



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY (EOP)

1. BACKGROUND

In accordance with the 1987 Philippine Constitution, specifically Article II, Section 26, which guarantees equal opportunities for public service, the Don Honorio Ventura State University (DHVSU) adheres to several key legislative measures designed to protect and promote equality for all in the workplace. These include Republic Act No. 7277, the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, which ensures equal access and protection for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs); Republic Act No. 9710, the Magna Carta of Women, which mandates gender equality and prohibits discrimination against women; Republic Act No. 8371, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act, which safeguards the rights of Indigenous Peoples; Republic Act No. 8972, the Solo Parents' Welfare Act, which provides necessary support and ensures non-discrimination for solo parents; Republic Act No. 11313, the Safe Spaces Act, which addresses and prevents gender-based sexual harassment; and CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, Series of 2015, which establishes policies on Gender and Development (GAD) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

In this regard, these regulatory frameworks are integral in shaping the University's Human Resource Management (HRM) systems, which include Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (RSP); Learning and Development (L&D); Performance Management (PM); and Rewards and Recognition (R&R). By adhering to these policies, DHVSU strives to ensure a workplace that upholds fairness, respects diversity, and offers equal opportunities for all employees and applicants.

2. PURPOSE

It is the mandate of DHVSU to promote and support an environment which upholds equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusivity in accordance with universal principles of equity, fairness and social justice, while ensuring that the university complies with its legal responsibilities in accordance with relevant laws.

Specifically, the Equal Opportunity Policy aims to ensure:

- a. just and fair access of all DHVSU personnel to all possible development opportunities;
- b. recognition of the right of every individual including persons with disabilities, members of indigenous communities and those from the LGBTQIA+ community to work equally with others for them to be productive members of the society; and

- c. reinforcement of policies that promote fairness in the university and the community as a whole.

Overall, this policy should provide equal access to jobs, trainings, promotions, rewards and incentives, as well as monetary and non-monetary benefits to all regardless of their age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliations, or other similar factors and personal circumstances.

3. SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all DHVSU employees regardless of employment status. Likewise, and if applicable, this policy shall also apply to all qualified individuals of all genders who aspire to be part of the University.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

DHVSU is committed in promoting the principles of equal opportunity and shall support the personal and professional development of personnel within a fair, inclusive, and diverse work environment free from discrimination and prejudice.

DHVSU also acknowledges that tapping the diverse skills and talents of its employees is vital for its continued success.

Therefore, it is the policy of the University that people be employed and developed within the organization based on merit and fitness regardless their age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliations, or other similar factors and personal circumstances that are not relevant to their position.

Lastly, DHVSU is committed in the prevention of discrimination, bullying, harassment, vilification, and victimization in the workplace. To achieve this, the university will take all necessary actions to ensure the preservation and promotion of the dignity of all personnel.

5. PRINCIPLES

DHVSU aims to provide a work environment that fosters fairness, justice, and the common good.

In support of this commitment, DHVSU will endeavor to:

- a. foster a culture which values diversity and inclusivity;
- b. ensure that employees are aware of their rights and their responsibilities as government employees;
- c. use gender-fair, non-discriminatory, and inclusive language and practices;

- d. ensure that all employees have fair access to benefits and services in an equitable manner, including assistance to reasonably accommodate persons with disabilities, pregnant women, solo parents, and senior citizens (i.e., properly ventilated rooms, wheelchairs, ramps, braille, and microphone or lapel); and
- e. provide effective mechanisms to resolve complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment, vilification, and victimization.

All employees shall be responsible in understanding and applying the principles of equal opportunity, equity, and social justice. Supervisors are directly responsible for taking the necessary steps to ensure that the learning and working environment is free from discrimination.

5.1 DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Diversity involves recognizing the value of individual differences in the workplace which includes age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, marital status, gender, religious belief, and sexual orientation. Diversity also refers to other ways in which people are different, such as educational level, life experience, work experience, socio-economic background and other related personal circumstances.

Equal opportunity means treating people as individuals with different skills and abilities, without making judgments based on stereotypes and other characteristics.

6. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Equal opportunity is ensuring that everyone has equal access and opportunity to take part in the following:

A. Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (RSP)

DHVSU upholds the policy of strict adherence to the principles of merit and fitness in all stages of the Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (RSP) process. Accordingly, appointments shall be based solely on the qualifications, competence, and capacity of applicants to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.

