OBJECTIVES:
- To encourage and sustain socio-economic-political engagement among Filipino youth in the civic life of the country as inspired by Catholic social teaching and the vision of Fr. Francisco Araneta, SJ.
- To enhance the capacity of student formators/mentors to develop and sustain political education and formation programs which would help advance the social and economic well-being of communities and the nation; and
- To strengthen and mobilize a network of reform-oriented youth and student organizations working to advance democratic and socio-economic reform in the Philippines.

OUTCOMES
The expected outcomes of the project are the following:
1. Design and creation of at least three (3) political formation modules/manuals which draw upon the vision, substance and pastoral method of Catholic social teaching.
2. Conduct of at least three (3) training workshops using the formation modules developed.
3. Holding of two (2) assemblies of the different student social formation offices from the Jesuit Higher Education/Society of Jesus Social Apostolate and Catholic education networks.
4. Support for the development of political education/engaged citizenship formation program of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), a network of secondary and tertiary educational institutions with more than one thousand two hundred (1,200) member-institutions nation-wide; and
5. Assistance in the framing of contemporary socio-economic-political issues, identifying mechanisms for greater involvement of the students in tackling such issues, and coordinating various responses.

Project Period:
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Nation-building has been identified as one of the three main thrusts of the Ateneo de Manila University under its new president, Fr. Jose Ramon T. Villarin, SJ. This strategic vision has three sub-goals: defeating poverty, transforming governance and politics, and cultivating love of country. Among the key strategies identified in the area of politics and governance is to engage in leadership formation work and promote careers in public service, particularly in government.

There are echoes in such present vision and strategy of the Ateneo de Manila of earlier calls to nation building made in 1970 by then Jesuit Provincial Fr. Horacio de la Costa, SJ and Ateneo President Fr. Francisco Araneta, SJ, which were inspired by the renewal of the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus after Vatican II. At that time, the vision was enunciated in terms of promoting integrated human development in the social, political, economic and spiritual (SPES) spheres of life and thus calling for the holistic formation of students in light of Catholic social teaching. It was this vision that led to the establishment of a SPES Institute during the Ateneo presidency of Fr. Araneta. Such a perspective remains relevant today in preparing students to engage the fields of politics and government, civil society, and the business/professional sectors in order for them to respond generously and effectively to persistent challenges of poverty, corruption, conflict and injustice.

One of the challenges of integrated human development and transformative education is to ensure greater synergy in the work of the various university units that focus on student social formation. While fostering youth volunteerism and community engagement is not new for the social action offices within the university, some projects tend to be framed in a manner that separates the socioeconomic, political, and spiritual arenas – often privileging socioeconomic initiatives while giving political involvement secondary importance and sometimes even a negative connotation. This approach tends to suggest that citizens can address poverty and effect social change without engaging the political processes and challenging political institutions, actors and outcomes. In order to counter this type of dichotomization, the proponents intend to further the development of training modules, conduct seminar workshops for student leaders and mentors/formators, and support service-learning projects which promote democracy-building in a manner that is consistent with the social vision of the Church.

In project component programs for political education and action, the project (and its proponents) will be (a) grounded in the core values of Catholic social teaching that espouses the promotion of human dignity, the common good, political democracy, and social justice; (b) guided by a critical and empirical analysis and understanding of the local, national, and global situations; and (c) involved in a diverse and broad social movement that will pursue a shared direction towards both strategic organizing and continuing collective reflection and action for democratization and empowerment.

Political Education Program: The approach to encouraging greater participation in politics is anchored in providing concrete avenues for constructive political engagement that will deepen young people’s involvement in democratic politics and strengthen democratic institutions. It will have three components: the development of at least three (3) political education modules/manuals grounded in the core values of Catholic social teaching and inspired by the vision of Fr. Araneta through the social, political, economic, and spiritual (SPES) formation; and the holding of three (3) training-of-trainers (TOT) workshops.

The political education modules/manuals will be designed/written by a core group of individuals coming from the Ateneo de Manila’s: (a) Office of the Vice President for Social Development, (b) the Ateneo School of Government, (c) Political Science and Economics Departments, (d) Office for Integrated Ateneo Formation (INAF), (e) Office for Social Concern and Involvement, and (f) Office of Student Activities, and from the Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan (SLB) network. Each module/manual will focus on a specific theme and will serve as a guide for the trainers to facilitate a one hour to two hours discussion and workshop on the topic. These political education modules will be designed to strengthen the participants’ understanding and analysis of the social, political, economic and cultural problems that afflict Philippine democracy and to identify and develop venues for political participation among the youth and young professionals in addressing those problems in manners consistent with Catholic Social Teaching.

After the modules are completed, the proponents will organize a one-day training of-trainers (TOT) seminar-workshop. 20 to 25 student leaders and formators will participate in each training workshop. Participants will be selected based on priority in democracy and community development activities and will be identified through university-based student organizations and formation offices such as, but not limited to, the Ateneo de Manila’s Office of Student Activities and Office for Social Concern and Involvement.

Through these activities, a constituency of politically-engaged young people trained and equipped to advocate democratic reform in their respective areas/organizations is to be built and expanded. These would-be trainers can also serve as resource persons and be responsible for coordinating opportunities for youth participation in democratic institution-building.

Institution Building and Networking:
Pugadlawin will also hold two assemblies to gather the representatives from the different social formation offices within the Jesuit/SISA and CEAP networks to discuss the challenges and share insights on the best practices in student formation and other initiatives. In these assemblies, participants will assess the current social, economic, and political situations as well as plan for coordinated initiatives to address priority issues and challenges.

Throughout the project period, Pugadlawin and the rest of the proponents will also continue to play a central role in providing a framework for understanding current political issues in the context of the longer-term effort to build lasting democratic institutions and for identifying strategic responses and options to address these challenges. In the course of the year, it will introduce, when necessary, advocacy campaigns around an issue that will be relevant to youth citizenship and democracy building.