

Workshop held to establish Joint Masters Degree in Food Security and Climate Change (MS FSCC)



The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and

Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) hosted the first workshop to establish the Joint Master's Degree program in Food Security and Climate Change (MS FSCC) at the SEARCA Headquarters, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines on 7-8 November 2016.

for Higher Education Program. The first year of the project is meant to establish the curriculum; the pilot implementation is set to start in August 2017.

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Workshop held to establish Joint Masters Degree in Food Security and Climate Change (MS FSCC) The MS FSCC is a project initiated by the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) and is jointly led by Kasetsart University (KU) and SEARCA. It is a 3-year project, which was awarded funding under the ERASMUS + Capacity Building



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University Consortium pushes for more collaborations and linkages



The Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC) held its 29th Executive Board



Meeting on 9-10 November 2016 at the SEARCA Headquarters, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines. Updates to the UC's various programs including the various grants, the Summer School, the Graduate Forum, the collaborative researches

on the Umbrella Program on Food and Nutrition Security for Southeast Asia (FANSSEA), the recently approved ERASMUS+ funded project on the establishment of the Master of Science in Food Security and Climate Change (MS FSCC), the application of University of Brawijaya to be a member of the UC, and the possible collaborations between the UC and the French institute AGRENIUM were discussed during the meeting.

Seventeen participants from the UC member organizations (Institut Pertanian Bogor and Universitas Gadjah Mada, both from Indonesia; Universiti Putra Malaysia from Malaysia; University of the Philippines Los Baños from the Philippines; Kasetsart University from Thailand; Tokyo University of Agriculture from Japan, and SEARCA) attended the meeting. Also present were three other resource persons from SEARCA, six representatives from the University of Brawijaya of Indonesia, and two representatives from AGRENIUM.

Part of the agenda of the board meeting was presentation of the FANSSEA portal under the Umbrella Program on Food and Nutrition Security for Southeast Asia. Dr. Maria Celeste H. Cadiz, Head of SEARCA's Knowledge Management Department, and Dr. Mariliza V. Ticsay, Head of Knowledge Resources Unit, solicited views and suggestions for the proposed website and invited the University Consortium members to consider linking the portal to their own websites for a more consolidated information system.

The UC was founded in 1989 to link the top agricultural universities in the region to facilitate free exchange of information, facilities and expertise.



UPLB, SEARCA co-host 2nd UC grad forum



“As holders of knowledge, we have a responsibility to our people, not just to our fellow countrymen, but also to everyone in our region,” said Chancellor Fernando C. Sanchez, Jr. in his welcome remarks during the 2nd SEARCA University Consortium Graduate Forum on Nov. 11 at the SEARCA DL Umali Auditorium.

The forum, with the theme “The quest for environmental and food security, inclusive and sustainable agricultural development,” gathered 35 participants representing the member universities of the Southeast Asian University Consortium for Graduate Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources, or the University Consortium (UC).

Chancellor Sanchez commended the organizers for bringing together research and academic luminaries to discuss the Region’s most pressing concerns on agriculture, environment and natural resources. These concerns are also among UPLB’s priority initiatives to become a globally competitive graduate and research university that contributes to national development.

On the other hand, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., director of Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), said that the event is an important building block in creating strong linkages and promoting internationalization among higher institutions in the region. Dr. Saguiguit also discussed SEARCA’s mandate and responsibilities in the Southeast Asian region.

The challenge for ASEAN

In her keynote message, Dr. Rowena Christina L. Guevara, undersecretary for research and development of the Department of Science and Technology, said that the Philippines is gearing towards agricultural modernization to strengthen its global competitiveness. To achieve this goal, she reiterated the need to address issues on food security, natural resources and free trade.

Dr. Guevara noted that food security became a concern because of growing world population and discussed the need to guarantee food supply and quality, and ultimately, to wipe out hunger by

2030.

She said that the decline in natural resources is primarily due to agricultural land conversion into commercial and industrial use. The challenge, according to her, is to sustainably improve agricultural activity in a way that will improve productivity and competitiveness and lessen environmental damage.

