



VSU Strengthens Global Ties Through International Conference in Thailand

In a proud moment for Visayas State University (VSU), Dr. Marilyn M. Belarmino, Director of Graduate Education, represented the university in an important international gathering held at the Amari Hotel in Pattaya, Chonburi, Thailand, from February 10 to 12, 2025.

Dr. Belarmino stood in for the University President during the ceremonial signing of the Postgraduate Micro- Credentials for Food Security and Climate Change (PMC FSCC) implementation agreement. This initiative brings together partner universities worldwide to strengthen academic collaboration, innovation, and global learning. The agreement is part of the ongoing efforts under the PMC FSCC, a project under UC consortium that aims to address pressing global issues through education and research.

The signing was a key highlight of the International Conference on PMC FSCC, which gathered educators, researchers, and academic leaders from various countries. With flags of participating nations displayed proudly on the signing table, the ceremony symbolized not just partnership but a shared commitment to a better and more sustainable future.

This milestone marks another step forward for VSU in its mission to bring its educational programs and research to the global stage, while fostering meaningful collaborations that benefit both students and the communities they serve.

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Editor's Note

Warm greetings to our readers!

As we welcome a new academic year filled with renewed energy and purpose, I am pleased to present this issue of the GRADNEWSLETTER, the official publication of Graduate Education at Visayas State University. This volume shines a spotlight on the many remarkable achievements and meaningful engagements of our graduate students, faculty, and the wider academic community.

From proudly representing VSU in international conferences and workshops in Thailand and Indonesia, to hosting national evaluators for our PhD in Agronomy program, this issue captures the strong momentum of our expanding global and national academic presence. We also celebrate the resounding success of the Graduate Students' Society's second general assembly, and the creativity and unity behind our award-winning student booth.

We take special pride in the successful completion of degree programs by our five international Master of Science students, as well as the academic milestone reached by our seven PhD candidates who have completed their coursework and delivered inspiring dissertation defenses. Each story is a testament to hard work, perseverance, collaboration, and academic excellence. This issue also highlights the powerful messages embedded in our Women's Month celebration, the heartfelt send-off for our international scholars, and the symbolic tree-planting activity led by our graduating students. These moments remind us that graduate education is not only about academic development—it is also about cultivating inclusive, ethical, and socially responsible communities.

Behind every milestone are the people who make it possible: our students, faculty mentors, university leaders, partners, and support staff. To all of you—thank you for your unwavering commitment and contribution to the vibrant and dynamic spirit of graduate education at VSU.

May this issue inspire continued growth, collaboration, and passion for research and innovation in service of a more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable future.

Best regards,

Dr. Marilyn M. Belarmino

Editor-in-Chief



VSU Graduate Education Participates in International Workshop on Food Security and Climate Change in Indonesia

Collaboration, knowledge sharing, and innovation were at the heart of a recent international workshop attended by representatives from VSU Graduate Education. Held on January 9 – 10, 2025 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, the workshop focused on the Development of Implementation Guidelines for Monitoring, Review, and Evaluation (MRE) of Postgraduate Micro-Credentials for Food Security and Climate Change (PMC FSCC).

The event brought together educators, researchers, and experts from various countries in Southeast Asia, all united by a common goal: strengthening postgraduate micro-credentials that address urgent global challenges like food security and climate change.

Representatives from VSU joined fellow participants in a dynamic exchange of ideas, best practices, and strategies to improve the implementation and evaluation of these specialized programs. Their participation underscores VSU's commitment to contributing to global educational innovations that equip professionals with the skills and knowledge to create meaningful change in their communities.

The photo shared on social media captures a vibrant moment of unity and collaboration among delegates, taken in front of the Institut Bio Sains Tropika dan Perladangan in Malaysia, where the workshop was held.



This event is part of a broader movement to make postgraduate education more responsive to real-world challenges through micro-credentialing—targeted learning programs that offer flexible, focused, and practical training.

Through its active involvement, VSU continues to elevate its presence in the international academic arena while helping shape the future of sustainable development education in the region.



