



Research Article

Faculty Perspectives on the Integration of Readings in Philippine History and Life and Works of Rizal into Rizal and Philippine Studies Under the Proposed Reframed General Education Curriculum

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Abstract. Empirical evidence remains limited on how faculty members perceive the proposed integration of Readings in Philippine History and Life and Works of Rizal into Rizal and Philippine Studies under the proposed reframed General Education Curriculum in the Philippines. This qualitative descriptive study examined faculty perspectives on the integration, its anticipated implications for teaching and learning, and the conditions necessary for implementation. Thirty-six faculty members with experience teaching either or both courses in public, private sectarian, and private nonsectarian higher education institutions across Philippine regions were selected through purposive sampling using criterion and maximum-variation strategies. Responses to a researcher-developed, expert-reviewed online questionnaire comprising 10 open-ended questions were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Six interconnected themes were developed: contested acceptance and defense of disciplinary integrity; conditional benefits of curricular integration; curriculum compression and threatened learning depth; pedagogical reconstruction and selective integration; institutional readiness and participatory curriculum governance; and faculty welfare and the political economy of reform. Participants recognized opportunities to reduce content overlap and situate Rizal's life and writings within broader Philippine historical contexts. However, they anticipated insufficient instructional time, diminished disciplinary depth, reduced engagement with historical sources and Rizalian texts, and challenges concerning civic formation, faculty workload, and employment security. The findings suggest that meaningful integration depends on coherent curriculum mapping, purposeful content selection, inquiry-based teaching, faculty preparation, adequate resources, and participatory course development. The study identifies faculty-informed priorities for curriculum planning rather than establishing the proposed course's actual effects. Pilot implementation across varied institutional settings and evaluation of intended, implemented, and attained learning outcomes are recommended before broader adoption.

Keywords: Curriculum integration; Faculty perspectives; General Education reform; Philippine history education; Rizal studies.

The proposed reframing of the Philippine General Education Curriculum has prompted debate about the purposes and scope of undergraduate education. In the draft Policies, Standards, and Guidelines released by the Commission on Higher Education on May 6, 2026, the existing 36-unit General Education curriculum

would be reduced to 18 units across six interdisciplinary courses: Professional Communication; Global Trends and Emerging Technologies; Data, Evidence, and Ethics in a Knowledge-Driven Society; Rizal and Philippine Studies; Labor Education; and an institutional course. The proposal seeks to address competencies reportedly duplicated in Senior High School, reduce the time and cost of undergraduate education, and create more curricular space for specialization, research, and experiential learning (Rappler, 2026). These objectives raise an educational question beyond the number of units retained: whether a shorter curriculum can preserve the intellectual breadth, historical understanding, and civic formation expected of Philippine General Education. Philippine evidence also indicates that the civic purposes of General Education require deliberate curricular integration. Alvero (2025b) identified differences between faculty and student assessments of global citizenship competency integration, highlighting the need for clearer connections among intended outcomes, instructional practices, and students' learning experiences. As a proposed reform, its anticipated benefits, limitations, and implementation requirements warrant examination before adoption.

This study draws on Beane's (1997) theory of curriculum integration to examine the proposed integration of Readings in Philippine History (RPH) and Life and Works of Rizal (LWR) into GE104: Rizal and Philippine Studies. For Beane, meaningful integration organizes knowledge around significant questions and concerns rather than merely placing content from separate subjects within a single course. Applied to the proposed GE104, this perspective emphasizes coherent relationships among historical and Rizalian concepts, learning outcomes, instructional sources, teaching approaches, and assessments. Research on interdisciplinary curriculum development also identifies stakeholder participation, collaborative planning, adequate resources, and continuing adaptation as important conditions for implementation (Illahibaccus-Sona, 2025; Wang, 2024). These conditions help explain how integration may be supported institutionally, while Beane's framework provides a basis for examining its educational coherence. Constructivist historical pedagogy complements this perspective by emphasizing how students develop historical understanding through examining evidence, contextualizing and corroborating sources, considering multiple perspectives, and constructing interpretations (Ofianto et al., 2022; Soininen, 2022).