Dr. Guevara also noted how the ASEAN Economic Community has transformed the region into a single and integrated market. She reiterated the challenge to increase productivity in agriculture and other industries in the region.

Solutions to the challenges

Dr. Isabelita M. Pabuayon, dean of the College of Economics and Management, offered a solution to these challenges in her presentation on “Sustainable agricultural development for food security and inclusive growth.” Dr. Pabuayon suggested the strengthening of production support for small-scale farmers; improving the agribusiness

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of higher education in Southeast Asia. Dr. Poonpipope Kasemsap of KU, Co-Project Leader, and Dr. Didier Pillot of Montpellier SupAgro, Project Coordinator for EU, also delivered their Messages in the Opening Program.

The two-day workshop, also supported by the Food Security Center of the University of Hohenheim, aims to identify the professional profiles of future graduates of this specialized Master's degree, based on market demand. It is also a first step to recognize the various degree programs and courses existing in

the partner universities that may be considered for the MS FSCC.

In his welcome remarks, Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., SEARCA Director, emphasized that the MS FSCC program will not just enhance and broaden the specific areas of study in the field of ARD but will also promote internationalization

The partners to the MS FSCC project include: Kasetsart University, Chiang Mai University, and Prince of Songkla University in Thailand; Universiti Putra Malaysia and Nilai University in Malaysia; Institut Pertanian Bogor and Universitas Gadjah Mada in Indonesia; University of the Philippines Los Baños and Central Luzon State University in the Philippines; Royal University of Agriculture and University of Battambang in Cambodia; Montpellier SupAgro and AGRENIUM of France; Gottingen University in Germany; BOKU of Austria; AGRINATURA (European Alliance on Agricultural Knowledge for Development) based in the Czech Republic; and SEARCA.



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creating better linkages among farmers, the private sector and the market; and emphasizing the role of the government in trade.

Dr. Pabuayon further recommended to implement interdisciplinary and integrated research, collaborative and comparative studies and to encourage joint postgraduate programs to provide clearer solutions to these challenges.

On the other hand, Dr. Rhodora V. Azanza, assistant vice president for academic affairs of the UP System and Academician of the National Academy of Science and Technology also proposed solutions in her presentation "Sustainability of marine ecosystems."

Dr. Azanza emphasized that "environmental sustainability is the bedrock of economic sustainability" and should be a major agenda of the government.

Economic growth, in any country, depends heavily on production, whether it be agriculture, industry or human resource. Production entails the use of natural resources. The idea, according to Dr. Azanza, is to increase production and at the same time, properly manage land resources.

Dr. Azanza also discussed UP's internationalization initiatives and highlighted university programs that allow students to avail themselves of study and travel support. Dr. Azanza is also the director of UP's Office of International Linkages.

Present during the Forum were Dr. Portia G. Lapitan, vice chancellor for academic affairs, who, in her closing remarks, urged graduate students to continue their work and to contribute to the inclusive and sustainable development of their countries in particular and the ASEAN in general; Dr. Jose V.

Camacho Jr. and Dr. Mark Dondi M. Arboleda, dean and secretary of the Graduate School (GS), respectively; Dr. Peter W. Brothers, head of International Rice Research Institute Education; and Dr. Ma. Cristeta N. Cuaresma, head of SEARCA's Graduate Education and Institutional Development Program.

The Forum was organized by SEARCA and GS. The UC was established in 1989 as a venue for sharing academic expertise and resources among its member universities. It has the following eight members: UPLB; Insitut Pertanian Bogor and Universitas Gadjah Mada in Indonesia; Universiti Putra Malaysia; Kasetsart University in Thailand; Tokyo University of Agriculture, Japan; University of British Columbia, Canada; and University of Goettingen, Germany. (Maribeth C. Jadina)

Source: uplb.edu.ph

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.

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. Two affiliate members joined the network, namely: University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada and Georg-August University of Göttingen (GAUG) in Germany. The Tokyo University of Agriculture (TUA) in Japan joined as an associate member.

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, joint scholarships and thesis grants.

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