, and the universities based abroad (Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia; STIE Perbanas of Indonesia, and ABATA, Tarakan, Indonesia). Finally, UIC will put priority in its applications for international grants and funding for state-of-the-art research projects.

V. Community Development Service

The goals of the UIC Community Development Service (CDS) for AY 2016-2021 spelled out in the Five –Year Strategic Plan are as follows: Strong and Relevant Institutional Programs to Enhance Quality of Life and Sustainable Programs to Favor the Disadvantaged Sectors of the Society. It commits to service learning, otherwise known as community engagement pedagogy. This is an approach that combines learning goals and community service with instruction, where the reflection to meaningful community services is integrated. Apparently, this teaching and learning strategy enriches the learning experiences of the students as they are taught with civic responsibility. Service learning is a project based teaching and learning strategy, which is integrated into a course or various courses. Students are expected to have a semestral presence in the community. In performing their project, the students have to reflect on their experiences using their course content as their basis for their analysis and understanding. This project leads students to apply course content to community-based activities which eventually gives students experiential opportunities to learn the reality and develop skills of community engagement.

To achieve the said goals, the CDS will continue to enjoin the involvement of the whole institution in the major programs and services of the CDS anchored on the different pillars of Justice and Peace, Ecological Integrity, Engaged Citizenship, Poverty Alleviation/ Reduction, Gender Equality and Youth Empowerment (JEEPGY) Framework vis-à-vis their skills and/ or interests. With the introduction of the JEEPGY Framework, **The pillar programs of Justice and Peace, Ecological Integrity, Engaged Citizenship, Poverty Alleviation, Gender Equality, and Youth Empowerment (JEEPGY) championed by the CEAP showcase Catholic values that encourage a strong commitment to effecting change in society.**

The JEEPGY Framework is one of the pillar programs of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), with this, the implementation of the programs and services of the UIC -CDS has led to a more comprehensive Institutional Community Involvement.

UIC has prepared its JEEPGY Framework with line-up programs and services vis-à-vis needs and concerns of its partner communities, agencies, groups, and institutions, where implementers anchor their projects and services based on their specialization or interest.

Among these significant programs and services anchored on the pillars of JEEPGY Framework, particularly on Poverty Alleviation or Reduction is the UIC Kaduyog Sagop Kinabuhi Program. This program is the institution's response to the call of the Church (through the Archdiocese Social Action Center of Davao City) and the institution's immediate action to the challenge of the government (through the City Anti- Drug Abuse Council of Davao City) on issues related to drugs.

The UIC Kaduyog Sagop Kinabuhi Program is implementing a Community –Based Rehabilitation and Aftercare Program for Persons with Substance Use Disorder (PSUDs). It has four (4) major components, namely: Physiological, Psycho-social, Spiritual and Economic Productivity/ Livelihood Opportunities.

The whole institution is encouraged to sustain its involvement in the said program through psycho-social programs and services, economic productivity/ livelihood-related projects, work and survival skills training, physical education and performing arts activities.

The CDS will sustain its strong linkage and networking with existing partners for the pooling of resources. Likewise build new partnerships with groups and agencies with similar programs and services for complementation, coordination, and collaboration.

VI. Implementation of Strategic Plans

To make fully operational the major aspects of this institutional development plan, the UIC has involved its key players and members by urging them to map out their respective department and program goals which could contribute to the realization of its strategic and

action plans. Thus, UIC administration has solicited from its faculty and other members their suggestions to achieve consistency for managing changes for development across the academe. In the next five years, UIC will focus its efforts in supervising the action plan towards its operation by coordinating with the department heads concerning their stated goals, objectives, strategies, measurement definition, and time frame for their respective strategic plan.

VII. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department Heads (Basic Education, Tertiary Education and Graduate School Departments) together with the Planning and Development Officer (PDO) will be tasked to monitor the progress of the implementation of the strategic plan based on the stated objectives and determine the effectiveness of strategies with due regard to resources allocation, realistic performance indicators within time frame, and full accountabilities of the key players for such plan. The UIC Administration will schedule a regular meeting for feedback and re-evaluation.

VIII. Conclusion

This holistic framework of the institutional development plan of the University of the Immaculate Conception reflects its Vision, Mission, and Core Values. The plan defines and reflects an awareness of realities in the external and internal environment through the Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis hand in hand with ERRC (Eliminate, Reduce, Raise and Create). Annual plans are indicated in the strategic plan as actions to be taken for the incoming academic year to realize strategic plans are designed for five years commencing AY 2016 to AY 2021.

Moreover, it is intended to describe the UIC's response to the pressing issues that confront educational institutions today. Among these issues are the implementation of K to 12 and CHED's OBE and typology-based quality assurance scheme, the impact of ASEAN 2015 Labor Mobility program and internationalization. The struggle of every institution to establish its reputation of being globally competitive is urging the leaders of the school to conceptualize a guide to ascertain its approach concerning accountability, improvement and resource allocation for the identified strategies. However, there must always be consistent efforts to align these goals with the institution's vision, mission, and philosophy to preserve the "branding" of the

academe that indicates the uniqueness of the institution. The development plans of UIC are contained in the Five –Year Strategic Plan for AY 2016-2021 and plans are disseminated to the different sectors of the academic community. Implementation of approved plans is monitored, reviewed and updated annually. A year-end progress report is accomplished and the corresponding actions to be taken for the succeeding year are also documented. Eventually, by AY 2021, the respective goals of each area have been attained.

As a Catholic university, UIC commits to an accessible holistic education that is centered in the person of Christ. Thus, a UICian graduate is a professional who must be imbued with values such as humility and selfless service to the community for the promotion of justice and peace amidst corruption and integrity-challenged society. This means that the quality of instruction is that which is marked with the evangelizing mission of the Church---an instrument for the renewal and strengthening of Christian faith here and across the world.