

Strategic Alignment and Implementation Gaps in Higher Education Internationalization: A Case Analysis of a Philippine State University

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Abstract: - Guided by national policies that espoused coherent directions for higher education internationalization in the Philippines, universities put up front-loosely related policy-guided practices to what actually took place on the ground. The study investigated the implementation of major documents on internationalization in higher education by a Philippine State University, approved and issued by Commission on Higher Education (CHED) based according from guidelines to course offerings for Transnational Higher Education, Guidelines To Establish Foreign Transnational Higher Education Institutions and Programs/Activities For Student Exchange Program Mobility Guidelines; Open and Distance learning (higher degree); Endorsement Of Travel Abroad. To evaluate the alignment of practices at State University with national-level policy, we analyzed evidence through a case study that included preliminary analysis via: (1) internal audits for institutional compliance with frameworks; (2) self-assessment efforts and/or stakeholder interviews to assess problems across multiple levels. A compliance matrix was created to determine adherence rates with the thematic analysis of the interview data, highlighting areas where participants shared common ground or differed in approach. The findings give confirmation of the advances that State University has achieved in terms of mobility and attunement to regional context, yet some areas (i.e., formal transnational education programs or open and distance learning as a sector altogether) remain unattended.

Key-Words: - Internationalization of Higher Education, Policy-Practice Discrepancy, State University, Philippine Commission on Higher Education Compliance, Philippine Higher Education, Transnational Higher Education, Student Mobility, Open and Distance Learning, Policy Implementation

Received: May 23, 2026. Revised: June 24, 2026. Accepted: July 25, 2026. Published: September 15, 2026.

1 Introduction

Whereas access to internationalization and the steps undertaken by both institutions as well as individuals [1] were previously viewed through an equity lens [2], they are now perceived as increasingly integrated in to institutional relevance for academic excellence and global engagement [3]; thus, making its place a strategic lever of contemporary higher education. As universities face the challenges of globalization, internationalization of teaching, research, and service functions has emerged as an important indicator of quality and competitiveness in higher education institutions. The impetus towards internationalization [4], at least as evidenced by frameworks like ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) and UMAP (University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific), was further fuelled regionally by cooperation and harmonization in policy.

Meanwhile, several planned policy instruments on institutionalization for internationalization have been mapped out by CHED — the designated higher

education (HE) priorities in the Philippines— over several administrations to promote international engagement among local universities. The release of CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 55, s. 2016, was a pivotal moment in the national higher education agenda by outlining the Policy Framework and Strategies on the Internationalization of Philippine Higher Education. It provides a broad outline of how students and faculty should move, integrate the curriculum, engage in transnational partnerships, conduct quality assurance (QA), and align with national development priorities [5].

This framework, which has existed for more than ten years now, was expounded even further by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) itself through initiatives like its Transnational Higher Education (TNHE) Act when Republic Act No. 11448 became operational; its Open Distance Learning (ODL) Act via RA No. 10650, along with new rules that guide the travel authorization of students studying abroad. The goals of these efforts

are to have HEIs be integrated into international academic networks, host foreign students and faculty, and provide quality offshore education [5], [6].

Nonetheless, this is a well-designed policy framework, but implementation varies by institution. Philippine HEIs, particularly state universities and colleges (SUCs), regularly experience institutional constraints including insufficient financing, digital information infrastructure, and administrative impediments [7], [8]. While awareness and intent grow about internationalization, few study the real-life practices of institutions that bind their everyday operations to internationalization [9], [10].

This makes the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology — a state university in the Philippines — a compelling case study for investigating how, in practice, policy intent aligns with institutional provisions. With a vision to be a "world-class university," the state university has been engaged in several internationalization endeavors, such as joint activities under UMAP and the SEA-Teacher Program, the naming of institutional focal persons for internationalization, and achievements included in the 2025 CHED Internationalization Champions of Nation-Building and Sustainability (ICONS) Awards. While these developments indicate good potential alignment with national objectives, they bring serious questions regarding depth, consistency, and scale.