Moreover, equal opportunity shall be extended to all qualified individuals to be hired or promoted within the university, regardless of age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar factors and personal circumstances—except when such consideration is necessary to support the individual without causing undue disadvantage to others. This ensures fair access to promotion and career advancement opportunities for all.

Thus, a fair and expeditious mechanism shall be maintained to address complaints and concerns related to the RSP process, thereby ensuring transparency at all times.

A.1 Recruitment /Talent Sourcing

- i. DHVSU shall not issue, print, or publish any employment advertisement that suggests preferences, limitations, specifications, or any form of discrimination.
- ii. All publications of vacant positions shall include the statement: “*DHVSU offers equal employment opportunity to all applicants regardless of age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar factors protected by law.*”
- iii. A brief description of the duties and responsibilities of the position to be filled shall be included in the publication to ensure that differently-abled applicants are adequately informed of the tasks required for the position.

A.2 Acceptance/Receipt of Application and Relevant Documents

- i. All applications shall be received without discrimination, regardless of the mode of submission—whether electronic or printed, submitted in person or via courier.
- ii. No application, provided it is complete and submitted on time, shall be excluded. For this purpose, the Human Resource Management Unit shall organize and file all applications received through any means.
- iii. An applicant with incomplete documentary requirements shall be informed of such deficiency through written communication, email, text message, or phone call, and shall be given a reasonable period to comply, as determined by the HRMPSB. Failure to submit the required documents within the prescribed period shall result in the removal from the list of applicants, and the applicant shall be duly notified of such removal.

A.3 Initial Assessment

- i. An initial assessment shall be conducted by matching the applicant’s credentials with the minimum qualification standards of the position.
- ii. All applicants who are not included in the list of Qualified Applicants shall be informed—through written communication, email, text message, or phone call—of the reason for their disqualification. In no case shall disqualification be based on age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar factors and personal circumstances.
- iii. Only relevant personal information and pertinent credentials shall be included in the preparation of applicants’ profiles.
- iv. From this point forward, only the applicants’ performance in the screening process shall be considered in the preparation of the final report to be submitted to the University President, subject to the results of the HRMPSB’s

deliberation.

A.4 Written Examinations/Technical/Functional Tests

- i. Applicants who pass the initial assessment shall be informed of the schedule of the examination or test, including the materials they are required to bring. In the event that an applicant is unable to bring a required item or tool, the office shall provide the necessary item for use during the conduct of the examination or test.
- ii. Persons with special needs or those belonging to specialized groups shall be provided with appropriate support, provided that such support does not suggest an inability to perform the duties required of the position if hired, nor shall it result in any undue advantage. For instance:
 - Low vision/partially blind applicants – the test questions shall be contained in a bigger font of at least 50% larger than the regular font.
 - Blind applicants – insofar as braille is not yet available, two (2) staff shall assist the applicant: one as dictation officer and another one as transcriber. The room shall be accessible and free from objects that may cause harm to the applicant.
 - Deaf/hard of hearing – the instructions shall be in writing or a trained staff on sign language or a professional from potential partner agency shall assist the applicant.
 - Pregnant women, solo parent with child, senior citizen – shall be categorized as one group to take the examination in a separate room on the ground floor.
- iii. The checking of examination and evaluation of test results shall be conducted objectively. Answer sheets shall not contain any information about the applicant other than his/her name or assigned code, as applicable. Any self-expression by the applicant in the answer sheet shall not be interpreted in a manner that may cause prejudice or discrimination. Similarly, during the examination, evaluators shall focus solely on whether the applicant has met the required outputs or performance expectations. Observations or incidental details about the applicant that are not directly relevant to the task shall not be taken into consideration.

A.5 Interview/Behavioral Event Interview

- i. The interview shall be conducted by qualified members of the HRMPSB in a venue that ensures privacy and confidentiality for both the interviewers and the applicant. The venue must be neutral and non-intimidating in order to help the interviewee feel at ease.

