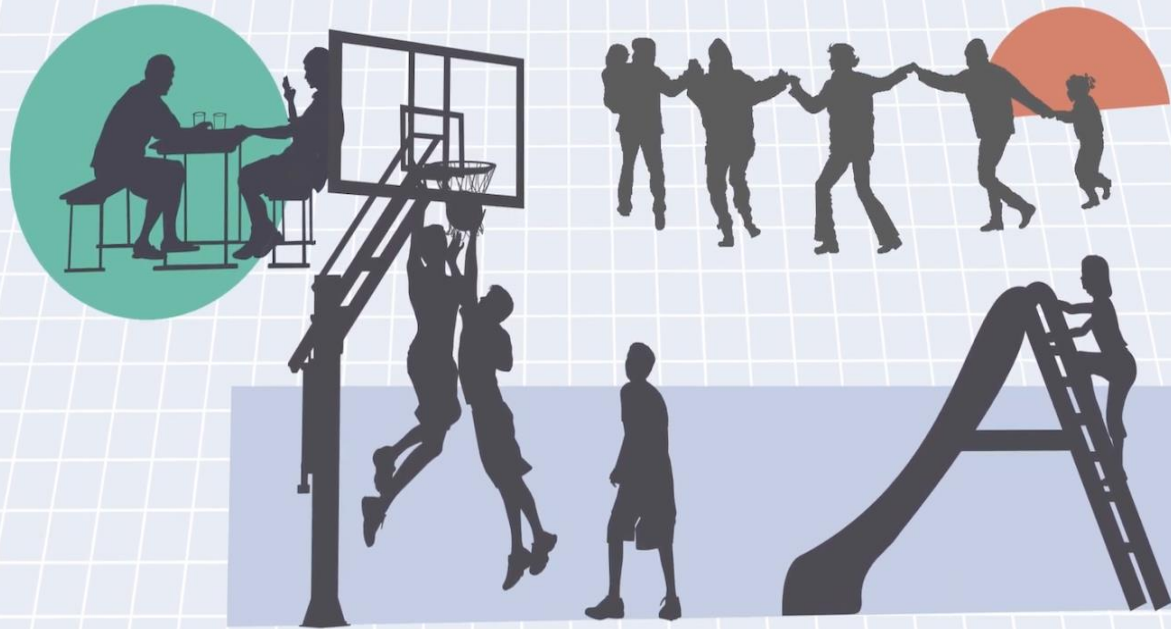


**10th Anniversary of the ASEAN University Network - Health  
Promotion Network (AUN-HPN)**

*Session: "Best Practices of Health Promotion Achievements in ASEAN Universities"*

***What Makes a University Healthy? -  
The Journeys of Health Promotion  
Achievements among State  
Universities and Colleges in the  
Philippines***

**Prof. Ronnell D. dela Rosa, PhD,DNM,RN,RM**  
*St Paul University Manila / University of the Philippines Open University*



# What Makes a University Healthy? – The Journeys of Health Promotion Achievements among State Universities and Colleges in the Philippines

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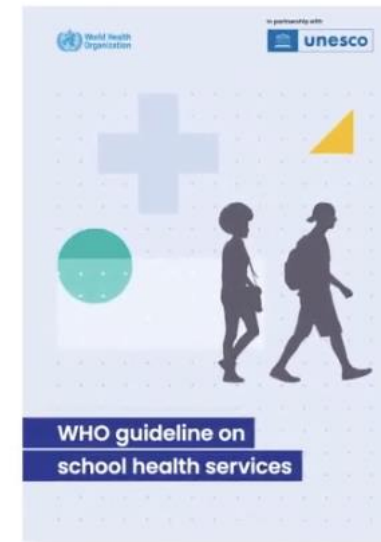
*St Paul University Manila / University of the Philippines Open University*



# March 2020!



(Cleofas, Oducado & Dela Rosa, 2022)



The concept of health within educational institutions has evolved significantly in recent years, moving beyond the traditional focus on physical well-being to embrace a more holistic view that includes mental, social, and environmental health (McMurray & Turner, 2020). As educational environments play a pivotal role in shaping the health and well-being of individuals and communities, there is increasing recognition of the importance of universities as sites for promoting health.

