

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8548

AN ACT CONVERTING THE BULACAN NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL (BUNAS) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAN ILDEFONSO, PROVINCE OF BULACAN, INTO A CHARTERED COLLEGE, TO BE KNOWN AS THE BULACAN NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATE COLLEGE (BNASC), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. The Bulacan National Agricultural School in the Municipality of San Ildefonso, Province of Bulacan, is hereby converted into a chartered agricultural college to be known as the Bulacan National Agricultural State College hereinafter referred to as the College.

SEC. 2. The College shall primarily provide higher professional, technical and special instructions for special purposes and promote research and extension services and advanced studies in agriculture, arts and science programs and other allied courses.

SEC. 3. The College shall offer other graduate courses in the field of agriculture. It shall also offer short-term technical and vocational non-degree courses within its area of specialization, as the Board of Trustees may deem necessary to carry out its objectives and to meet the needs of the nation.

The existing high school shall be transferred to the jurisdiction and supervision of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports: *Provided*, That this high school shall be allowed to remain and operate within the campus of the College until it shall have been transferred to another location, or until their students shall have been accommodated in other public or private high schools.

SEC. 4. *The Governing Board; Manner of Appointment.* –

(a) *Composition* - The governing body of the State College is hereby vested in the Board of Trustees which shall be composed of the following:

- (i) Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), chairman;
- (ii) President of the College, vice chairman;
- (iii) Chairmen of the Congressional Committees on Education and Culture;
- (iv) Regional Director of the Department of Agriculture (DA) where the main campus is located;
- (v) President of the faculty association;
- (vi) President of the supreme student council or the student representative elected by the student council: *Provided, That in the absence of a student council president or student representative elected by the student council, the College shall schedule one (1) week for the campaign and election of a student representative;*
- (vii) President of the alumni association of the College; and
- (viii) Two (2) prominent citizens who have distinguished themselves in their professions or fields of specialization chosen from among a list of at least five (5) persons qualified in the province as recommended by the search committee constituted by the President in consultation with the Chairman of the CHED based on the normal standards and qualifications for the position.

The private sector representatives shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of a duly constituted search committee.

(b) *Term of Office* - The presidents of the faculty and alumni associations and the student trustee shall sit in the Board until the expiration of their term of office in such capacities.

The prominent citizens shall serve for a term of two (2) years.

(c) *Meetings; Quorum* - The Board of Trustees shall regularly convene at least once every quarter. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees may call a special meeting whenever necessary: *Provided*, That members are notified in writing at least three (3) days prior to said meeting.

A majority of all members holding office shall constitute a quorum for board meetings: *Provided*, That the Chairman of the CHED who is the chairman of the Board or the President of the College is among those present in the meeting. In the absence of the Chairman of the CHED, a Commissioner of the CHED, duly designated by him, shall represent him in the meeting with all the rights and responsibilities of a regular member: *Provided, however*, That in the said meeting, the President of the College as vice chairman shall be the presiding officer: *Provided, further*, That this *proviso* notwithstanding, the Chairman of the CHED is hereby authorized to designate a CHED Commissioner the regular chair to the Board of the College, in which case said CHED Commissioner shall act as the presiding officer.

The members shall serve without compensation, but they shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in their attendance of meetings of the Board or in connection with their official business authorized by resolution of the Board.

SEC. 5. *Powers and Duties of Governing Board.* – The governing board shall have the following specific powers and duties in addition to its general powers of administration and the exercise of all the powers granted to the board of directors of a corporation under Section 36 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 68, otherwise known as the "Corporation Code of the Philippines":

(a) To enact rules and regulations not contrary to law as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and functions of the College;

(b) To receive and appropriate all sums as may be provided, for the support of the College in the manner it may determine, in its discretion, to carry out the purposes and functions of the College;

(c) To receive in trust legacies, gifts and donations of real and personal properties of all kinds, to administer and dispose the same when necessary for the benefit of the College, subject to limitations, directions and instructions of the donors, if any. Such donations shall be exempt from all taxes and shall be considered as deductible items from the income tax of the donor;

(d) To fix the tuition fees and other necessary school charges, such as but not limited to matriculation fees, graduation fees and laboratory fees, as the Board may deem proper to impose after due consultations with the involved sectors.

Such fees and charges, including government subsidies and other income generated by the College, shall constitute special trust funds and shall be deposited in any authorized government depository bank, and all interests that shall accrue therefrom shall form part of the same fund for the use of the College.

