

**THE FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCIES OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS
AND SCIENCES FACULTY OF UNIVERSITY OF PERPETUAL HELP
SYSTEM DALTA – LAS PIÑAS CAMPUS: RELEVANT POLICY
IMPLICATIONS FOR SELECTION, TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT
AND RETENTION**

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ABSTRACT

The study attempted to find out the levels of functional competencies of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA as an indicator of quality and excellence in education and ascertain the relevant policy implications to the University System in the selection, training and development and retention of teachers.

The study made use of the descriptive exploratory research method with documentary analysis. It determined and described the demographic variables of the teacher respondents and ascertained their levels of functional competencies in 13 areas of Subject Matter Expertise, Syllabus Preparation, Instructional Materials Development, Effective Instructional Delivery, Classroom Management, Student Evaluation, Effective Presentation Skills, Facilitation Skills, Effective Writing, Research Skills, Technology Competency, Community Service Skills and Marketing Skills.

Descriptive and inferential measures were utilized in the statistical treatment of the data gathered using the numeric data processing qualities of Microsoft Excel and SPSS 15.0 for Windows.

Significant findings were drawn and the following functional competencies were identified as strengths of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences: 1) subject matter expertise, 2) syllabus preparation, 3) facilitation skills, 4) classroom management and 5) effective instructional delivery. However, the following functional competencies must be enhanced: 1) Research Skills, 2) Technology Competency, 3) Community Service Skills, 4) Marketing Skills and 5) Effective Writing. Hence, the Institutional Faculty Development and Training Program and the faculty development program of the College should focus on priority areas which are research skills, technology competency, community service skills, marketing skills and effective writing.

Implications were likewise discussed to support the proposition of adopting a standard-based reform policy relevant to the recruitment, selection, development and retention of the faculty.

Key words: *Functional competencies, teachers, selection, faculty development*

INTRODUCTION

Unprecedented changes have emerged in organizations and in the workplace with the advent of globalization. The 21st century is an era where professionals must possess and manifest a repertoire of competencies such as the ability to be “critical thinkers, problem solvers, innovators, effective communicators and self-directed learners who are information and media literate, globally aware, civically engaged and financially and economically literate” (<http://www.davidson.edu/>). For educators, content knowledge, pedagogical skills and professional dispositions are competencies necessary for personal and professional growth. These competencies are likewise necessary for developing the potentials of students in schools to prepare them for the world of work. Hence, schools must rise to the challenge of bringing forth authentic interactions between teachers and students that will facilitate the making of dynamic knowledge that is revealed through real world performance.

A “competency” is the ability of an individual to master a situation under the conditions of a changing environment, or to change it. Moreover, it can be described as

“...a unique system of the individual’s profession and personal knowledge, abilities and qualities, all combined with a creative approach to work, a constant striving toward professional improvement, to be utilized in order to master new aims of activity, phenomena, and objects of culture that make it possible to achieve new quality in social relation.”

Thus, educators in the 21st century should be competent in the use of instructional practices “to create classrooms where students have the opportunity to work at a comfortable pace at an individually challenging degree of difficulty in a learning mode that is a good match for their learning profiles and with applications that are personally intriguing.” They must be equipped with capabilities and competencies to teach the necessary tools of life which are knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and to develop students who can be equal to the high demands of the workplace today.

The focus on the “teacher” as a human resource developer for the 21st century is in itself a target on the quality of the educational process. The recent UNESCO World Survey of Education declares that:

“The quality of the educational process depends upon the level of education and professional sharing of teachers, the nature of their methods of teaching, the materials and equipment they and their pupils have at their disposal, the scope and balance of the curriculum

of the school and the advisory services that can be drawn upon by teachers to help them in their classroom ”

Recent trends in improving educational quality have emphasized the role of “schools, teachers, school leadership, community members, and students in defining and creating quality.” Schools and teachers in the context of a strong and comprehensive system of support and supervision, flexible policies, efficient administration, and community involvement, should be emphasized in policies and programs intended to help improve educational quality. Improved teacher skills, improved relationships and emotional climate between teachers and students contribute to improved quality in schools. Thus, the knowledge and skills of teachers, and their competencies positively influence the quality of education in schools.

