

The Internationalization of Bicol University: An Analysis

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Abstract

This paper aimed to assess the level of Bicol University in the internationalization in higher education and looked into the profile of Bicol University in terms of the ten internationalization domains: a) student mobility; b) faculty mobility; c) institutional linkages; d) research; e) international presence; f) internationalization at home; g) regional connectivity; h) ranking; i) curriculum; and j) planning for internationalization. This research used the Network-based Internationalization Theory. The descriptive-qualitative method was employed where textual evaluation and FGD were used in the procedure. The level of internationalization was determined through an assessment instrument composed of a table of indicators per domain and analyzed according to the indicators for internationalization, specifically made for this study, culled from various literature and studies on internationalization, cross-border education or transnational education. Each domain's corresponding percentage was further tabulated as to its significance in the internationalization of an institution.

Keywords: *Internationalization, cross-border education, transnational education*

Introduction

Because of globalization and internationalization, the world has become smaller and larger at the same time. Smaller in the sense that, local and international travel have become cheaper and more accessible, making experiencing other cultures more feasible. The same reasons made our world larger. One can no longer exist in the local sense only but needs to always consider the “global” sense. In teaching and learning for instance, classrooms have become this “global classroom” which has given rise to countless student and faculty exchanges, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), research grants, and fellowships abroad.

We need to consider the global market because of globalization. Cantu (2013) states that globalization is seen as a social and economic process. This process leads to internationalization which is described as “strategies by which colleges and universities respond to globalization” (p. 1). Knight (1994) defines the internationalization of higher education as the process of integrating an international or intercultural aspect into the teaching, research and service functions of internationalization. The research done by Williams, et al. (2017) for UNESCO, developed a typology of domains of internationalization and carried out a

frequency analysis of those domains as seen in the academic and agency literature and in online datasets.

To be world-class is the current brand of Bicol University. In its 50 years of existence as a premier university in the Bicol Region, and during the second term of its current president, how far has BU gone in terms of internationalization? It is important to find out the internationalization status of the university so that a strategic plan may be devised to make BU more visible in the Asian and international arena.

This study is anchored on J. Johanson and L. G. Mattsson's Network-based Internationalization Theory which states that a company's internationalization and the manner in which a company joins a foreign market is determined by the following needs: “development of knowledge about a given market and the process itself, quantitative and qualitative adjustment to the requirements of a given foreign market and the use of an established position in a network” (Hosseini & Dadfar, 2012, p. 187).

According to this theory, a company, before entering a foreign market, needs to build a network of relationships. These relationships may be newly established, obtained from its current network, or

expanded to a broader network apart from its current pool of network. These partnerships emanate from the mutual interactions of individuals and units from within the company, as well as mutual interactions from its outside network (Ratajczak-Mrozek, 2012). This theory states that a company cannot be analyzed in isolation. Its efforts and attainments in internationalization should always be looked at with the other companies in the field and the international setting.

This study aimed to assess the status of Bicol University in the internationalization in higher education. Specifically, it sought to find out the profile and level of Bicol University in terms of the 10 internationalization domains: student mobility, faculty mobility, institutional linkages, research, international presence, internationalization at home, regional connectivity, ranking, curriculum, and planning for internationalization.

Materials and Methods

Bicol University is a premier state university in the Bicol Region, Philippines, institutionalized in September 22, 1970. It is home to an average of 25,000 students per academic year, 630 faculty members, and 332 non-teaching personnel. BU is ISO-certified and is classified as SUC Level IV since 1998. It is considered as a top performing school by the Professional Regulation Commission in licensure examinations in Accountancy, Education, Engineering, Midwifery, Nursing, and Social Work (<http://bicol-u.edu.ph/bu/about/who+we+are>).

Research design

This study employed the qualitative descriptive method. This aimed to find out the profile of BU in terms of its internationalization program, following the 10 domains of internationalization, from January 2011 to December 2019.