This study aims to conduct a full policy and practice gap analysis of the internationalization efforts of the state university. In particular, it assesses how state universities are aligning with CHED's internationalization framework around very important aspects: areas like mobility, transnational education, open and distance learning, as well as institutional capacity. It sheds light on the underlying strategic, operational, and contextual determinants of internationalization outcomes in public Philippine HEIs through a comparative analysis of areas of alignment and divergence. The results aim to facilitate institutional decisions and refinements in policy, as well as other wider implications for improving practices of internationalization.

2 Review of Related Literature

2.1 The Philippine Internationalization Policy Landscape

Internationalization has been one of the primary avenues for reform propelled by the Philippines' Commission on Higher Education (CHED). The

national policy framework for internalization and comprehensiveness in higher education [student and faculty mobility, curriculum integration, research collaboration, and other academic partnerships] provided by the Commission is CHED Memorandum Order No. 55, Series of 2016 [5]. CHED has certain initiatives in this regard, like ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) and University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP), where it is going beyond intra-regional, which allow nations to have day-to-day cross-border academic exchanges among each other, further leading to qualification referencing at a regional level as per different frameworks mentioned above by CHED [11] and Cheung [4]. To institutionalize cross-border collaborations, Republic Act No. 11448 or the Transnational Higher Education (TNHE) Act of 2019 built on this agenda by allowing Philippine HEIs to participate in dual degrees and twinning arrangements with foreign universities, and subsection (a) authorizes branch campuses of foreign universities in the Philippines under certain conditions [12]. This change in policy is a broader strategy on how to integrate Philippine HEIs within the global education system after establishing national development goals.

2.2 Open and Distance Learning (ODL) as a Pathway to Internationalization

Increasing internationalization and access for a diverse range of learners have been framed as a key feature of Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Open Distance Learning Act or Republic Act No. 10650 declares the use of ODL in Philippine education system and even utilizes it as a possible means to reach out to overseas Filipinos and other global learners. Some provisions in CHED guidelines (e.g., CMO No. 15, s.2019) emphasize quality assurance, provision of learner support, and accessibility of ICT infrastructure in ODL delivery [5], [13].

UPOU and other institutions have taken the lead role in institutionalizing ODL among international collaboration frameworks. But in many state universities, ODL implementation is still at the greenfield level, faced with multiple constraints in terms of technological, pedagogical, and policy capacities. When wielded carefully, ODL could become an expandable framework for transnational program delivery and academic diversity.

2.3 International Scholarships and Faculty Capacity Development

One of the key areas where CHED has focused its priorities in internationalization has been human

capital development. From 2016 to 2021, the government has invested about PHP 3 billion for international mobility and graduate education of faculty and students [5]. With the help of programs such as the Fulbright-CHED scholarships and ASEM-DUO, scholars have been equipped to pursue advanced studies and collaborative research overseas that will enhance both local institutional knowledge transfer and a growing global academic network. As such, these programs both enhance individual competencies and act as levers for institutional innovation, positioning the institution to lead in internationalization efforts. However, uptake is heterogeneous across institutions for a range of reasons linked to awareness, institutional support and competitiveness of applications.

2.4 Structural Constraints and Gaps in Policy Implementation

Even though frameworks are articulated in policy, studies show significant implementation challenges, mainly among public HEIs. [7] full policy execution obstacles are driven by chronic capacity deficits, infrastructural constraints, and a fragmented institutional approach [8]. Bureaucratic, regulatory hurdles are shown in the insufficiently supportive foreign trip endorsement process found and laid out under the directive of CHED CMO No 3, s.2025 [14], preventing better participation for international programs. Equity concerns are also prevalent. [15] and [16] argue that marginalized students and faculty are regularly excluded from mobility opportunities, highlighting the need for a more expansive model of internationalization in particular alongside it. Finally, a decolonial perspective on internationalization — typical of the Global South [17] — has been called for in new literature. And, ultimately, the Epistemic Equity Project (2025) focused on faculty agency and cultural context.