The educational implications of the proposed integration arise from the distinct yet related contributions of the two existing courses. In a mixed-methods study of students enrolled in Readings in Philippine History, Alvero (2026b) found that Philippine primary sources were perceived as meaningful resources for historical understanding, heritage appreciation, Filipino identity, and civic responsibility. However, stronger understanding and appreciation did not consistently correspond with active cultural and civic participation. RPH emphasizes historical inquiry across periods and perspectives through the critical examination of primary and secondary sources. LWR provides sustained engagement with José Rizal's life, writings, intellectual context, political ideas, and contributions to Filipino nationalism in relation to Republic Act No. 1425. Integrating these areas could reduce overlapping discussions and situate Rizal's writings more fully within Philippine historical processes. It could also support interconnected inquiries into colonialism, reform, nationalism, citizenship, and nation-building. However, limited instructional time could require difficult decisions about which historical periods, sources, and competencies receive sustained attention. A predominantly Rizal-centered course could narrow the range of historical experiences represented, whereas a broad historical survey could leave insufficient time for close engagement with Rizal's texts. Learning depth, inclusive representation, and civic formation therefore constitute central considerations in evaluating the educational potential of the proposed integration (Bleeze, 2024; Hajisoteriou et al., 2024).

Understanding these possibilities also requires attention to the faculty members who would enact the proposed curriculum. The ecological approach to teacher agency advanced by Priestley et al. (2015) explains educators' actions in relation to their professional histories, present working conditions, and orientations toward future practice. Within the proposed GE104, faculty members would interpret learning outcomes, select historical materials, determine the relationship between RPH and LWR content, and develop learning activities and assessments within their institutional contexts. Research on curriculum change similarly indicates that professional beliefs, available resources, administrative support, institutional culture, and perceived compatibility with disciplinary identity shape educators' responses to reform (Wang, 2022; Aydın & Ok, 2024, 2025). Faculty perspectives can therefore illuminate both the perceived educational value of integration and the conditions that may enable or constrain its implementation. Their judgments are particularly relevant to decisions about instructional time, disciplinary depth, pedagogical preparation, and faculty workload.

Despite public and institutional discussion of the proposed General Education reform, empirical evidence remains limited on how faculty members who teach RPH and LWR understand and evaluate their proposed integration into Rizal and Philippine Studies. Policy-level discussions have raised concerns about the breadth and civic purposes of General Education (DOST-NRCP, 2026), but these concerns also require examination through the perspectives of faculty who would make decisions about course content, instructional sources, pedagogy, and assessment. To address this gap, the present study examined the perspectives of 36 faculty members who taught RPH, LWR, or both in public, private sectarian, and private nonsectarian higher education institutions across Philippine regions. It explored their understanding of the proposed integration; its perceived benefits, risks, and implementation challenges; its anticipated implications for content coverage, historical inquiry, Rizalian studies, and civic formation; and the conditions they considered necessary for implementation. By examining faculty perspectives on a proposed curricular change, the study seeks to inform course design, institutional preparation, stakeholder consultation, and policy deliberation. It provides a faculty-informed basis for assessing how the proposed integration might preserve and strengthen historical and civic learning within a shorter General Education curriculum.

Methodology

Research Design

The study used a qualitative descriptive design to examine faculty perspectives on integrating Readings in Philippine History (RPH) and Life and Works of Rizal (LWR) into GE104: Rizal and Philippine Studies under the proposed reframed General Education Curriculum. This design was appropriate because the study sought detailed accounts of how faculty members understood the proposal, assessed its anticipated educational implications, identified potential implementation challenges, and described the support necessary for implementation. Reflexive thematic analysis was used to develop patterns of meaning across participants' written responses while attending to differences and divergent perspectives.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were 36 college faculty members who were teaching or had previously taught RPH, LWR, or both in Philippine higher education institutions (HEIs). Purposive sampling combined criterion and maximum-variation strategies. Criterion sampling ensured that participants possessed teaching experience relevant to the proposed integration. The inclusion criteria were: (a) current or previous employment as a college faculty member in a Philippine HEI; (b) experience teaching RPH, LWR, or both; (c) familiarity with the proposed reframed General Education Curriculum; (d) voluntary informed consent; and (e) sufficiently substantive responses to support qualitative analysis. Submissions that did not meet these criteria were excluded.