Sources of Data

The primary sources of data were documents, manuals, publications, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), General Bilateral Agreement (GBA), unstructured interviews of students, teaching and non-teaching staff in Bicol University and focus group discussion of the deans and directors of the different colleges. Unstructured interviews were purposely conducted with six students

and with two non-teaching personnel. Unstructured interviews were used to gather in-depth qualitative data with different interviewees. Since the interviews focused on the 10 domains of internationalization, distinct open questions were utilized per interviewee. The student interviewees were beneficiaries of BU's student development program and the interviews focused on student mobility, institutional linkages, international presence, and internationalization at home. These students were chosen because of their excellent academic standing, active participation in extra-curricular activities, and accessibility. They were student leaders in the College of Arts and Letters, College of Engineering, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, and College of Business Economics and Management. The two non-teaching personnel interviewed, a registrar and administrative officer, shed light on the student mobility processes and internationalization at home aspects. The eight faculty members interviewed were purposely selected from those who availed of the Human Resource Development Plan (HRDP), further considered because of their designation in internationalization-related offices such as the International Relations Office (IRO), Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (OVPA), and the Office of the Student Affairs and Services (OSAS).

For the FGD, all deans and directors were invited through a formal letter sent via email, but only the deans of the College of Arts and Letters, College of Science, College of Education and Gubat Campus participated. The FGD was conducted via the Zoom videoconferencing platform as this was during the initial month of lockdown due to the CoVid-19 pandemic.

All interviews and FGDs were conducted in both English and Filipino languages, lasted for one and a half to two hours, and recorded. These were done online via Zoom videoconferencing and Google Meet in April and May 2020.

An assessment instrument was made to determine the existence and adequacy of documents supporting the 10 domains of internationalization as outlined by Williams, et al. for UNESCO, in the "Second Stakeholders Meeting on Indicators for Internationalization of Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific." Indicators of the different levels of internationalization were devised and validated.

Data Gathering and Analysis

Various data were secured from IRO, OSAS, Human Resource Management Office (HRMO), University Registrar's Office (URO), Office of the Vice President for Research Development and Extension (OVPRDE) and the Information and Communication Technology Office (ICTO), to get the internationalization profile of BU.

The curriculum and course descriptions were retrieved from the following colleges: College of Arts and Letters (CAL), College of Nursing (CN), College of Science (CS), Institute of Physical Education, Sports and Recreation (IPESR), College of Education (CE), Institute of Architecture (IA), College of Engineering (CENG), College of Industrial Technology (CIT), College of Social Work and Philosophy (CSSP), College of Business Economics and Management (CBEM), College of Agriculture and Forestry (CAF), Polangui Campus, and Gubat Campus. Excluded from this study are the Graduate School, the College of Law and the College of Medicine.

All data were requested via a formal letter addressed to the head of office. Follow-ups were also done formally through a letter.

All data were analyzed according to the indicators on the 10 domains, specifically made for this study, culled from various literature and studies on internationalization, cross-border education or transnational education. These were culled from the works of Williams, et al., Knight, De Wit, Beelen, Delgado-Marquez, Van der Wende, Wells, Cantu, Altbach, Rumbley, and documents from the Commission on Higher Education, Finland Ministry of Education, UNESCO, and the ASEAN Secretariat.

Each domain's percentage corresponds to its significance in the internationalization of an institution. Percentage is computed as follows: maximum points per domain divided by the total points from 10 domains multiplied by 100. Each domain has three levels of internationalization: Beginning (1 point), Intermediate (2 points), and Advanced (3 points). The indicators were validated by experts from Bicol University College of Education, Commission on Higher Education Region V, University of the Philippines Communication Research Department, and Universitas Islam Malang (UNISMA) in Jawa Timur, Indonesia.

Results and Discussions

Internationalization Profile of Bicol University

In February 2010, the Global Linkage Office at Bicol University was created through the Board of Regents (BOR) Resolution No. 14, series of 2010, "A Resolution Approving the Creation of the Global Linkage Office at Bicol University (GloBU) under the Office of the University President to be headed by an International Affairs Coordinator with the rank of Director, as a New Unit in Its Organizational Structure" (p. 1).

When Dr. Arnulfo M. Mascariñas became the president, the GloBU was renamed as the International Relations Office (IRO). The BU Code of 2016, Chapter 5: Office of the University President, Section 5, states that the IRO shall pursue feasible partnerships with foreign academic institutions, research organizations, and other entities. It shall take the lead in exploring, endorsing, and implementing programs and projects with organizations abroad. IRO shall also serve as the PR-arm of the university abroad, representing the university in international meetings and activities and fostering goodwill among BU partners.

