A Paradigm Shift to Outcomes-Based Higher Education: Policies, Principles and Preparations

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Abstract

This article presents the policies regarding Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) System of the Commission on Higher Education and explores some of the principles of OBE that abound the literature. It is intended to help Batangas State University, particularly the College of Accountancy, Business, Economics and International Hospitality Management, prepare for a paradigm shift to an outcomes-based higher education. It does not claim nor attempt to be a comprehensive review or treatise on OBE. Rather, it provides concepts that are central to OBE and which can be put into practical actions.

Keywords: competency-based standards; constructive alignment; learning outcomes; outcomes-based education; outcomes-based teaching and learning; program educational objectives; quality assurance

1. Introduction

Higher education course documentation in the Philippines has traditionally been done in terms of syllabi describing what is to be taught. But what some teachers taught and what their students actually need to learn are often quite different. It is one reason why there is a need to specify what successful graduates should be expected to know or be able to do, i.e. the learning outcomes. For in the new trend on institutional accountability, the quality and improved performances of higher education institutions are most of the times insisted and not just expected.

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Quality assurance developments in higher education have encouraged a move to an outcomes-based approach to teaching, learning and assessment. Program specifications define the students in terms of what they can do at the end of a program or a particular level of study. This is a change from the more traditional approach where academics tended to define courses in terms of what is taught, rather than what the student can do at the end of the module or program. Moving to this approach requires academics to think about what they ask their students to do during various formative and summative assessment activities. What students can do at the end of a learning opportunity defines the learning outcome. Stated outcomes must be realistically achievable by the students and should not merely constitute a teacher's "wish list" [5].

With the current tendency in higher education, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) thru CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 46, series of 2012, had set its policy-standard to enhance quality assurance (QA) system in Philippine higher education through learning competency based standards and outcomes-based system that is differentiated by type of private or public higher education institution (HEI). As stated in Sec. 4 of the said CMO [3], "the importance of quality and quality assurance is highlighted by the urgent need to move significant populations of Filipinos out of poverty and to address local, regional and national development concerns by educating quality leaders, thinkers, planners, researchers, technological innovators, entrepreneurs, and the much-needed work force to launch the national economy."

CHED defines quality as the alignment and consistency of the learning environment with the HEI's vision, mission and goals demonstrated by exceptional learning and service outcomes and the development of a culture of quality [3: Sec. 6]. This definition highlights three perspectives of quality namely, fitness for purpose, exceptional, and developing a culture of quality. Quality as "fitness for purpose" requires the translation of the vision, mission and goals into learning outcomes, programs and systems and is generally used for assessment and accreditation. Quality as "exceptional" means either being distinctive, exceeding very high standards or conformance to standards based on a system of comparability using criteria and ratings. Quality as "developing a culture of quality" is the transformational dimension of the notion of quality [3].

For Killen [10], the quality of an educational system can be judged from at least three perspectives: the inputs to the system, what happens within the system and the outputs from the system. Those interested in inputs focus their attention primarily on finances, resources and infrastructure and use economic rationalism as the basis for their judgments about the quality or value of the system. Those interested in what happens within the system focus their attention primarily on the organization, control and delivery of education. Those interested in outputs or outcomes focus their attention primarily on the products or results of education. These three are all important and that quality should not be judged from any narrow perspective. However, in recent years there have been increasing calls for greater attention to be paid to the outcomes so that the return on investments in education could be evaluated. These increasing calls for accountability resulted to the rapid spread of various forms of outcomes-based education.

CHED also states that quality education today is measured not only by effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability but also by relevance. Relevance in education means addressing the needs of the students and the employers of today and providing the future graduates a curriculum of global comparability. In engineering education, for example, six countries represented by their engineering professional societies signed the Washington Accord (WA) in 1989 defining common standards for equivalency among their graduates of engineering programs. Full member signatories of the WA agree that graduates from their accredited engineering programs shall be mutually recognized across their countries as having met the academic requirements for entry to the practice of engineering, thus promoting mobility of professional engineers practicing across their borders. And since 2000, accreditation standards among the full members of the WA have shifted from an input-based to an outcomes-based education (OBE) system, where the focus is for the institutions with accredited programs to demonstrate that their engineering graduates have met an acceptable level of knowledge, skills and attitude demanded by their different fields of practice [2].