2.5 Comparative and Empirical Insights

Diverse models of internationalization and comparative benchmarks emerge from empirical research conducted across Southeast Asia. [18] compared policy coherence along with institutional autonomy strategies in Indonesia and the Philippines. [19] highlighted the importance of regional cooperation in facilitating institutional preparedness. In the Philippine context, as pointed out by [20]. Localized rationales and implementation strategies for HEIs were documented by in [20], [21] and [22]. On the other hand, [23] and [24] emphasized the internal quality assurance mechanisms of higher education institutions as they relate to the international framework. [10] conducted a systematic

review that consolidated best practices and common constraints across institutions and offered a meta-perspective on implementation trajectories and outcomes.

The celebrated gains of internationalization as a policy area in the Philippine higher education system are both represented collectively by and depicted through the literature that shows uneven efforts at translating these policies to an institutional level. Gaps are created by structural, operational, and cultural differences. We articulate the present study reflecting on this body of work by examining how a state university in Central Luzon is dealing with these challenges and what it means for policy-practice alignment among emerging higher education systems.

3 Research Objectives

This study aims to investigate the level of alignment between internationalization efforts in a state university in the Philippines and the policies & regulatory framework of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Evaluate the implementation and compliance of CHED Policies on Internationalization – CMO 55 s.2016 (Internationalization Framework), Transnational Higher Education Act with its Implementing Guidelines/Rules, AIMS Program Participation guidelines, Open Distance Learning Act; UMAP initiatives by CHED international scholarship programs endorsed for travel abroad — including both Incoming and Outgoing students;
2. Examine the institutional practices that operationalized these policies, such as the composition of internationalization offices, the adoption of ODL platforms, exchange programs, and global partnerships, along with their alignment with national policy strategies.
3. Locate gaps between institutional practices and policy to call out where partial or non-implementation is occurring, including identifying the barriers that make it difficult for full alignment.
4. Investigate potential reasons for these gaps from stakeholder perspectives, e.g., resource constraints (money or time), administrative bottlenecks, institutional readiness and policy literacy.
5. Recommend ways to better align the institutions with CHED's internationalization agenda, and suggest how CHED can be a partner in policy reform, provision of funds and conduct capacity - building initiatives

4 Research Methodology

Utilizing a single instrumental case of a State University in the Philippines, this study was designed using the case study research design to gain insight into the complex and pervasive issue of policy implementation in higher education internationalization. This was achieved by triangulating qualitative and quantitative data collection.

4.1 Document Analysis and Compliance Matrix

The investigators undertook a thorough content analysis of relevant policy documents and institutional records. National policy documents analysed included CMO, No. 55 s.2016 (Internationalization Framework) [25], Republic Act No. 11448 and CHED's TNHE guidelines CMO Nos. 11 s.2014 & 19 s.2015 on AIMS participation; Republic Act No., 10650 and CHED Guidelines on Open and Distance Learning (ODL); UMAP program documentation; and circulars on international scholarships under the K-12 transition program; CMO no. 3 s.2025 Foreign Travel Authorization for SUCs. At the State University level, a variety of institutional data—including strategic plans, internationalization action plans, partnership agreements, annual reports and self-assessments submitted to CHE—were collected.

Based on these documents, the researchers created a policy compliance matrix that pointed to major requirements of each policy area and observable evidence for implementation. Data were scored using a scale from 0–2 for each item (0 = not implemented, 1 = partially implemented/in process, 2 = fully implemented with evidence), e.g., presence of an International Affairs Office or participation in a regional mobility consortium. Compliance rates were calculated for each of the major policy domains to allow for comparisons and visualization of alignment across policy areas.

4.2 Institutional Self-Assessment

The State University conducted an internal self-assessment modeled after a compliance audit. A task force composed of the Director of the Office of International Affairs, the Quality Assurance Office, and designated internationalization coordinators evaluated implementation using the compliance matrix. Data reviewed included the number of active MOUs, inbound/outbound student counts, required office structures, and scholarship uptake. CHED's monitoring indicators (e.g., the Internationalization Monitoring Instrument) guided benchmarking. The

results informed both the scoring and descriptive narratives [5].