- ii. In cases where an applicant is deaf and mute, the university shall seek the assistance of professionals from potential partner agencies, as bound by Memoranda of Agreement, who possess expertise in areas such as sign language support, assistive technologies, and other adaptive strategies to ensure effective communication and an inclusive interview process. These professionals shall be informed prior to the scheduled date of the interview.
- iii. The university may hire professionals specializing in sign language interpretation or may train selected employees to develop proficiency in sign language and other inclusive communication strategies, thereby enhancing its capacity to accommodate applicants with hearing and speech impairments during interviews and related activities.
- iv. Applicants with special needs shall be provided with the necessary assistance to enable them to participate fully in the interview (e.g., wheelchair access, lapel microphone, etc.).
- v. The interview shall be structured and shall follow a set of pre-determined questions formulated by the HRMPSB. Follow-up questions may be asked to probe further into the applicant's responses.
- vi. Interviewers shall at all times uphold the principles of equal employment opportunity and shall refrain from demonstrating non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, body language, gestures, eye contact, or any form of communication that suggests bias, preference, discrimination, prejudice, or unfair treatment.
- vii. Applicants shall not be evaluated based on disclosures that are irrelevant to the position being applied for, such as age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar factors and personal circumstances.
- viii. During deliberation or consensus meetings, interviewers shall avoid expressing views that may disparage an applicant based on personal attributes that are unrelated to the duties and responsibilities of the position being applied for.
- ix. The comparative assessment report shall be free from personal disclosures or observations that may unduly influence the University President's decision to the applicant's disadvantage.

A.6 Background Investigation (BI)

- i. The background investigation shall be conducted by the personnel from the Human Resource Management Officer (HRMO).
- ii. The background investigation shall follow a structured format consisting of standardized questions for all applicants vying for the same position. The

inquiry shall focus on competencies relevant to the position applied for, as well as the applicant's character, integrity, and work attitude in alignment with DHVSU's core values.

- iii. No personnel shall be assigned to conduct a background investigation if the HRMO has reasonable grounds to believe, that the individual holds any bias for or against the applicant.
- iv. In planning the background investigation (BI), the investigator shall identify interviewees who, to the best of his/her knowledge, are neutral and not strongly in favor of or against the applicant's well-being, promotion, or employment outcome. The investigator must interview at least one individual and may increase the number if deemed necessary to fulfill the objective of the investigation.
- v. During the conduct of the investigation, the investigator shall ask only the prescribed questions. Follow-up questions may be made only for purposes of clarifying responses.
- vi. In preparing the BI report, the investigator must include all relevant information gathered during the investigation and must not add or omit details in a manner that would unjustly benefit or disadvantage the applicant. The report must be written objectively and must not be crafted in a way that may influence the HRMPSB or the University President. For this purpose, the investigator shall be required to submit their notes or any supporting documentation containing first-hand information gathered from the interviewees.
- vii. The assignment of investigator, the dates of investigation, the results, and the final reports shall be treated with strict confidentiality. Any individual who, by virtue of their function or through any means, obtains information about the investigation and discloses such information to unauthorized persons shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

A.7 Proceedings of the HRMPSB and Preparation of the Comparative Assessment Report

- i. The proceedings of the HRMPSB shall be conducted in private to prevent any leakage of information regarding the screening process.
- ii. During deliberations, HRMPSB members shall ensure that the Equal Employment Opportunity Principle (EEOP) is observed.
- iii. No member shall exert any influence over another member or the entire body to the advantage or disadvantage of any applicant, particularly if such actions violate the principles set forth in this policy.
- iv. The comparative assessment report prepared by the HRMU shall include only relevant information, ensuring compliance with the policies outlined herein.

A.8 Selection by the University President

- i. The University President shall select only from among the applicants listed in the HRMPSB report. If the University President decides not to appoint from the list, he/she shall provide a written explanation to the board.
- ii. The decision of the University President is final. The University President has wide discretion to either choose from the top applicants in the HRMPSB report or not to appoint at all. This discretion shall be respected and should not be considered a violation of the equal employment opportunity principle unless a manifest violation is evident in the records of appointments. In the rare event of such a violation, it shall not be actionable and may simply reflect the University President's support for equal employment opportunity.

A.9 Onboarding/Placement

- i. The appointee shall be informed of their role, as well as the expectations of the office, supervisors, peers, and required submittals/reports, following the usual appointment ceremonies.
- ii. For onboarding purposes, a distinction shall be made between those required and not required to undergo a probationary period. The ORAOHRA, DHVSU Merit Selection Plan and the New Employee Onboarding Program shall determine the need for probation. This distinction shall not be construed as discrimination, as it serves a legitimate and valid purpose.
- iii. Appointees required to undergo probation shall be informed of this requirement, along with the details of their probation. They will undergo a thorough assessment of their performance and character. The equal employment opportunity policy under performance management shall apply, where relevant.
- iv. In assessing the appointee's character, the background investigation provisions outlined in this policy shall apply, with the following modifications:
 - Negative feedback regarding the appointee's character shall not be considered unless submitted in writing.
 - Only feedback unrelated to the appointee's age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar factors and personal circumstances shall affect the assessment. Any feedback based on these factors shall be disregarded.
 - The appointee shall be informed of negative character feedback, in line with principles of fairness.

