

Case Study

Creating New Knowledge For Public Good



About DLSU

De La Salle University (DLSU) is a private non-profit comprehensive Catholic university run by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. DLSU was founded in 1911 and became a university in 1975. Positioning itself as a learner-centered and research institution of higher learning, it is the first private university in the Philippines to be listed in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and is one of the country's most productive research institutions based on Scopus-indexed publications.

The Catholic university currently offers doctoral, master's, bachelor's, senior high school, diploma and certification programs at its 36 academic departments and 15 research centers in arts and social sciences, business, computer technology, education, engineering, law, and natural science. With an academic staff strength of more than 1,400 and 18,000 undergraduate and 4000 graduate students, the institution is known for training leaders, professionals, scholars, researchers and entrepreneurs who actively improve the quality of life in the Philippine society.



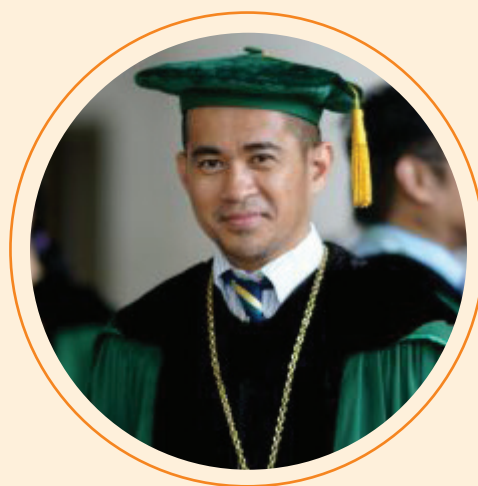
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Prof. Raymond Tan

Vice President for Innovation and Research, DLSU.



Social Good as Research Goal

DLSU has a research ambition that transcends contemporary research trends—the university aims to be the leading advocate and provider of intellectual property, knowledge and technology services for the common good. To this end, it hopes to build better communities in the Philippines, Southeast Asia, and eventually, the world through research.

Specifically, some of its strategic research goals include alleviating poverty, promoting peace and social justice, protecting the welfare of women, youth at risk, and other vulnerable sectors of society, and creating wealth and resources to bridge the various societal divides. It hopes to support a society attuned to a sustainable earth, especially the poor and marginalized.

DLSU subscribes to the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a broad framework to gauge its contributions to human development through education, research, and social engagement.

“A lot of the national targets in the Philippines are actually based on some of these SDGs. As a research university that receives funding from the public funding agencies, we have to have some sort of alignment with the national ambitions,” said Prof. Raymond Tan, Vice President for Innovation and Research, DLSU. “It is not to say that we require our researchers to give their research exclusively to the SDGs. However, if a researcher has work that is linked to some degree to the SDGs, we think it is important that he or she knows about the link and is able to discuss how the work eventually contributes to these goals.”

A Research Goal Shared by Many

This research ambition is shared by many of DLSU's researchers, one of whom is Prof. Kathleen B. Aviso, Professor of Chemical Engineering, University Fellow, and Dean of the Gokongwei College of Engineering. Her research focuses on the development of mathematical models for the optimal design of water exchange networks, renewable energy systems and various sustainability applications, such as determining carbon capture storage integrity and ranking green technologies, which address some of the SDGs.

“One of the main responsibilities of a university is not just to teach and pass on knowledge to its students but to create new

knowledge that will be useful both locally and internationally for the current generation and for generations after us,” she said. “I believe that developments in science and technology will help address current and future problems and improve the lives of humanity. It is our duty as individuals to continue enriching knowledge, make discoveries that help us better understand our world and, in the process, help us develop solutions to create a more sustainable world.”

The university's unique research focus on social good also attracts researchers who are creating knowledge that bucks local conventions. For instance, the

research interest of Prof. Allan B. I. Bernardo, Distinguished University Professor and University Fellow, is in the social cognitive and social/cultural psychological aspects of concerns in intergroup relations, socioeconomic and other inequalities, learning in education, well-being in schools, workplaces, and communities. It inquires how social norms and beliefs shape individuals' knowledge and attitudes that influence how they perceive the problem of poverty and their willingness to support anti-poverty policies and programs.