However, the task of implementing OBE at Philippine HEIs is expected to be far from easy during the early stages. The adoption of OBE can become complex and challenge with problems, particularly the teaching and learning activities, in achieving the intended learning outcomes and during assessment tasks. The OBE curriculum may be new not only to instructors and professors but also to HEI administrators, students and other stakeholders. Effectiveness in implementing OBE, self-evaluation, assessment techniques, and learning standards can be buzzwords in educational arguments among HEI administrators, teachers and students. Upon implementation of OBE, key policy focus areas may possibly include: how effective is OBE in the higher education, how to measure the effectiveness of OBE, and how to achieve the success indicators of OBE.

It is therefore imperative that in the preparation and initial stages of OBE implementation in an HEI, stakeholders, especially instructors and professors, should have a clear understanding of the CHED policies and standards on OBE System in Philippine higher education and at least basic knowledge and comprehension of the OBE principles. This paper is a humble contribution to assist Batangas State University, particularly the College of Accountancy, Business, Economics and International Hospitality Management, in its ongoing shift to OBE. Other HEIs and advocates of OBE may also find some value from this modest work.

2. Outcomes-Based Standards in Philippine Higher Education

CHED strongly advocates a shift from a teaching- or instruction-centered paradigm in higher education to one that is learner- or student-centered, within a lifelong learning framework. A learner- or student-centered paradigm in higher education entails a shift from a more input-oriented curricular design based on the description of course content, to outcomes-based education in which the course content is developed in terms of learning outcomes. In this paradigm, students are made aware of what they ought to know, understand and be able to do after completing a unit of study. Teaching and assessment are subsequently geared towards the acquisition of appropriate knowledge and skills and the building of student competencies as defined by disciplinal and multi-disciplinary communities of scholars and

professional practitioners. In a student-centered, outcomes-based approach to education, the development of these learning competencies is the expected outcome of higher education programs [6].

OBE has various interpretations. There are, for instance, at least two different curriculum frameworks associated with the term – the "strong OBE" and the "weak OBE". The strong OBE is designed to cover the total system and is organized around the achievement of authentic outcomes that will enable students to fulfill the complex life roles they will ultimately assume as adults. Although CHED recognizes the importance of the complex roles students will perform in the future, these roles are not made to function as the organizing theme of the Philippine higher education program curriculums. CHED subscribes to a more eclectic approach that resonates with a weak OBE, which is mixing OBE with other curriculum approaches and is open to incorporating discipline-based learning areas that currently structure HEI curriculums [6].

The Guidelines for the Implementation of CMO 46 s. 2012 [6] tasked technical panels and committees to revise their respective program's Policies, Standards and Guidelines (PSGs) by June 2013. The revised PSGs shall reflect the shift to OBE and shall specify the core competencies expected of graduates of particular programs regardless of the type of HEI they graduated from. However, the PSGs shall still provide ample space for HEIs to innovate learning outcomes according to their particular contexts and respective missions. Cognizant of the wide range of disciplinal and multidisciplinary orientations and practices across branches of knowledge, CHED is not subscribing to a one-size-fits-all model of OBE. While disciplines like engineering and maritime education that have developed their outcomes-based PSGs ahead of others may provide useful inputs or guides, other programs are expected to develop PSGs based on learning competency standards that are appropriate to their respective disciplinal or multidisciplinary programs and are aligned with internationally agreed-upon frameworks and mechanisms. For programs that are closely linked to industry and are outside the scope of Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), CHED shall set the requirements for associate degree programs that build on the K to 12 curricula based on the same outcomes-based approach applied to baccalaureate programs.

2.1. Establishment of OBE system in engineering

By virtue of CMO No. 37, s. of 2012 [2], it is now a policy of CHED to require, support and monitor the establishment of an Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) System in all HEIs offering engineering programs. Said HEIs shall shift to OBE beginning Academic Year 2012-2013 and with full implementation by the end of Academic Year 2016-2017. As defined in the said CMO, outcomes are what learners are expected to know and be able to do at the desired level of competence and OBE means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences.

To ensure the sustainable delivery of OBE in the concerned HEIs, an institutional framework with the following components shall be in place for each engineering program offering: (1) Mission and Vision, (2) Program Educational Objectives, (3) Program Outcomes, (4) Matrix of Courses with Program Outcomes (Curriculum Map),

(5) Outcomes-Based Teaching and Learning Delivery Process, (6) Program Assessment and Evaluation Process, and (7) Continuing Quality Improvement Program [2: Sec. 4].