Maximum-variation sampling guided recruitment across institutional types, regions, academic ranks, educational qualifications, and lengths of teaching experience. Participants' ages ranged from 26 to 56 years and above; 18 were male, and 18 were female. Sixteen taught in public HEIs, 10 in private nonsectarian HEIs, and 10 in private sectarian HEIs. Their educational qualifications, academic positions, and teaching experience also varied. These characteristics broadened the range of perspectives examined, although the sample was not intended to be statistically representative of Philippine faculty.

The researchers assessed whether the 36 retained responses were adequate in relation to the study's purpose, scope, and the dataset's richness. The researchers considered whether the responses substantively addressed the research questions, represented relevant teaching experiences across the sampled institutional contexts, and provided sufficient detail to develop and support distinct themes. Divergent accounts were also considered. Sample size alone was not treated as evidence of saturation or data adequacy.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a researcher-developed questionnaire comprising a demographic section and 10 open-ended questions. The demographic section collected information on age, sex, highest educational attainment, academic rank or position, teaching experience, institutional type, and region. The open-ended questions explored faculty members' understanding of the proposed integration; perceived benefits and risks; anticipated adequacy of instructional time and content coverage; implications for historical inquiry, Rizalian studies, and civic formation; possible teaching approaches; necessary resources and institutional support; and recommendations for

course design and implementation. Five validators, all holders of doctoral degrees in education with specializations spanning curriculum and instruction, social studies, and educational management, reviewed the draft questionnaire for relevance, clarity, neutrality, coverage, and alignment with the study objectives. This review supported the questionnaire's suitability for eliciting accounts relevant to the research questions. Because the instrument elicited narrative responses rather than scores from a multi-item scale, internal-consistency reliability was not applicable.

Data-Gathering Procedure

Invitations were distributed to eligible faculty members through LinkedIn and other recruitment channels used during the study. The invitation explained the research purpose, eligibility criteria, estimated completion time, voluntary nature of participation, intended use of responses, and confidentiality measures. Interested faculty members accessed the Google Forms questionnaire and reviewed the informed-consent information before deciding whether to participate. Data collection took place from May 15 to July 15, 2026. Participants completed the demographic section and 10 open-ended questions independently. The online format allowed them to describe their perspectives in their own words. The researchers recorded submitted responses electronically and reviewed them after the collection period. The researchers screened submissions for informed consent, eligibility, and sufficient substantive content for qualitative analysis. Submissions that did not meet these requirements were excluded. The researchers assigned participant codes to retained responses and removed identifying details from the working dataset. The written accounts were then organized for coding and thematic analysis.

Data Analysis

The written responses were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis. The process involved familiarization with the dataset, coding, developing initial themes, reviewing and refining themes, defining and naming themes, and preparing the analytical report. These phases were undertaken iteratively rather than as a strictly linear sequence. Familiarization involved repeated reading of participants' complete responses and recording initial observations about recurring concerns, differences, and significant accounts. The researcher then coded meaningful passages across the dataset. Coding was primarily inductive: although the research questions directed attention to the proposed integration, codes were developed through engagement with participants' accounts rather than assigned exclusively from predetermined theoretical categories.

Related codes were organized into candidate themes. The researcher revisited coded excerpts and complete responses to assess each theme's coherence, distinctions between themes, and representation of contrasting perspectives. The researcher then refined, defined, and named the themes. This process produced six interconnected themes: contested acceptance and defense of disciplinary integrity; conditional benefits of curricular integration; curriculum compression and threatened learning depth; pedagogical reconstruction and selective integration; institutional readiness and participatory curriculum governance; and faculty welfare and the political economy of reform. Findings were presented as analytical accounts supported by participant quotations. Participants were identified using codes such as P1 and P2. Where frequencies were reported, they described how often particular views occurred in the dataset. They were not used to determine thematic importance or support statistical generalization to the wider faculty population. Individual responses could contribute to more than one theme.

Establishing Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was supported through attention to participant relevance, contextual interpretation, transparency, and researcher reflexivity. Recruitment focused on faculty members with direct experience teaching RPH, LWR, or both, ensuring that their accounts were informed by relevant teaching experience. During analysis, the researcher read responses in full, interpreted statements within the context of each participant's account, and compared perspectives across participants. Accounts that differed from emerging patterns were examined and incorporated where analytically relevant. Participant quotations were selected to demonstrate the basis of interpretations while preserving the meaning of the original responses.

