

UC awards research grants to Southeast Asian graduate students

The Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) has awarded six thesis grants this year to graduate students from Kasetsart University (KU), University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

Through the UC Thesis Grant, each graduate scholar receives USD 500 to

fund their respective graduate research that falls within the strategic priorities of the Consortium.

The UC Thesis Grant awardees for 2012 are:

Kasetsart University (KU)

Mr. Kitti Koonsanit, "Automatic Segmentation of Hyperspectral Imagery using Clustering and Image Processing Technique"

Ms. Rane Saisaleem, "Study of Genetic Diversity using Microsatellite in Cucumis sativus"

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

Mr. Bashir Ibrahim Muse, "Modeling Consumer Behavioral Intentions towards Genetically Modified Food (GM)"

Ms. Sohana Shabnam, "Mixed Culture of Microalgae for Phycoremediation of Oil Palm and Domestic Wastewater and Biomass Production for Sustainable Biofuel Generation"

University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB)

Mr. Bryan Rey R. Oliveros, "Use of Ozone as a Wash Water Additive for Sanitizing Organic Produce"



Mr. Kitti Koonsanit, KU



Mr. Bashir Ibrahim Muse, UPM



Ms. Josephine B. Makiling, UPLB



Ms. Rane Saisaleem, KU



Ms. Sohana Shabnam, UPM



Mr. Bryan Rey Oliveros, UPLB

Ms. Josephine B. Makiling, "Assessment of Amenity-led Migration and Its Influences on Ecotourism at the Taal Volcano Protected Landscape (TVPL), Philippines"

Since the launch of the UC Thesis Grant in 1995, a total of 202 grants have been awarded from the UC-affiliated universities, namely: KU, UPLB, UPM, Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), Universitas Gadjadara (UGM), University of British Columbia (UBC), and University of Queensland (UQ).

Aside from the thesis grant, the UC also offers student grants for credit and for research. For faculty members of participating Consortium universities, grants for conference, research, and visiting professor programs for teaching purposes are offered. Details on these grants can be found at the Consortium website at www.uc.searca.org.

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UQ has new Vice Chancellor and President



Professor Peter Høj, the new vice-chancellor and president of UQ

The Senate of the University of Queensland (UQ) has appointed Professor Peter Høj as the next Vice-Chancellor and President of the university. Professor Høj, who is currently the Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of South Australia, is a University of Copenhagen graduate (Master of Science, PhD, and Honorary Doctorate).

In addition to his Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering Fellowship, Professor Høj was recently appointed as a Foreign Member (Natural Sciences Class) of The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters.

Since settling in Australia in 1987, Professor Høj has gained national esteem within academic, industry, and government circles. He served as Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Research Council and Managing Director of the Australian Wine Research Institute. Professor Høj's reputation in the sector is attested to by his membership in several national bodies. He is deputy chair and lead vice chancellor (research) for Universities Australia, the sector's peak body. He is one of only two Vice-Chancellors on the Australian Quality Framework Council, and was recently appointed to the Board of Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

Professor Debbie Terry remains as UQ's Vice-Chancellor until Professor Høj commences his appointment on 8 October 2012.

UPM's Business and Management Institutes raise the bar with AACSB accreditation

SERDANG, 1 August - Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) is now the first university in Malaysia to obtain accreditation in business from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the world's largest accreditation association for business schools and universities.

AACSB International President and Chief Executive Officer, John J. Fernandes, announced the accreditation of UPM's Putra Business School and the Faculty of Economics and Management through their website at www.aacsb.edu.

Other international universities recognized by AACSB include the University of Texas at Brownsville (USA), Chongnam National University (South Korea), Dongguk University (South Korea), Istanbul University (Turkey), Peking University (China), Providence College (USA), and West Texas A & M University (USA).

Fernandes said that AACSB accreditation is the highest achievement for an educational institution that offers business degrees. The accreditation is a sign of excellence in business, which at present has been achieved by only 655 business schools in 44 countries.

