

University Consortium pushes for collaborative projects on food and nutrition security

Recognizing the importance of attaining food and nutrition security in Southeast Asia, the six member-universities of the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) have agreed to implement a number of collaborative projects to address this emerging concern in the region.

The said activities which likewise aim to further strengthen the partnership



UC Executive Board Members during the 27th UC Executive Board Meeting, 14 November 2014 at New World Hotel, Makati City, Philippines

between and among UC members, were presented and approved on 14 November 2014 at the New World Hotel, Makati City, Philippines as part of the 27th UC Executive Board Meeting.

Collaborative activities include the conduct of an annual Postgraduate Course, an annual Graduate Forum, a dual degree undertaking, and research projects on food reserve management and policies, knowledge management on food and nutrition security, human resource development, halal food processing, fruits and vegetable post-harvest improvement, and indigenous crops production. Each research project will be spearheaded by a UC member from among Kasetsart University in Thailand, Institut Pertanian Bogor and Universitas Gadjah Mada in Indonesia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, University of the Philippines

Los Baños, and SEARCA, with funding support from the University Consortium, the host university, and other local and international partners. On the other hand, Tokyo University of Agriculture (Tokyo-NODAI) has expressed interest in funding as well as providing expertise (faculty and graduate students) to the researches that are of common interest with the Japanese university.

In the implementation of the said activities, the Executive Board likewise foresees the effective utilization of the UC student and faculty grants. At present, UC offers thesis grants, and student travel grants for research or for credit, while faculty members can apply for travel grants for research or for conference, and a grant for visiting professor for teaching purposes.

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Summer School maiden offering brings to a close

This pilot offering was completed by 10 participants from 7 countries, namely: Indonesia (1), Lao PDR (1), Germany (1), Malaysia (1), Myanmar (1), Philippines (3), and Thailand (2).



LOS BAÑOS, Philippines— SEARCA, in collaboration with the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and with support of the University Consortium (UC) has successfully completed the one month Summer School on Food and Nutrition Security for Sustainable Development in Southeast Asia. This pilot offering was completed by 10 participants from 7 countries, namely: Indonesia (1), Lao PDR (1), Germany (1), Malaysia (1), Myanmar (1), Philippines (3), and Thailand (2).

The post graduate course, which commenced in 6 October 2014, involved six modules and a roster of high-profile resource persons from UPLB and other institutions including Kasetsart University of Thailand, International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) in Silang Cavite, and the Philippines Department of Agriculture with Assistant Secretary Romeo Recide giving a lecture on the ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security (SPA-FS), 2015-2020.

The different lectures were complemented with group discussions,

case studies, and field visits to relevant sites such as IIRR, Department of Science and Technology's Food and Nutrition Research Institute, Costales Nature Farms in Majayjay, Laguna, and one of Asia's leading agro-industrial and food conglomerate, Charoen Pokphand Foods Philippines, Corporation.

"We drew the best for this course, and I have never seen such a high level of commitment from all the collaborating institutions," said Dr. Percy E. Sajise, during the course's Closing Ceremonies held on 29 October 2014 at the SEARCA Residence Hotel. Dr. Sajise served as the coordinator and lecturer of the said summer course.

Having been involved from the conceptualization and implementation, Dr. Sajise expressed fulfillment after seeing how the participants were able to integrate in their project proposals what they have learned from the different lectures and field trips.

Meanwhile, UPLB Chancellor Rex Victor Cruz, in his message, reminded the participants that continuous learning is essential. "SEARCA has effectively promoted the pursuit of continuous learning and we thank SEARCA for

partnering with UPLB in this endeavor," he added.

Three SEARCA Directors witness the Summer School Closing Ceremonies. (From L-R) Incumbent Director Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., and past Directors Dr. Arturo A. Gomez and Dr. Percy E. Sajise. Three SEARCA Directors witness the Summer School Closing Ceremonies. (From L-R) Incumbent Director Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., and past Directors Dr. Arturo A. Gomez and Dr. Percy E. Sajise. The summer course is foreseen to be one of the staple offerings of SEARCA in collaboration with UC and its member universities. UC will work towards making the summer school an accredited graduate course among the UC members in order to attract more graduate students to join.

"Thank you for teaching us to do everything sustainable," said Maryono, a Lecturer from the Bogor Agricultural University.

On the other hand, as a sign of appreciation for what she has learned, Meryl Bernardino, a graduate student from the UPLB looks forward to

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SEARCA holds 2nd international conference on ARD



MAKATI, Philippines – Over 400 participants from 20 countries joined in the Second International Conference on Agricultural and Rural Development (ARD2014) in Southeast Asia held on 12-13 November at the Makati Shangri-La Manila, Philippines.

