



Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations

STATEMENT OF CONCERN

The Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (COCOPEA), with due respect, takes exception to the decision of the Supreme Court in the case entitled "In the matter of the charges of plagiarism, etc. against Associate Justice Mariano C. del Castillo."

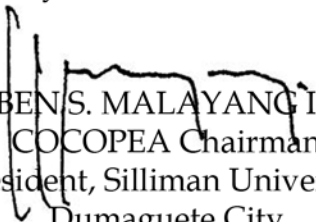
As educators, we are alarmed by the Supreme Court ruling that plagiarism cannot be committed without "malicious intent". How can we now discipline our students who copy the works and writings of other authors without attribution when they can simply take refuge behind the Supreme Court ruling?

Plagiarism is intellectual dishonesty. It is thievery of intellectual property. In the world of the academe, it is punished most severely.


To treat plagiarism in a cavalier fashion is to fling the door wide open to flagrant violations against intellectual property and invite intellectual thefts without fear of punitive sanction. This academic atmosphere is not only deleterious to scholarly pursuits but more so to the moral fiber of young minds, but more importantly, it detracts from the essential purpose of the Higher Education Institution (HEI) to be the cradle of original ideas. It is for this reason that the right to academic freedom is granted to HEIs.

In view thereof, we implore the Supreme Court, most respectfully, to follow "The Way Forward" of Justice Sereno's Dissenting Opinion as the only way by which it can maintain its judicial dignity.


Respectfully submitted:



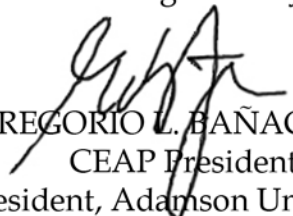
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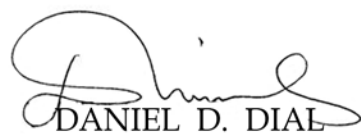
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