# Introduction



## Current Status

In particular, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines have been at the forefront of initiatives aimed at fostering a culture of wellness, not only for their students, faculty, and staff but also for the broader communities they serve.



## Health promotion in higher education institutions

is increasingly seen as an essential component of fostering student success and well-being. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health promotion involves not only promoting individual health but also creating environments that support health and well-being at every level of society (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022).



## Study Goals

This study aims to explore the health promotion practices of twelve (12) SUCs in the Philippines, utilizing the framework of Appreciative Inquiry to uncover success stories, challenges, and lessons learned in fostering healthy, vibrant educational environments.

Universities, as institutions that **bring together diverse populations of students, faculty, and staff, are uniquely positioned to serve as catalysts for health promotion.** The **integration** of physical, mental, and social health into the **curriculum, campus policies, and community outreach programs** has been recognized as key to creating a holistic approach to student well-being (Buchanan et al., 2019).



In the **Philippines**, higher education institutions, **particularly SUCs**, *face unique challenges in promoting health due to varying levels of access to resources, infrastructure, and community engagement* (Alvarez et al., 2022). However, many SUCs **have successfully implemented health promotion initiatives** that serve as models for other institutions, *blending academic expertise with community-oriented solutions to address pressing health issues*. These initiatives often focus on fostering not only the physical health of individuals but also their **mental and emotional well-being, aiming for a "whole person" approach** to health (Hsu et al., 2020).

# Review of Health Promotion Achievements

## ● The Role of Community Engagement in Health Promotion

University of the Philippines launched the first nationwide health promotion program for students. Through collaboration with local health organizations, SUCs can provide their students and faculty with access to critical health resources and services while also contributing to the broader goal of community resilience (Lal & Chinnery, 2020). These partnerships enhance the capacity of universities to address both immediate health concerns and long-term health determinants such as access to care, environmental conditions, and socio-economic factors. Furthermore, they create opportunities for meaningful student involvement in health advocacy, leadership, and service learning, which are integral to fostering a sense of responsibility and social consciousness among students (Samson & Gabriel, 2021).

## ● Appreciative Inquiry as a Framework for Health Promotion

This study employs Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a qualitative research method to explore the health promotion practices within SUCs. AI focuses on identifying and building upon an organization's strengths, successes, and positive experiences (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Rather than focusing on problems or deficits, AI encourages a collaborative and positive approach to understanding and enhancing organizational practices. In the context of health promotion, AI offers a powerful tool for uncovering best practices and innovative strategies that have led to positive outcomes in SUCs, while also fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

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## ○ The Need for a Health University Framework

● The definition of what constitutes a "healthy university" is complex and multifaceted, encompassing a wide range of physical, mental, and social factors. This study emphasizes the importance of viewing universities as ecosystems where policies, programs, and practices converge to promote the health of all individuals within the institution. Moreover, it underscores the need for SUCs to adopt a comprehensive, whole-person approach to health that addresses the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and social well-being (Telford et al., 2021). By highlighting the achievements of SUCs in promoting health, this study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on how universities can serve as models for advancing health promotion and building resilient communities.

As educational institutions continue to evolve, there is an increasing need to consider their role in fostering health and well-being. This study seeks to illuminate the health promotion practices within SUCs in the Philippines and offer insights into how universities can create environments that nurture the health of individuals and communities alike. By exploring the journeys of health promotion achievements among SUCs, the study will not only contribute to academic understanding but also inspire continued innovation in promoting holistic health within the higher education sector.

# Research Methodology



qualitative research design using Appreciative Inquiry (AI) by Cooperrider, & Srivastva (1987)



as the guiding framework to explore health promotion practices in twelve (12) State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines.



Appreciative Inquiry, known for its strengths-based approach, was chosen to focus on the successes and positive experiences of health promotion initiatives within these universities, rather than merely identifying challenges or shortcomings.



The methodology aligned with the study's aim of uncovering best practices and innovative strategies in fostering a culture of wellness.

- The Appreciative Inquiry (AI) in several stages: defining the research focus, discovering positive health promotion practices, dreaming about future possibilities, designing improvements, and delivering sustainable health strategies.
- By engaging fifty-two (52) participants among university administrators, faculty, health promotion staff, students, and community health organizations, this research gathered rich, narrative data that highlighted the key elements of successful health initiatives and the role of community partnerships in advancing health promotion efforts.



