



## **COCOPEA Statement on CHED Memorandum on Foreign Students**

**January 29, 2009**

In general, the proposed new CHED Memorandum consolidated the existing rules and regulations on admission of foreign students. As such, there is really no drastic change in the requirements previously set by the government on HEIs. However, the proposed new CHED Memorandum contains some additional requirements for the HEIs to be allowed to admit foreign students, which includes additional program accreditation from CHED and/or CHED recognized accrediting bodies/federations, obligation to provide *auxiliary services* to foreign students, and the additional documentation requirement on foreign students who are exempt from securing student visas.

On the part of the foreign student, he/she is now **required to pass** the given SAT or an equivalent tests such as IELTS or TOEFL, *at the discretion of HEIs accepting foreign students*. The undersigned is of the understanding that the “*discretion of HEIs*” referred to above **pertains only to the type of test that the foreign student shall pass, but not whether the foreign student should or should not take the test.** Section 14 of the proposed new CHED Memorandum categorically requires foreign students seeking admission in Philippine HEIs to pass any of the above mentioned qualifying test.

It is interesting to note how the Government attempts to strike a balance at encouraging foreign students to study in our country without being lax on the security concerns that comes with the influx of foreigners. In this day and age when terrorism has neither face nor alliance, it is quite understandable why additional security features, thru reportorial requirements and spot inspection by government agencies concerned, are placed in the proposed Memorandum. Nonetheless, we should not lose sight of the main goal of our educational system, which is to promote our country as a “center of education in the Asia Pacific Region”. This can be done only if the government will provide for a less cumbersome manner of enrollment in any of the Philippine HEIs. Corollary, the proposed Memorandum mentions of “corresponding fees” for those who will obtain a student visa and for the annual renewal of the same. It is definitely to the best interest of everyone if such “corresponding fees” be pegged at a minimal amount. As it is, the proposed Memorandum is silent on this matter.

It is also important to note that in addition to competing with other South East Asian Countries for this market on foreign students, we are also competing against advanced computer technology where college and/or graduate degrees can easily be obtained on-line. The challenge now for us is to make our HEIs more marketable to this foreign student market. Thus, the government should aid HEIs in improving their academic program and not merely imposing additional requirements from them.

Handwritten signature of Dr. Benjamin R. Yngente in black ink.

**DR. BENJAMIN R. YNGENTE**  
*ACSCU President*

**DR. JOSE PAULO E. CAMPOS**  
*PAPSCU President*

Handwritten signature of Dr. Vicente K. Fabella in black ink.

**DR. VICENTE K. FABELLA**  
*PACU President*

Handwritten signature of Engr. Constancio A. Sia in black ink.

**ENGR. CONSTANCIO A. SIA**  
*TEVSAPHIL President*

Handwritten signature of Msgr. Gerardo O. Santos in black ink, with a large 'X' over it.

**MSGR. GERARDO O. SANTOS**  
*CEAP President*  
*COCOPEA Chairman*