On July 20, 2006, Associate Professor Dr. Pruet Sribanpitak, Dean of the Faculty of Education, signed an agreement with five other renowned universities in the region to establish Asia-Pacific Education Dean Association (APEDA) at the University of Philippines in Manila. APEDA is a non-profit organization established to generate, disseminate, share, utilize, and reconstruct information on teacher education, teacher quality assurance and other educational research as well as encourage friendship between and among different scholars and educational organizations in Asia-Pacific Region. Its membership is open to current deans of education colleges or education faculties in Asia-Pacific region who support the goals of APEDA. Preliminarily, the University of Sydney, Hiroshima University, Seoul National University, The University of Auckland, University of Philippines, and Chulalongkorn University are founding members. Meanwhile, University of Malaya and Nanyang Technological University have also expressed their keen interest in the Association.

In the agreement signing session, Dr. Sribanpitak was honored to be nominated as Treasurer, along with the Education Dean at The University of Sydney as President, the Education Dean at The University of Auckland as Vice President, and the Education Dean at the University of Philippines as Secretary. The Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, is proposing a plan to host an international conference on teacher education in cooperation with APEDA in 2008.

Pre-service Teacher Training Scholarships for Kampong Cheauteal High School in Cambodia

Since November 2005 when Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn graciously presented the Kampong Cheauteal High School to H.E. Hun Sen, the Cambodian Prime Minister, significant progress and efforts have continuously been made for the school to become well-established and sustained. In this regard, as quality teachers are widely considered one of the most important factors of school development, a program to provide pre-service teacher training scholarships under the Royal Educational Assistance Project has been set up. The aim is to give chances for qualified local students whose conduct and academic performances are distinguished to further their education in the much needed fields of study in Thailand. At present, twelve bachelor’s degree level scholarships as well as twenty diploma level scholarships have been awarded to eligible students in the fields such as dentistry, science, and education as well as various fields in industrial technology and agriculture.

The program was first launched on April 3, 2006. On that auspicious day, the president of Chulalongkorn University presided over the opening ceremony with the presence of all program committee members and the recipients of the scholarships. The president also kindly gave valuable advice to the students and placed high hopes on them for the bright future of Kampong Cheauteal High School and Cambodia.
The grave concern about the deterioration of morals especially among Thai youth has led to a remarkable research study conducted recently by Assistant Professor Dr. Chumphol Phulpaparatavichin and his team comprising five PhD graduates from the Development Education Program at the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University. Preliminarily, a forum on “Research to Develop Moral and Ethical Standards in Thai Society” was held at Dusit Palace Hotel in February 2005. Those present at the meeting unanimously agreed that exchanges of ideas among good and moral people and the set up of a network among them were necessary steps to promote further good and moral communities, in turn contributing to good families and good family members. This entails a research study, aiming at studying criteria and screening methods to identify good and moral people and developing a process to inculcate in people as well as their families and communities good and ethics.

The researchers chose to study subjects in three selected provinces, i.e. Chachoengsao, Phichit, and Trang, representing the eastern, the central, and the northern regions respectively. In each participating province, 10-15 good and moral persons identified by the communities from amphiws or districts within the province were invited to join the group discussions, participated also by experts at the national level. Prior to the group meetings, documents and data from various sources, including the Internet, were analyzed and then synthesized to derive at the criteria and screening methods to be used subsequently. Comparisons between Thai and foreign criteria as well as screening methods were also clearly made. Among the criteria found in common are gratitude, responsibility, honesty, kindness, unity, diligence, patience, and ethicality. In identifying subjects, the first pre-identified subject was asked to introduce the next as well as his/her reasons. At the final stage, representing subjects from each amphoe convened to exchange further ideas and again collaboratively set up criteria for good families and communities as well as to seek guidelines boosting the number of people with desirable characteristics.

The findings of this study led to a conclusion that an individual, his/her family, and the community are closely related in such a way that the good characteristics of one lead to those of another. In this regard, an analogy was drawn to compare the relationship mentioned with the way a Thai takraw is made (Takraw is a Thai ball made of 9-11 stems of rattan or plastic with 12 holes, 170-190 grams in weight, and 40 centimeters in parameter played in a sport native to Thailand and Laos, resembling volleyball). Each strand of the ball comprises three stems of rattan, representing an individual, his/her family, and the community. The interconnectedness and continuity of the stems and strands make the rattan ball resemble well how the three parties affect one another. Once played in a game, the rattan ball is touched by the player’s head and foot at a point just like when an individual or one of the other two parties gets deteriorated or troubled; the rest also are affected as the object absorbs the force enacted.