UPM was audited by the AACSB Peer

Review Team (PRT) on 27 to 30 May 2012. With the successful audit, UPM becomes the sixth university in Southeast Asia to receive AACSB Accreditation.

According to UPM Vice Chancellor Dato 'Ir. Dr. Radin Umar Radin Sohadi, less than five percent of business schools worldwide are accredited with the AACSB. With UPM's accreditation, a new benchmark for the quality of tertiary education in Malaysia has been set.

Sohadi, in particular, commended the management and staff of the Putra Business School and the Faculty of Economics as well as the strong support of Malaysia's Ministry of Higher Education for this milestone. With its international recognition, UPM's image, quality, and reputation is enhanced.

UPM joins an elite group of the world's top business schools that are accredited by AACSB including the London Business School, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard University, Yale University, Columbia University, Warwick Business School, and the University of Toronto.

Source: UPM Media | 1 Aug 2012



Dato 'Ir. Dr. Radin Umar Radin Sohadi (center) announces AACSB accreditation of Putra Business School and the Faculty of Economics in a press conference at UPM.

Southeast Asian Soil researchers converge at IPB

Climate change, land degradation, and increasing urbanization all lead to a decline of arable land in Southeast Asia. Consequently, this region is gradually becoming dependent on food imports from developed countries. To prevent a market-driven global food system dominated by the developed countries, promoting food sovereignty is now being endorsed as a social movement in the region.

The Department of Soil Science and Land Resources of the Bogor Agriculture University (IPB) in collaboration with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) held the Regional Workshop “Water, Land and Southeast Asia Food Sovereignty,” on 17-21 September 2012 at the IPB International Convention Center. Students and researchers from Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Philippines, Belgium, China, and Bangladesh, participated in the workshop, which also aimed to build networks between scientists and policy makers on food and agriculture in Southeast Asia.

Prof. Dr. Ir. Herry Suhardiyanto, Rector of IPB, opened the regional meeting, which he said was an avenue for sharing of vital information and research results on water, soil and agricultural productivity among

This regional workshop aims at sharing knowledge, study results, and policy measures in the field of water, land, climate and food sovereignty issues.



Southeast Asian countries. Dr. Suhardiyanto emphasized the improvement of the irrigation system as a critical component which should be given due attention by all stakeholders, especially the government. As a case in point, Dr. Suhardiyanto shared that in managing its irrigation system, the government of Indonesia has adopted the concept of integrated water resource management, based on economic efficiency,

equity, and environment preservation.

Aside from Dr. Suhardiyanto, Dr. R. M. Marty M. Natalegawa, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. Ir. H. Suswono, MMA, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia and Dr. Norbert Baas, German Ambassador in Indonesia graced the regional.

Source: IPB News | 20 September 2012

UGM to assist in the establishment of the Faculty of Engineering in Myanmar

The Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) inked accord with Myanmar's United Mercury Group (UMG) University to help establish UMG's Faculty of Engineering.

Part of UMG's blueprint is to open four-study programs, namely: Department of mechanical engineering, civil engineering, geological engineering, and electrical engineering. Through the bilateral cooperation, UMG faculty members will be sent to UGM for graduate education and training. UGM will likewise be tapped to assist in drawing up the engineering education curriculum of the said Myanmar university.

UGM Rector Prof. Dr. Pratikno, welcomed the cooperation, which according to him is an opportunity for

Myanmar academicians to cooperate with international partners after the country opened its doors to democracy.

“I hope this cooperation would give better benefits, not only between universities, but also between students and society,” Pratikno said.

Moreover, Pratikno envisions the cooperation to support the ongoing democratization process in Myanmar. “UGM has a variety of science disciplines, producing more than two hundred thousands of alumni who become bureaucrats, politicians, and professional workers. The experience of these alumni can be explored more deeply,” he added.

Meanwhile, UMG Rector, Prof. Dr.

Aung Shein, said the partnership opens up opportunities and chances for Myanmar students to receive education at par with international standards, particularly with UGM belonging to the world's top 500 universities.