Mission and vision are statements on the long-term view of the institution of itself and of the world within which it operates, including the fundamental purpose of its existence, its long-term role and stature, and what it does to achieve this purpose and how it would like to play its role. Program educational objectives (PEOs) are broad statements that describe the career and professional accomplishments that the program is preparing graduates to achieve within three to five years of graduation and these are based on the needs of the program's constituencies. Program outcomes or student outcomes (SOs) specify what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time of graduation; these relate to the skills, knowledge and behaviors that the students acquire as they go through the program. Curriculum map is a matrix relating all the courses listed in the program curriculum with one or more of the declared SOs [2: Sec. 7].

Outcomes-based teaching and learning (OBTL) is a constructive alignment of intended learning outcomes with appropriate outcomes-based assessment methods and teaching and learning activities; this is OBE applied in the classroom level. Assessment is one or more processes that identify, collect, analyze, and report data that can be used to evaluate achievement of the PEOs and SOs. Effective assessment uses relevant direct, indirect, quantitative and qualitative measures as appropriate to the outcome or objective being measured. Evaluation is one or more processes for interpreting the data and evidence accumulated through assessment processes. Evaluation determines the extent to which PEOs and SOs are achieved. Evaluation results in decisions and actions regarding Continuing Quality Improvement Program, which is defined as the periodic feedback process for changing any aspect of a program whereby formal results from assessment and evaluation and other informal observations are utilized in the formulation of the changes with expected higher degrees of attainment of PEOs and SOs [2: Sec. 7].

Any internal QA system begins with the HEI's identity and enters a quality cycle of planning, implementation, review and enhancement. The plan-do-check-act cycle is applied to the HEIs capacity to translate vision, mission and goals into desired learning outcomes; establish the proper learning environment, i.e. implementation of teaching-learning systems as well as support processes and procedures; review against performance indicators and standards defined in the assessment system; and enhance programs and systems. The cycle continues as the HEI develops into a mature institution [3: Sec. 8].

3. Principles of OBE

There are two basic types of outcomes from any educational system. The first type includes performance indicators such as completion or graduation rates, licensure examination results, post-course employment rates, etc. The second type is less tangible and is usually expressed in terms of what students or graduates know, are able to do, or are like as a result of their education. It is this second type of outcomes that is normally implied when OBE is being discussed [10].

Killen [10] viewed OBE in three different ways – as a theory of education, as a systemic structure for education and as classroom practice. OBE is a theory or philosophy of education in the sense that it embodies and expresses a certain set of beliefs and assumptions about learning, teaching and the systemic structure within which these activities take place. Ultimately, the systemic structure and the classroom practice need to be aligned with the theory in order to have genuine outcomes-based education.

William Spady is regarded by many as the world authority on OBE. In his words: "Outcomes-based education means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing the curriculum, instruction and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens" [10].

OBE is founded on three basic premises: (1) All students can learn and succeed (but not on the same day in the same way); (2) Success breeds success; and (3) Schools control the conditions of success [11]. In his discussion of outcomes-based schools, Mamary (cited in [10]) suggested that:

1. All students have talent and it is the job of schools to develop it.
2. The role of schools is to find ways for students to succeed, rather than finding ways for students to fail.
3. Mutual trust drives all good outcomes-based schools.
4. Excellence is for every student and not just for few.
5. By preparing students every day for success the next day, the need for correctives will be reduced.
6. Students should collaborate in learning rather than compete.
7. As far as possible, no student should be excluded from any activity in a school.
8. A positive attitude is essential.

From the three basic premises, Spady and Marshall [11] developed four key principles of OBE, which are as follows:

1. *Ensure clarity of focus on outcomes of significance.* Outcomes become the starting point, focal point, and ultimate goal of curriculum design and instruction. Schools work to carefully align or match curriculum, instruction, assessment and credentialing with the criteria and processes of the intended outcomes.
2. *Design down from ultimate outcomes.* Curriculum and instructional design inherently should carefully proceed backward from the outcomes on which everything ultimately focuses and rests, thereby ensuring that all components of a successful outcome are in place.
3. *Emphasize high expectations for all to succeed.* Outcomes should represent a high level of challenge for students, and all should be expected to accomplish them eventually at high performance levels and be given credit for their performance whenever it occurs.

4. *Provide expanded opportunity and support for learning success.* Time should be used as a flexible resource rather than a predefined absolute in both instructional design and delivery to better match differences in student learning rates and aptitudes. Educators should deliberately allow students more than one uniform routine chance to receive needed instruction and to demonstrate their learning successfully.