4.3 Stakeholder Interviews

In addition to the analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders at State University. These included university executives (e.g., Vice President for Academic Affairs, Director of International Affairs), faculty global mobility coordinators, and students while they were on exchange. External perspectives on implementation progress. Additionally, an external perspective was also provided by a representative from the CHED Regional Office. The questions revolved around knowledge of CHED policies, how the [program] works in terms of its operations, their views on what they consider problematic with the programs, and perceived institutional support or policy-level support. Interviews (with informed consent) were transcribed and thematically analyzed with a duration varying from 45 to 60 minutes.

Qualitative coding of implementation facilitators and constraints resulted in "leadership support," delays in completing mandatory administrative processes, or a lack of funding. In order to triangulate, themes were compared with findings based on the documents.

Use of Policy-Implementation Frameworks

To analyze their data, the researchers used a framework established in theory on how policies are put into action. Gap analysis utilized insights from the top-down and also bottom-up implementation literatures [26] that sought to reconcile the mismatch between centrally designed policies and local institutional realities. In the compliance framework approach, each CHED policy requirement is viewed as an alignment metric. Important constructs similar to "nominal compliance", "institutional capacity," and "clarity of objectives" were used to clarify the policy-practice gaps at the level of State University.

5 Results and Discussion

5.1 Overview of Policy Compliance of the State University

We begin with an overview of State University compliance rates for the major internationalization policy areas identified in the compliance matrix. Table 1 (Appendix) presents a qualitative measure of how close the state university came to meeting expectations for each policy or program, determined by document review and self-assessment scoring.

Compliance rates denote the percentage of tracked key indicators or requirements that State University has met for each requirement.

Compare the CHED internationalization policy areas by categories, some of them may be low compliance or high compliance, notice summary in Table 2 (Appendix). Its Institutional Strategy (80%) and Regional Mobility (UMAP) (90%), which include structural reforms such as the establishment of the International Affairs Office and active participation in multicultural programs like NiCE 2025, are aligned, as the current high level of alignment reflects its structure. Open and Distance Learning is at moderate compliance with a score of 60%, as foundational systems are laid out, but there is still limited full-scale implementation, such as fully online programs or wider uptake of scholarships [5], [13]. Also, awarding International Scholarships has at least 50% compliance. Transnational Education and AIMS participation have the highest gaps (20% & 10%, respectively), suggesting a misalignment between norms and institutional readiness to use dual degrees or join the AIMS consortium by the State University [4], [11], [12]. In contrast, with procedural burden [5], [14], administrative compliance is high (95%) for international travel procedures following CHED approval protocols. Such findings spur further investigation into the practices of the State University as well as the obstacles to complete policy alignment.

5.2 Implementation Practices at the State University vs. Policy Expectations

This analysis examines State University's implementation practices against the CHED policy expectations for higher education internationalization. It identifies areas of strength where the State University is in full alignment, evidence of partial compliance, and opportunities for development. The matrix that follows offers a snapshot of these dimensions across major policy areas.

It implies that State University actually has a very high level of adherence to internationalization strategies such as institutional strategy, mobility programs, and procedural compliance [5], [27] represented in the matrix. A prepared institution possesses its own international office [24], strategic agenda, and displays continuity in joining the region through SEA-Teacher [4], UMAP [22].

However, there are gaps in transnational education, application of curriculum, and uptake of scholarship. Although the TNHE context is largely favorable, the policy environment presents a number

of challenges; there are limited opportunities and little regulatory capacity for its implementation [6], [12]. Likewise, it also means that there might be institutional inequities with respect to embedding global perspectives [19], [28] and partial curricular internationalization as well.