On the other hand, Myanmar's ambassador to Indonesia, Myint Lwin, said the cooperation between universities would strengthen the commitment of the countries in Southeast Asia towards ASEAN Community 2015. “It is not only cooperation between governments, but also cooperation between communities through education,” he concluded.

Source: UGM News Report | July 2012

Representatives from University of Science and Technology, People's Republic of China visit KU

On 16 August 2012, the eight-member delegation from the University of Science and Technology, People's Republic of China visited the Kasetsart University, starting with a courtesy call on Mr. Preungboon Chakkaphak, vice president for International Affairs

After expressing their sincere appreciation of KU's hospitality, Professor Gu Jibao, the representative of the delegates, shared the possible areas of future collaboration with Kasetsart University. On the other hand, Mr. Chakkaphak on behalf of Kasetsart University, he was very pleased to know that University of Science and Technology, is also a member of EXPERT II, under the ERASMUS MUNDUS Action 2, which KU has been also collaborating with.

Right after the courtesy call, the delegates, then proceeded to meet with faculty members of Kasetsart University chaired by Associate Professor Dr. Gunjana Teeragool, Dean of Graduate School, Dr. Matrini Ruktanonchai, Deputy Dean for Foreign Relations and Special Affairs, Faculty of Social Sciences and Assistant Professor Dr. Patamaporn Sripadungtham, Assistant Dean for Information Technology and

Photosource: www.intaff.ku.ac.th



International Affairs, Faculty of Engineering.

To conclude the visit, both universities agreed to initiate several activities including joint researches and knowledge sharing on Graduate Study in four (4) areas: Business Administration, Public Administration, Project Management, Logistics Engineering.

Student exchange program will also be one area for collaboration while the possibility of Double Degree Program will be taken into account on a later plan.

Source: IAD News | August 2012

IPB-developed artificial rice to reach Indonesian market

Agriculture Minister Suswono has launched food products made from local plants developed by the Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB) to support food diversification.

"We don't need to worry about food scarcity because we have an abundance of natural and human resources. What we need now is more innovation as the number of fields for agriculture is limited," he said during the launch at the campus on 1 September 2012.

Researchers at IPB have produced food products that have been processed to have similar characteristics to food made from rice.

By adding fiber, antioxidant substances or other ingredients, the artificial rice that can be made from corn, sorghum, sago and tubers is ideal for a customized diet.

The researchers describe the products as

"analog rice" because they have analogous characteristics to conventional rice.

Suswono said that with such innovations, the archipelago had no reason to worry about food shortages, especially when extreme weather occurred.

Slamet Budijanto, IPB's director of agriculture technology and one of the product researchers, said that analog rice had made it to the 2011 list of 103 innovations in the country and had also received an award from the West Java administration.

"We hope in the future for private-sector involvement in the production of analog rice to support national food sustainability," he said.

Artificial rice can be cooked through both conventional and modern means, and people do not need to wash it before use.

But the price is still expensive, ranging from Rp 9,000 (99 US cents) to Rp 14,000

per liter, depending on the ingredients used to make the rice. Due to its cost, the product is targeted for middle-to-upper class consumers.

Indonesia, the world's third-largest rice producer after China and India, with a population of 240 million, annually consumes 139 kilograms per capita. But it has been unable to maintain self-sufficiency and relies a lot on imports of the staple food as stockpiles have fallen and harvests failed to meet targets.

The government has set a target of a surplus of 10 million tons of rice in 2014 as part of the rice-self sufficiency program it launched several years ago.

Condensed from: The Jakarta Post
| 3 September 2012

UQ improves in world rankings for agricultural science

With a world ranking of 45 out of more than 1200 universities, UQ has also been recognized as the top university in Queensland and in the top three nationally for its research and teaching in the life and agricultural sciences. Head of UQ's School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, Professor Neal Menzies, said UQ agricultural science had moved up the global ranking system by five places from the previous ranking of 50.

"This global ranking has a strong emphasis on research and so the result reflects the high quality of UQ researchers who are working on some of the biggest issues in agricultural science," Professor Menzies said.

