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Portugal and Chula: Collaboration with the University of Coimbra



Our Faculty is one of the few Thai institutions with strong ties to Portugal, and specifically to one of its flagship colleges, the University of Coimbra. A joint MOU is already in place, so when on January 12, 2015, Prof. Joaquim Ramos de Carvalho (the Vice President for Foreign Affairs) and Prof. Jose Pedro Paiva (the Dean of Faculty of Arts and Humanities), visited the Faculty of Arts, even more concrete steps were discussed. Welcomed by Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan Chatraporn (the Deputy Dean for International Affairs) Ajarn Dr. Penpisa Srivoranart (lecturer of Spanish in the Department of Western Languages), Assist. Prof. Dr. Pittayawat Pittayaporn (lecturer of the Department of Linguistics), and Ajarn Dr. Tul Israngura Na Ayudhya (lecturer of the Department of History), the guests from Portugal discussed opportunities for student and teacher exchange, plus research collaboration, with the Chula counterparts.

As a result, students from University of Coimbra may take classes in the BALAC, and Arts students both in the Thai and BALAC programs may study Portuguese in the summer, and the credits are transferable. The University of Coimbra will cover part of the food and accommodation cost for Arts students. Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan Chatraporn suggested signing a joint Student Exchange Agreement to facilitate student exchange between the two universities. 


Orientation and Reception for BALAC and Exchange Students

In September 2014, the BALAC program organized an orientation and reception for BALAC and exchange students at Sasa International House to welcome foreign students, provide information about the Faculty and the program, and assign a buddy to each foreign student. 29 foreign students, 70 BALAC students, and 8 professors participated in this orientation.



Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan Chatraporn, Director of the BALAC, welcomed foreign students and provided information on classes and life in Faculty of Arts' BALAC program, and at Chula. Then, all the professors and staff as well as the new students from Japan, Germany, Sweden, Indonesia, Brunei, England and the US introduced themselves.

The highlight of the orientation was the presentation of three field trips to learn about culture, history and the environment at Damnoen Saduak Floating Market in Ratchaburi, the Elephant Show in Nakhon Pathom, the historic site in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, and Khlong Khon Forest at Mangrove Forest Conservation Center in Samut Songkhram. The purposes of the field trips are to educate students in Thai history, culture, lifestyle and environment, and to promote close relations and strong networks between the BALAC program and foreign students. Faculty lecturers and students, as well as staff, will join these field trips.

After that, students and professors enjoyed a meal and socialized with one another. This orientation and new student welcoming party was a good start and opportunity for foreign students to get to know one another and their Thai buddies, and to acquire useful information about life and study at Chula. 


Hispanic Week



The Spanish Section, the Latin American Center, the Department of Western Languages, and the International Affairs Section of the Faculty of Arts collaborated with no fewer than 7 embassies of countries with Spanish speakers (Argentina, the Republic of Chile, Colombia, Mexico, the Republic of Peru, Cuba, and Spain) to organize ‘Hispanic Week’ for Thai and international students who study Spanish and Latin American cultures. The event took place from March 16 to 19, 2015 with a purpose to increase students’ knowledge and experience in languages and cultures of countries with Spanish speakers.

Ambassadors of six embassies joined in the opening ceremony.: H.E. Ana María Ramírez (Argentina), H.E. Javier Becker, (Republic of Chile), H.E. Andelfo García (Colombia), H.E. Jorge Chen (Mexico), H.E. Felix Denergri (Republic of Peru), and H.E. Victor Ramirez Peña (Cuba).

Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan Chatraporn, the Deputy Dean for International Affairs welcomed the ambassadors and participants, and the Ambassador of the Embassy of Argentina gave opening remarks. There were Spanish and Latin American dance shows presented by the embassies, and a ceremony to present prizes to winners of the contest by the ambassadors. Then, Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan presented flower bouquets to all the ambassadors for their support and cooperation in organizing Hispanic Week. The event ended with a Spanish and Latin American food exhibition and small talks in the reception.


The week-long Hispanic Week included Spanish and Latin American culture contests, Salsa and Flamingo dance demonstrations, and cooking demonstrations that featured Spanish paella, Mexican taco, and Peruvian Ceviche. Moreover, knowledgeable speakers from outside were invited to give talks on Latin American culture. Hispanic Week received much attention from students, faculty members, as well as the public. 