# Research Methodology



Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis, enabling a comprehensive understanding of health promotion practices across diverse SUCs. Ethics clearance was secured from BPSU Peninsulares Research Ethics Committee – DOST PREB Level 1 Accredited. Informed consent was facilitated among participants.



Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including university health officers, student leaders, faculty members, and representatives from local health organizations. Focus groups included students and faculty involved in health-related initiatives to capture a wide range of perspectives and experiences.



Document analysis examined health-related policies, program reports, and other relevant university materials to further contextualize the findings.



Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns, successes, and recurring themes within the health promotion practices of the participating SUCs.



The findings contributed to defining what makes a university healthy, with an emphasis on integrating physical, mental, and social well-being into the institutional culture and broader community engagement efforts.

# Research Locale



Bataan Peninsula State  
University



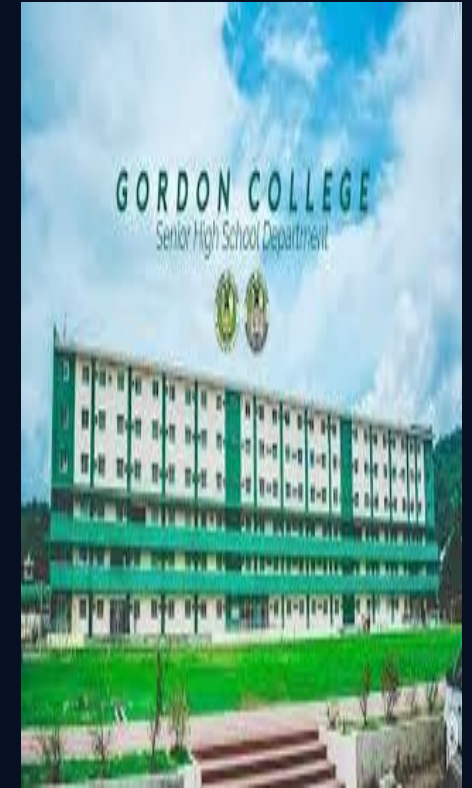
Limay Polytechnic College



Don Honorio Ventura State  