"The University's research capacity in agriculture and food sciences has been strengthened with the formation of the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation (QAAFI), which brings together scientists from the Queensland Government and UQ.

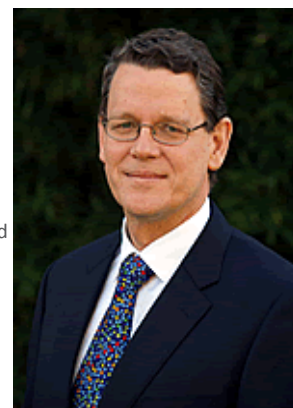
"UQ is committed to finding solutions to global issues related to diminishing natural resources, climate change, and feeding a growing population.

"For example, UQ has research teams working on foods for health, international agricultural development, native food innovation, crop and tropical fruit innovation, bioenergy crop development, and sustainable farming systems."

The Academic Ranking of World Universities was first published by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China in 2003. Since 2009 it has been compiled by an independent organization, the

Dr. Neal Menzies

Professor of Soil and Environmental Science
Head, School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, and
Dean of Agriculture



Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, and was released today by the Centre for World-Class Universities of Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

The ARWU uses a number of objective indicators to rank world universities. They include:

- > Number of alumni and staff winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals
- > Number of highly cited researchers selected by Thomson Scientific,
- > Number of articles published in journals of Nature and Science,
- > Number of articles indexed in Science Citation Index - Expanded and Social Sciences Citation Index, and
- > Per capita performance with respect to the size of an institution.

More than 1200 universities are ranked by the ARWU every year and the best 500 are published on the web at <http://www.shanghairanking.com/index.html>.

Source: UQ News | 16 August 2012

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR SY 2014-2015 SEARCA GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) invites applications for its graduate scholarship (MS and PhD) in agriculture and related fields for School Year 2014-2015.

Eligibility: The SEARCA Graduate Scholarship is open to nationals of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam who are regular employees of academic, research or government institutions and not more than 35 years old at the time of application.

Fields of Studies: Agriculture and related sciences (including biological sciences, fishery, environmental science, statistics, forestry and social sciences).

For more information, visit <http://www.searca.org>

SEARCA Senior Fellow probes human ecology over time and space in new book

Internationally recognized ecologist and environmentalist Dr. Percy E. Sajise brings together in a new book the discipline of ecology and the perspective of human ecology in analyzing environmental problems over time and space in the landscape of the Philippines, Southeast and East Asia. The book is entitled "Ecology, Environment, and Sustainable Development: Reflections Spanning Five Decades".

Launched at SEARCA on 6 August 2012, the book is written in a style of a travelogue that spans five decades, drawing from the author's actual experiences in his travels as well as his publications, speeches, and interdisciplinary research and development engagements.

As Dr. Sajise's book highlights significant lessons learned from the analysis of various case studies, it will be useful for students, professionals, and practitioners of environmental science(s), natural resource managers, as well as development workers and advocates of sustainable development.

The book is co-published by SEARCA and the University of the Philippines Los Baños through School of Environmental Science and Management (SESAM) and College of Human Ecology (CHE).

A former SEARCA Director (1994-1999),

now a SEARCA Senior Fellow, Dr. Sajise is also an Adjunct Professor at the UPLB-SESAM, where he had devoted most of his professional life.

Dr. Sajise's experience spans more than four decades across communities, farms, and forests as well as universities and research institutions worldwide. He served as Regional Director of Bioversity International's Office for Asia, Pacific and Oceania in 2000-2008 and is currently an Honorary Research Fellow of Bioversity International and a member of the World

Academy of Arts and Science. He is also a member of the advisory body of the Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge based in Yunnan, China.

Dr. Sajise was also recently appointed as a member of the Advisory Group to the Secretariat of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The Advisory Group plays a key part in the preparation of the State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture.