What was gained in this study should guide well a plan to develop moral and ethical standards in Thai Society.

Recent Research Studies of Interest

In March 2006, the Office of Research and Academic Services in corporation with HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn’s Education Initiatives Supporting Center, Teaching Profession Development Center, and the network of Islamic private schools organized a week-long workshop for Islamic teachers and administrators of fourteen private schools in the three southernmost provinces, i.e. Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. The eighty-four participants in the workshop had a chance to learn together and exchange ideas to develop the instruction beneficial to their students.
Professor Emeritus of Education Khun Duangduen Bisalputra was awarded an honorary doctorate for the academic year 2005. The recipient has been nationally and internationally renowned as an expert in Foundations of Education and an able administrator in her capacity as the former Foundations of Education Department head for 14 years. Throughout her teaching and administrative career at the Faculty of Education, significant progress was made in various aspects. Outside the university, she is also highly recognized as president, chairwoman, and adviser of numerous foundations and educational organizations. In 1995, she was named “Distinguished Person of the Year in Social Development” by the National Identity Board of the Office of Prime Minister. In addition, four years later, she was awarded the “Semadhammachak” in recognition of her devotion to Buddhism. On top of that she was voted “Thai Woman of Distinction” in 2004. The Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, took great pride in her and her contribution to the society at large and was highly delighted to bestow on her the 21st honorary doctorate in July 2006.

Visit from CSUSB Professors

Associate Professor Dr. Pruet Sriratanapitak and his associates welcomed a group of professors led by Dr. Rosalie Giacchino-Baker from California State University at San Bernardino (CSUSB) who visited the Faculty of Education to discuss the academic cooperation between the two institutions. Right after their visit, Dr. Pongsin Visedsiri, Head of the Graduate Program in Educational Administration, went to CSUSB to give a talk. On April 10, 2007, the CSUSB president, Dr. Albert K. Karmig, will give a visit to Chulalongkorn University to meet with Chulalongkorn University president.

On March 3, 2006, the Educational Research and Psychology Department organized a seminar to allow the eight doctoral students to share the experience abroad with their fellow students. These doctoral students went to Australia, Singapore, and the United States of America to present their research studies. Their accomplishment and experience gained helped encourage their peers to study harder and produce quality work to be further accepted in the international arena. The picture shows Assistant Professor Dr. Sriporn Suwanmonke, on the right, listening attentively and proudly while the two doctoral students share their thoughts.
Revitalizing Higher Education Management

In March 2006, Higher Education Section, Educational Policy, Management, and Leadership Department organized an annual regional training on Revitalizing Higher Education Management for higher education administrators from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Thailand. The participants learned together new administrative skills from the well known educators in the field. A network of administrators was also set up after the training.

Strategic Foreign Affairs for the Development of Quality and Standards of Thai Higher Education

On February 3, 2006, the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, organized a national seminar on Strategic Foreign Affairs for the Development of Quality and Standards of Thai Higher Education. The seminar was a gathering of university administrators for foreign affairs to discuss and listen to distinguished authorities in the foreign affairs circle. Among the invited speakers were Directors of SEAMEO RIHED, ASEAN University Network, Thailand-United States Educational Foundation (Fulbright), and Thai Higher Education Commission. The Vice Minister to the Prime Minister's Office, Dr. Sorachak Kasemsuwan, presided over the opening ceremony on behalf of the Minister and also gave a keynote address emphasizing the important role of universities in the development of the nation and the importance and the government gave to educational institutions for a knowledge-based society and economy. He also stressed the need for those who work for foreign affairs to review their plans and activities in promoting linkages with foreign institutions, and whether they really served the university policy. In addition, the network for all university administrators to work closely together and share information was needed for the utmost benefit of the country.

Foreign Guests to the Faculty of Education

On January 16, 2006, Professor John K. Hudzik, Professor Jeffrey M. Riedinger, and Professor Christopher W. Wheeler from Michigan State University visited the Faculty of Education to discuss with the Dean and his associates about the research collaboration and academic staff exchange.

On February 21, 2006, a group of professors in education from Toyo University of Education paid a visit to the Faculty of Education. They also observed classes at the two affiliated Demonstration Schools.

On February 22, 2006, the Faculty of Education welcomed educators from Guangxi University of Education. During the visit, the delegation went to the library and talked with the librarian with interest.

CU Education Newsletter, one of the publications of the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, provides information about the Faculty and its academic movements to both local and international readers. It is published twice a year, in January and July. Address editorial correspondence to the Office of Foreign Affairs and Outreach Projects, 4th Floor, Building 3, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Phayathai Road, Bangkok 10330, Thailand.

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