



June 22, 2022

DR. EDGARDO E. TULIN

University President

Visayas State University

Visca, Baybay City, Leyte 6521-A

Thru: **DR. BEATRIZ S. BELONIAS**

Vice President for Academic Affairs Visayas
State University

Dear Sir:

Good day! This is in response to the demand letter I received last June 15, 2022. I would like to explain why I couldn't finish my MS Chemistry at the University of San Carlos (USC) during my study leave until now.

Based on the faculty development plan in DoPAC, I was to take Organic Chemistry as my major in MS Chemistry. With this, I decided to take Natural Products for my thesis last 2017. There was only one PhD-holder faculty specializing in natural products at that time which the Head of the USC Chemistry Department recommended. I naturally sought the said faculty, but I seldom got ahold of him since he also occupies a high administrative position. When I almost finalized my thesis proposal, the said faculty resigned from USC. This happened in the last quarter of 2017. My new thesis adviser didn't accept my proposal and advised a new topic for study. My thesis panel approved my new proposal by November 2017. I have then started conducting my thesis until July of 2018.

Since I reinstated last August of 2018, my academic workload, which is usually overload, has always been prioritized, and the write-up of my thesis manuscript always gets pushed aside. When the pandemic hit, it was even more challenging for me to allocate time for manuscript writing since I am making learning guides and setting up the subjects I've handled in VSUEE, both of which are new to me. I was blessed to conceive a baby during this time, but I had a delicate pregnancy. My OBGYN advised me not to overexert myself. By November 2020, I delivered a healthy baby boy by emergency cesarean section and was advised again to take it easy after the operation. My husband and I are first-time parents, and with the start of the pandemic, the travel between borders was restricted, and we could not get help from our parents in taking care of our baby for the first few months. Our baby couldn't gain weight for two months and became underweight since we thought my breastfeeding our baby was enough.

The scholarship committee called for updates last December 2020. My husband was the only one to explain our side to the committee as no other person could be left behind at home to attend to our 1-month-old baby, and I was still recovering from my C-section. We were given one semester to finish our MS Chem from March 2021 to August 2021. Although I was on maternity leave, the subjects I've handled were not assigned to other faculty in the department as we have a similar class schedule and overloaded units. My maternity leave ended on February 3, 2021. We could not find a nanny for our baby because of the travel restrictions and fear of having an outside person come in contact with our underweight baby due to the ongoing pandemic. It was so hard at that time juggling between taking care of the baby to help



him obtain an average weight for his age, handling overloaded units, and taking care that I don't overexert myself as well as I was still bleeding. Hence, after my maternity leave, I was catching up with my classes and could only submit my grades by May 2021. I was on study leave for three months, but I'm still working on the subjects I've handled. Also, it was almost the end of the 2nd semester of USC at that school year, but for VSU, it was only mid-way thru the 2nd semester. By June-July of 2021, while being a full-time mom, I started working on my manuscript, which I can only do late at night when my baby is asleep. All the work I have done previously and the lack of rest trying to balance everything have taken a toll on my body. My mother-in-law called it "nabughat" based on what I was experiencing. This incident led me to stop my manuscript writing and focus on the meantime in taking care of my baby. The restrictions brought by the pandemic also hindered us from obtaining help from our family since they could not easily come here and spend even at least three days as they also have their obligations as government employees. We are also heavily affected by the restrictions since we still cannot avail of vaccines at this time. The peak of the pandemic with the emergence of new COVID-19 variants also left us to stay at home, fearing for our safety, especially for our child.

By September of 2021, I was reinstated to work still unfinished with my manuscript. We still don't have a nanny for our baby this time, so I was handling subjects while also caring for my baby. By October 2021, we were able to get vaccinated at Baybay City. Restrictions also eased up around the end of November 2021. We started to look for a nanny again from my husband's hometown but still to no avail due to the fear of uncertainty during the pandemic. By December 2021, after Typhoon Odette ravaged our area, we went home to Camotes Island since the restrictions had eased up. It was also difficult to stay here in Leyte and my husband's hometown in Southern Leyte. It was only by January of 2022 that we could find a fully vaccinated nanny for our baby from my hometown.

In the 2nd semester of SY 2021-2022, I was given a new subject for our BS Chemistry majors, which requires new preparation in lecture presentation and eLearning setup. With the pressure and mandate to produce graduates who would pass the Chemist Licensure exam, I have devoted my time to making this new preparation to help the students in their board exam. Unfortunately, I couldn't submit the progress report when I was reinstated to work as I was still constantly finding time to work on my manuscript writing. As of this month, June 2022, it has occurred to me that I am on teacher's leave status this July-August of 2022 since I am not handling any research. I was planning to continue my manuscript writing during this time after I finished checking the undergraduate thesis manuscripts of BS Chemistry students. I have also contacted my thesis adviser, who said she'll gladly read the manuscript I submit. I am optimistic that I can finish my manuscript and defend my thesis the earliest during this time since I won't be handling academic workload, and I already have a nanny to take care of my baby. However, if I will be required to conduct further by my thesis panel for additional positive results, I may be able to finish my degree by May of 2023. With this, I humbly ask from your good office that I will be given consideration and one more chance to finish my MS Chemistry degree without having to pay the amount indicated in the demand letter.

I am hoping for your kind consideration.

Respectfully yours,

YHENA L. BANDIBAS
Instructor, DoPAC



Endorsed by:

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Approved by:

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