

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1724



Introduced by: **REP. RUTH MARIANO-HERNANDEZ**

AN ACT
MANDATING THE COMPULSORY TEACHING OF ETHICS SUBJECTS IN
PHILIPPINE TERTIARY EDUCATION

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This measure aims to mandate the compulsory teaching of ethics as a general education subject in Philippine tertiary education with the long-term view of mitigating and eventually eradicating the long-term scourge of corruption in the country.

In the 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) conducted by the global anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International, the Philippines obtained a score of 36 in 2018 – up from 34 in 2017 – thereby jumping from 111th to 99th out of 180 countries.

The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, according to experts and business people. It uses a scale of zero to 100, where zero is “highly corrupt” and 100 is “very clean.”

While the Philippines’ ranking has generally improved, there is a need to institute a cross-generational policy to continually educate the citizenry on the ways and means to address and combat the said scourge. In fact, our country’s score, according to Transparency International, is still far from the Asia-Pacific regional average of 44.

It is hoped that the inclusion of mandatory ethics subjects in the general education curriculum of colleges, universities, and technical and vocational education institutions shall result in a more morally enlightened, assertive and accountable citizenry in the public and private sectors of our national life.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

Approved,


HON. RUTH MARIANO-HERNANDEZ
2nd District, Laguna

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Ethics and Accountability Education Act”.

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the sustained and all-round development of Filipinos in all fields and professions, including the inculcation and strengthening of ethics and accountability, through education. Towards this end, the State shall establish, maintain, and continuously update and innovate a permanent curriculum on Ethics and Accountability in the tertiary education of Filipinos.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms are referred to as follows:

- (A) Ethics – involves the systematization, defense, and recommendation of concepts of right and wrong conduct. It seeks to resolve questions of human morality by defining concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice and crime in all fields of endeavor in government and the private sector;
- (B) Accountability – is the obligation to accept responsibility or to account for one's decisions and actions. This includes the obligation of an individual, institution or organization to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them, and to disclose the results in a transparent manner. It is the answerability, liability, and the expectation of account-giving in the public, non-government and private sectors.
- (C) CHED – Commission on Higher Education;

(D) TESDA – Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;

(E) Tertiary Education – refers to any post-secondary education course, be it a technical, vocational, or degree program.

SECTION 4. *Compulsory Teaching of Ethics Subjects.* – The offering of general ethics subjects as part of the general education curriculum is hereby declared mandatory for all tertiary education courses in all higher educational institutions (HEIs) and technical and vocational education institutions. The general ethics subject is apart from the professional specialization ethics subjects that are required in specific courses (i.e.: legal ethics, medical ethics, journalism ethics, etc.).

SECTION 5. *Implementing Agencies.* - The CHED and the TESDA are hereby authorized and directed to formulate and adopt a system for the effective implementation of this Act.

The said system shall include the following:

- (a) The study and standardization of all current offerings of higher educational institutions and vocational education institutions on general ethics courses;
- (b) Research on current educational efforts on teaching ethics in foreign countries with the end view of applying relevant practices to our education system;
- (c) Maximize the expertise and participation of the Office of the Ombudsman in the conduct of fora and symposia in higher educational institutions and technical and vocational education institutions on ethics and accountability;
- (d) Extend support to the activities of university-based youth groups that promote ethics and accountability in the various universities in the country; and,
- (e) Exercise such other powers as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged to the budgets allocated to the CHED and the TESDA, and other relevant government agencies and institutions under the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Chairperson of the CHED and the Director General of the TESDA shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the proper implementation thereof within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or a in national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,