3.1. Three-circle outcome model and advantages of OBE

Harden, Crosby and Davis [8] developed the so-called three-circle outcome model shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1. The Three-Circle Outcome Model

The inner circle represents tasks undertaken or work done by the professional: *doing the right thing*. The middle circle represents the approach taken to the tasks; it emphasizes the necessity for knowing not only what to do but why and how to do it: *doing the thing right*. The outer circle represents the personal attributes and professionalism: *the right person doing it* [4].

The outcomes-based approach as represented in the three-circle model has multiple advantages according to Harden, Crosby and Davis [8]. These include:

1. *Relevance*. OBE promotes fitness for practice and education for capability. The three-circle model ensures that areas that have been underrepresented in the traditional curriculum, such as appropriate attitudes and professionalism, are given emphasis that is required.
2. *Controversy*. The process of identification of the outcomes within an institution promotes discussion of fundamental questions, such as what type of graduates or professionals are the institution aiming to train and what are the core issues.
3. *Acceptability*. The notion of the three-circle model of OBE seems acceptable to most teachers and has an intuitive appeal.
4. *Clarity*. An explicit statement of what the educational process aims to achieve clarifies the curriculum for both students and teachers and provides a focus for teaching and learning.
5. *Provision of a framework*. OBE provides a robust framework for integration of the curriculum.

6. *Accountability*. By providing an explicit statement of what the curriculum is setting out to achieve, OBE emphasizes accountability. The outcomes provide details against which the graduates of the curriculum can be measured and facilitate the quality assurance process.

7. *Self-directed learning*. If students are clear about what they are trying to achieve, they can take more responsibility for their own learning. OBE thus promotes a student-centered approach to learning and teaching.

8. *Flexibility*. OBE does not specify educational strategy or teaching method; it allows flexibility and employs various methods. What is important is that the students achieve the outcomes and not how they get there. Innovation in teaching is possible and encourage by this approach and different learning styles can be accommodated.

9. *Guide for assessment*. As it is the outcomes that are assessed, planning the examinations is clarified. The outcomes provide the framework for student examinations.

10. *Contribution to curriculum planning*. Identification of the exit learning outcomes enables specification of phase learning outcomes. The phase learning outcomes lead to the identification of course or module outcomes. The course outcomes lead to the identification of individual lesson outcomes. OBE is thus a top down approach to curriculum planning that aids coherence and cohesion in student learning.

11. *Facilitates curriculum evaluation*. The outcomes provide benchmarks against which the curriculum can be judged.

12. *Continuity of education.* The outcomes provide pathways along which individuals can progress in basic or undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing education.

Using the work of Harden [7] as guidelines, the following outcomes-based curriculum planning process was devised by Davis [4]:

1. *Identification of the type of graduates or professionals that the country needs*.

2. *Identification of the outcomes of the educational process*. In OBE the exit learning outcomes must be explicit and clearly and unambiguously defined.

3. *Identification of curriculum content*. This relates to the scope of the curriculum. It is the outcomes that decide what is to be taught. To achieve a place in the curriculum, all courses must contribute in some way to the curriculum outcomes. The outcomes thus have an important role to play in eliminating redundant material and reducing factual content to what is relevant.

4. *Student progress through the curriculum*. This relates to the sequencing of the curriculum. The curriculum needs to be planned so that student progression towards the exit learning outcomes is coherent and cohesive. Student progression towards the exit learning outcomes involves increased scope, utility and proficiency.

5. *Identification of appropriate educational strategies*. This identifies the educational philosophy of the school. The outcomes-based approach has an important part to play in the selection of appropriate educational strategies. A student-centered, problem-based approach, with integration of the curriculum,

some community-based teaching and learning, a proportion of elective courses chosen individually by students, and a systematic educational program are the educational strategies that may be selected to support the learning outcomes. It is important to decide on the educational strategies before decisions are taken regarding teaching methods, as the educational philosophy should inform decisions regarding teaching methods.

6. *Identification of teaching methods*. Various teaching methods can be employed, in accordance with the educational strategies adopted, to enable students to achieve the learning outcomes. Students can also select the learning opportunities that best suited their preferred learning style to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes.

7. *Decision as to how the students will be assessed and the curriculum evaluated*. The student-assessment system is based on the demonstration of achievement of the learning outcomes by the individual student in each year of the curriculum. The outcomes provide a benchmark or framework for curriculum evaluation in each stage of the course.