- The university shall ensure that character feedback is free from discrimination, bias, prejudice, or unfair treatment.
- If the decision is to terminate the appointee's services, they shall be informed of their right to appeal.

B. Performance Management (PM)

Every employee shall have the right to participate freely and equally in the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Rewarding stages of the Performance Management System (PMS) cycle, in alignment with the organization's needs, customer demands, and relevant trends, taking into account workforce capacity, available technology, material or physical constraints, and other personal circumstances that directly affect individual performance, even if such circumstances are not of the employee's choosing.

Considerations related to age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar personal factors and personal circumstances shall not be used unless such consideration is intended to benefit the individual without causing undue disadvantage to others.

B.1 Performance Planning and Commitment Setting

- i. All employees shall be involved in Performance Planning. No one shall be deprived of the opportunity to participate in setting and committing to their performance targets.
- ii. Employees scheduled to retire within the performance rating period shall have their targets adjusted based on the limited timeframe available for delivering outputs.
- iii. Female employees expecting to give birth during the performance period shall also have their targets adjusted, with consideration given to their maternity leave. Their targets must be realistic, achievable, and not pose any risk to their health or that of their child.
- iv. Male employees whose legal spouse is expected to give birth within the performance period shall likewise be allowed adjustments to their targets to accommodate the use of paternity or other applicable leave, even if formal paternity leave entitlements have been exhausted.
- v. Persons with disabilities (PWDs) shall be given targets that are realistic and achievable.
- vi. Employees on study or scholarship leave shall have their targets adjusted accordingly or, where necessary due to the coverage period, may be exempted from having performance targets.
- vii. No employee shall be required to perform duties or deliver outputs that would

compromise their religious beliefs and practices.

- viii. All such other planned, schedules, or expected events that will occur in the planned performance rating period that will affect any one or more employees shall be taken into consideration to avoid assigning unattainable or unrealistic targets.
- ix. Immediate supervisors shall ensure that office-level targets are adjusted accordingly, taking into account the individual adjustments made for their team members and themselves.
- x. No employee shall be assigned tasks beyond the required competencies of their position without their express consent.
- xi. No employee shall be assigned a workload so excessive that it compromises their right to work-life balance.
- xii. No employee shall be burdened with another's workload in a manner that unfairly advantages one to the detriment of another.
- xiii. Employees shall not be restricted from invoking the provisions of this policy, regardless of their salary grade, position, or personal circumstances.
- xiv. The University President shall not approve any Performance Commitment and Rating Form without the signature of the employee concerned and their College Dean/Campus Director/Office Head.
- xv. Should the Planning and Development Office/Performance Management Team discover or receive information of any violation of this policy or would tend to violate this policy, they shall act on it with immediacy or cause it to be reviewed and resolved.
- xvi. Final approval of any commitment and rating form shall be contingent upon the completion of all required actions and corrections.

B.2 Performance Monitoring and Coaching

- i. Performance monitoring shall be conducted fairly. No employee shall be treated in a manner that singles them out, causes isolation, or fosters a sense of ostracism.
- ii. Performance shall be monitored based on each employee's agreed-upon targets, taking into account all necessary adjustments in observance of this policy.
- iii. No employee shall be deprived of the right to provide feedback to their College Dean/Campus Director/Office Head regarding the need to adjust targets due to new assignments, changes in expected outputs, or any hindrance to performing their duties.
- iv. All employees shall be included in the regular semi-annual performance

assessment. Each employee must be properly informed of their performance status (e.g., monthly or quarterly), especially if it may affect their final performance rating.

- v. Coaching shall be made when appropriate and only when solicited.
- vi. Mentoring and other forms of developmental interventions shall be made available to any employee who may benefit from them.
- vii. Immediate supervisors shall at all times ensure that no direct report is unduly favored or unfavored in terms of workload and shall make the necessary adjustments if inequities arise due to unforeseen circumstances.
- viii. College Dean/Campus Director/Office Head shall take note of any adjustments made to an employee's targets or deliverables and ensure these are duly considered during performance evaluation.

