

Western Mindanao State University

Justifications for College of Agriculture and College of Forestry and Environmental Science Student Subsidies

Food security, climate change, and environmental protection have long been serious concerns for the government sectors at the local and national levels. Aiming to be the Center of Sustainable Agri-Fishery Industries Country, the Regional Development Plan (RDP) 2023-2028 outlines the expansion of economic prospects in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries by forging partnerships between and among public and private entities. In its strategic framework, the decline in interest vis-à-vis enrollment in Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resources (AFNR) discipline prompted the CHED and the DepEd to revisit their respective basic and tertiary curricula for the possible integration of agri-fishery-forestry subjects. This was to encourage the youth to engage in farming and fishery during and after their academic tenures.

Responding to the same objective and at the institutional level, WMSU had been offering stipends and allowances for students of the College of Agriculture and College of Forestry since 2007 through Board Resolution No. 111, s. 2007; Board Resolution No. 57, s. 2008, and Board Resolution No. 58, s. 2008. The resolutions approved the additional slots for students of both colleges to avail of the Php 2,500 allowance per semester. Students enrolled in BS Forestry, BS Agroforestry, BS Environmental Science, BS Agriculture, BS Agri-Business, Bachelor in Agricultural Technology, and BS Agricultural Engineering were entitled to the duly sanctioned subsidy to promote the same in consonance with the unrelenting global, regional, and national thrusts on agricultural sufficiency and environment preservation.

Albeit these programs for whatever reasons remain undersubscribed, advocacies notwithstanding, support must be rendered as they essentially serve as mainstays that are fundamental to support livelihood, living, and life specifically for agriculture-based countries. Heretofore, the Php 2,500 semestral enticement is a viable approach that needs to be sustained if not strengthened.