Graduate Students Gear Up for the VSU-GSS 2nd General Assembly

Visayas State University Graduate Students' Society (VSU-GSS) successfully held its 2nd General Assembly today at the CCE Building, 1st Floor. The event featured several important activities aimed at strengthening the graduate student community and ensuring the organization's continued growth.

Key highlights included the election of new officers for the academic year 2025-2026, setting the stage for fresh leadership and new initiatives. The Secretary and Treasurer also presented their annual reports, providing transparency and updates on the organization's activities and financial status.

Additionally, the assembly saw the unveiling of the official VSU-GSS T-shirt, which symbolizes unity and pride within the graduate student body. The event also featured team-building games, offering opportunities for members to connect and foster stronger relationships.

With a renewed leadership team and a strengthened sense of community, VSU-GSS is poised to continue serving and representing the needs of graduate students at Visayas State University.



VSU Welcomes DOST-SEI Experts for PhD Agronomy Program Evaluation

In a significant step toward academic advancement, Visayas State University (VSU) recently opened its doors to the Department of Science and Technology – Science Education Institute (DOST-SEI) Technical Working Group. The team visited the university on April 15, 2024, to conduct a thorough evaluation of VSU's PhD in Agronomy program.

The visit was announced on April 14 by the VSU Graduate Education office, expressing excitement about hosting the distinguished panel. The announcement reflected a sense of pride and anticipation as the university prepared to showcase its premier graduate program in agronomy, a field crucial to the country's agricultural development.

Among the visiting experts were key figures from DOST-SEI, including Engr. Albert G. Mariño (Director III and Deputy Director of DOST-SEI), Prof. Fortunato T. de la Peña (former DOST Secretary), Dr. John Glenn D. Ocaña (DOST Regional Director, Region VIII), and other experts in plant pathology, academic affairs, and agricultural education. Their presence highlighted the importance and scale of the evaluation process. On April 16, VSU Graduate Education shared a follow-up post detailing the successful visit.

The post conveyed appreciation for the technical working group's insights and recommendations, which are expected to help the university further enhance its PhD in Agronomy program. The team was warmly welcomed and given a comprehensive tour, including presentations on program curriculum and faculty engagements.

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Photos from the visit captured moments of meaningful dialogue, collaborative assessments, and shared commitment to educational excellence. It was clear that the engagement was more than just an academic audit, it was a collaborative milestone rooted in a shared goal of improving agricultural education in the Philippines.

As VSU continues to grow its graduate offerings, the insights gained from the DOST-SEI visit are expected to help strengthen the university's vision of becoming a leading institution for agricultural innovation and research. With the backing of national science leaders and the commitment of VSU's academic community, the future of its Agronomy PhD program looks exceptionally bright.



Victory Through Teamwork: VSU Graduate Education Booth Shines Bright

In the spirit of collaboration and dedication, the Visayas State University (VSU) Graduate Education students proved that passion and teamwork are a winning formula. What started as a simple booth setup idea turned into an award-winning masterpiece that captured the hearts of many during the university's celebration week.

On April 23, the VSU Graduate Education team proudly unveiled their meticulously crafted booth. Decorated with intricate native designs, vibrant lights, and thoughtful educational materials, the booth stood as a testament to the creativity and commitment of the students and faculty involved. The booth wasn't just visually appealing, it was a space buzzing with camaraderie and academic pride.

The team invited everyone to lend a hand in the final preparations, and the response was overwhelming. Students showed up, not just to help, but to celebrate their shared identity as graduate learners striving for excellence. The unity was palpable, and it transformed the booth into something far greater than the sum of its parts.

Fast forward to April 28, an unforgettable day. During the convocation ceremony, the VSU Graduate Education booth was honored with the Best Student Booth Award. Cheers erupted as the team took the stage, proudly donning their purple and white uniforms. This recognition was more than a trophy; it was a validation of sleepless nights, shared meals, spontaneous brainstorming sessions,

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and tireless dedication.

The VSU Graduate Students' Society, along with the unwavering support from the GE faculty and student body, played a key role in this success. Their enthusiasm lit up every corner of the booth, creating a space that truly represented the heart of graduate education.

As celebrations continue, one message echoes loud and clear: when passion meets purpose, and when students come together for a common goal, incredible things happen.