B.3 Performance Evaluation

- i. Performance evaluation shall be objective and shall not consider behavior or actions irrelevant to the achievement of performance targets. Evaluation shall focus solely on the comparison between agreed-upon targets and actual accomplishments.
- ii. Performance evaluation shall consider unforeseen or unexpected changes in circumstances that directly affect an employee's performance. These may include, but are not limited to, rehabilitation leave for work-related injuries, unexpected miscarriage or childbirth of a female employee or the spouse of a male employee, prolonged absence due to official business, disruptions caused by contingencies or directives, and other similar situations.
- iii. All employees shall have the right to participate in the evaluation of their own performance. There must be mutual agreement between the employee and the immediate supervisor on the actual accomplishments and their corresponding ratings. Neither party may impose a rating without supporting evidence.
- iv. No employee shall be deprived of their rights to raise issues and/or concern regarding their performance rating to the appropriate forum. All issues/concerns raised shall be resolved within a period prescribed by existing rules.
- v. Performance ratings shall not be finalized until all issues and concerns related to the evaluation have been addressed and resolved.

B.4 Performance Rewarding and Development Planning

- i. Outstanding performance shall be recognized regardless of the personal circumstances of the employee. Once performance ratings have been

approved, no further feedback—formal or informal—shall be entertained if it aims to cast doubt on the evaluation process or deprive any employee of recognition due them.

- ii. Development planning shall take into careful account each individual's personal circumstances and aspirations for advancement and growth. Supervisors, based on their observations and supporting evidence, may contribute to the developmental planning of their direct reports. In all cases, the immediate supervisor and the employee shall agree on the identified development plans.
- iii. No employee shall be unduly excluded from the development plan. The Planning and Development Office and the PMT in collaboration with the College Deans/Campus Directors/Office Heads shall ensure that all employees shall be included in development plan. Any reasonable exclusion (e.g., due to upcoming retirement, transfer, or other forms of separation) shall only be made with the consent of the employee concerned.

C. Learning and Development (L&D)

The processes of Learning Needs Assessment, Learning and Development (L&D) Planning, Design and Development, Delivery, Monitoring, and Evaluation shall incorporate the principles of equal opportunity. No individual shall be discriminated against or excluded on the basis of age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar personal attributes and circumstances. All individuals shall be treated equally, equitably, and fairly.

Furthermore, the provision of L&D interventions shall be guided by each employee's Individual Development Plan (IDP), identified competency gaps, accomplishments, work performance, and specific job requirements. These decisions shall not be influenced by any personal characteristics that are not directly relevant to the learning intervention.

In addition to regular work-related L&D programs, DHVSU shall also provide orientation and training for specialized groups to ensure that they are informed and empowered with knowledge about their rights and privileges.

C.1 LNA and L&D Planning

- i. L&D Planning shall involve all individuals within the organization, ensuring that no one is excluded and that every employee's learning and development needs are acknowledged and considered.
- ii. In planning for L&D, the following processes/policy shall be observed:
 - The results of the online competency assessment, or any other form

of learning needs assessment, shall serve as the foundation for the Individual Development Plan (IDP). Any identified gaps, whether related to the current position or a desired higher position, shall be documented.

- Supervisor's comments and recommendations, in agreement with the individual concerned shall be incorporated in the IDP.
- The Human Resource Development Unit (HRDU) shall consolidate the IDP results as prepared and reviewed by the individuals and their supervisors. No filtering of data/information shall occur at this level.
- Based on the consolidation, the HRDU will prepare a report to present to the Human Capital Development Committee (HCDC). The HRDU will also gather information on both internal and external L&D offerings and seek options that address the learning needs of all employees, as feasible.
- With the list of gaps and recommendations in hand, the HRDU shall prepare an initial match to address the learning needs.
- The HCDC, during a meeting scheduled for this purpose, shall ensure that all individuals are provided with L&D interventions, prioritizing according to the urgency or significance of the gap. They shall consider the principles of this policy to ensure no one is deprived of L&D opportunities that could result in disadvantage. However, if financial and operational constraints limit the provision of all L&D interventions, this shall not be considered a violation of the Equal Opportunity Policy.

