

Orientation for Incoming Exchange Students 2017 and Cultural Excursion at King Prajadhipok Museum

On Wednesday 23 August 2017, the BA in Language and Culture (BALAC) International Programme of the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, organised an orientation for incoming exchange students. This semester BALAC has the pleasure of receiving more than 30 students from universities in China, Japan, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Associate Professor Kingkarn Thepkanjana, PhD, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Director of the BALAC Programme gave a welcome speech, which was followed by a session where international lecturers of BALAC took turns introducing themselves to students.

This year BALAC has the honour and pleasure to welcome 3 new lecturers to its academic community: Dr David Malitz from Germany, who gained his PhD in Japanese Studies from Ludwig-Maximilian University of Munich, Dr Kyja Noack-Lundberg from Australia, who gained her PhD in Gender, Sexuality and Diversity Studies from La Trobe University, and Dr Seung Soo Kim from South Korea, who gained his PhD in Media Studies from the University of Colorado-Boulder.

After the “Meet the New Lecturers” session, Assistant Professor Penpisa Srivoranart, PhD, Deputy Director of the BALAC Programme (Academic Affairs) gave a talk on the topic of “Academic Life at BALAC”. This was followed by a presentation on “Activities and Career Development Opportunities for Exchange Students” given by Assistant Professor Verita Sriratana, PhD, Deputy Director of the BALAC Programme (Internationalisation and Student Affairs).

The presentations were followed by a first-hand experience talk from the BALAC seniors who shared their journey on the path of exchange program. The delighted session allowed inbounds to raise questions and discuss in detailed about the suggestions of how Hatsaya Teerananon Kritaya Tantiwatanavorakul Yeewah Kitsomsub News from BALAC 36 to adapt into Thai culture and more importantly how to make the most of their time in Chulalongkorn university.

This year's "Buddy system" was widely recognized by many for its truly bound relationships among inbounds and Thai students even prior to their arrivals. With collaboration from student volunteers from year 2 to 4 pairing up with an exchange student, the barrier or differences play no role in terms of difficulties. The intention and goal of this system is to allow the exchange students to have a smooth transition upon embarking on the new adventure in Chulalongkorn University.

Lectures and talks aside, the BALAC organizing team creatively came up with a game session to balance the mood. The attendees were overwhelmed by the "Cabbage game" which attempted to grab full attention from all, including respective professors. The venue was overloaded with laughter and applause which leave the perfect impression for a semester to begin.

Aside from the amazing orientation, we also organized a special excursion to the King Prajadhipok Museum. The King Prajadhipok Museum, located on Lan Luang Road, is housed in a three-story registered heritage building constructed in 1906 by the Privy Purse office during the reign of King Chulalongkorn. In 2001, King Prajadhipok's Institute was granted permission from the Crown Property Bureau to lease this historical building, which had been previously occupied by the Department of Public Works. The Institute undertook renovation works which were completed in the year 2002, the year when it was officially open to the public. The Prajadhipok Museum is Thailand's first museum which is dedicated to a particular monarch.

The excursion advocates better, in-depth understanding of Thai culture for which it illustrated how Thailand has evolved and molded overtime. Several important events in Thai history has been stressed for inbounds to realize the essence of Thai history. Briefly after, lunch took place by the Rama IX bridge at the famous "Gin Lom Chom Saphan" restaurant. Students had a chance to capture the scenario of the calm river which is very relaxing and a splendid way to call it a day.