8. *The educational environment*. The outcomes have a fundamental impact on the educational environment. The teaching, the teachers, the students' perception of the climate or ethos of the school, and the students' social and academic self-perceptions are all shaped by the outcomes.

9. *Management and administration of the curriculum*. The academic committee and administrative support structure have to be redesigned to support OBE.

10. *Communication of the curriculum to all stakeholders*. Staff development and student orientation are critical for the success of the outcomes-based approach.

3.2. Learning outcomes in higher education and employability

HEIs are expected to educate students in their chosen discipline and to prepare them for employment or practice of profession. While employers sometimes complain that HEIs fail to produce graduates with the skills that they require, HEIs often respond that students are not being prepared to meet the needs of any particular job or employer but rather they are equipped for a variety of employment opportunities, including self-employment. Dialogue between HEIs and employers is a possible solution for this disparity.

It is important that when formulating learning outcomes for any program, course or module, the writer should take into account the transferable skills which are being developed on achievement of the learning outcome, thus aiding the employability of the students. It is also important that the views of employers should be taken into account [5].

3.3. Outcomes-based design and constructive alignment

In outcomes-based approach, the curriculum must be concerned with both content to be learned and the behavior to be developed. This will involve far more than merely writing a wish list of desirable outcomes. The starting point, after considerable thought and discussion, must be a clear statement of the learning outcomes required following any

period of study. Only once this has been done should consideration be given to the delivery of the learning program in terms of the teaching, learning and assessment strategies that will facilitate the development and assessment of the required outcomes. This is likely to be an iterative process as only when the assessment package has been finalized can the arrangements for teaching be completed [5].

According to Biggs (cited in [5]), it is vital to align learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks, where the intention is to encourage deep approaches to learning. He calls this approach "constructive alignment".

Biggs' *constructive alignment* [5] entails the following steps:

1. Defining the learning outcomes.
2. Selecting learning and teaching activities that enable the students to develop the outcomes.
3. Selecting appropriate assessment activities which allow the student to demonstrate that the outcomes have been achieved to the appropriate level.

3.4. Program and course design

The global trend towards defining qualifications in terms of a set of expected learning outcomes, or desirable graduate attributes, has presented HEIs with significant new challenges. The main requirements for any outcomes-based qualification are a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the program, and the teaching strategies that are able to support the development of the required competencies, coupled with assessment procedures capable of reliably monitoring whether the established targets are being met or not. Hence, HEIs will need to ensure that the learning programs that they deliver provide the following [5]:

1. A coherent assembly of discipline specific and complementary knowledge areas, with appropriate embedding and meaningful integration of required skills and values.
2. Adequate opportunities for the development, demonstration and assessment or required competencies, from the level of novice up to the desired level of proficiency, as the student progresses through the program.
3. An increase in the level of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor complexity from first year to final year, to ensure effective preparation for the world of professional practice, and lifelong learning.

A three-stage process on the development and delivery of outcomes-based qualifications is as follows [5]:

1. *Description of the Qualification*. Establishing the purpose of the qualification, and the expected competencies of graduates from the program.
2. *Structuring the Curriculum*. Establishing the content and learning activities required to support the achievement of the outcomes required.

3. *Program Delivery*. Providing the teaching, learning and assessment strategies that will facilitate the development and assessment of the outcomes associated with the qualification.

4. BatStateU at the forefront of OBE in the Philippines

Outcomes-based higher education in the Philippines is barely on its infancy with the issuance of CMOs concerning OBE only in the latter months of 2012; CMO No. 37 was issued on September 11 while CMO No. 46 was issued on December 11 (see [2], [3]). Nevertheless, Batangas State University (BatStateU), seeing the great importance of OBE, was quick to embrace the new system. Aiming to be a leading university in the region, it has incorporated OBE in its Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016 [1].

BatStateU's vision and mission statements are outcomes-based, to wit:

Vision: *A leading University in the region which shapes a globally competent citizen imbued with moral courage nurtured through values and quality education*

Mission: *Batangas State University commits to develop productive citizens by providing the highest standard of instruction, research, extension service and production through value-laden learning experiences, community partnerships and internationalization initiatives.*

Further, as stated in the Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016 [1], the first and foremost goal of the University is to strengthen the quality of instruction towards developing excellent and competent graduates, with the outcomes-based approach to curriculum development, teaching and learning, and quality assurance as key strategies.