In December 2017, the Bicol University Strategic International Plan (BU-SIP) for 2018–2028 was approved. This happened through the BOR Resolution No. 223, Series of 2017, "A Resolution Approving the Bicol University Strategic Internationalization Plan (BU-SIP) for 2018-2028, Thereby Prescribing Its Strategic Priorities, Programs and Projects and Activities, And Authorizing the Allocation of Funds for Its Implementation" (Mascariñas, 2017).

The BU-SIP was proposed by the current IRO Director, Dr. Dimson M. Rivero, with the tagline, "Optimizing Opportunities for Cross-Border Education."

Following is the summary of indicators and points of the 10 internationalization domains.

Student Mobility. European Parliament and Council (2006) defines international student mobility as "a period of learning abroad, or mobility undertaken by individual ..., for the purposes of formal and non-formal learning and for their personal and professional development" (Wells, 2014, p. 8). Wells added, "the most obvious property of mobility, the relocation from one place to another, is referred to as geographical mobility international mobility crosses national borders and

is also known as transnational” (p. 20).

Majority of the student outbound mobility is attributed to short-term programs in Dongseo University and in the Asia Summer Program. BU’s partnership with Shih Chien University, Taiwan is also very productive having various activities for both students and faculty such as the summer camp.

Most students showed travel preference to ASEAN countries and to Asia. This is because ASEAN countries and some Asian countries do not require a visa, therefore, entail less cost and less paperwork for students. The cost in the country’s stay is also a consideration since most BU students are poor to middle-class. Japan is an expensive country to travel to, but has a policy on an all-expense paid attendance to most of their student exchanges. Therefore, even if Japan has a high standard of living, it is a popular destination for students because the students need not pay anything.

Very few BU students have spent months abroad. Most availed of the short-term travels which were fully subsidized under the Student Development Fund. BU supports student mobility, however, for stays longer than 15 days abroad, BU pays only half of the cost of the travel. To increase student mobility, more funding is needed, either from the university or external agencies.

The highest number of inbound students is attributed to the Track and Field Joint Training with the National Taitung University, Taiwan. Inbound students may be few but were from diverse nationalities such as Thai, Indonesian, Japanese, Taiwanese, French, and Belgian.

Student mobility is the main domain of higher education internationalization in both literature and indicators (Williams, et al., 2017). Internationalization is essential for the growth of all HE systems, and student mobility is a mechanism to support this trend (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Higher Education Development [SEAMEO RIHED] Programme Operational Handbook, 2012). The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 55, series of 2016 states that, “Internationalization in higher education contributes to building informed and critical citizenry, more inclusive and participative society ...” (p. 6). The Ministry of Education of Finland (2009) also states that, “Internationalization promotes the mental growth and understanding of global responsibility in an individual” (p. 17) and “the international competence of students

is consolidated by well-executed mobility periods abroad” (p. 28).

Faculty Mobility. International faculty mobility refers to the crossing of national borders for the purpose of studying or teaching in higher education or engaging in research abroad (Lanzendorf & Kehm, 2010). In this study, it refers to the BU faculty going to different institutions abroad, to present papers in seminars, conferences, to attend short-term trainings, and to enroll or teach in joint degree programs and fellowships. This also refers to a foreign faculty doing the same in BU. These inbound and outbound travels were either funded personally or funded by either BU, other government agencies or scholarships, and private and non-government agencies.

Faculty mobility for BU faculty is mostly because of attendance to seminars, workshops, symposia and trainings, and attendance to and presentation of research in international conferences. Benchmarking, establishing linkage and signing GBAs were also popular reasons for faculty to travel abroad. The highest number of outbound faculty mobility was in 2018, where the College of Science faculty attended a symposium in Taiwan. The purpose was to attend the symposium and bring the same to Bicol University.

Inbound international faculty were mostly volunteers. Their agency pay for their salary and BU gives a counterpart such as accommodation. There were also inbound faculty who came to provide Language courses for BU employees and students with the same set up.

