



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

20th CONGRESS
2nd Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10324



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER A. LAGBAS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State is constitutionally mandated to “protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels” and to ensure access to professional fields essential to national development. In recent years, the demand for qualified mental health professionals in the Philippines has grown exponentially, driven by increasing public awareness of mental health, the passage of the Republic Act No. 11036, otherwise known as the “Mental Health Act,” and the documented shortage of licensed psychologists in both public and private sectors.

Current data from the Department of Health, the Professional Regulation Commission, and the Commission on Higher Education indicate that the country’s mental health workforce remains critically inadequate. Many local government units, schools, community health facilities, and government institutions remain without access to licensed psychologists. This gap directly undermines service delivery under national policies on mental health, child protection, disaster response, gender-based violence, and workplace wellness, among others.

One systemic barrier is the long, segmented pathway to becoming a licensed psychologist under Republic Act No. 10029, which requires a completed graduate degree in Psychology and extensive practicum hours before an individual may qualify for licensure. This structure, while necessary for professional competence, results in a lengthy and costly educational pathway that discourages many capable students from entering the field.

The University of the Philippines, by virtue of its mandate under Republic Act No. 9500 (UP Charter of 2008) as the national university, is tasked to serve as a leading institution in innovation, professional training, and the development of model academic programs responsive to national needs. The UP Charter expressly empowers the University to design pioneering curricular programs while retaining full academic freedom through its internal academic councils and the Board of Regents.

Following this mandate, the University has successfully implemented the Integrated Liberal Arts and Medicine (INTARMED) Program, a seven-year accelerated pathway that seamlessly integrates pre-medical and medical training for exceptional students. This integrated model has proven effective in producing highly competent medical professionals through a streamlined curriculum without compromising academic rigor.

This proposed measure seeks to direct the University of the Philippines to establish an analogous integrated undergraduate-to-graduate program in Psychology, designed to produce graduates who meet all qualifications under Republic Act No. 10029 for eligibility to the Psychologist Licensure Examination. The intent is not to legislate or prescribe specific curricular content but to provide a statutory policy direction that empowers UP to develop an accelerated, cohesive, and outcomes-based program addressing the urgent national need for licensed psychologists.

Under this measure, UP shall determine the program's admission mechanisms, curriculum design, degree nomenclature, practicum structure, and progression rules through its existing academic bodies, subject to approval by the UP Board of Regents and subsequent recognition by CHED. Funding support may be sourced from the annual General Appropriations Act and UP's internal resources.

By strengthening the pipeline of highly trained mental health professionals and modernizing pathways into the psychology profession, this Act advances national mental health goals, supports LGUs and government institutions in delivering mandated services, and expands opportunities for Filipino students aspiring to enter the mental health field.

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



HON. JENNIFER A. LAGBAS
Representative
First District, Misamis Oriental



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AN ACT
MANDATING THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES TO ESTABLISH AN
INTEGRATED UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PSYCHOLOGY
LEADING TO QUALIFICATION FOR LICENSURE UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO.
10029, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “PHILIPPINE PSYCHOLOGY ACT OF 2009”,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “Integrated Psychology Education Program Act.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to expand access to quality mental health services, strengthen the professional mental health workforce, and support innovative academic programs that respond to national needs.

Consistent with Articles XIII and XIV of the Constitution and Republic Act No. 9500, the State shall encourage the University of the Philippines, as the national university, to develop pioneering models of professional education that advance academic excellence while upholding institutional academic freedom.

SECTION 3. *Establishment of an Integrated Psychology Program.* - The University of the Philippines is hereby mandated to establish an integrated undergraduate–graduate program in Psychology analogous in structure to the Integrated Liberal Arts and Medicine (INTARMED) Program of the UP College of Medicine.

The program shall be designed as an accelerated and seamless curriculum that admits qualified students at the undergraduate level and leads to the completion of a graduate degree in Psychology consistent with the requirements of Republic Act No. 10029 for qualification to the Psychologist Licensure Examination.

SECTION 4. *Curriculum Development and Academic Governance.* - The specific curriculum, degree nomenclature, admission mechanisms, progression rules, practicum requirements, and learning outcomes shall be determined exclusively by the appropriate curriculum committees, academic units, and councils of the University of the Philippines, subject to approval by the UP Board of Regents and subsequent recognition by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Nothing in this Act shall be construed as limiting the academic freedom of the University of the Philippines to design, revise, or update the program in accordance with outcomes-based education standards and evolving professional competencies.

SECTION 5. *Minimum Program Outcomes.* - The integrated program shall be structured so that graduates:

- (a) Obtain both an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree in Psychology, as required by RA 10029;
- (b) Complete not less than the required practicum hours and competencies for licensure as a Psychologist;
- (c) Receive training aligned with national mental health priorities and evidence-based psychological practice; and
- (d) Are eligible to apply for the Psychologist Licensure Examination administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) upon completion of the graduate component.

SECTION 6. *Scholarships and Student Support.* - The University of the Philippines may create scholarship programs, financial assistance mechanisms, or service-based incentives to support qualified students admitted into the integrated program. Funding for such support may be sourced from the university budget, government appropriations, or partnerships with public and private entities.

SECTION 7. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the regular appropriations of the University of the Philippines. Thereafter, the needed funds for the continued implementation of the program shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the University of the Philippines shall formulate the rules and guidelines necessary for its implementation, including coordination with CHED and the PRC to ensure alignment with licensure and accreditation standards.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder thereof shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive issuances, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,