A Special Lecture on OCSC, Fulbright and Australian Government Scholarships



Not many things draw as much attention and interest as scholarship events, and the “OCSC, Fulbright and Australian Government Scholarships” lecture was no exception. The Faculty of Arts’ International Affairs Division hosted it on Wednesday, March 18, 2015 from 1.30-3.30 p.m. in Room 304 of Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Building. Assist. Prof. Dr. Prapod Assavavirulhakarn, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, gave opening remarks. Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan Chatraporn, Deputy Dean for International Affairs, was the moderator. Speakers included Khun Jiraphorn Wirojcheewan, Senior Human Resource Officer of the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC), Assist. Prof. Benjawan Ubonsri, Director of the Thai-American (Fulbright) Foundation, Khun Supawaree Patavanich, Junior Program Officer of Fulbright, Khun Pasinee Ratanaburi, Scholarship Officer of the Australian Embassy’s Australia Education International, and Khun Porntip Kanjananiyot, former Director of the Thai-American (Fulbright) Foundation.

The distinguished speakers provided information and details on scholarships, application and preparation. The OCSC offers scholarships to graduates to pursue study abroad, as well as to senior students to complete their last year of their undergraduate program and then pursue study abroad. The Thai-American Foundation and the Australian Embassy offer various scholarships to students with different interests and capability. Finally, Khun Porntip Kanjananiyot, former Fulbright Director, gave a talk on “How to obtain a scholarship to study abroad.”

Many students were interested in the lecture, and many questions were asked. In the end, Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan presented tokens of appreciation to all the speakers. The lecture was attended by 120 Arts students and alumni, as well as students from other Faculties. 

BALAC Seminar 2014



In the present era, everyone aspires to be part of the international community. The Faculty of Arts, too, aims to internationalize. One of the factors that can make this possible is to gain more full-time international students: guideline-wise, they are supposed to make up at least ten percent of the total number of students, which would mean increasing the number of exchange students to at least 40 each year. The BALAC seminar, held on August 16, 2014 at Novotel Siam Square, identified possibilities and strategies to promote such internationalization.

Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan Chatraporn, BALAC Director, had invited Assist. Prof. Dr. Kriengkrai Boonlert-U-Thai, Assistant to President of Chulalongkorn University, and Prof. Glen Chatelier, Director of International Affairs, Assumption University to share experiences and progress. After Assoc. Prof. Surapeepan's introduction to the BALAC program's measures and commitment to gain more foreign students and prepare Thai students for student exchange abroad, Assist. Prof. Dr. Kriengkrai, one of the experts in Chula's international programs and former Director of Faculty of Commerce and Accountancy's BBA, emphasized that the long-term goal of having a ten-percent rate of international students must not lower our high educational standards, and that targeting students in Asia makes sense. Moreover, we can attract more students through inter-university networks, exchange and internship programs, educational planning, and credit transfer.

Prof. Glen Chatelier, Director of International Affairs, Assumption University, one of the universities with the highest number of foreign students, shared experiences in becoming part of the international community and how to enhance international affairs, which could benefit the BALAC. Focus should be on quality educational materials, participation in educational exhibitions arranged by various agencies, especially abroad, hosting academic events such as seminars, building foreign alumni relations, maintaining an interesting website, and arranging field trips in Thailand for people interested in learning and sharing experience in a short-term period.

Prof. Glen also added that even though Chula is slow in opening up to internationalization compared to other universities, being a "leading university" in the country will help a lot in the long term.

The afternoon session was devoted to discussion and brainstorming of professors, program executives, and lecturers about issues such as strategies to attract foreign students, courses to reflect Thai values, student exchange and internship programs, international academic programs such as seminars, and the new website's design. Around 30 professors and lecturers participated in this seminar. 

We are at Your Service.

The Committee Members of the Section of International Affairs, which comprises Deputy Dean Surapeepan Chatraporn, Assoc. Prof. Charunee Hongcharu, Assist. Prof. Dr. Duantem Krisdathanont, Assist. Prof. Dr. Julispong Chularatana, Dr. Sirivan Chulakorn, Dr. Anant Laulertvorakul, Dr. Nurida Hayiyakoh, Dr. Penpisa Srivoranart, Dr. Pasuree Luesakul, Dr. Suebpong Changboonchoo, Assist. Prof. Dr. Ingo Peters, Scott Oltmann, Simon Turner, Dr. Jaime Tejada, and Kankanok Singharerg as secretary, welcome advice and suggestions concerning any plans and activities. We aim to encourage a fully internationalized environment and to promote increased networking with overseas institutions and scholars. If you would like to talk to us, you can contact any of the committee members. We would be very happy to hear from you and cooperate closely with you.