An audit trail documented coding decisions, theme revisions, and the reasons for retaining, combining, or reconsidering interpretations. Reflexive notes supported examination of how the researcher's professional experience and assumptions about General Education reform could shape the analysis. Descriptions of participant characteristics, institutional contexts, the proposed reform, and data-gathering procedures were provided to help

readers assess the findings' relevance to other settings. These practices were consistent with reflexive thematic analysis, in which themes are developed through the researcher's sustained interpretive engagement with the dataset. Themes were therefore treated as contextualized analytical constructions rather than fixed categories requiring intercoder agreement. Data adequacy was assessed through the relevance, detail, and range of the responses and their capacity to address the research questions.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent. The invitation and opening section of the Google Forms questionnaire explained the study's purpose, eligibility criteria, expected time commitment, intended use of responses, and confidentiality measures. Prospective participants reviewed this information before deciding whether to proceed. They could decline participation by leaving the form without submitting it and could skip questions they did not wish to answer. We assessed submitted accounts for sufficient substantive content rather than requiring an answer to every question. We removed identifying information from the dataset used for analysis and replaced names with participant codes in the organization and presentation of responses. We reviewed quotations before including them in the manuscript to reduce the risk of identifying participants or their institutions through contextual details. Electronic records were maintained in password-protected storage accessible only to the researcher.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of the written responses from 36 faculty members generated six interconnected themes: (1) contested acceptance and defense of disciplinary integrity; (2) conditional benefits of curricular integration; (3) curriculum compression and threatened learning depth; (4) pedagogical reconstruction and selective integration; (5) institutional readiness and participatory curriculum governance; and (6) faculty welfare and the political economy of reform. These themes describe how participants understood and evaluated the proposed integration of Readings in Philippine History (RPH) and Life and Works of Rizal (LWR) into GE104: Rizal and Philippine Studies under the proposed reframed General Education Curriculum. The findings represent faculty interpretations and anticipated implications of the proposal rather than observed outcomes of an implemented course.

Theme 1: Contested Acceptance and Defense of Disciplinary Integrity

Participants expressed strong reservations about the proposed integration. One described it as "outrageous," while another recalled being "shocked then gradually became sad." A third felt that the decision had been "lightly made." These responses conveyed concern about whether the proposal sufficiently recognized the educational purposes of RPH and LWR. Although emotionally expressed, the objections raised substantive questions about course design, disciplinary depth, and preserving learning outcomes.

Participants clarified these concerns when discussing the relationship between the existing courses. One stated, "RPH and LWR have different course outcomes and cannot be carelessly integrated." Another distinguished RPH's emphasis on historical sources and controversies from LWR's sustained examination of Rizal, his social context, and his writings. These accounts acknowledged connections between the subjects while questioning whether a single course could preserve their distinct contributions. For RPH, participants emphasized interpreting sources, comparing accounts, and examining Philippine history across periods and perspectives. For LWR, they emphasized sustained engagement with Rizal's life, works, intellectual development, and contributions to Filipino nationalism.

The defense of disciplinary integrity therefore concerned both content and learning methods. Historical inquiry requires students to evaluate evidence and construct interpretations, while Rizalian study requires close attention to texts, ideas, and their historical contexts. A syllabus could formally include material from both courses yet provide insufficient opportunities for these intellectual practices. Participants' objections thus highlighted the need to establish coherent relationships among learning outcomes, sources, teaching activities, and assessments.

This interpretation aligns with Aydın and Ok's (2024) finding that faculty evaluate curriculum reforms based on their perceived necessity, clarity, quality, and compatibility with disciplinary practice. Wang (2022) likewise identifies professional beliefs, previous experiences, resources, and institutional conditions as influences on educators' responses to change. In the present study, faculty criticism identified a question requiring an explicit curricular response: how would the proposed GE104 preserve historical inquiry and meaningful engagement with

Rizal's writings within its intended structure?

Some participants also raised concerns about the place of Rizal's life, works, and writings in relation to Republic Act No. 1425. These accounts indicate a perceived need for clarification about how the proposed course would address statutory requirements. They do not establish that the proposed integration violates the law; that question requires examination of the final policy and course provisions through authoritative legal interpretation. Taken together, the accounts suggest that faculty acceptance depended on the course's academic substance. Participants sought assurance that integration would preserve the distinct contributions of RPH and LWR while establishing meaningful connections between them. This theme introduces the central question underlying the remaining findings: how could GE104 provide a coherent learning experience while sustaining historical inquiry and Rizalian study?

