

## **SHAPING TOMORROW: PIONEERING SUSTAINABLE FUTURE THROUGH STUDENT RESEARCH**

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As higher education institution, the Occidental Mindoro State College is focused on the future, addressing tomorrow problems using the present innovation. One of the many ways OMSC is transforming the world is by involving students in sustainability efforts. Sustainability means employing an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to understand and address the complex relationships among the environment, economy, and society (Mensah, 2019). In a dynamic academe-industry landscape, there is an increasing need for sustainable solutions. The role of research and innovation policy is important to address challenge of climate change, food security, social equity, resource scarcity, and public health (Ludwig et al., 2021). Academic research institutions have a major role in guiding students toward a systematic viewpoint that promotes interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches to developing sustainable solutions (Baumber, 2022).

University and college students play a key role in undertaking societal issues, as they are driven by their desire to contribute to the attainment of sustainable development (Torsdottir et al., 2023). Well, of course, in addition to the desire to complete academic obligations. Students should learn that hard-pure and soft-pure research have equal weight in generating findings that can serve as useful basis for policy and program development. Integrating sustainability concepts and constructs in student research topics will help to advance the body of knowledge in a specific field of interest. Still, it will equip the students with the necessary skills and attitude toward sustainable decisions needed in their chosen field (Trevisan et al., 2024).

Moreover, a key mandate of higher education institutions, particularly state universities and colleges, is to nurture students as incubators of innovative ideas by providing the resources, mentorship, and platforms necessary to translate their work into tangible outcomes. These innovations are not limited to just technology but also encompass social studies with the potential to create social enterprises, develop innovative policies and programs, and drive organizational change. The focus is not solely on profit and business but on enhancing the welfare and well-being of individuals and communities by addressing issues such as poverty alleviation, healthcare, education, community development, environmental conservation, and promoting equitable access to resources.

As we gear towards a future-proof institution that ensures adaptability, resilience, and sustainability, we recognize that solutions will not arise from isolated efforts but from collaborative, interdisciplinary approaches. Student research, with its inherent creativity and innovative perspectives, plays a crucial role in positioning our institution as a leader in various discipline. By promoting a culture of inquiry, we are not only producing leaders in various fields but also serving as the foundation for a sustainable and equitable future. Consequently, the

outcomes of research endeavors become more than theoretical exercises; they become actionable and practical solutions that contribute to the improvement of society and align with OMSC's goal of becoming a university.

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