METRIC 5.6 WOMEN'S PROGRESS MEASURES

Indicator 5.6.1 Policy of non-discrimination against women

Davao Oriental State University (DOrSU) recognizes the importance of promoting gender equality, protecting women's rights, and ensuring that women are afforded equal opportunities to participate, develop, and progress within the University. As a public higher education institution, DOrSU acknowledges that women's advancement requires an institutional environment that recognizes their capabilities, respects their rights, and provides equitable opportunities for personal, academic, and professional growth. In this regard, the University upholds the principles of non-discrimination, inclusivity, and equal treatment to ensure that women are not disadvantaged or excluded from opportunities for development and advancement on the basis of sex or gender.

The University's commitment to non-discrimination is anchored on Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the *Magna Carta of Women*, which serves as the primary national legal framework for the protection and promotion of women's rights in the Philippines. Particularly, Section 13 – Equal Access and Elimination of Discrimination in Education, Scholarships, and Training emphasizes the importance of ensuring that women have equal opportunities to pursue education, scholarships, and training that contribute to their personal and professional development. Furthermore, Section 35 expressly prohibits discrimination against women, while Section 36 mandates gender mainstreaming in government institutions as a strategy for promoting women's human rights and eliminating gender discrimination in institutional systems, structures, policies, programs, and processes. These provisions establish the legal foundation for creating an environment where women can develop their capabilities, enhance their competencies, and pursue opportunities for advancement without discrimination.

This commitment is further reinforced by the 1987 Philippine Constitution, particularly Article II, Section 14, which recognizes the fundamental equality of women and men before the law and acknowledges the vital role of women in nation-building. This constitutional provision affirms that women must be recognized as equal contributors to social, economic, and institutional development. Likewise, Article III, Section 1, which guarantees equal protection of the laws, provides an important safeguard against discriminatory treatment. These constitutional principles support the promotion of women's participation, recognition, and advancement in various areas of university life.

As a State University and College (SUC), DOrSU is also guided by Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 1, Series of 2015, which establishes policies and guidelines on

Gender and Development (GAD) in the Commission on Higher Education and Higher Education Institutions. This issuance provides a framework for integrating gender perspectives into institutional policies, programs, projects, activities, and processes. It encourages higher education institutions to promote gender-responsive academic and administrative environments, address gender-related concerns, and strengthen initiatives that support women's empowerment. Through gender mainstreaming, universities are guided in identifying and addressing institutional barriers that may limit women's participation, development, and advancement.

Consistent with these national laws and policy frameworks, DOrSU upholds the principles of equality, inclusivity, and empowerment, as reflected in its institutional Vision of becoming “A university of excellence, innovation and inclusion.” This vision underscores the University's commitment to fostering an academic and professional environment where women are recognized for their capabilities and contributions and are provided equitable opportunities to pursue their aspirations. It also reinforces the importance of ensuring that women can actively participate in university programs and activities, access professional and academic development opportunities, and contribute to institutional growth and development.

In the context of women's progress, the principles of non-discrimination are essential in ensuring that female students and employees are afforded fair opportunities to advance in their respective fields. These include opportunities for academic achievement, participation in leadership and decision-making, access to scholarships and professional development programs, skills enhancement, research engagement, and other initiatives that contribute to their personal and professional growth. Women must likewise be able to participate in institutional activities and assume leadership responsibilities based on their qualifications, competencies, and interests, without being limited by gender stereotypes or discriminatory practices.

Furthermore, the University recognizes that promoting women's progress involves more than ensuring equal treatment; it also requires creating an enabling environment that supports women's empowerment and addresses circumstances that may hinder their advancement. Through gender-responsive policies, programs, and institutional initiatives, DOrSU is guided by the principle of providing opportunities that recognize the diverse needs and experiences of women. These efforts contribute to strengthening women's confidence, capabilities, participation, and representation in the academic community and in the broader institutional setting.

References:

1. 1987 Philippine Constitution

https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/1987-constitution/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

2. RA 9710 (Magna Carta of Women)

https://pcw.gov.ph/magna-carta-of-women/

3. CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, Series of 2015

https://unifast.gov.ph/assets/pdf/gad/CMO-No.-1.-Series-of-2015.pdf