There is a total of 113 outbound faculty in the nine-year period. The highest faculty mobility was in 2018. This was after the Bicol University Strategic International Plan (BU-SIP) for 2018–2028 was approved by the BOR in December 2017, which contains the policies and the budget related to internationalization. Faculty mobility increases the competence needed for working in an international higher education community by improving the appreciation of other cultures, religions and languages (Finland Ministry of Education, 2009). As in the case of Bicol University, the attendance and participation to international conferences and trainings “will provide an opportunity for developing and strengthening academic linkages for collaborative work exchanges” (CHED Memo 55, 2016, p. 7).

The increased global competition for talent, research, funding, and branding not only implies that universities must compete for the best and brightest of

undergraduate and graduate students, but they must also seek out talented researchers and teachers on a worldwide scale (Rumbley & de Wit, 2017). The ultimate goal however is to have more meaningful faculty exchanges. As Bloom mentioned, “Cultural responsive instructors learn about the customs and heritage of their students and incorporate those perspectives into their teaching practices, modeling appreciation for diversity” (Rumbley & de Wit, 2017, p. 7). This can be done through longer interactions with other cultures via teaching exchange fellowships.

Institutional Linkages. These are active exchange agreements with institutions abroad. These agreements, sometimes referred to as MOUs or GBAs, are signed between universities, governments, or organizations to define the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Partnerships with other universities in foreign countries is one of the activities to internationalize a university. Before any collaboration can be initiated and implemented, an agreement is needed between or among the concerned universities. BU has 36 active general bilateral agreements.

In spite of the students’ and faculty’s numerous attendances to international activities abroad, very few agreements have been products of their initiative. Most were initiated by the Office of the President, the IRO, and the former GloBU. Terminal reports are required for all students and employees who have traveled abroad, which could be a source of future partnerships, but it is the network of the OP and the IRO which set the direction of the partnerships. After all, it is these offices which finalize the GBAs, suited to the vision of the BU President. As CHED puts it, HEIs collaborating transnationally, “whether inbound or outbound, must clearly show that such partnership is consistent with the institution’s strategic plan and its international objectives ...” (Memo 55, 2016, p. 18).

Majority of the partnerships were also one-way. Bicol University sent student scholars to Dongseo University, South Korea but there is no record of student scholars from them studying or attending a training in the university. Conversely, Kochi University sent exchange students to BU, but BU did not send exchange students to Kochi University. Shih Chien University, Taiwan and Vives University of Applied Sciences, Belgium had sent their faculty to BU, but BU did not send faculty to these universities. The IRO stated that most GBAs effectivity is for five years and with the SIP 2018-2028 approved in December

2017, the activities and programs that will benefit both parties are yet to be implemented within the remaining GBA effectivity period.

CHED has provided guidelines in choosing academic partners abroad. Some of these are: “a) Complementarity and compatibility of vision and mission, strategies and expertise; b) Willingness to set shared goals and to work towards these goals through specific and time-bound measures; ...” (Memo 55, 2016, p. 19).

Research. Research comprises creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humans, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications. It is used to establish or confirm facts, reaffirm the results of previous work, solve new or existing problems, support theorems, or develop new theories. A research project may also be an expansion on past work in the field (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015).

There were BU researches that were internationally funded. International organizations include the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the *Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo* (AECID), Plan International, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WorldFish, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and Leuphana University. These grants are placed in CAF, CSSP, CBEM, and the OVRPDE.

In the nine-year period, there were only 10 researches with international co-author(s). All of these were lodged in the Tabaco Campus and partnered with Japanese researchers. Though the partners were foreign and internationally funded, researches are local or national-based.

There are 71 faculty members ranked as professor in the university, who are required to undertake research per semester. Twenty five percent of this number is required for the beginning level in research citations and BU had an average of only 11 citations from foreign journals in the nine-year period. Of the expected 71 researches in 2019, only nine researches were published in peer-reviewed journals, specialized journals, and monographs. Currently, there are no patents with international authors.

Faculty mobility and institutional partnerships are doors to research partnerships. As CHED mentioned,

internationalization should include “the establishment of area and theme centers and joint research projects with international content, holding of international conferences ..., and establishment of linkages with international research partners” (Memo 55, 2016, p. 3). The Strategy for the Internationalisation of HEIs in Finland notes that, “Research and innovation activities are becoming international. The production and wide-ranging utilization of research information is increasingly a collective and international objective” (2009, p. 18).