Relatively modest attention given to formal AIMS and international scholarship programs is another suggestion for strategic scale-up in specific high-yield areas, with advice needed either externally or through internal capacity building [17], [18]. Although procedural compliance is assured by the State University in travel endorsements [14], this has also been limited due to administrative inflexibility that calls for adaptive policy mechanisms and other practices [15].

This is also reflective of the broader dynamics with Philippine HEIs—taking strides towards internationalization while continuing to face structural constraints and varying capacities [7], [8]. Addressing policy-practice gaps via better support structures, collaborative endeavors and contextually-led co-implementation is vital to continued alignment efforts [10], [29].

5.3 Areas of Misalignment and Challenges

The following section extracts and conjoins the CHED policies aligning with internationalization along with the challenges supporting this misalignment from State University to elaborate its conceptualization. Table 3 (Appendix) presents the key gaps identified, or partial policy objectives, along with the data that may help explain each gap.

Institutional-level barriers account for many of the State University policy practice gaps. Despite interest in TNHE and AIMS, participation is limited by a dearth of high-quality programs, funding, and international partners [4], [6], [10], [11]. Such findings strengthen the demand for a customized capacity-building approach from CHED to underdeveloped HEIs [19], [28]. A barrier to engagement is the need for more information and additional training. Limited scholarship uptake and uneven mobilization of curriculum internationalization are more indicative of an awareness and support trickle-down failure among faculty [17], [18], [24]. This is in spite of State University being very much a stickler for travel policies of [14] issuing such internationalization, and the procedural delays to people from countries that Colby serves as its prime students will only be clipped marginally, in which he can beckon for an agile process to international collaboration [7], [15]. Digitizing approvals and making processes more efficient can expedite turnaround time. There have

been some steps towards ‘internationalization at home’, but these are often marginal. Involvement in multicultural programming and student services might also promote inclusivity [8], [20]. Your experience at State University is illustrative of a developmentally-relevant response to the enabling policy context set by CHED, i.e., missing parts can offer insights and mechanisms to provide support not proof of noncompliance [5].

5.4 Linking Practice to Policy Frameworks: A Conversation

Policy Conformity in Internationalization at the State University. Firm compliance focuses on institutional mechanisms such as establishing an International Affairs Office and signing MOUs, while loftier goals—joint degrees (UD) or large-scale ODL projects remain at a level of aspiration [5], [23]. Accreditation such as the ICONS Award from CHED, has been reinforced through external recognition, but official institutional support expected along with other incentives [5], [18].

But the lack of resources still remains one of the key enablers. Because national internationalization funds tend to be competitive, the State University has a limited pool of resources they can spend on this work. Global goals could likewise be embedded into core programs [13], [15], whereas institution-wide commitments might also get locked in. Nonetheless, disinterest is not the cause of mismatches in TNHE or AIMS participation—broad CHED policies may benefit from gradual shifts perspective-wise and infrastructural builds within universities with support offered by available organizations.

These gaps are also strategic opportunities. A potential area for the State University is to develop niche TNE offerings or develop existing bilateral exchanges outside a TNE consortium context (e.g., AIMS; [6], [21]). For long-term sustainability, a heavy dependency on curriculum design and mobility coordination trainings of faculty development and internationalization (Bagayawa et al., 2024; Alimorong, 2025; Ulla et al.

Most importantly, the degree of State University alignment with CHED policies is considerable but evolving. It serves as a case that policy objectives will take place only if an institutional context is in place along with other necessary resources and support [5], [7].

6 Conclusion

The experience of the State University epitomizes both the potential and challenges in implementing

CHED’s internationalization agenda at the institutional level. So far, the university has made remarkable strides in internalizing internationalization first through establishing offices such as the International Affairs Office (IAO) in 2014 and then by participating in regional mobility programs like UMAP (University Mobility Asia Pacific) that allow undergraduate students from higher education institutions to travel, practice their acquired skills, and live abroad for a certain semester or academic year and SEA-Teacher which is intended to enhance the professional development of pre-service teachers through student learning exchanges among Southeast Asian countries. Such arrangements have increased the visibility of the state university and offered additional global exposure for both students and faculty.

