

## Admin holds ToFI consultation; SG objects to move, states reasons

Contributed by Keneth Charles Hamada  
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In accordance to Republic Act 7722, the Higher Education Act of 1994, a Tuition Fee Increase Consultation was held at the Burgos Conference Room last February 26 between the SLU administration and the Supreme Student Council from 9 a.m. onwards in the hope of achieving a compromise regarding the matter.

In a 9-page letter dated February 6 sent to KASAMA/SSC President Michael Karl Flores, Rev Fr Jessie Hechanova gave the formal invitation to the concerned student government officials and attached the proposed 7 per-cent increase to a broad range of fees and other unit subjects.

An open letter from the KASAMA/ SC to the SLU community stated that last February 13, a feasible consultation was held as well between the SLU administration, represented by the different College Deans and the Vice-Presidents for Administration, Finance, and Academic Affairs, and the Executive Committee together with all the College Governors of the KASAMA/SSC. It was held at the Burgos Center from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and served as the venue to set straight the demands of the students as to unanswered grievances ranging from the repair of classrooms, restrooms, facilities the improvement of student services and existing curriculums, and the unexplained fees to cordial dealings of employees to students.

Furthermore, according to the open letter, "There were a lot of things scrutinized as it also became the venue for the students and the Deans themselves to voice out their concerns as to how to improve the quality of education and services which are due to the students." It further stated that the KASAMA/SSC was "thankful that the administration as a whole has acknowledged positively the need of the students and we hope that such agreement and concerns noted and witnessed by the media would provide a guide as to what should be prioritized by the university in its mission to transform."

The KASAMA/SSC remained adamant in its opposition to the proposed 7 per-cent tuition fee increase and requested for the administration to not increase the fees due to the following reasons, which have been realized after the Student Government's study of the university's latest financial statements as prepared by the Manabat Sanagustin and Co., an accounting and auditing firm located in Makati — according to the KASAMA/SSC in the open letter, the administration should not increase the tuition fees because 1) the school appears to be financially sound and has enough funds and revenues to cover employee salaries and facility improvement; 2) SLU has not less than P4,520,859,072.00 as its beginning balance for the school year 2007-2008. It is also expected to collect revenues of about P911,717,646.00 from tuition fees and other sources; 3) SLU has an Endowment Fund of not less than P452,339,554.00 as of May 31, 2007, which has specifically been set aside for the improvement of facilities 4) SLU has total assets from 2006-2007 of P4,538,430,725.00; 5) SLU has an increase in other income from P22,636,049.00 in the year 2006 to P23,811,415.00 in the year 2007; 6) SLU has receivables of P47,334,928.00 at the end of school year 2006-2007; and 7) the projected increase in fees based on the 7 per-cent proposed increase would only amount to P51,034,865.14. The open letter concludes by saying, "SLU can afford not to increase its tuition and other fees yet can still give us quality education by improving school facilities and giving its employees salary increases." The letter also requests for Rev Fr Hechanova and the other members of the administration to hear the students' prayers.

The consultation concluded with a 4.5 percent increase for tuition and other fees for the next academic year.  
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