

## **Academic Excellence through Faculty Development: UP's Path to Greatness**

The University of the Philippines, the country's premier institution of higher learning, is also the country's premier research university. UP has over 50,000 students drawn from the country's best and brightest; a corps of faculty members and researchers with outstanding track records in research and creative work; the country's most state-of-the-art laboratories and multidisciplinary research centers in the sciences, engineering, agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, biotechnology and biodiversity; centers for the arts and humanities; and regional and cultural studies centers in strategic locations across the country. Indeed, with its vast scope and reach, the diversity of its programs and fields of study, and its verdant campuses, UP is a fitting home for the country's premier community of scholars.

Moreover, as national university, UP is mandated to perform its unique and distinctive leadership in teaching and research; to harness its considerable body of knowledge in the service of the Filipino people; and to produce from among its students the ethical, committed and progressive leaders who will steer the nation toward true and lasting development. In this globalized, highly competitive and rapidly changing world, where knowledge, information and innovation are the driving forces behind development, UP will play an even bigger role in shaping the country's future.

### **The Faculty: UP's Heart and Soul**

Critical to achieving this is the faculty, considered to be the heart and soul of any university. It is the faculty who are principally involved not only in the transmission but also in the creation of knowledge. It is the faculty that gives UP its institutional character. The success of UP's transformation into a research university with national and regional relevance and a global orientation will depend on its faculty, and key to this is to significantly increase the number of high-quality faculty—excellent, highly trained, expert faculty with PhD degrees and postdoctoral training in key research areas, faculty who will be responsible for the research mentoring and leadership training of the students, who will play a major role in establishing, nurturing and sustaining a vibrant research culture and productive research process in UP through the generations to come.

However, UP is currently losing its faculty, some to retirement, others to greener pastures in private universities or abroad. In order to fulfill its mandate to conduct research and to serve, UP must increase the number of its PhD-level faculty if it is to become a world-class and internationally recognized research institution.

With this in mind, UP has embarked on several programs, each with the goal of boosting the number of UP's high-quality faculty.

### **The UP Expanded Modernization Program-Doctoral Studies Fund**

The UP Modernization Program-Doctoral Studies Fund was established under UP President Francisco Nemenzo's UP Modernization Program, with its vision of a 21<sup>st</sup>-century university. The Doctoral Studies Program aimed to develop 100 PhD faculty members across the UP System. Over the years, however, it has become clear that the Program's current conditions for support have yet to translate to any significant increase in the number of PhD-holders in UP.

Following a review and revision of its terms and conditions, the Doctoral Studies Program was expanded to make it more flexible, more open and more responsive to the needs of the UP faculty and the realities of today. Through the UP Expanded Modernization Program-Doctoral Studies Fund, UP will subsidize the doctoral or postdoctoral studies of its faculty within the University or abroad, with preference given to faculty pursuing doctoral or postdoctoral studies in leading, top-rated ASEAN universities and other Asian Universities.

All regular UP faculty with a good track record and a recognized potential for contributing to a research field, with or without MA or MS degrees, may apply for doctoral support. Moreover, the length of the fellowship has been extended from three years to a maximum of five years.

For full-time local fellowships, the Doctoral Studies Fund will provide the fellow with free tuition and other related fees, a monthly stipend, a book allowance and other benefits. For foreign fellowships, fellows will be provided with pre-travel and clothing allowances; funds for tuition and related fees, foreign travel, living allowance for the grantee, and other benefits. A government passport will be used for travel, if possible. The Department of Foreign Affairs will

be informed of the fellowship and the pertinent embassy or consulate will be updated on the status of the fellowship and the financial obligations of the faculty fellow.

### **The UP Visiting Professor Program**

In order to increase its number of PhD-mentors for young faculty working on their doctoral and postdoctoral degrees as well as improve and encourage the culture of research among its faculty and students, UP is also establishing the UP Visiting Professor Program under the UP Expanded Modernization Program-Doctoral Studies Fund.

Inspired by and based on the Department of Science and Technology's short-term Balik Scientist Program, the Visiting Professor Program calls on foreign-based Filipino and foreign professors and researchers willing to commit to help produce PhD graduates in and for UP, and to participate actively in the development of UP as a research university. These Visiting Professors will be matched with a counterpart UP faculty researcher as the collaborator— a PhD or postdoctoral supervisor for the UP researcher. A work plan will then be created to build and support the research collaboration and the research group consisting of the visiting professor-research mentor, the UP faculty researcher and their graduate students.