Any provision of existing laws, rules and regulations to the contrary notwithstanding, any income generated by the College from tuition fees and other charges, as well as from the operation of auxiliary services and land grants, shall be retained by the College, and may be disbursed by the Board of Trustees for instruction, research, extension, or other programs/projects of the College: *Provided*, That all fiduciary fees shall be disbursed for the specific purposes for which they are collected.

If, for reasons beyond its control, the College shall not be able to pursue any project for which funds have been appropriated and allocated under its approved program of expenditures, the Board of Regents/Trustees may authorize the use of said funds for any reasonable purpose which, in its discretion, may be necessary and urgent for the attainment of the objectives and goals of the College;

(e) To adopt and implement a socialized scheme of tuition and school fees for greater access to poor but deserving students;

(f) To authorize the construction or repair of its buildings, machineries, equipment and other facilities and the purchase and acquisition of real and personal properties including necessary supplies, materials and equipment. Purchases and other transactions entered into by the College through the Board of Trustees shall be exempt from all taxes and duties;

(g) To appoint, upon the recommendation of the president of the College, vice presidents, deans, directors, heads of departments, faculty members and other officials and employees;

(h) To fix and adjust salaries of faculty members and administrative officials and employees subject to the provisions of the revised compensation and position classification system and other pertinent budget and compensation laws governing hours of service, and such other duties and conditions as it may deem proper; to grant them, at its discretion, leaves of absence under such regulations as it may promulgate, any provisions of existing law to the contrary notwithstanding; and to remove them for cause in accordance with the requirements of due process of law;

(i) To approve the curricula, institutional programs and rules of discipline drawn by the administrative and academic councils as herein provided;

(j) To set policies on admission and graduation of students;

(k) To award honorary degrees upon persons in recognition of outstanding contribution in the fields of education, public service, arts, science and technology or in any field of specialization within the academic competence of the College and to authorize the award of certificates of completion of non-degree and non-traditional courses;

(l) To absorb non-chartered tertiary institutions within the province in coordination with the CHED and in consultation with the Department of Budget and Management, and to offer

therein needed programs or courses, to promote and carry out equal access to educational opportunities mandated by the Constitution;

(m) To establish research and extension centers of the College where such will promote the development of the latter;

(n) To establish chairs in the College and to provide fellowships for qualified faculty members and scholarships to deserving students;

(o) To delegate any of its powers and duties provided for hereinabove to the president and/or other officials of the College as it may deem appropriate so as to expedite the administration of the affairs of the College;

(p) To authorize an external management audit of the institution to be financed by the CHED and to institute reforms, including academic and structural changes, on the basis of the audit results and recommendations;

(q) To collaborate with other governing boards of State universities and colleges within the province or the region, under the supervision of the CHED and in consultation with the Department of Budget and Management, the restructuring of said colleges and universities to become more efficient, relevant, productive, and competitive;

(r) To enter into joint ventures with business and industry for the profitable development and management of the economic assets of the College, the proceeds from which to be used for the development and strengthening of the same;

(s) To develop consortia and other forms of linkages with local government units, institutions and agencies, both public and private, local and foreign, in furtherance of the purposes and objectives of the College;

(t) To develop academic arrangements for institution capability building with appropriate institutions and agencies,

public or private, local or foreign, and to appoint experts/specialists as consultants, or visiting or exchange professors, scholars, or researchers, as the case may be;

(u) To set up the adoption of modern and innovative modes of transmitting knowledge such as the use of information technology, the dual system, open learning, community laboratory, etc., for the promotion of greater access to higher education;

(v) To establish policy guidelines and procedures for participative decision-making and transparency within the College;

(w) To privatize, where most advantageous to the College, management and non-academic services such as health, food, building or grounds or property maintenance and similar such other activities; and

(x) To extend the term of the president of the College beyond the age of retirement but not later than the age of seventy (70), whose performance has been unanimously rated as outstanding and upon unanimous recommendation by the search committee for the president of the institution concerned.

*SEC. 6. Promulgation and Implementation of Policies.* – The Board of Trustees shall promulgate and implement policies in accordance with the declared state policies on education and other pertinent provisions of the Philippine Constitution on education, science and technology, arts, culture and sports; as well as the policies, standards and thrusts of the CHED under Republic Act No. 7722.

*SEC. 7. The Administration.* – The administration of the College shall be vested in the president of the College who shall render full-time service. He shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of a duly constituted search committee. He shall have a term of four (4) years and shall be eligible for reappointment for another term.