It is within this purview that the challenges of quality education and meeting the challenges of the dynamic global, political and economic security landscape in reshaping life must be fully met. These include redefining workplace competencies and moral values in organizations to cope with new concepts of the individual, family and country. The redefining of workplace competencies is highly related to the inevitable fact of global competition and rapid technological advancements and the focus on quality delivery systems in schools and organizations which cannot be overlooked today. According to Overtoon, global competition and rapid technological advancements are causing the redesigning of workplaces that require work environments with higher demands of knowledgeable and skilled workers.

Workplace competencies are viewed by the Organization of European Countries for Development (OECD, 2005) as a set of skills that are complementary to academic or more technical skills. They are required for workers to function within the organizational structures as part of the demands of the emerging context of a knowledge-based economy where higher generic skills and higher-level skills are in demand to meet the requirements for high performing organizations of the 21st century. This would likewise call for the upgrading of educational standards of institutions including raising the competency and capability of their faculty and the quality of instruction to achieve an improved and better quality in education which in turn can meet the demands of globalization. Thus, the competencies of teachers and their competency standards must be well defined and established so they can provide education to address workplace competencies today.

Competencies deemed most valuable in a teacher change from era to era. Before the 1950's, emphasis was placed on the teacher's knowledge of Math and Science and in the 1960's and 1970's, the “human potential” era, emphasis was placed on the effective skills of teachers. However, it was soon established that even the most caring teacher could not be successful

without knowledge of subject matter and a repertoire of teaching skills. The competencies that are required swing from the cognitive and the affective domains. These competencies include, among others, subject knowledge, pedagogy and curriculum, facilitating student learning and assessing student learning outcomes and forming partnerships with the school community and philosophical ideas as well as professional predispositions.

To lay down the framework for competencies demanded of the teaching profession, the Department of Education has defined the competency standards for teacher performance under its National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS). These standards refer to a complex set of behaviours, attitudes and skills that each teacher must possess in order to carry out a satisfactory performance of their roles and responsibilities. Seven domains were included in the Teacher Performance and Development Framework, with each domain identifying a series of strands of desired teacher performance statements/competencies.

The standard competencies for the teaching performance set by the Department of Education and Teaching Professionals would complement with the necessary educational qualifications and professional license for one to practice the teaching profession.

Highlighting on this teacher performance and development framework of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and looking into the current universal and functional competencies defined by the University of Perpetual Help System, it can readily be seen that certain elements are articulated in both frameworks. For its parts, the University of Perpetual Help System has identified teaching competencies in accord with its Competency-Based Performance Appraisal System (CBPAS). This CBPAS stipulates two sets of competencies. The first set is the universal competencies, which are competencies required of all employees including the faculty and the second set is the functional competencies, which are required for the college faculty.

Apparently, however, gaps can be seen in the fact that the University is still uncertain as to what really are the current levels of competencies of its college faculty. The questions that need to be raised in order to determine the norm in teaching competency levels for the University still remain unanswered.

In light of the foregoing premises, there is a felt need for a study that would specifically examine the levels of competencies of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA (UPHSD), using its recently formulated Competency Based Performance Appraisal System (CBPAS).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study examined the functional competencies of the faculty members of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA Las Piñas Campus. Results of the study were deemed significant in the policy review and revision relative to selection, training, development and retention of the members of the teaching force.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

The study was conducted on a convenient sampling of part-time and full-time faculty members of the College of Arts and Sciences teaching in the General Education courses as well as in the liberal arts programs which include the Bachelor of Arts in Communication program, the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science program and the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology program.

Instruments

A survey questionnaire with two parts was utilized for the study. The first part contained a covering letter and questions asking demographic characteristics such as gender, employment status, educational qualifications and years of teaching experience. The second part was the Competency-Based Performance Appraisal Form (CBPAS) which was developed and formulated by the selected Deans of the University System and the Corporate Human Resource Development (CHRD) Office. This was used to assess the functional competencies of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The CBPAS focused on the minimum requirements for traits, knowledge, skills, values/beliefs, motives, physical ability and other characteristics expected of faculty members in order that they can contribute to the realization of the University goal of offering quality education. It assessed two sets of competencies – the universal competencies for all the employees and the functional competencies required of the college faculty.