Theme 2: Conditional Benefits of Curricular Integration

Alongside their reservations, participants recognized educational possibilities in the proposed integration. One described the course as "challenging yet enriching." Another suggested that it could help students connect "Rizal's life and writings, Philippine history, nationalism, and contemporary social issues." These responses indicated that participants saw value in examining Rizal's ideas within the historical conditions that shaped them. Participants identified several potential connections. Rizal's family background, education, travels, reformist thought, and writings could be examined alongside Spanish colonial institutions, nineteenth-century social change, the Propaganda Movement, and competing understandings of Filipino nationhood. Questions concerning colonialism, inequality, reform, resistance, and citizenship could connect Rizal's texts with other historical sources. The anticipated benefit was a stronger understanding of relationships among people, texts, events, and ideas.

Support for this possibility remained conditional. One participant observed that integration appeared practical because "some of the topics are connected," but cautioned that it could remove the "deeper essence" of each course. This account illustrates the distinction between reducing content overlap and strengthening understanding. Removing repetition could create opportunities for deeper inquiry, but only if the resulting course deliberately used those opportunities. Combining abbreviated versions of RPH and LWR would not automatically enable students to interpret Rizal's writings historically or engage with Philippine experiences beyond his immediate context.

Research on integrated and interdisciplinary curricula helps explain these conditions. Illahibaccus-Sona (2025) emphasizes stakeholder input and systematic evaluation, while Wang (2024) identifies collaboration, resources, and continuing adaptation as requirements for interdisciplinary course development. Zou et al. (2024) similarly discuss the importance of shared understandings of the knowledge and ideas connecting learning experiences. Considered alongside participants' accounts, these studies suggest that GE104 would require related learning outcomes, purposeful source selection, and assessments that ask students to develop and substantiate connections across historical and Rizalian studies.

Participants also anticipated practical benefits, including fewer overlapping discussions and a lighter academic load. They perceived these as possibilities rather than measured effects. Whether integration could reduce repetition while sustaining learning depth would require examination through course development, pilot implementation, and evaluation. This theme therefore reflects qualified support for integration that produces stronger relationships among ideas and sources while preserving substantive engagement with both areas.

Theme 3: Curriculum Compression and Threatened Learning Depth

Participants repeatedly questioned whether the proposed instructional time would support the breadth and depth expected of the integrated course. One stated, "A lot of topics will be sacrificed to fit in one semester," while another argued that "we cannot achieve both depth and range." Descriptions such as "condensed," "watered down," "shallow," and "surface level" expressed concern that integration might result in rapid coverage rather than sustained learning.

Two possible imbalances were identified. A predominantly Rizal-centered course could treat other historical periods and perspectives mainly as background to his life. Participants anticipated reduced attention to precolonial societies, regional and Indigenous histories, women's experiences, labor and peasant movements, and

developments beyond the nineteenth century. Conversely, a broad survey of Philippine history could leave insufficient time for Rizal's novels, essays, correspondence, and political ideas. These accounts identified anticipated risks in course organization rather than deficiencies in an implemented syllabus.

The concern extended beyond the number of topics retained. Participants questioned whether students would have sufficient opportunities to examine sources, compare accounts, contextualize claims, and construct evidence-based interpretations. Close engagement with Rizal's writings similarly requires time to consider language, argument, intellectual context, and subsequent interpretations. A crowded syllabus could limit these activities and encourage reliance on factual summaries.

Research on historical thinking supports these concerns. Ofianto et al. (2022) describe competencies involving primary-source evidence, continuity and change, causes and consequences, and historical perspectives. Godsell (2022) emphasizes sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and evidence-based argumentation. Soininen (2022) likewise identifies the value of primary sources while recognizing the preparation and instructional time required for meaningful engagement. These studies explain why formally retaining a learning outcome may be insufficient if students lack opportunities to practice the associated competencies.

