

Statement of the UP President on the Mark Joseph Solis Issue

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I have been closely monitoring the events over the past few days that led to the revocation of the Calidad Humana (Smiles for the World) photo essay competition award given to Mark Joseph Solis.

I am saddened that a student of the University of the Philippines (UP) has committed fraud in the said competition by submitting someone else's photograph and claiming it as his own work. Mark Solis not only violated the spirit of Calidad Humana, but also showed a disregard for Gregory Smith and other photographers who work hard to capture and produce beautiful images to support their causes and livelihood.



The netizens alerted the media and the public about his plagiarism. Additional reports from concerned UP alumni, faculty, students, netizens, and the media now show that Mr. Solis has been using other people's work in local and international photo competitions over the past five years. Solis has owned up to the act and has, himself, admitted this in the print and broadcast media. He also claims to have already sent a letter of apology to the concerned person.

While some of his acts may have been performed outside academic work, these blemish the image of UP as an academic institution which holds dearly the values of honor and excellence.

I would like to assure the public that the UP administration is treating this matter very seriously. I share the outrage felt by everyone. Upon my instructions, the UP National College of Public Administration (NCPAG) has formed a Fact-Finding Committee to establish the circumstances and chronology of events as well as the digital footprints related to this issue, and to recommend measures to be undertaken to ensure that justice is served.

While stones have been cast in indignation, the apology has been made public. I call on the UP community to allow the processes of the University to take its course. We shall follow due process, even as we remain just and humane.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alfredo E. Pascual', is written in a cursive style.

ALFREDO E. PASCUAL
President