Nevertheless, expanded policy-practice gaps continue to exist mostly around transnational education offerings, full participation within multilateral mechanisms like AIMS, and absolute integral incorporation of open distance learning. These gaps are not predicated on lack of will but on real limitations: available funding, capacity, and infrastructure seem to be key contributors, along with the challenge of moving through new regulatory frameworks.

In response to this, the State University should prioritize faculty development, initiate more targeted international partnerships, and embed internationalization into institution-wide academic strategic and operational planning. At the policy level, CHED could explore tiered implementation models, technical mentorship for emerging HEIs, and additional simplification of approval processes to lessen institutional burdens.

The State University example illustrates that internationalization is not a straight-line process model checklist, but rather one where institutional will takes time, support, and adaptive leadership. The progress that it has made can be taken as an example and model for institution in the same field, while the instances of challenges faced by institution makes one understand wherein national policy evolves into something more inclusive and enabling. A globally engaged, regionally rooted higher education system is still attainable with concerted effort.

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Contribution of Individual Authors to the Creation of a Scientific Article (Ghostwriting Policy)

The authors equally contributed in the present research, at all stages from the formulation of the problem to the final findings and solution.

Sources of Funding for Research Presented in a Scientific Article or Scientific Article Itself

No funding was received for conducting this study.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. The State University's Compliance with CHED Internationalization Policies

Policy / Framework	Key Focus	Compliance Rate (%)	Status of the State University
1. CHED Internationalization Policy (CMO 55 s.2016)	Institutional IZN strategy, structures, programs	80%	Established OIA, int'l plan, some integration; needs improvement in curriculum internationalization.
2. Transnational Higher Education (RA 11448 & CMO guidelines)	Cross-border programs, TNE partnerships	20%	No active TNE programs yet; only basic MoUs, no joint degrees; exploring possibilities (low engagement).
3. ASEAN Int'l Mobility for Students (AIMS)	Student exchange consortium (ASEAN+ partners)	10%	Not an official AIMS member HEI; minimal participation in AIMS exchanges; relies on bilateral/other programs (gap in consortium engagement).
4. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) (RA 10650, CHED ODL policies)	Distance education offerings, online programs	60%	Implemented partial ODL (blended learning, emergency remote classes); no fully online degree program for the international market yet.
5. University Mobility in Asia-Pacific (UMAP)	Regional mobility and projects	90%	Active participant in UMAP initiatives (e.g., hosted cultural programs, exchange students); high alignment with CHED's UMAP advocacy.
6. International Scholarship Programs (CHED-funded)	Faculty/student scholarships abroad	50%	Several faculty availed of CHED international scholarships (e.g., for PhD abroad); student participation in gov't scholarship exchanges is modest.
7. Travel Endorsement Compliance (CMO 3 s.2025)	Securing CHED travel authority	95%	All official travels follow the CHED approval process; minor delays are experienced, but overall compliance is very high.

Source: created by the authors.

Table 2. Alignment of the State University's Internationalization Practices with CHED Policy Expectations

CHED Policy Domain	CHED Policy Expectations	The State University Implementation Practices	Alignment/Gap
Institutional IZN Strategy	Strategic IZN agenda; dedicated international office	IZN Strategic Plan included in 5-year plan; OIA established with assistant director-level head, active MOU tracking	Aligned
Curriculum Internationalization	Infusion of global content; ASEAN focus; foreign language courses	Some curriculum revisions (Education, Management); ASEAN literature in the English curriculum; Mandarin electives offered	Partially Aligned
Leadership & Global Positioning	Budget support for global participation; rankings engagement	Budget for fairs and delegations; joined INTENSE 2024; used consultants for global rankings	Aligned
Transnational Higher Education (TNHE)	Joint/dual degrees; foreign university presence	No dual degrees; twinning-type credit exchanges; visiting lecturers; no TNE application submitted	Significant Gap
AIMS Participation	Join AIMS network; submit proposals; ensure mobility financing	Not a formal AIMS member; participates in SEA-Teacher and bilateral exchanges	Partial Gap
ODL Policy Implementation	CHED-approved ODL offerings; collaborative capacity building	Moodle-based LMS in place; pilot hybrid M.Ed; CHED training attended; no collaboration with UPOU yet	Partially Aligned