UP will provide support for the UP Visiting Professor for a one- to two-month stay in the Philippines each year, including roundtrip airfare and a reasonable living allowance. UP will also provide for intensive lectures and team teaching courses by the UP Visiting Professor, as well as training on research concept, proposal writing and research methodology. An official appointment will be given to the UP Visiting Professor so that he or she becomes part of the UP's faculty roster and thereby contributes to UP's international ranking. Moreover, research agreements, sandwich PhD programs or joint-degree granting programs between the UP Visiting Professor's university and UP, with the UP Visiting Professor and the UP faculty researcher as lead persons, will be strongly encouraged.

### **The Honors Faculty Fast-Track System**

From the ranks of the UP students may emerge the most promising mentors and professors, able to guide the generations of students who come after them. Under the Honors Faculty Fast-Track System, UP aims to recruit the honor graduates of the undergraduate program

of a UP college or institute to become faculty members and to pursue an academic research career in UP. This will involve identifying potential honor graduates from among the current crop of students, and offer them an attractive academic research development package, including relatively high instructor positions— Instructor 3 to *cum laudes*, Instructor 4 to *magna cum laudes*, and Instructor 5 to *summa cum laudes*.

The honor-graduate faculty will receive help in planning his/her graduate studies so as to align these with the research priority areas of his/her institute. This aims to create a critical mass of research faculty with expertise in related fields, in order to promote the growth of the institute's research capabilities.

Among the other components of the academic research package for honor graduates are:

- Protected time for research, with a 3-6 unit teaching deloading, to enable him/her to continue or complete his/her undergraduate thesis and publish a paper under the mentorship of his/her thesis adviser or another senior faculty;
- Intensive training on leadership, research mentoring and research-based teaching to the honor-graduate faculty through his/her undergraduate thesis adviser or another senior faculty;
- Opportunities for the honor-graduate faculty to discuss teaching and research with the UP Visiting Professors and research leaders from other local and foreign institutions;
- Fast-tracking of the honor-graduate faculty's doctoral studies, either in leading institutes within UP or, to avoid inbreeding and to provide great intellectual challenge, in the best universities abroad;
- A fellowship for doctoral studies in UP or abroad within one to two years after joining the institute, even without tenure, as long as the honor-graduate faculty has published a paper in an international peer-reviewed, high-quality journal;

- Funds for required examination or application fees for doctoral studies, airfare for return visits, funding support for a fellowship under the UP Expanded Modernization Program, among others;
- The assurance of a faculty item with a fair and attractive promotion or rank for the new doctoral or postdoctoral fellow, depending on the number of high-quality publications and other academic output he/she produces upon his/her return to the institute;
- A start-up grant to the PhD graduate or postdoctoral fellow under the UP Emerging Interdisciplinary Research Program, as well as opportunities for sustaining the research through competitive grants so that he/she can immediately pursue a project related to his/her dissertation.

### **Foreign-Trained Filipino PhD Faculty Recruitment Program**

Like the UP Visiting Professor Program, the UP Foreign-Trained Filipino PhD Faculty Recruitment Program is based on and inspired by the DOST's long-term Balik Scientist Program. Through this program, UP aims to increase the number and improve the quality of UP faculty, and to reduce the tendency of inbreeding, by embarking on a massive campaign to recruit Filipino doctoral and postdoctoral fellows abroad to return to the Philippines and become UP faculty, thereby enriching the culture of research and creative work in the University and the country.

Incentives include a start-up research grant of around P2.5 million as well as opportunities for sustaining the research through competitive grants; a fair and attractive faculty rank depending on the number of high-quality publications and other academic qualifications and output produced by doctoral or postdoctoral fellow; and a relocation package of about half a million pesos, and other economic benefits and incentives.

### **Serving UP, Serving the Country**

The faculty, alumni and students are the heart, pride and life-blood of any university, and UP takes rightful pride in the quality, caliber and character of its constituents. Because of this, the University exhorts its faculty, alumni and students to do more, to become more and to aim

even higher through continuing education and self-improvement, through rigorous and dynamic research and creative work, through excellent teaching and mentorship, and through a commitment to utilize one's knowledge and learning in true service to the country and its people. A university is only as good as the people within it, and through its faculty, alumni and students, UP has what it takes to become the great national and regional university it is meant to be.

For inquiries and application forms, please contact the UP Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs through telephone numbers (02) 926-4736, email [ovpaa@up.edu.ph](mailto:ovpaa@up.edu.ph).