

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9163, January 23, 2002]

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM (NSTP) FOR TERTIARY LEVEL STUDENTS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7077 AND PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1706, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as the "National Service Training Program" (NSTP) Act of 2001.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is hereby affirmed the prime duty of the government to serve and protect its citizens, In turn, it shall be the responsibility of all citizens to defend the security of the State and in fulfillment thereof, the government may require each citizen to render personal, military or civil service. Recognizing the youth's vital role in nation-building, the State shall promote civic consciousness among the youth and shall develop their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism, nationalism, and advance their involvement in public and civic affairs. In pursuit of these goals, the youth, the most valuable resource of the nation, shall be motivated, trained, organized and mobilized in military training, literacy, civic welfare and other similar endeavors in the service of the nation.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* — For purposes of this Act, the following are hereby defined as follows:

1. "National Service Training Program (NSTP)" is a program aimed at enhancing civic consciousness and defense preparedness in the youth by developing the ethics of service and patriotism while undergoing training in any of its three (3) program components. Its various components are specially designed to enhance the youth's active contribution to the general welfare.
2. "Reserve-Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)" is a program institutionalized under Sections 38 and 39 of Republic Act No. 7077 designed to provide military training to tertiary level students in order to motivate, train, organize and mobilize them for national defense preparedness.
3. "Literacy Training Service" is a program designed to train students to become teachers of literacy and numeracy skills to school children, out of school youth, and other segments of society in need of their service.
4. "Civic Welfare Training Service" refers to programs or activities contributory to the general welfare and the betterment of life for the members of the community or the enhancement of its facilities, especially those devoted to improving health, education, environment, entrepreneurship, safety, recreation and morals of the citizenry.

5. "Program component" shall refer to the service components of the NSTP as enumerated on Section 4 of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Establishment of the National Service Training Program.* — There is hereby established a National Service Training Program (NSTP), which shall form part of the curricula of all baccalaureate degree courses and of at least two (2)-year technical-vocational courses and is a requisite for graduation, consisting of the following service components:

1. The Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), which is hereby made optional and voluntary upon the effectivity of this Act;
2. The Literacy Training Service; and
3. The Civil Welfare Training Service.

The ROTC under the NSTP shall instill patriotism, moral virtues, respect for rights of civilians, and adherence to the Constitution, among others. Citizenship training shall be given emphasis in all three program components. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in consultation with the Department of National Defense (DND), Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC), Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations of the Philippines (COCOPEA) and other concerned government agencies, may design and implement such other program components as may be necessary in consonance with the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Coverage.* — Students, male and female, of any baccalaureate degree course or at least two (2)-year technical-vocational courses in public and private educational institutions shall be required to complete one (1) of the NSTP components as requisite for graduation.

SEC. 6. *Duration and Equivalent Course Unit.* — Each of the aforementioned NSTP program components shall be undertaken for an academic period of two (2) semesters. In lieu of the two (2)-semester program for any of the components of the NSTP, a one (1) summer program may be designed, formulated and adopted by the DND, CHED and TESDA.

SEC. 7. *NSTP Offering in Higher and Technical-Vocational Educational Institutions.* — All higher and technical-vocational institutions, public and private, must offer at least one of the program components: Provided, That State universities and colleges shall offer the ROTC component and at least one other component as provided herein: *Provided, further,* That private higher and technical-vocational education institutions may also offer the ROTC if they have at least three hundred and fifty (350) cadet students. In offering the NSTP whether during the semestral or summer periods, clustering of affected students from different educational institutions may be done, taking into account logistics, branch of service and geographical considerations. Schools that do not meet the required number of students to maintain the optional ROTC and any of the NSTP components shall allow their students to cross-enroll to other schools irrespective of whether or not the NSTP components in said schools are being administered by the same or another branch of service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), CHED and TESDA to which schools are identified.

SEC. 8. *Fees and Incentives* — Higher and technical-vocational institutions shall not collect any fee for any of the NSTP components except basic tuition fees, which shall