FAKE PROFESSIONAL TEACHER SENTENCED TO PRISON

Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) Chairperson Teresita R. Manzala announced that a fake professional teacher in Lingayen, Pangasinan was recently sent to prison for 4 months and 1 day (minimum) to 2 years 4 months and 1 day (maximum) and to pay a fine of PhP5,000.00.

In a decision promulgated last January 17, 2012, Lingayen Municipal Trial Court Judge Mervin Jovito S. Samadan found Mary Grace Bautista-Fernandez guilty of falsification of public document. Fernandez was charged by the Pagasinan Provincial Prosecutor's Office upon the complaint of the PRC for using a forged secondary professional teacher license.

Chairperson Manzala said that the court judgment once again demonstrates the political will of the PRC to exercise its mandate – to protect the public welfare through effective regulation of professional practice. She warned aspiring professionals against dealing with fixers and to pass the licensure examinations through legitimate means. She also appealed to the public to be vigilant and for employers to verify professional documents. The public can now easily verify professional credentials at www.prc.gov.ph.

According to Chairperson Manzala, the court decision is the first conviction among eighteen (18) other cases that the PRC Baguio Regional Office is investigating or has filed in various courts. She directed the PRC Baguio Office to further intensify anti-fixing programs in cooperation with regional agencies and local government units. She also directed the full implementation of the Online Application System to facilitate the processing of professional documents and minimize, if not eradicate, acts of fixing.

Chairperson Manzala commended the PRC Baguio Regional Office, National Bureau of Investigation – CAR and the Pangasinan Provincial Prosecutor's Office for the court decision which, according to her, is a victory for the public welfare.