International Presence. This is the planned expansion of an organization’s business activities into countries in several regions throughout the world. Global expansion implies more than just making investments in nations outside of the organization’s home; the concept includes maintaining an actual business presence in those countries (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/global-expansion.html>). The riskier exhibition of “presence” abroad is by setting up a branch of the university in the foreign country. The virtual international presence is determined by the availability of online courses for international students, the readership of the HEIs journal or eJournal and the citations of the faculty researches in published materials.

BU does not have a branch abroad. There is also no online course available for undergraduate degrees. It has an Open University, which features online courses for both local and international students but for graduate studies only.

For its virtual presence, BU has a website with the address, <http://bicol-u.edu.ph/bu/>. There is also an online research journal, BU eJournal, readable in Portable Data Format (PDF).

The BU eJournal link has a total of 3,966 pageviews since January 1, 2019. The total number of users is 439. This may be because of the eJournal’s location in the BU website which is not easily found. The interface design of the website does not make the eJournal accessible, and the link to the website does not direct the viewer to the latest issue, instead it links to the archives. Also, there is no mobile version of the BU website.

The Philippines is the number one source of readers of the BU eJournal. The locations of other readers are countries where BU has no active partnerships, except for the United States of America. The online data shows readers from USA, Singapore, Australia, Canada, China, Thailand, Germany, Ethiopia and Hongkong.

Increasing the number of readers of the BU eJournal needs an aggressive stance in its promotion especially to BU’s local, national, and international partners.

As of the conduct of this research, the latest publication of the journal in the website was the 2018 issue. The Publication and Knowledge Management Division has since updated the eJournal in the website, however, because of the complex interface of the eJournal, it is still hard to find.

Internationalization at Home (IaH). This is the integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments (Beelen & Jones, 2015). This must be an integral part of the vision as institutions design intentional encounters across curricular and co-curricular activities to provide all students an opportunity to develop global competencies. Students need to feel at home, often with students of similar backgrounds, but institutions also must help students feel at home with students unlike themselves (Agnew & Khan, 2014).

BU provides full-funding support for the international travel of its students for up to a maximum of 15 days. However, there is no available scholarships for incoming international students who plan to do their coursework in BU. Instead, BU provides services and facilities such as free tuition fee, dormitory, and other arrangements, embodied in the MOA with the partner university.

There is also a program in place for foreigners who want to study Filipino or English, under the University Language Center and *Sentro ng Wikang Filipino*. Services such as the guidance counseling services and the dental and medical services are available, including facilities and laboratories. There is a meditation room available in the OSAS, and there is a dormitory for male and female students as well. Visa processing assistance is also available via the IRO.

The eateries and canteens in the university however, do not serve international food, but BU’s campuses are located in places where restaurants serving international food are available. Only three student organizations deal with international culture: the Campus Crusade, the Otaku Circle, and the Korean Society.

According to CHED (2016), part of the IaH is the “establishment of student clubs and organizations linked with those of other countries, holding of

intercultural campus events, as well as establishing connections with cultural and ethnic groups” (Memo 55, p. 3).

Regional Connectivity. This concerns BU’s efforts to foster connectivity and engagement with foreign HEIs within the ASEAN region. Affiliation can be in terms of membership in higher education organizations or networking via research funding or grants or MOAs. The CHED (2016) states that the “Philippines adheres to the principles of ASEAN cooperation and is committed to establish an ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community that is people-centered and socially responsible with the view to achieving enduring solidarity, unity and a common identity with the peoples of ASEAN” (Memo 55, p. 11).

BU’s regional connections include: University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) and Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE). BU has not yet issued a policy related to UMAP’s Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS).

Ranking. This is the position of higher education institutions which have been ranked, across a region or the world, based on a combination of performance indicators. BU is not yet included in any of the university world ranking.

Rankings are important as they are “perceived as having cemented the notion of a world university market” (Delgado-Marquez, 2007, p. 271), where institutions are evaluated according to a global scale, therefore, “introducing the notion of competition among HEIs as a new paradigm in most countries” (p. 271). Rankings have a “brand effect” for the institution as a whole (Delgado-Marquez, 2011).