Participants also connected learning depth with civic formation. They associated RPH and LWR with national consciousness, political awareness, and the capacity to question distorted accounts of the past. Research linking history education with perspective-taking, historical consciousness, and civic judgment provides a basis for examining these anticipated implications (Bleeze, 2024; Hajisoteriou et al., 2024). The present findings do not demonstrate that GE104 would weaken civic outcomes. They identify those outcomes as priorities for evaluation during any pilot implementation.

This theme highlights the educational consequences of content selection. A defensible course would need to identify essential historical periods, Rizalian texts, perspectives, and inquiry skills; explain their relationships; and provide sufficient opportunities for engagement. Participants feared that, without these decisions, the proposed integration could be enacted as curriculum compression.

Theme 4: Pedagogical Reconstruction and Selective Integration

Despite their reservations, participants proposed ways to teach the integrated course. One recommended "interactive discussions, contextualized teaching, collaborative activities, and the use of primary historical sources." Another suggested connecting Rizal's works with relevant periods of Philippine history to examine colonialism, nationalism, inequality, and civic responsibility. These recommendations emphasized reorganizing learning around historical questions and relationships.

A combination of thematic and chronological organization was reflected in the responses. Chronology could help students situate events and writings in time, while themes such as reform, resistance, identity, and nation-building could connect Rizal's works with other historical sources. An inquiry into nineteenth-century reform, for example, could pair a selected Rizal text with sources representing other actors and perspectives. This approach could contextualize Rizal while still allowing students to examine historical experiences beyond his lifetime. Its feasibility would depend on selecting questions and materials appropriate to the available instructional time.

Recommendations for guided reading, comparative interpretation, debate, research tasks, and reflection emphasized active engagement with evidence. These activities could require students to contextualize sources, compare interpretations, and justify claims. Research on primary-source and inquiry-based history learning supports the educational value of such approaches (Fahrudin et al., 2025; Sariyatun et al., 2025). Their contribution to GE104 would depend on alignment with clear learning outcomes and sufficient time for students to undertake the required intellectual work.

Evidence from the Life and Works of Rizal course also supports considering structured reflective questioning. Alvero (2026d) reported that students perceived the strategy as supporting conceptual understanding, critical analysis of Rizal's texts and socio-political contexts, and connections to contemporary civic responsibility. Comparatively lower ratings for emotional motivation and active participation suggest complementing reflective questioning with dialogic and interactive activities. These findings offer a pedagogical direction for the proposed

GE104, although its effectiveness within the integrated course would require evaluation.

Participants also identified digital archives, films, multimedia resources, and online materials as possible instructional supports. These resources could improve access to selected materials and introduce historical problems through varied formats. Using them would require guidance on examining provenance, context, credibility, and interpretation. Kumalasari et al. (2024), in discussing digital historical literacy, likewise emphasize the critical use of online historical material. Digital access could support inquiry, but it would not, by itself, resolve limitations in course scope or instructional time. Related Philippine scholarship connects historical thinking, AI, and digital historical literacy with civic agency and democratic citizenship (Alvero, 2026c). These connections provide a rationale for retaining critical evaluation of digital historical information within the proposed integrated course.

Collectively, participants' recommendations suggest an approach based on selective depth: examining a manageable number of consequential questions through Rizal's writings, other primary sources, historical scholarship, and multiple perspectives. Possible inquiries might explore how Rizal and his contemporaries understood reform and nationhood or how later generations interpreted his writings. These examples illustrate implications drawn from the responses rather than a syllabus collectively endorsed by participants. The theme shows that faculty could envision pedagogical connections across the two courses while recognizing the constraints of the proposed structure.

Theme 5: Institutional Readiness and Participatory Curriculum Governance

Participants identified institutional guidance and resources as important conditions for implementation. One asked, "Aside from the content, what outcomes are being sought after?" Another requested a "standardized curriculum framework, sample syllabi, updated teaching modules, and access to reliable primary and secondary sources." These statements reflected uncertainty about the proposed course's intended outcomes and the support available to faculty.

Clarifying outcomes was particularly important because integration would require decisions about what to retain, connect, or reorganize from RPH and LWR. Faculty would need guidance on essential historical inquiry skills, periods, Rizalian texts, and civic learning outcomes before selecting content and developing assessments. Participants therefore called for curriculum mapping, sample syllabi, curated sources, teaching materials, and assessment examples. Their accounts suggest a need for shared expectations that could be adapted to institutional circumstances, regional histories, and faculty expertise.