SEARCA Director Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. Themed “Strengthening Resilience, Equity, and Integration in ASEAN Food and Agriculture Systems”, the conference was organized by the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA). ARD2014 aimed to highlight innovative technologies and approaches to processes spanning the entire agricultural value chain, showcase and derive lessons learned in the management of agricultural systems and draw inputs to policy making, particularly in view of the ASEAN Economic Community.

SEARCA Director Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr. opened the conference on 12 November 2014, followed by the keynote address of Pres. Benigno S. Aquino III delivered by the Secretary for Agrarian Reform of the Philippines, Hon. Virgilio De los Reyes.

In his speech, Pres. Aquino hoped that through ARD2014, synergies will be

forged even more, building a Southeast Asia where no one [country] is left behind.

Hon. Virgilio De los Reyes, Secretary for Agrarian Reform of the Philippines, delivered the keynote address of Pres. Benigno S. Aquino III. Hon. Virgilio



De los Reyes, Secretary for Agrarian Reform of the Philippines, delivered the keynote address of Pres. Benigno S. Aquino III. With 22 partner-session conveners and more than 65 thought leaders and experts from Southeast Asia and outside of the region who gave presentations on topics that addressed implications of ARD on resilience, equity, and regional integration, ARD2014 produced useful information about the current situation and gaps on ARD in the region, which led to the identification of key policy recommendations for decision makers.

In the overall synthesis, Dr. Cielito

Habito, the Conference Technical Adviser and Coordinator, emphasized the need for more advantaged players---whether countries, firms, private groups or development partners--to take deliberate actions to reach out, link up to and assist less advantaged one; and to widen and strengthen knowledge sharing and exchange across the region, for a truly resilient, inclusive, competitive and harmonious (RICH) ASEAN. (Junette Dawn A. Baculfo)

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putting up her own vegetable garden once she goes back to Pangasinan.

Kuan Chee Hao, a PhD student from Universiti Putra Malaysia said the summer school was a good platform to learn about food and nutrition security. “When I go home, I will promise to plant seeds of sustainable development in my heart, water it every day and hopefully influence my colleagues to do the same.”

UPLB to implement first offering of University Consortium Summer School in 2015

The University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), under the leadership of its new Chancellor, Dr. Fernando C. Sanchez, Jr., has committed to launch the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) Summer School on Food and Nutrition Security for Southeast Asia in July 2015. This was firming up during the 27th UC Executive Board Meeting on 14 November 2014 at the New World Hotel, Makati City, Philippines.

The Summer School takes off from the pilot project on Food and Nutrition Security for Sustainable Development which was implemented by SEARCA in partnership with UPLB on 6-30 October 2014 (see related story).



in their home university. Moreover, while foreign students will have to enroll at UPLB as non-degree students, the State University will endeavor to apply local rates for their tuition and other fees.

A workshop on Summer School course development will be conducted by UPLB during the early planning phase which will refine the SEARCA-developed course modules.

The Summer School is a post-graduate enhancement course that focuses the various

However, the UPLB-hosted 2015 Summer School aims to be a credit-earning Special Topics course under the UPLB Graduate School, which means students from abroad who registers in the summer course can get credit in an equivalent subject

concepts related to food and nutrition security in the context of sustainable development in Southeast Asia. It will be offered through a combination of class lectures, educational field trips, group work, and case study analysis.

Sanchez takes oath as UPLB's 9th Chancellor



Dr. Fernando C. Sanchez, Jr. took his oath of office as the 9th UPLB Chancellor on 29 October 2014 at the Makiling Botanic Gardens Pavillon, College of Forestry and Natural Resources, UPLB at 3:00 PM. The oath taking was administered by University of the Philippines President Alfredo E. Pascual.

During the ceremony, the incoming chancellor introduced the new vice-

chancellors and officers, including Dr. Portia G. Lapitan, who will take over as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and at the same time, the University Consortium Executive Officer for the University.

Dr. Sanchez was elected as the UPLB chancellor effective 1 November 2014 to 31 October 2017 at the 1301st meeting of the UP BOR on 29 September 2014.

A certified arborist and a licensed agriculturist, Dr. Sanchez is a landscape horticulturist/arborist by profession. He obtained his BS Agriculture and MS Environmental Science at UPLB and his Ph.D. in Landscape Architecture at the Tokyo University of Agriculture in Japan. He is the first in the Philippines to graduate with a Ph.D. in landscape architecture. Dr. Sanchez is recognized as one of the pioneers in the development of the landscape horticulture profession in the Philippines. He has been part of the faculty of the

Department of Horticulture since 1988 and has served the University for 26 years.

He is currently an Associate Professor 7 at the Crop Science Cluster, and is responsible for teaching 19 undergraduate and graduate courses on ornamental and landscape horticulture and adviser to more than 80 BS Agriculture (landscape horticulture) and two MS students.