University



Pam panga State Agricultural  
University



Gordon's College

# Research Locale



Central Luzon State University



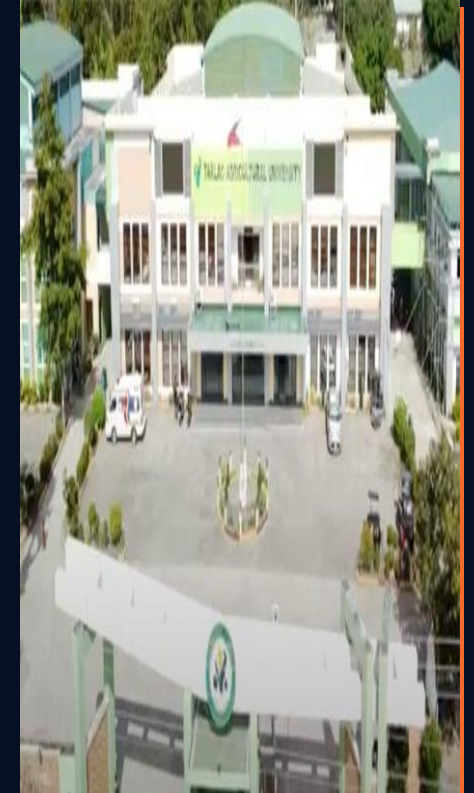
Aurora State College of  
Technology



Bulacan State University



Tarlac State University



Tarlac Agricultural University

# Research Locale



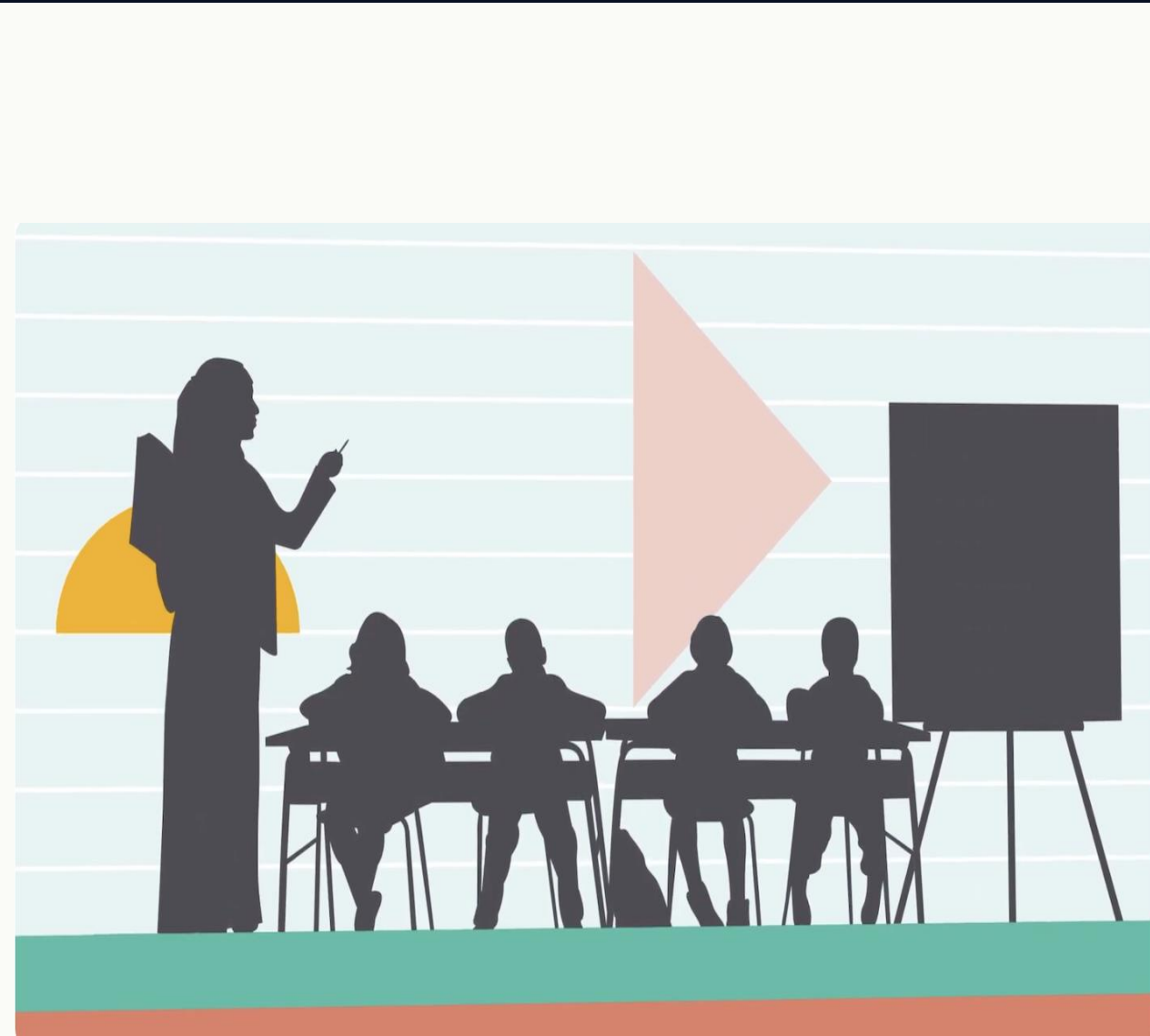
Philippine Merchant Marine  
Academy - Zambales



Bulacan Agricultural State  
College

# Health Promotion Achievements' Experiences

The findings of this study, based on the Appreciative Inquiry approach, reveal a rich array of health promotion practices within the twelve (12) State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines that were examined. These findings illuminate the strengths, successes, and strategies that have enabled these institutions to foster a culture of health and wellness, both on-campus and in the surrounding communities. Through interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis, several key themes emerged, which were organized into three major categories: holistic health initiatives, community partnerships, and student engagement in health promotion. Each of these categories contributes to the development of a "healthy university" framework that integrates physical, mental, and social well-being into the educational environment