The functional competencies that were assessed using the CBPAS form are subject matter expertise, syllabus preparation, instructional materials development, effective instructional delivery, classroom management, student evaluation, effective presentation skills, facilitation skills, effective writing, research skills, technology competency, community service skills and marketing skills.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data generated on demographic profile and functional competencies were analyzed using SPSS 15.0 for Windows. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the profile of the respondents. Mean, which is a measure of central tendency, was used in the study to determine the overall

functional competency of each of the faculty respondents based on their ratings in all the thirteen (13) areas of competency evaluated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the participants (N=34) of the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants when grouped according to Profile

	f	%
Gender		
Male	13	38.24
Female	21	61.76
Employment Status		
Full-Time	26	76.47
Part-Time	8	23.53
Highest Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	1	2.94
Master's Degree	27	79.41
Doctorate Degree	6	17.65
Years of Teaching Experience		
21 and above	12	35.29
16 years -20 years	7	20.59
11 years -15 years	7	20.59
6 years -10 years	5	14.17
1 year - 5 years	3	8.82

Majority of the participants are female (f=21, 61.76%), full-time teachers (f=26, 76.47%), and with a Master's degree (f=27, 79.41%). More than 25% have been in the teaching profession for more than 20 years while an equal number of participants have 11-15 years and 16-20 years of teaching experience (f=7, 20.59%).

Functional Competencies

Respondents identified the functional competencies that they currently possess and demonstrate, as reflected in Table 2.

Table 2. Levels of Functional Competency of the Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences of UPHSD Las Piñas Campus as perceived by themselves

	Area of Competency	Mean	VD
I	Subject Matter Expertise	4.89	Excellent
II	Syllabus Preparation	4.76	Excellent
III	Instructional Materials	4.32	Very Good
	Development		
IV	Effective Instructional	4.54	Excellent
	Delivery		
V	Classroom Management	4.62	Excellent
VI	Student Evaluation	4.39	Very Good
VII	Effective Presentation Skills	4.24	Very Good
VIII	Facilitation Skills	4.67	Excellent
IX	Effective Writing	3.84	Very Good
X	Research Skills	3.37	Good
XI	Technology Competency	3.57	Very Good
XII	Community Service Skills	3.58	Very Good
XIII	Marketing Skills	3.68	Very Good
	OVERALL	4.19	Very Good

As gleaned from Table 2, the competency which received the highest self-assessment rating is on subject matter expertise ($x=4.89$, Excellent) followed by syllabus preparation ($x=4.76$, Excellent) and facilitation skills ($x=4.67$, Excellent). The least rated area is on research skills ($x=3.37$, Good). Five areas were rated by the faculty respondents as excellent, seven areas as Very Good and only one area was rated Good. The average rating of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences as rated by themselves is 4.19 which is described as Very Good.

Literature supports the findings of this study which emphasize the need for teachers to demonstrate subject knowledge, utilize a repertoire of pedagogical methods and approaches and facilitate student learning. The effectiveness of instructional delivery and the attainment of the intended student outcomes require teachers to be knowledgeable about the subject matter they teach and teach it in the most effective and efficient way possible by employing appropriate methods of teaching, facilitating learning and sustaining a challenging academic environment for students.

Literature likewise highlights the importance of research in the professional practice of teachers. To become reflective practitioners of the craft of teaching, faculty members need to engage in research to find ways of improving instruction. Faculty research is paramount for teachers in universities, since Universities have the responsibility of seeking new knowledge and exploring ways of ensuring quality.

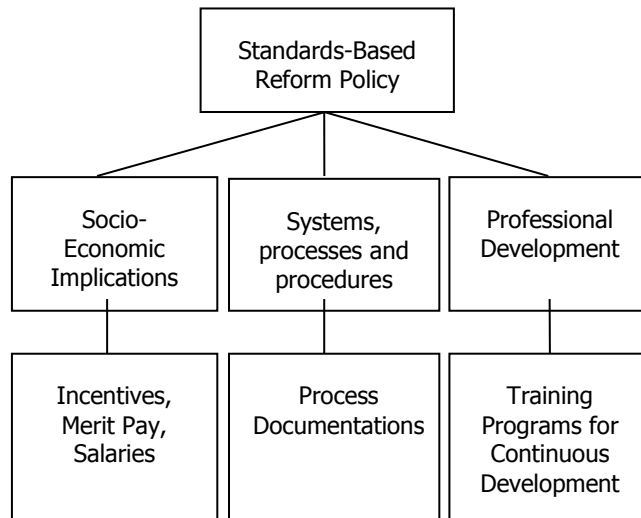
It is for this reason that higher education institutions must adopt and