Participants also recommended consultation with faculty in history, Rizal studies, the humanities, and related fields. Consultation was understood as a means of improving concrete curricular decisions: clarifying outcomes, reviewing content balance, identifying resource gaps, and assessing feasibility within the proposed time allocation. This interpretation aligns with research emphasizing stakeholder feedback, faculty preparation, collegial planning, and institutional support during curriculum change (Aydın & Ok, 2025; Illahibaccus-Sona, 2025; Wang, 2022).

These recommendations suggest a staged implementation approach. Essential outcomes from RPH and LWR could first be mapped into a proposed framework, followed by developing adaptable materials and preparing faculty. Pilot implementation across different institutional settings could then examine how the framework is interpreted, which learning experiences are provided, and what outcomes students attain. Faculty and student feedback could inform revisions before broader adoption. This sequence follows from the findings; the study did not evaluate a completed GE104 pilot.

Outcomes monitoring would be particularly important during this process. Alvero (2026a) found that students' perceived attainment of General Education outcomes varied across competency domains and individual courses, with receptive and reflective outcomes generally stronger than applied and analytically demanding competencies. These findings support evaluating the proposed GE104 through specific learning outcomes rather than overall course satisfaction alone. Complementary evidence from Liberal Arts programs also supports examining how curricular outcomes translate into graduates' experiences. Alvero et al. (2026) identified discipline-specific differences in graduates' perceived attainment of program outcomes, including the need to strengthen applied

competencies and ethical and civic praxis. These findings reinforce the importance of evaluating the proposed GE104 through evidence of learning and application, alongside faculty and student feedback.

The theme indicates that participants regarded institutional readiness and faculty participation as integral to meaningful integration. They sought sufficient common guidance to sustain the course's academic purposes, together with opportunities to contribute to its design, implementation, and evaluation.

Theme 6: Faculty Welfare and the Political Economy of Reform

Participants also interpreted the proposal through its possible consequences for employment and workload. One urged institutions to "ensure that faculty members will not be removed from their current post," while another asked policymakers to consider "the lives of the faculty, especially the irregular ones." Faculty whose teaching assignments depended on General Education offerings, particularly those with less secure appointments, anticipated that replacing two courses with one could reduce available teaching loads.

Concerns also involved the preparation required for GE104. Faculty would need to reconsider learning outcomes, select and sequence sources, develop activities, and design assessments appropriate to the integrated curriculum. An instructor experienced primarily in one existing course might require additional preparation in the other. Consequently, fewer course units could coexist with greater preparation demands for faculty assigned to the proposed course.

Employment arrangements and preparation conditions could also influence educational quality. Limited development time, inadequate materials, or insufficient support for teaching beyond an instructor's principal expertise could constrain implementation. Mendoza et al. (2022) identify teaching loads and possible faculty displacement as concerns in Philippine General Education restructuring. Research on curriculum change similarly connects educators' capacity to enact reform with institutional resources, leadership, and working conditions (Aydın & Ok, 2024; Wang, 2022). Participants' accounts focused these concerns on who would teach GE104, under what arrangements, and with what preparation.

The findings suggest institutional measures, including transparent teaching-assignment policies, workload-transition planning, protected course-development time, relevant training, and access to collaboratively developed materials. Where feasible, faculty with complementary expertise could collaborate in course design or delivery. These measures are implications drawn from participants' concerns; their effectiveness was not assessed, and the study did not estimate the number of positions potentially affected. This theme extends consideration of the proposal beyond syllabus design. Faculty accounts suggest that staffing, employment security, and preparation requirements warrant attention alongside intended learning outcomes because they shape the conditions under which the proposed course would be taught.

Integrative Discussion

Across the six themes, participants evaluated the proposed integration through interconnected concerns about disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical practice, civic formation, institutional capacity, and faculty welfare. They recognized meaningful relationships between Rizal's life and writings and Philippine historical development. However, their support depended on how those relationships would be translated into outcomes, content, learning activities, and assessments. Conceptual connections alone did not resolve their concerns about instructional time and disciplinary depth.

