

Amando M Tetangco, Jr: The Central Bank of the Philippines – supporting academic excellence

Speech by Mr Amando M Tetangco, Jr, Governor of the Central Bank of the Philippines (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas), at the BSP UP Centennial Professorial Chairs Launching Ceremony, Quezon City, 7 October 2008.

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Senator Angara, President Roman, Chancellor Cao, our friends from the UP community, fellow supporters of UP, special guests, good afternoon.

On behalf of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, I am here to launch the seven BSP-UP Centennial Professorial Chairs. We believe that setting up professorial chairs is the best way to institutionalize our support to academic excellence that is the hallmark of the University of the Philippines.

As I said before, the concentration of UP alumni in legal, political and government circles as well as in the scientific pool speaks volumes about the university's central role in nation-building. By helping mold the minds of the nation's best and brightest or what we call iskolars ng bayan, by stoking the engine of innovation, and by providing an intellectual compass and healthy critique to public policymaking, UP has contributed and continues to contribute to the advancement of our country.

The BSP-UP Centennial Professorial Chairs managed by the UP Foundation Inc. are professorial chairs donated by the Central Bank of the Philippines in 1982-1983 during UP's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The original endowments for these chairs was P150,000 each. We raised each endowment to P1,500,000 by donating an additional P1,350,000 per chair. Meanwhile, the BSP UP Centennial Professorial Chair in Business Administration has an endowment of P1.5 million from several donations made by the CBP and the BSP since 1981. We raised the endowment to P3 million through an additional donation of P1.5 million. The terms also have been enhanced to maximize the benefits to the chairholder.

Since 1983 when the professorial chairs were first awarded, they have been held by distinguished scholars whose research and public service have contributed significantly to the shaping of policy decisions, the enactment of landmark legislation and the formation of institutions, both in the government and private sectors.

The decision of the Bangko Sentral to establish additional professorial chairs namely, the BSP Sterling Professorial Chair in monetary and Banking Economics at the UP School of Economics and the BSP Sterling Professorial Chair in Government and Official Statistics at the UP School of Statistics, manifests the satisfaction of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas in the contribution of the chair holders. Therefore, when UP President Roman and Dean Echanis approached the BSP for upgrading the old CBP/BSP chairs to UP Centennial Professorial Chairs, they found ready support within the Monetary Board.

In awarding the chairs, the BSP affirms the academic excellence and freedom that makes the University of the Philippines what it is today. The professorial chairs provide funding support for research but the chair holders are free to set the research agenda within the sphere covered by the professorial chairs.

On the whole, the gains to the UP exceed the obvious opportunity to retain and upgrade its most important resource, its faculty. It provides a chance to generate research and facilitate extension activities among the major units of the UP system.

For its part, the BSP benefits through improvements in the existing body of policy-oriented social science research, of which it is both a producer and user. Our partnership with the University will allow us to further avail of intellectual assets to generate ideas, evolve good

practices, access good vetting and generate competitive advantage in a difficult policy environment.

I must say that the establishment of the BSP UP Centennial Professorial Chairs is also in recognition of the role of the University of the Philippines as the alma mater of the many professionals among its staff.

Through these offerings, we hope to continue to provide UP's community of academics and scholars the opportunity to generate ideas and applications that uphold the long-standing UP tradition of academic rigor, intellectual freedom, and practical relevance. More importantly, we hope that the research generated through the professorial chairs will be of benefit to policymakers at the BSP and in government who are engaged in the quest for socio-economic development, one that will truly meet the development aspirations of Filipino society.

The BSP UP Centennial Professorial Chairs also serve as a challenge for UP's community of academics to continue to serve as catalysts for meaningful change in our society.

Once again, the Bangko Sentral celebrates with you the first 100 years of the University of the Philippines and look forward to the next one hundred years of excellence in research and education at UP.

Maraming salamat at magandang hapon sa inyong lahat!