CHED Policy Domain	CHED Policy Expectations	The State University Implementation Practices	Alignment/Gap
UMAP and Mobility Programs	Inclusive, credit-bearing international mobility via UMAP or regional programs	Active in SEA-Teacher and UMAP; hosted NiCE 2025; strong internal structures and top leadership support	Well Aligned
International Scholarships	Uptake of CHED and ASEAN scholarships for students and faculty	Few faculty with CHED overseas PhDs; small number of outbound students; barriers include readiness and awareness	Moderate Gap
Travel Authorization Compliance	Adherence to CHED AO No. 04 s.2019; submission of complete documentation	100% compliance in 2024; CHEDRO commended practices; faculty find process bureaucratic and slow for spontaneous trips	Procedurally Aligned; Practically Cumbersome

Source: created by the authors.

Table 3. Key Policy-Practice Gaps at the State University and Underlying Factors

Policy Objective / Expectation	Observed Gap at the State University	Underlying Challenges
Broad participation in Transnational Education programs (TNE Act)	No TNE programs in place: the State University lacks dual degree or franchise programs with foreign HEIs (only informal partnerships, no joint credentials)	Limited faculty and program capacity for TNE; Financial and logistical constraints; Risk aversion and lack of foreign partner willing to collaborate on degrees; Nascent understanding of TNE regulatory process.
Membership in the ASEAN Mobility Consortium (AIMS)	Non-membership in AIMS: the State University is not in the AIMS network, thus not leveraging this multilateral exchange platform	AIMS entry is competitive and initially limited to select HEIs; the State University's resource constraints for funding exchanges; Possibly insufficient lobbying or proposal for inclusion; Reliance on bilateral exchanges as a substitute.
Scaling up of ODL to reach international learners (ODL Act vision)	ODL not fully institutionalized: the State University offers minimal online programs and none explicitly targeting foreign/off-campus students	Technical and instructional capacity still developing; Faculty workload limits time to develop ODL content; Concern about maintaining quality in fully online mode; Need for more investment in e-learning infrastructure and training.
Maximizing CHED scholarship and training opportunities	Underutilization of scholarships: Only a handful of faculty/students benefit from international scholarships; many do not apply or qualify	Awareness gap: information reaches only some; Competitive selection criteria (e.g., language ability, research output); "Our local faculty/students are struggling to meet these requirements." Some faculties/colleges cannot afford to have their staff leave. Recruitment bonds deter vulnerable applicants.
Integrating internationalization across the curriculum and research	Partial internationalization at home: Efforts (foreign language courses, ASEAN content) exist, but are not universal; few international research collaborations exist	Variability by department –some faculty do not have global experiences to bring to their teaching; Pressure of the local vs international exam content options available - -limited time on syllabus; Exam question updates are broader than content; Low research funding and fewer networks for people in charge of building global collaboration (especially outside current partner countries)
Administrative agility in internationalization processes	Bureaucratic delays: Even while complying with travel regulations, the length of processes (travel authority, MOU approvals) sometimes delayed/limited action.	Many Layers of Approval (University Board scrutinizing, CHED central office) → Slow down initiatives; Fear of audit or legal problems encourages an over-cautious approach; Staff hate paperwork & see it as burdensome → enthusiasm drops; Very strict autonomy on what is identified as 'minor' international activities.
Resource provision aligning with policy ambitions	Resource-policy mismatch: Ambitious international goals vs. modest institutional budget and staffing for internationalization	International programs rely on special funds or external grants, which are not always available; the State University OIA is small (limited personnel) relative to tasks; Competing priorities (e.g., expanding domestic access) divert funds from internationalization projects.

Source: created by the authors.