During the initial year of OBE implementation, Academic Year 2012-2013, two of BatStateU's engineering programs had already applied for outcomes-based accreditation and had been assessed by the Philippine Technological Council (PTC). The PTC is the umbrella organization of all professional engineering organizations in the country and has led the preparation for the application of the Philippines to be a provisional member of the Washington Accord. The other engineering programs of the University are also preparing to meet the accreditation criteria of the PTC – Certification and Accreditation System for Engineering Education (PTC-CASEE).

4.1. CABEIHM's shift to OBE

HEI's in the Philippines is still waiting for the issuance of the revised PSGs by CHED concerning the different programs, with the exception of engineering and maritime education that already had their new PSGs. As stated in the Guidelines for the Implementation of CMO 46, s. 2012 [6], the Technical Panels and Committees for the different programs, including associate degrees, are expected to complete their draft PSGs aligned with learning competency-based standards, K to 12 curriculum, and revised general education (GE) curriculum by June 2013 and relevant CMOs issued by August 2013. Further, the instruments for assessing institutional sustainability should have

been harmonized by September 2013 and CHED should have assisted HEIs in putting QA systems in place using the Institutional Sustainability Assessment (ISA) until December 2013. Also by December 2013, accreditation criteria, as well as criteria for Center of Excellence (COE) and Center of Development (COD) should have been aligned with the learning competency-based standards.

Such timetable, however, is not a hindrance for the College of Accountancy, Business, Economics and International Hospitality Management (CABEIHM) to start preparing for a paradigm shift to outcomes-based higher education. At least three seminar-workshops on OBE for the faculty had been conducted already by the College. A consultative meeting as regards to program objectives of the different programs offered at CABEIHM was also conducted and this was attended by faculty members and representatives from the business sector, tourism and hospitality industry, accountancy, and customs administration.

In addition, outcomes-based course specifications, intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning strategies, and assessment and evaluation process are being prepared for trial use this Academic Year 2013-2014.

5. Concluding Remarks

For HEI today, conforming to international standards is no longer an option or an aspiration; it has become an obligation. A measure of international standing of an HEI is the ability of its graduates to secure employment or to practice profession across borders. HEIs have to produce graduates with relevant competencies that respond to the global challenges and development needs. It should be noted however that the achievement of few graduates is not a sufficient indicator of international standing; it is the achievement of many that matters well. It is a welcomed development that CHED had finally decided to shift to an outcomes-based higher education system, devising its own eclectic approach and not subscribing to a one-size-fits-all model of OBE. Though CHED, through PSGs, will be providing the core competencies of graduates for each higher education program, HEIs can still practice their academic freedom in formulating their programs' learning outcomes based on their respective visions and missions.

OBE has much to offer HEIs. The approach is based on sound educational principles and provides a solid framework for students to acquire the necessary competencies. However, the move to OBE can be a complex process that needed curriculum mapping to enable both teachers and students understand the planned progression and the complex relationship among learning outcomes, learning opportunities, curriculum content and the assessment of students. It is very clear that effective implementation of an outcomes-based approach is far from a simple task. Even so, given the increasing importance of accountability and employability throughout higher education, it is vital that the difficulties that may be encountered will be used constructively to improve teaching and learning, rather than as excuses to doing nothing.

Despite the fact that CHED has not yet issued CMOs concerning the new PSGs indicating the shift to OBE for programs like Business Administration, Accountancy, Customs Administration, Tourism Management and

Hospitality Management, CABEIHM is by now very eager to shift to OBE. It is alright to prepare the course specification of each course or subject, including the intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning strategies and assessment methods. CABEIHM can use the program specifications and objectives and competency standards of graduates stated in existing PSGs as guide for the formulation of intended learning outcomes. But before the full implementation of OBE and finalization of the program educational objectives, student outcomes, curriculum content and intended learning outcomes, the College should still await the revised PSGs to fully understand what CHED's eclectic approach or weak OBE really means and for proper *designing down from ultimate outcomes* and *constructive alignment* of curriculum, teaching and learning strategies and assessment.

Full implementation of OBE will definitely require teachers to be able to contextualize the principles of OBE to suit their particular situation. No system of education is perfect and no system will work unless teachers are committed to it. It is therefore a must for every responsible teacher, lecturer, instructor or professor to equip himself or herself with more knowledge as regards to OBE through more readings, attendance to seminars and continuing professional education.

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