He shared, “My research program straddles basic and applied questions in psychology and seeks to make theoretical and real-life contributions. I cannot imagine how my research program can be supported in any other Philippine university.”

Measuring Impact on Social Good

One of the key factors in measuring research is impact. For conventional research, this can be measured by the extent of knowledge generation and research outputs, such as the number of publications and the number of times the publications are cited. But how does one measure impact on social good? “It's much more challenging to



figure out how scientific knowledge translates into public good, and this is still very much a work in progress. A good way to do this is to use a framework that the entire world uses—the SDGs,” stated Prof. Raymond Tan.

“The SDGs organize the different ways by which researchers can create public good. At the moment, our researchers are encouraged to understand how their work in their labs or the field connects to the SDGs and conceive a way to explain to a lay person the kind of impact that might come true in the future.”



Ms Christine Abrigo
Director of Libraries,
DLSU

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Supporting DLSU’s Research Ambition

A good library is a lifeline for any research, and having access to quality resources is paramount. However, beyond providing information to the Lasallian research community, the DLSU libraries’ larger role is to be the hub for knowledge process and scholarly communication.

And this is where Elsevier’s resources have helped DLSU in achieving these goals. “The data from ScienceDirect and Scopus not only provides scientific information, but also connects our experts globally, which is very important for the achievement of our research ambition,” explained Ms Christine Abrigo, Director of Libraries, DLSU.

The Lasallian research community also agrees. “The ScienceDirect and other index websites are necessities for our literature review,” said Prof. Anthony SF Chiu, University Fellow, Distinguished Full Professor, Research Fellow, and Professorial Chairholder, DLSU.



“Scopus and other databases are not only useful in showing the breadth of the literature, but more importantly, also suggest more important publication venues,” added Prof. Bernardo. “As a researcher, I need to know which journals or publications are on the cutting edge of my discipline and the directions in which the discipline is moving. Journal and article metrics guide me on how important some works are. Such data also provides me with more options for choosing where to publish my research. Researchers want their publications to be read by as many scholars as possible, particularly by the more important thinkers in the field. It is important to know which journals have the attention of the scholarly community.”

DLSU currently has the Animo Repository, a digital repository of scholarly and creative works of its faculty, students and researchers, to manage its research information. The system is powered by Digital Commons, a cloud-hosted solution to openly publish, manage and showcase DLSU’s full spectrum of research and scholarship, including journals, conference proceedings, open educational resources, books, campus newsletters and magazines.

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Prof. Allan B. I. Bernardo
Distinguished University
Professor and University Fellow

“We want to contribute to the positioning of DLSU in the global research community by providing research collaboration opportunities to our researchers. To make this happen, we need robust tools and open systems such as Digital Commons. We are happy that we can fulfill our work and achieve our vision through the system,” said Ms Christine Abrigo.

Elsevier As A Research Partner

Ultimately, the achievement of any research ambition requires support from many sources and partners, and Elsevier has been an avid supporter of DLSU’s research plan through the various solutions it offers to the university.

The partnership between DLSU and Elsevier is best summarised by Prof. Aviso, who stated, “Knowing that Elsevier is a leading institution in scientific research, DLSU will benefit by learning how we can

further improve our processes so that we can be more efficient in conducting research and making sure that our work is able to reach the international scientific community and our intended audience. On the other hand, Elsevier will also benefit from this partnership since DLSU is a leading institution in the country and a member of several local organizations and consortiums. Once other institutions see the benefits of this partnership, more will learn about Elsevier.”



About Sustainable Development Growth

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are specific research areas that are helping to solve real-world problems. They are part of a plan to end poverty, protect the planet, and improve the lives and prospects of everyone by 2030. The 15-year plan has 17 goals with 169 targets aimed at stimulating action in areas of critical importance to humanity and the environment.

For more information, visit

<https://www.elsevier.com/about/partnerships/sdg-research-mapping-initiative>

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