



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Press Statement

CHED welcomes passage of UniFAST Law

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) welcomes the passage of the Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) through Republic Act No. 106871 which was signed on October 15 by President Benigno S. Aquino III. The Commission hails it as a Landmark Social Legislation of the Administration benefiting Filipino youth.

Designed to unify all modalities of publicly-funded Student Financial Assistance Programs (StuFAPs)—Scholarships, Grants-in-Aid and Student Loans—for Tertiary Education, the UniFAST rationalizes the allocation, utilization and client-targeting of government resources and improves access to quality higher and technical education for those who need it. It shall also serve as the ultimate national human resource development mechanism and strategy that will direct beneficiaries to priority courses needed for economic growth and development. Further, it insulates any StuFAPs modality from political labeling or partisan affiliation.

The idea of a harmonized financial assistance program emerged more than five years ago as a proposal of the NEDA-Social Development Committee, but the real work took place in 2013 after a comprehensive study was conducted by the Philippine Institute of Development Studies. CHED's current Higher Education Reform Agenda, which deemed UniFAST a priority strategy for access, gave the necessary impetus. The Commission provided continuous technical assistance to both the Lower and Upper Houses of Congress in the formulation and eventual enactment of the Law.

The UniFAST will be governed by a Board composed of the heads of CHED, DOST and TESDA as co-chairs, with the head of DepEd and representatives from DOLE, NEDA and NYC as members. The Board, with the support of a technical secretariat, will ensure program sustainability and safeguard student welfare. It will see to it that standard-setting, client-targeting, fund allocation and prioritization are based on supply/demand situations, prices and inflationary factors, the government human resources development plan and current trends in internationally-shared human resources.

Issued this 21st day of October 2015 at the Higher Education Center Building, C.P. Garcia Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

Patricia B. Licuanan, Ph.D.
Chairperson