Congratulations to the VSU Graduate Education community, your hard work truly paid off, and your story is an inspiration to all.



VSU Celebrates Successful Dissertation Presentations of Four Doctoral Candidates

Baybay City, Leyte – May 29, 2025, a proud moment unfolded at the VSU Graduate Education as four determined PhD candidates successfully defended their dissertations in a public presentation held at VSU, Department of Soil Science 119-AVR.

The academic event showcased the work of Mr. Angelo Francis F. Atole and Mr. Francis Eric C. Largo, both PhD candidates in Animal Science; Mr. James Francienne J. Rosit, a PhD candidate in Horticulture; and Mr. Manuel D. Elatico, a PhD candidate in Agricultural Education. These scholars presented the culmination of years of rigorous research, personal sacrifices, and unwavering academic dedication. Among the highlights was Mr. Elatico's dissertation titled "Effectiveness and Problems of Modular as Blended Learning Modality and Its Influence on Academic Performance of Selected Senior High School Agri-Fishery Students in Region VIII."

Guided by his adviser Dr. Lijueraj J. Cuadra, Mr. Elatico's study delved into the real-world implications of alternative learning strategies in agriculture-based education a timely and relevant topic in today's evolving learning environments. The event was attended by a broad mix of stakeholders, including fellow graduate students, department heads, deans, and guests, creating a vibrant and supportive academic environment. Attendees witnessed passionate defense, thoughtful questioning, and meaningful academic discussions—hallmarks of VSU's commitment to research excellence.



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The Graduate Education, through its official social media page, extended warm congratulations to the four PhD candidates for successfully navigating one of the most significant milestones in their academic journey.

This moment marks not only a personal achievement for the presenters but also strengthens VSU's reputation as a center of excellence in agricultural and allied sciences. Their research contributions are expected to play a meaningful role in advancing both regional and national development, particularly in agricultural education, animal science, and horticulture.

Congratulations once again to Mr. Atole, Mr. Largo, Mr. Rosit, and Mr. Elatico. The VSU community celebrates your success and looks forward to the positive impact your work will bring to the world.



Celebrating Women's Strength at VSU

The VSU Graduate Education family came together to mark the opening of the National Women's Month celebration with a vibrant and inspiring event at the RDE Hall. Graduate students proudly joined in the ceremony, standing in unity to honor the vital roles that women play in our academic communities and society at large.

The program's highlights included the Oath-taking of the Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS), reaffirming VSU's commitment to promoting gender-sensitive practices both within the university and across the wider community. This was followed by an engaging forum led by Ms. Ligaya Diaz-Jocson, who offered a compelling discussion on the transformative role of women in building a more inclusive and progressive future. Her insights resonated deeply with the audience, sparking conversations about the essential contributions women make to society.

This year's Women's Month celebration is anchored in the theme, "Babae sa Lahat ng Sektor, Aangat ang Bukas sa Bagong Pilipinas," which emphasizes the urgent need to advance gender equality and empower women in every sector. A range of exciting events will unfold throughout March, each designed to highlight the voices, achievements, and leadership of women, while inviting both men and women to actively engage in the ongoing movement toward gender equity.

The occasion also marked the unveiling of the New VSU Quality Policy Statement, accompanied by a ceremonial signing that signified the university's collective commitment to ensuring that gender equality and inclusivity remain core values in all aspects of its operations.





A Heartfelt Send-Off for Our International Scholars

April 3, Graduate Education Conference Room–Visayas State University. With a blend of formality and warmth, VSU honored its graduating international students in a special send-off ceremony that celebrated more than just academic milestones, it celebrated journeys, friendships, and global unity. Key university officials graced the occasion, delivering messages of encouragement and appreciation. The atmosphere was one of pride and accomplishment, as students from diverse cultural backgrounds were recognized not just for reaching the end of their graduate studies, but for enriching the VSU community through their presence and stories.