The findings reveal a tension between curricular efficiency and the formative purposes of General Education. This concern also has implications for the dimensions of citizenship that an integrated course should address. Alvero (2025a) identified a knowledge-to-action gap across students' cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral global citizenship competencies, suggesting that curricular integration should provide opportunities to translate understanding and ethical reflection into meaningful participation. Participants acknowledged reduced repetition and more space for specialization as possible advantages, while historical consciousness, critical inquiry, civic judgment, and national identity remained important educational priorities. Mendoza et al. (2022) similarly identify practical benefits and concerns about breadth, institutional capacity, and faculty displacement in Philippine General Education restructuring. The proposed GE104 therefore requires evaluation through both its organizational advantages and its capacity to sustain substantive learning.

Beane's (1997) theory of curriculum integration helps interpret this distinction. Meaningful integration requires organizing learning around significant questions and coherent relationships among knowledge, experiences, and concerns. Participants' recommendations for thematic inquiry, contextualized examination of Rizal's writings, multiple perspectives, and primary-source engagement reflect this emphasis. Their concerns about compressed coverage indicate the risk that combining courses could preserve topic labels while reducing opportunities for inquiry. The findings thus suggest that the educational value of integration depends on the coherence of its design and the learning experiences it enables.

The ecological approach to teacher agency also helps explain the importance of implementation conditions (Priestley et al., 2015). Faculty would interpret the proposed curriculum through their professional experience, disciplinary commitments, available resources, and institutional circumstances. Their ability to develop and teach GE104 would consequently depend on more than formal policy provisions. Research identifying educators as active interpreters of curriculum reform supports considering their judgments during course development and implementation (Aydın & Ok, 2024, 2025; Wang, 2022).

Faculty reservations should therefore be treated as evidence relevant to planning and evaluation. They identify questions about curricular coherence, content balance, inquiry opportunities, resources, workload, and professional preparation that require examination before broader adoption. Because this study analyzed written perspectives on a proposed reform, it cannot establish GE104's actual effects on student learning, civic formation, or employment. Its contribution lies in identifying faculty-informed conditions and evaluation priorities: coherent curriculum mapping, sustained historical and Rizalian inquiry, appropriate instructional time, faculty preparation, adequate resources, participatory governance, and pilot assessment of intended and attained learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The study provides a faculty-informed assessment of integrating Readings in Philippine History and Life and Works of Rizal into GE104: Rizal and Philippine Studies under the proposed reframed General Education Curriculum. Participants recognized opportunities to connect Rizal's life and writings with broader Philippine historical contexts, while expressing concerns about instructional time, learning depth, disciplinary integrity, civic formation, and faculty welfare. Their accounts suggest that meaningful integration requires coherent learning outcomes, purposeful content selection, sustained engagement with historical sources and Rizalian texts, faculty preparation, adequate resources, and participatory course development. Because the study examined perspectives before implementation, its findings identify priorities for curriculum planning and evaluation rather than establish GE104's actual effects on student learning or faculty employment.

CHED and higher education institutions may use these findings to develop and evaluate the proposed course. Priorities include consulting faculty and other stakeholders; mapping the distinct and shared outcomes of RPH and LWR; and clarifying how the proposed course would address the requirements of Republic Act No. 1425 through authoritative legal and policy review. Implementation planning should also provide adaptable syllabi, curated primary-source collections, assessment examples, and faculty-development opportunities. Attention to instructional time, teaching assignments, preparation demands, and transition support for faculty whose workloads depend on General Education offerings would help address the institutional and professional concerns identified by participants.

Pilot implementation across varied public, private sectarian, and private nonsectarian higher education institutions is recommended before broader adoption. Future research could compare the integrated course with the separate-course arrangement by examining students' historical thinking, engagement with Rizal's writings, source evaluation, and civic learning, as well as faculty workload and classroom practice. Longitudinal and mixed-methods studies could further investigate relationships among the intended, implemented, and attained curriculum across institutional types and Philippine regions. Such evidence would support a more grounded assessment of whether the proposed integration achieves curricular efficiency while sustaining the historical, intellectual, and civic purposes of both existing courses.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: John Clifford M. Alvero conceptualized and designed the study, collected and analyzed the documents, interpreted the findings, drafted and revised the manuscript, and approved the final version for publication.

Author 2: Jomar L. Enriquez assisted with data gathering.

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Conflict of Interests

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