C.2 L&D Design and Development

- i. In cases where a learning need is common to all DHVSU employees and no existing L&D offerings can address it, in-house training shall be designed.
- ii. For in-house training, the HRDU or learning service provider and/or any such responsible persons shall observe the following:
 - The training design shall be people-centered, considering the diverse learning styles, needs, and capacities of individuals.
 - It shall ensure that all employees, regardless of age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar personal attributes and circumstances, have equal access to the training, provided it is required by their IDP, and that no one is excluded or disadvantaged due to these attributes.

- iii. The HRDU, learning service provider, or responsible person shall continuously improve the design and development of training programs to address any issues regarding equal opportunity.

C.3 L&D Delivery

- i. The delivery of the L&D intervention or training shall align with its design and development, with adjustments made as necessary to meet the training objectives.
- ii. PWDs, senior citizens, and pregnant women shall be provided with seating that ensures their comfort.
- iii. Administrators, resource speakers, facilitators, and secretariat members shall respect the diversity of the group, avoiding actions that could offend participants based on age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar personal attributes and circumstances.
- iv. Workshops and activities shall be designed in a way that can accommodate PWDs, senior citizens, and pregnant women without undue burden or exclusion.
- v. Facilitators shall encourage the active participation of all members, fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels respected and able to contribute.

C.4 L&D Monitoring and Evaluation

- i. The conduct of L&D programs shall be monitored and evaluated to ensure adherence to equal opportunity principles. In-house trainings must take into account the reactions, comments, and feedback of all participants through the use of the Training Evaluation Form and Impact Assessment Form.
- ii. The HRDU shall monitor the implementation of the DHVSU L&D Plan.
- iii. The HCDC shall evaluate the L&D effectiveness conducted by the university.

D. Rewards and Recognition (R&R)

DHVSU implements the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) pursuant to the Revised Policies on Employees Suggestions and Incentive Awards System under CSC MC No. 01, s. 2001. The university shall likewise promote consistency and fairness in the implementation of the awards and incentives program by ensuring that employees belonging to specialized groups are not left behind.

Officials and employees, whether individually or as a group, shall be recognized and rewarded for valuable suggestions, innovations, inventions, superior accomplishments,

discoveries, heroic deeds, exemplary behavior, extraordinary acts or services in the public interest, and other personal efforts that contribute to the efficiency, economy, and improvement of DHVSU operations, leading to increased organizational productivity.

All Rewards and Recognition (R&R) programs of DHVSU shall incorporate Equal Opportunity Principles (EOP) at every stage—from formulation, nomination, screening, and deliberation, to the awarding process. No employee shall be excluded on account of age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliations, or other similar factors and personal circumstances.

D.1 R&R Program Design/Formulation

- i. The design of any Rewards and Recognition (R&R) program shall consider the importance of providing all employees the opportunity to be nominated. To this end, the University shall implement as many practicable and inclusive recognition programs as possible to ensure that every employee has a fair chance to be acknowledged and rewarded.
- ii. The PRAISE Committee shall regularly review and enhance the design and implementation of R&R programs to ensure that EOP is consistently observed, upheld, and promoted.

D.2 Nomination

- i. Nominations for Rewards and Recognition (R&R) shall strictly adhere to the prescribed guidelines of each R&R program. No employee shall be excluded from nomination for any reason other than non-compliance with these established guidelines.
- ii. All nominations that comply with the guidelines shall be officially recorded. No form of unauthorized filtering, screening, or exclusion that may prejudice the nominee or nominator shall be permitted. Any violation of this provision shall be subject to appropriate action.

D.3 Screening and Deliberation by PRAISE

- i. The PRAISE Committee shall strictly adhere to the criteria established for each R&R program.
- ii. Deliberations for the selection of awardee(s), especially when the R&R program allows only one or a limited number of recipients, shall observe Equal Opportunity Principles. No nominee shall be excluded without a valid reason. If some nominees are not selected, it must be because the selected awardee(s) have clearly demonstrated superior qualifications.
- iii. If the PRAISE Committee determines that a background investigation or validation is necessary, the applicable provisions governing background

investigations of applicants under RSP shall, as far as practicable, be observed.

- iv. No member of the PRAISE Committee shall knowingly or intentionally exhibit bias, prejudice, or discrimination against any nominee. Any violation of this provision shall be subject to appropriate action.