implement a standards-based system in the selection, recruitment, retention and promotion of teachers in the University system. Its implementation, as a reform, would be considered a strategy devised to measure teaching performance, establish consequences of performance and raise the bar of performance across the spectrum, in order to continuously maintain, enhance and improve the quality of people and services within the University. These alone would point towards a review and change of certain existing socio-economic related policies, policies on quality and excellence, and in the professional development programs of the University.

Policy Implications

Policy implications can be drawn using a standards-based reform policy with particular targets on: 1) Socio-Economics; 2) Quality and Excellence; and 3) Professional Development.

The setting of competency standards would require a system-wide Standards-Based reform policy. The setting of standards as a bases for selection, recruitment, retention and promotion would imply the adoption of a standard-based reform policy for the whole University system. These standards can be effected through a reform policy emanating from the University Board and cascaded down to the grassroots of the University. This implementation, however, creates other implications that are consequential of the reform policy. The relationships of the different components are presented as follows:



The implementation of a system-wide standard-based reform policy would spawn consequential implications that would affect human resources development and its social-economic considerations. The theory of a standards-based system would likely

have effects on the performance incentives and economic outcomes of teachers as paid employees of the University. Standards have been seen as a good framework for the basis of incentives and pay which in turn could be considered as a prime consideration of a standard-based reform. The scoring effects and consequences would naturally place the performers in their “right places and positions” and correspondingly compensated according to their levels of competencies.

The implementation of a standard-based reform policy would affect systems, processes and procedures both in human resource development and in the material performance of the teaching job.

A system-wide standard-based reform policy would likewise call for a standardization of other processes and procedures within the system. Processes and procedures for selection, recruitment, hiring, retention, training and development and eventually promotion will have to be revised and aligned to the implementation of the competency and performance standards, including instrumentation to be used and methods of assessing the teacher. Duties, tasks and responsibilities of teachers, impliedly, would be aligned to the performance standards, as well as methods of evaluating the teacher in order to meet the standards.

The implementation of a system-wide standard-based reform policy would call for a revision of the professional development program of the University System to conform with the standards.

The school’s professional development program would need to be re-evaluated to ensure the upgrading of competencies of teachers so that they can meet higher levels of standards. Teachers would now necessarily formulate their own individual professional development plans that are aligned to the University professional development policy plan, conforming with the standards and addressing training gaps. A yearly review of the plan can be undertaken by the Dean or Department Head to ensure that the individual plan of the teacher is consistent with the educational needs of the teacher and is designed to enhance the ability of the teacher to improve himself/herself and contribute to student success. For the College of Arts and Sciences, priority areas for faculty development include developing research competencies, community service skills, marketing skills, effective writing and technology competency.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study revealed the following major findings: The profile of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences indicate that majority are female, on full-time status, with a Master’s degree in their field of specialization and with more than 11 years of teaching experience. Based on self-assessment, the faculty identified the following competencies as strengths and these are subject matter expertise, syllabus preparation, facilitation skills, classroom management and effective instructional delivery. However, the following

functional competencies must be enhanced and these are research skills, technology competency, community service skills, marketing skills and effective writing.

These findings underscore the need to ensure that the faculty development and training programs of the University and of the College of Arts and Sciences focus on the improvement of the functional competencies identified by the faculty as areas for improvement. Enhancement activities can be designed to strengthen and reinforce competencies in the areas of effective writing, presentation, use of technology in teaching, community service and marketing. Further, the Dean can strengthen the mentoring program of the college through close supervision of the mentor-mentee partnerships among the faculty members for sharing and learning about best practices in the teaching of their disciplines.

On a system-wide scale, there are relevant policy implications in the implementation of a standard-based reform policy in the University system.

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