Curriculum. The academic content taught in a specific course or program, the teachers’ plan of delivery of content in the classroom, the learner’s learned content and activities done in the classroom, the assessment materials and learning outcomes or learning competencies, and the learning standards and learning objectives, all comprise the term curriculum (<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/geqaf/annexes/technical-notes>).

Key internationalization terms were noted, for the curriculum to be considered as having an “international” component. These terms were international, internationalization, ASEAN, Asian, global, intercultural, cross-cultural, multicultural, diverse cultures and foreign, such as:

Comm 14: Media Ethics. Discussion and application of basic ethical principles and relevant tenets in media and broadcast journalism, extending discussions to ASEAN and global ethical issues in gathering, processing and disseminating media content (Department of Print and Broadcast Media, CAL).

The international components of the curricular offerings in the various colleges are at 18.10%. The OVPAA stated that deans and directors have autonomy when it comes to determining the course descriptions and syllabi. They make sure that these have international components in them. The average foreign language subject at 0.58%, which means that the majority of the courses in BU does not offer a foreign language subject.

The study of foreign language for Filipinos is an important aspect of internationalization. Most countries where English is considered as a foreign language is moving towards achieving better competency in English, while countries with English as a second language are also exploring teaching and learning other foreign languages, to reach out to other cultures. “Organizing internationally high-quality study modules are created with the aid of cooperation between HE institutions and different fields of education Participation in international course selection, ... requires multilingualism and cultural competence from both the students and the entire personnel” (Finland Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 29).

There may be no twinning, joint, dual or double degree programs for undergraduate programs but there is a joint program for a graduate degree in partnership with the University of Liverpool, which is not part of this study. Undergraduate courses are all in compliance with CHED standards and are open to all international students. Policies regarding the crediting of subjects are being worked out by BU and its university partners. The holding of internships abroad is being considered in the next curriculum revision in the university.

According to Beelen (2018), international and intercultural components should not be separate but should be integrated in the regular teaching and learning activities in the formal and in the informal curriculum. However, each institution has different strategies in internationalization, and even in one institution, colleges which are part of the institution, may have different approaches (Bordean & Borza, 2013). The nature of the college or the programs in the college shall

determine how internationalized the curriculum would be. The “development of international competence and the mobility of students are realized in a systematic manner. The ways and means of internationalizing are different in different disciplines and areas” (Finland Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 28).

Planning for Internationalization. The Bicol University Strategic Internationalization Plan (BU-SIP) 2018-2028 lays down the direction of BU in forwarding its internationalization goals until 2028. Currently there are three positions in the International Relations Office, i.e., the International Relations Director, and two administrative staff. With the BU-SIP, three new positions will be created in the IRO: 1) Coordinator for International Mobility and Support Services, 2) Coordinator for International Partnership Development, and 3) Coordinator for International Communication and Marketing (Rivero, 2018).

Less than 50% of BU faculty and staff have attended capacity-building or training related to internationalization. Also, BU has no scholarships available for outbound and inbound students. However, there are scholarships available from other government agencies such as CHED and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and foreign governments such as Japan, USA and Australia.

The Institutional Linkages domain is the only one at the advanced level. Over-all, Bicol University’s internationalization status is at the intermediate level.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

BU’s outbound student mobility and faculty mobility, both in intermediate level, have no country focus. Its institutional linkages, classified under advanced level, are strong in Europe and the rest of Asia but weak in the ASEAN region; it has no close ties with its ASEAN neighbors. Its research undertakings, falling in the intermediate level, are focused on the sciences and most grants and international partnerships are in the College of Agriculture and Forestry and Tabaco Campus. BU is virtually invisible in terms of online presence and yet to break in into regional or Asian university ranking; both domains fall under the beginning level. IaH, which is in the beginning level, is not yet present in the consciousness of the student

affairs administration and the student body. The curriculum, which is in the intermediate level, has its GEC courses aligned with CHED requirements but international and intercultural components seldom appear in the course descriptions and syllabi, and foreign language electives are seldom present in the curriculum, evidences that these are not yet present in the mindset of the faculty and curriculum-crafters in the university. The BU-SIP 2018-2028 presents a solid path to internationalization, but the university lacks in-house scholarships that will aid outbound and inbound student mobility, which puts it in the beginning level. With CoVid-19 pandemic still present, the internationalization efforts of BU will be greatly challenged in the next few years.

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