D.4 Awarding

- i. The results of the screening and deliberation process shall be considered final, unless there is a valid reason to believe that a violation of the EOP has occurred. Post-process feedback that may undermine the integrity of the process shall not be entertained.
- ii. The awarding ceremonies for each R&R program shall follow a consistent format and procedure to avoid unnecessary comparisons and ensure justice and fairness.
- iii. Prizes or awards shall be granted in accordance with the guidelines specific to each R&R program. No awardee shall be denied their rightful reward as stated in the guidelines, except when there are prior amendments or changes duly communicated before the nomination period.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of the EOP, the following key players shall be actively engaged:

- a. Top Management - shall institutionalize the EOP, promote awareness among officials and employees, and ensure its consistent implementation and compliance across all campuses and offices of the university.
- b. College Deans/Campus Directors/Office Heads – shall assume responsibility with the university in enforcing the EOP across all Human Resource systems. They shall guarantee that all employees understand and implement the policy, and foster a work culture that upholds equal opportunity principles.
- c. Human Resource Management Unit (HRMU) - shall:
 - Conduct regular orientation sessions on the EOP;
 - Provide technical assistance regarding EOP-related concerns; and
 - Ensure the continued and consistent observance of the EOP across all levels of the institution.
- d. Finance management Services Office (FMSO) - shall ensure the timely and appropriate allocation of funds to support mid- to long-term accessibility projects aligned with the goals of the EOP.
- e. Performance Management Team (PMT) – shall monitor the successful implementation of this policy. Monitoring will not be an end in itself but will produce information to be used in planning and decision-making in order to:

- Identify and promote best practices;
 - Identify any issues or barriers in the promotion of equality and the acceptance of diversity; and
 - Identify actions to be taken to address issues and problems pertaining to equal employment opportunity.
- f. PRAISE Committee – shall ensure that deliberations on nominations and selections for awards under the Rewards and Recognition (R&R) Program adhere to the principles of equal opportunity. The Committee shall guarantee that no nominee is excluded without valid reason, and that selections are based on merit, in line with the standards of fairness, inclusivity, and transparency.
- g. Employees - All employees have a responsibility to ensure that they do not discriminate against, harass, bully or victimize co-worker, prospective employees, contractors, clients, partners, suppliers, or any other person at the workplace.

8. REVIEW

This policy and related policies and procedures will be reviewed at least every three (3) years to ensure adherence and to confirm that it does not include requirements or conditions that constitute or may lead to discrimination. The review also aims to incorporate any updates in laws and policies set by government agencies.

9. GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

9.1 Grievances

All allegations of discrimination on the grounds of age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliations, or other similar factors and personal circumstances shall be dealt with seriously with utmost confidentiality. An employee may use the University-approved Grievance Machinery to file grievance about discriminatory conduct.

9.2 Disciplinary Measures

DHVSU shall penalize offensive conduct, derogatory remarks, and other forms of verbal or physical aggression based on an individual's age, sex, color, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender preference, race, income, class, political affiliation, or other similar factors and personal circumstances. Any employee who harasses another employee and is found guilty—after due process—on the grounds of the aforementioned discriminatory factors shall be deemed to have committed gross misconduct. Consequently, such offense shall warrant summary dismissal in the absence of mitigating circumstances for permanent employees, and non-renewal or termination of appointment/contract for those under Casual, Contract of Service, or Job Order status, in accordance with the provisions of the Revised Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service (RACCS).

10. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

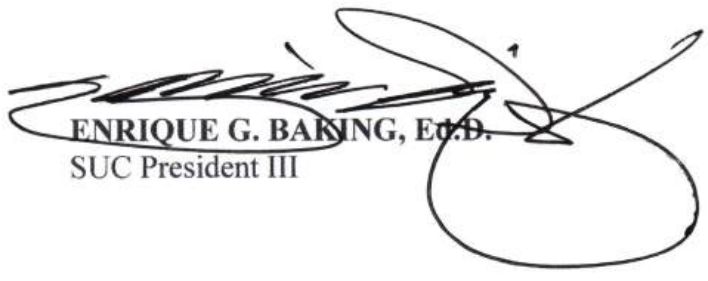
In the event that any provision or part of this policy is declared illegal or rendered invalid by a competent authority, provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain valid and effective.

11. EFFECTIVITY

This Equal Opportunity Policy shall take effect immediately upon its approval and shall remain in effect unless supersede by an appropriate issuance.



REDEN M. HERNANDEZ, RCE, MM
Executive Vice President



ENRIQUE G. BAKING, Ed.D.
SUC President III