# Results: Major Themes



Holistic Health Initiatives



Community Partnerships



Student Engagement



Innovations in Health Promotions



Success Stories Impact

# Generated Themes, Sub-themes & Meaning Units

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Meaning Units</b>
<b>Holistic Health Initiatives</b>	<b>Comprehensive Health Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Integration of physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being.</li><li>- Emphasis on addressing multiple dimensions of health.</li></ul>
	<b>Mental Health Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Mental health awareness campaigns.</li><li>- Peer counseling services and workshops to reduce stigma around mental illness.</li></ul>
	<b>Physical Health and Fitness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Campus fitness programs, including yoga, sports, and meditation.</li><li>- Stress management sessions and physical fitness activities.</li></ul>

# Generated Themes, Sub-themes & Meaning Units

<b>Community Partnerships</b>	<b>Collaborations with Local Health Organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Partnerships with local health departments for free medical check-ups and vaccination drives.</li><li>- Health education campaigns targeting infectious diseases.</li></ul>
	<b>Community-Based Health Initiatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Community outreach through mobile health clinics and health service programs.</li><li>- Service-learning projects benefiting marginalized communities (e.g., indigenous groups).</li></ul>
	<b>Government and NGO Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for health initiatives in underserved areas.</li><li>- Participation in public health advocacy programs.</li></ul>



# Generated Themes, Sub-themes & Meaning Units

<b>Student Engagement</b>	<b>Student-Led Health Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Student health advocacy groups focusing on mental health, substance abuse prevention, and sexual health education.</li><li>- Peer-led wellness initiatives.</li></ul>
	<b>Peer Support and Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Students leading workshops, health campaigns, and awareness initiatives.</li><li>- Faculty support and mentorship for student health programs.</li></ul>
	<b>Health Education and Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Organizing wellness events, health fairs, and mental health discussions.</li><li>- Collaborative efforts with faculty to integrate health education in student life.</li></ul>

# Generated Themes, Sub-themes & Meaning Units

<b>Innovations in Health Promotion</b>	<b>Digital Health Platforms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Online platforms providing mental health resources, wellness tips, and fitness challenges.</li><li>- Confidential online counseling services and self-help tools.</li></ul>
	<b>Campus Infrastructure for Wellness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Creation of green spaces, walking paths, and recreational facilities on campuses.</li><li>- Adoption of sustainable practices, like promoting healthy eating in dining areas.</li></ul>
<b>Success Stories and Impact</b>	<b>Student Participation and Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Increased student involvement in health initiatives.</li><li>- Growth in health-related student organizations and advocacy groups.</li></ul>
	<b>Community Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Enhanced collaboration between the university and the local community.</li><li>- Sustainable health practices and broader health benefits to local populations.</li></ul>

- **Conclusions:**



The findings from this study underscore the multifaceted nature of health promotion within State Universities and Colleges in the Philippines.



Through holistic health initiatives, community partnerships, and active student engagement, these universities have created health-promoting environments that support the well-being of their students and the surrounding communities.



By focusing on success stories and innovative strategies, this study highlights the potential of SUCs to serve as models for advancing health promotion and resilience in higher education settings.



These efforts have not only fostered a culture of wellness on campus but also contributed to the broader goal of building healthier, more resilient communities.

# Recommendations toward enhancement for the Healthy University Framework



## Holistic Approach

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines further strengthen their health promotion initiatives by adopting a more integrated, holistic approach that encompasses not only physical health but also mental, emotional, and social well-being.

## Establish Collaborative Partnerships

SUCs should continue to foster collaborative partnerships with local health organizations and government agencies to enhance resource-sharing and expand community-based health interventions.

## Develop a Comprehensive Plan as Student-led initiatives

Additionally, universities could benefit from increasing student involvement in the planning and implementation of health programs, as student-led initiatives have proven effective in fostering peer engagement and promoting a culture of wellness.

## Digital and Remote Health Services

Finally, universities are encouraged to invest in innovative digital health platforms and campus infrastructure that support both on-campus and remote health services, ensuring that health resources are accessible to all students, including those who face time or geographical constraints.

## Inclusive, Sustainable and Effective Health Promotion Strategies

By prioritizing these recommendations, SUCs can create more inclusive, sustainable, and effective health promotion strategies that contribute to the well-being of students and the broader community.

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***Thank you much for listening!***  
***MARAMING SALAMAT!***

***MABUHAY!!!***

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