The president shall be assisted by a vice president for academic affairs who shall be appointed by the Board upon the former's recommendation without prejudice to the appointment of more than one vice president when so warranted.

In case of vacancy by reason of death, resignation, removal for cause or incapacity of the president to perform the functions of his office, the Board shall have the authority to designate an officer-in-charge pending the appointment of a new president.

In case of vacancy in the office of the president as mentioned in the immediately preceding paragraph, his successor shall hold office for the unexpired term.

SEC. 8. *The Secretary of the College.* – The Board shall appoint a Secretary who shall serve as such for both the Board and the College and shall keep all records and proceedings of the Board. He shall communicate to each member of the Board notice of meetings.

SEC. 9. *The Treasurer of the Philippines.* – The Treasurer of the Philippines shall be the *ex officio* treasurer of the College. All accounts and expenses of the College shall be audited by the Commission on Audit or its duly authorized representative.

SEC. 10. *Administrative Council.* – There shall be an administrative council consisting of the president of the College as chairman, the vice president(s), deans, directors and other officials of equal rank as members, and whose duty is to review and recommend to the Board of Trustees policies governing the administration, management and development planning of the College for appropriate action.

SEC. 11. *Academic Council.* – There shall be an academic council with the president of the College as chairman and all members of the instructional staff with the rank of not lower than assistant professor as members.

The academic council shall have the power to review and recommend the curricular offerings and rules of discipline of the

College subject to appropriate action of the Board of Trustees. It shall fix the requirements for the admission of students as well as for graduation and the conferment of degrees subject to review and/or approval by the Board of Trustees through the president of the College.

SEC. 12. *Academic Freedom.* – Pursuant to paragraph 2, Section 5 of Article XIV of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, all institutions of higher learning, public or private, shall enjoy academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

SEC. 13. *Admission.* – No student shall be denied admission to college by reasons of sex, nationality, religion, political affiliation or physical disability.

SEC. 14. No religious opinion or affiliation shall be the matter of inquiry in the appointment of faculty members of the College: *Provided, however,* That no member of the faculty shall teach for or against any particular church or religious sect.

SEC. 15. No member of the faculty of the College shall attempt directly or indirectly, under penalty of dismissal by the Board of Trustees, to influence students or any person in the College towards any ideology, political or otherwise, which agitates the overthrow of the duly constituted government.

SEC. 16. The appointment of the officer-in-charge of the College pending the appointment of the president by the Board upon its composition, shall be made by the CHED, based on the qualifications of the incumbent administrator.

SEC. 17. On or before the fifteenth (15th) day of the second month after the opening of the regular classes each year, the Board shall file with the Office of the President of the Philippines, through the chairperson of the CHED and to both Houses of Congress, a detailed report on the progress, conditions and needs of the College.

SEC. 18. All the assets, fixed and movable, personnel, records and facilities of the Bulacan National Agricultural School as well as liabilities or obligations, are hereby transferred to the

College: *Provided, however,* That the positions, rights and security of tenure of personnel therein employed under existing laws prior to absorption by the College are not impaired: *Provided, further,* That the incumbents of the positions shall remain on the same status until otherwise provided for by the Board. All parcels of land belonging to the government occupied by the Bulacan National Agricultural School are hereby declared the property of the Bulacan National Agricultural State College and shall be titled under that name: *Provided, furthermore,* That should the College cease to exist or be abolished or such parcels of land aforementioned be no longer needed by the College, the same shall revert to the Province of Bulacan.

SEC. 19. The heads of bureaus and offices of the national government are hereby authorized to loan or transfer, upon request of the president of the College, such apparatus, equipment or supplies as may be needed by the College and to detail employees for duty therein when in the judgment of the bureau or office, such apparatus, equipment, supplies or services of such employees can be spared without serious detriment to the public service. Employees so detailed shall perform such duties as required of them by the president of the College, and the time so employed shall be counted as part of their regular services.

SEC. 20. It shall be the continuing policy of the College to accept the affiliation and/or integration within its operation of any existing national school whose programs can contribute largely and effectively to the attainment of its objectives: *Provided, however,* That in case of integration, the chairperson of the CHED is hereby authorized to determine and approve the affiliation and/or integration of the specific existing national school. In such case, all funds, properties and other assets, as well as obligations of the integrated school shall be transferred to the College.

SEC. 21. The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Bulacan National Agricultural School, except the sum needed to continue the operations of its existing high school. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the continued operation and maintenance of the College shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 22. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations contrary or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 23. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved, February 24, 1998.