Dr. Sanchez has served as Vice Chancellor for Planning and Development (Nov 1, 2011-Oct 31, 2014) at UPLB after serving six years as Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Development.

In preparation for the ASEAN University Network in 2015, Dr. Sanchez said that UPLB will craft its internationalization program to include global institutional, research, and student partnerships. (from UPLB News)

UPM Vice Chancellor appointed as New ASAIHL President

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dato' Dr. Mohd. Fauzi Hj. Ramlan has been appointed as the new President of Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (ASAIHL) Board of Trustees, during its conference at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore on December 4.

The appointment was made in the 140th ASAIHL board of directors meeting, effective from January 2015 until December 2016, replacing the current president, Prof. Dr. Idrus A. Paturusi from Indonesia.

The conference with the theme 'Education Innovation for the Knowledge-based Economy: Curriculum, Pedagogy and Technology' was held from December 3 to 5 and attended by nearly 300 participants from 23 countries.

Prof. Dato' Fauzi when commenting on his appointment, said that he would give his full commitment to bring ASAIHL to a higher level and improve the quality of education at the ASEAN as well as international levels. This appointment would enable the country to pave the way to more opportunities in strengthening the existing collaborations among ASAIHL members, in line with Malaysia's role as the ASEAN Chair in 2015.

"I will work with all ASAIHL members to collectively bring about improvement in the quality of education," he said.

Meanwhile, the current ASAIHL President, Prof. Dr. Idrus A. Paturusi, said Prof. Dato' Fauzi is seen as the best candidate to lead ASAIHL members to a greater equality in the field of education.

"I think he will be able to bring together ASAIHL members to a greater equality in the field of education," he said.

The establishment of ASAIHL was aimed to be the pathway for its members institutions to collectively shape regional identity, reach international equality in teaching, promote research and public service as well as enable the members institutions to contribute to the strength of their countries and regions.

The organisation also provides opportunities for academic and public universities development, assistance to members institutions in the recruitment, faculty and staff placement, exchange of



professors and students, development of specific collaborative projects, consultancy services, consolidation among regional and international bodies, assurance to development information and recognition among fellow members.

University Consortium GRANTS

For guidelines, application procedures and requirements, please visit

<http://www.uc.searca.org>



FACULTY GRANTS

Faculty Travel Grant for Research

Conduct research in another participating UC member.

Faculty Travel Grant for Conference/Seminar

Participate and present a paper in a conference/seminar organized by another participating UC member.

Visiting Professor Program for Teaching Purposes

Teach a graduate course in his/her field of discipline at another participating UC member.

STUDENT GRANTS

Thesis Grant

Assists the UC graduate student to develop and finish his/her thesis.

Student Travel Grant for Research

Travel for a semester in another participating UC university to conduct his/her research or a portion of it.

Student Travel Grant for Credit Program

Spend a semester in another participating UC university to take courses for credit to his/her program.

Dwikorita Karnawati Inaugurated as Rector of UGM from 2014-2017

Prof. Ir. Dwikorita Karnawati, M.Sc., Ph.D has been inaugurated as rector of Universitas Gadjah Mada for the period between 2014-2017 at the Senate Hall of UGM, Monday (24/11), attended by all university leadership as well as Board of Trustees.

Chairperson of UGM Board of Trustees, Prof. Dr. Sofian Effendi, said that after a meeting, the Board had decided to elect and appoint Prof. Dwikorita as rector of UGM for the period 2014-2017. She replaced Prof. Dr. Pratikno, M.Soc.Sc, who became State Secretary.

“Prof. Dwikorita is the first female academician that is elected as rector,” said Dr. Sofian.

The task of the new rector, said Sofian, is to consolidate the output of higher learning to the national demand that has not yet been met, also optimising graduate programme, which currently stays at 25 percent of the total UGM students.

Rector of UGM for the period 2012-2014, Prof. Dr. Pratikno has been acknowledged to have elevated to UGM’s status as reference for humanity and Indonesia’s leadership in the global era. He hoped the new rector could UGM produce graduates who are civilized, modest but smart whilst making



contribution to the world.

Prior to her new role as UGM Rector, Prof. Dwikorita was the university’s Vice Rector for Cooperation and Alumni Relations. She is a Professor in Engineering and Environmental Geology at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) Indonesia. She was also a Fulbright Adjunct Professor in San Diego State University, USA from 2011 to 2012; and as the Leverhulme Professor in the Institute of Advanced Study – Bristol University, UK in 2003. She graduated with a PhD from the Department of Earth Sciences, at Leeds University, UK in 1996.

Her contributions to science have

been internationally recognized by receiving the International Award from the International Consortium – United Nation International Strategy on Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR) in 2011 and with her appointment as the Vice President for the International Consortium on Landslides, due to her innovative efforts in developing Community & Indigenous Technology-based for Landslide Disaster Risk Reduction.