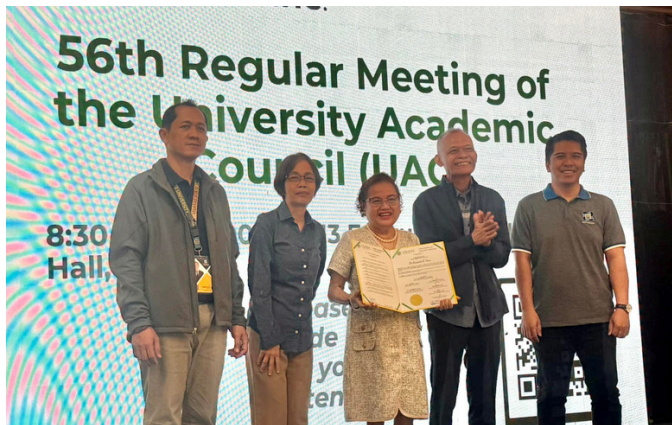
From heartfelt speeches to genuine smiles, the event captured what education is truly about: building bridges across borders and nurturing lifelong connections.

Planting Seeds, Growing Legacies

In a meaningful and symbolic step toward graduation, VSU's graduating graduate students took their learning outside the classroom and into the soil. Through a tree-planting activity organized as part of their requirements, these future leaders took on their responsibility to the environment and the generations that will follow. Set against the lush green backdrop of Baybay City, the event wasn't just about fulfilling a task. It was about embodying the values of stewardship and sustainability.

As students dug, planted, and nurtured seedlings, they planted more than trees; they sowed hope, commitment, and a greener legacy for tomorrow. This initiative is a powerful reminder that education isn't only about intellectual growth, but also about cultivating compassion and accountability for the world we share.





Honoring Dr. Anabella B. Tulin: A Legacy of Dedication, Innovation, and Service

After more than four decades of extraordinary service to VSU, Dr. Anabella B. Tulin has retired leaving behind a remarkable legacy as a scientist, educator, and mentor. Recently honored with the prestigious title of Professor Emeritus, Dr. Tulin's contributions to the university and the broader community have made a lasting impact, and her story is one of dedication, innovation, and service.

Dr. Tulin's journey at VSU began in 1980, when she first joined as an Instructor I. From those early days, she set herself apart with her passion for soil science, steadily climbing the academic ranks and ultimately achieving the highest academic distinction—University Professor—in 2015. Her decades of tireless work have left an indelible mark on VSU, making her one of the university's most respected figures.

Her academic home was the Philippine Root Crops Research and Training Center (PhilRootcrops), where her groundbreaking work revolutionized agricultural practices, particularly in marginalized regions. Dr. Tulin's research on developing micronutrient-enriched root crops, such as sweet potato and purple yam, played a pivotal role in addressing food security challenges, improving crop productivity, and providing sustainable livelihoods for farmers. Her work was not just about theory; it was about making a tangible difference, especially for women farmers in the Visayas and Mindanao.

But it wasn't just research that defined Dr. Tulin's career, it was her commitment to the people behind the science. She didn't just publish papers; she worked alongside over 15,000 farmers, introducing practical solutions that enhanced productivity, boosted income, and helped farmers

adapt to climate change. Her hands-on, participatory approach has left a lasting impact on the agricultural communities she served.

Dr. Tulin's influence as an educator is equally profound. As Dean of the VSU Graduate School from 2017 to 2023, she was a constant source of inspiration and guidance for countless graduate students. Her leadership went beyond administrative duties; she nurtured talent and fostered an environment of growth and opportunity. Under her guidance, the VSU Scholarship and Fellowship Programs grew, allowing foreign students from countries like Nepal, Indonesia, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Bangladesh, and the Solomon Islands to pursue graduate studies at VSU. Many of these students, now accomplished professionals, carry forward the values and lessons Dr. Tulin instilled in them.

Her dedication to service and excellence has earned her numerous national and international recognitions. Among the highlights are the Civil Service Commission's Presidential Lingkod Bayan Award, the Regional Dangal Bayan Award, and the SEARCA Regional Professorial Chair Award. Dr. Tulin's expertise also took her abroad, where she served as a visiting professor in countries such as Germany, Japan, and Fiji, further solidifying her place as a global leader in soil science and sustainable agriculture.

Dr. Tulin's remarkable career has shaped the course of many lives, and her retirement marks the end of one chapter and the beginning of another.



Photo courtesy of the PhilRootcrops



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