A colorful poster for the "International Conference on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Food and Environmental Security". The background features a sunset over a body of water with silhouettes of wind turbines. On the left, there are logos for SEARCA, ASEAN, and the Asia Pacific Adaptation Network. The main title is in large, bold, yellow and red letters. Below the title, it says "Scientific Meeting 21-22 November 2012" and "Post-conference Fieldtrip 23 November 2012", both in green. The location is listed as "SEARCA, UPLB, Los Baños, Philippines" and "Southern Tagalog Region, Philippines". At the bottom left, the registration fee is stated: "Registration Fee: USD 200 (Covers conference meals, materials, and campus shuttle; Add: USD 40 for fieldtrip)".

International Conference on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Food and Environmental Security

Scientific Meeting
21-22 November 2012
SEARCA, UPLB, Los Baños, Philippines

Post-conference Fieldtrip
23 November 2012
Southern Tagalog Region, Philippines

Registration Fee: USD 200 (Covers conference meals, materials, and campus shuttle; Add: USD 40 for fieldtrip)

For more information, visit: <http://icciafes.searcabackup.org/>



The University Consortium

The Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources is a network of 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 have been admitted, 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 components, namely: student exchanges, faculty visits, research fellowships, professorial chairs, and thesis grants.

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Seminar underscores power of online media for social change

“It is no longer a question of professionals versus amateurs; it is a world of collaboration. We have moved from the age of authority to the age of authenticity.”

This statement from Maria Ressa, CEO and executive director of the social news network, Rappler, created ripples of excitement among more than 400 students and teachers who packed the SEARCA Umali Auditorium in the UP Los Baños campus on 19 September 2012.

Ressa, former chief of CNN’s bureau in Manila and Jakarta and head of ABS-CBN News and Current Affairs, was referring to the power of social media for reportage and social change during her keynote speech in the seminar, entitled, Move Chat Series @ UPLB with the theme “Social Media for Social Change: Pushing Development Forward.”

Rappler, as their online site describes, is “a group of journalists committed to inform Filipinos and inspire them to interact and participate in nation-building by providing a credible, creative, and interactive platform through social media.”

She further explained that the new approach to journalism, which Rappler is advocating, is to be in the center of three overlapping circles, namely: professional journalism, the wisdom of crowds, and rich media.

“You now have to cut across all disciplines of professional journalism. You write, you shoot [pictures], you do the voice, you edit, then you upload,” Ressa said. “Then you have to get the wisdom of the crowds. Seek the opinions and feedback of people; ask them how they feel about issues. That way, we cross out our biases and collectively make better decisions,” she explains.

Rich media, meanwhile, means using technology such as iPhones that enable you to transmit all [information] immediately. “It’s faster than anything!” she enthused. Capturing the best features of these circles are

social media.

Building on the keynote message of Maria Ressa are other Rappler team members. Chay Hofileña, citizen journalism director, shared some principles on pushing stories into the mainstream media. “You must tell a story or let it have a human face before going into the statistics; have a narrative such as a triumph, struggle or determination; have a clear voice and direction; and offer a new, different, or fresh perspective to every story,” she advised.

Michael Josh Villanueva, Rappler special projects director, gave useful tips on how to mobilize, build, engage, and act on a development issue using Facebook.

Patricia Evangelista, Rappler multimedia reporter, who describes herself “as more of a story-teller,” shared how to tell compelling stories about people who would otherwise not be

heard of or known. “People don’t have that imagination to put themselves in others’ shoes” That’s why I write,” she said.

The representative speaker from UPLB was Dr. Serlie Barroga-Jamias, director of the Office of Public Relations (OPR). She related how social media transformed her DevCom 123 students into citizen journalists especially during the crisis of student murders around UPLB last semester.

The seminar was co-organized by the Office of the Chancellor- OPR, the Development Communication Graduate Students Association (DEVCOM-GRADSA), the College of Development Communication (CDC), and the UPLB Foundation Incorporated (UPLB-FI).

Source: Dr. Serlie Jamias from UPLB News | 21

September 2012



Rappler CEO and Executive Director Maria Ressa speaks before the jam-packed SEARCA Umali Auditorium