Prof. Dwikorita said the new government arrangement of the Ministry that manages higher learning could be an opportunity for UGM to become socio entrepreneur university.

(with reports from UGM News)

Masyhuri recognized promoting food security in Indonesia

SUBANG, WEST JAVA, Indonesia – Dr. Masyhuri, Senior Researcher of Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) Center for World Trade Studies and concurrent Coordinator for the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) was one of the recipients of the prestigious Adhikarya Pangan Nusantara medal, an award bestowed to outstanding Indonesians who have contributed very significantly to Indonesia’s efforts to attain food security, food sovereignty, and food self-sufficiency.

No less than Indonesia’s President, Joko Widodo conferred the accolade, which was

also awarded to 8 governors and 10 village leaders, during the ceremony that took place in the middle of the rice-paddy dike in the Grand Center for Rice in Subang, West Java, on 26 December 2014.

“With this award, I hope in the future to do more research on food security in Indonesia,” acclaimed Masyhuri.

Coincidentally, the UC has resolved to implement a number of collaborative projects to address food security in the region (see related story). This include a study on the effects of ASEAN economic integration, trade, and investments on



food security in the region, which will be spearheaded by UGM.

The University Consortium

The Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources is a network of higher education institutions launched on 19 September 1989 by SEARCA.

The idea of having such a network was formed in August 1988 when SEARCA convened a meeting of deans of five leading agricultural graduate schools in the region. The deans noted a rising demand for graduate education across all agricultural disciplines and related fields, strong agricultural and demographic pressures, and tremendous growth in education, and agreed to the idea of establishing a University Consortium.

The objectives of the Consortium are:

1. To provide highly trained personnel in agriculture and natural resources for national development of Southeast Asian countries.
2. To promote mutually beneficial cooperation among agricultural universities in the region.
3. To utilize more fully and efficiently the scarce resources and expertise available in each country in the region for top-quality graduate education and research.
4. To stimulate freer sharing and exchange of information, facilities, and expertise among agricultural universities in the region.

SEARCA has served as the Consortium's Secretariat since 1989. Its founding members are Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) and Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), both in Indonesia; Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in Malaysia; University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in the Philippines; and Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand. Four associate members joined the network, namely: University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada, University of Queensland (UQ) in Australia, Georg-August University of Göttingen (GAUG) in Germany, and Tokyo University of Agriculture (TUA) in Japan.

The vision of the University Consortium is to be a leader in implementing collaborative strategies for excellent graduate education and cutting-edge research in agriculture, environment, and natural resources for the benefit of Southeast Asia.

The Consortium has five program components, namely: student exchanges, faculty visits, research fellowships, professorial chairs, and thesis grants.

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(as of 30 December 2013)

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UPM boosts national agricultural education to international level

SERDANG – The Chancellor of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, said that the success of UPM in being ranked among the world's top 51 – 100 universities in agriculture, forestry and education by the QS World University Ranking 2014 has placed Malaysian agricultural education on the international stage.

“This meets the purpose for which UPM was established: to spearhead agriculture and agro-related education in the country. I hope the university's position in the rankings will prompt the government to optimise resources and expertise in the university to spur the nation's excellence in education to greater heights.

“UPM has strengthened its Putra Global 200 Initiative strategies to be ranked among the top 200 universities in the world and top 30 universities in agriculture by 2020,” he said at the first session of the 38th UPM Convocation being held in the Great Hall, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Cultural and Arts Centre.

In his speech, the Sultan said that he was satisfied with UPM's recently achieved 376th place out of 20,000 higher learning institutions worldwide, as indicated in the QS World University Ranking 2014.

Sultan Sharafuddin expressed his hope that the university will continue to champion sustainable development, which covers the sustainability of natural resources and the environment, as well as the preservation of a culture of scholarship rich with eastern values.

“I am pleased with the university's efforts in establishing the Food Security Institute



and the Plantation Research Institute, with the aim of addressing the problems in food security and the plantation industry, which are among the top areas of economic growth. “Both institutions play important roles in the production of high impact research in these areas,” he said.

The Sultan said the launch of the UPM Strategic Plan 2014, which extends beyond 2020, is aimed at developing UPM into a university of international repute. “This is in line with the government's call to place UPM at the helm of efforts to elevate agricultural education to higher levels, and to conduct relevant research so that the findings will benefit the public,” he said.

The Sultan expressed his pleasure at UPM achieving MyGAP (Malaysian Good Agricultural Practices) status for the Livestock Sector in dairy cattle, beef cattle and sheep husbandry, which will lead

to UPM producing safe and high-quality products.

“The implementation of MyGAP will reduce agriculture-related environmental pollution. GAP certification strengthens UPM's competitiveness and establishes it as a benchmark entity based on standards set by internationally recognised bodies such as the ASEAN GAP and the Global GAP,” he said.



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