

EXPERIENCE AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES ON COOPERATION
BETWEEN THAI AND AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES

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*COOPERATION BETWEEN CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY
AND AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES*

*IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO TALK ABOUT COOPERATION BETWEEN
CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY AND AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES.*

*1. FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOU SOME BACKGROUND
INFORMATION.*

*BY WORLD STANDARDS, CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY IS QUITE NEW. WE WERE
FOUNDED IN 1964, BARELY 30 YEARS AGO. YET WE HAVE MADE GOOD PROGRESS
ON MANY FRONTS AND NOW HAVE 15 FACULTIES COVERING THE RANGE FROM
HEALTH SCIENCE, AGRICULTURE, PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCE, AND ENGINEER-
ING, ARTS, AND THE HUMANITIES. WE HAVE THREE RESEARCH INSTITUTES, ONE IN
THE HEALTH SCIENCE, A SECOND IN THE PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES, AND THE
THIRD IN SOCIAL SCIENCE.*

*THERE ARE ALMOST 15,000 STUDENTS, MOSTLY UNDERGRADUATES. THE
FULL-TIME TEACHING STAFF NUMBER 1645. WE HAVE AN ACTIVE COMPUTER
SERVICE CENTER, DIRECTED BY A PERSON WHO HOLDS AN AUSTRALIAN
DOCTORATE IN COMPUTER SCIENCE. ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND PROMOTION IS
ALSO THE MISSION OF OUR CENTRAL LIBRARY & UNISERV, AN AGENCY WHICH
SUPPORTS EXTENSION AND CONSULTANT SERVICES.*

*INSTRUCTION IS GIVEN BY MORE THAN ONE-HUNDRED DEPARTMENTS, MORE
THAN HALF OF WHICH OFFER GRADUATE LEVEL EDUCATION. AT PRESENT
MOST OF OUR GRADUATE PROGRAMS LEAD TO THE MASTERS DEGREE. HOWEVER,
THERE ARE A FEW DOCTORAL PROGRAMS IN PLACE.*

*2. NOW, I WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF COOPERATION
BETWEEN OURSELVES AND SISTER INSTITUTIONS OF AUSTRALIA.*

*AUSTRALIA HAS A LONG TRADITION OF UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP AND MANY
WORLD-CLASS INSTITUTIONS. I AM HAPPY TO CONFIRM THAT CHIANG MAI
UNIVERSITY HAS SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS COVERING INTER-UNIVERSITY
COOPERATION WITH 13 AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTIONS.*

WE HAVE AGREEMENTS WITH WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, CUMBERLAND COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES (UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY), MONASH UNIVERSITY, CANBERRA INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG, THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY, UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (SYDNEY), MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY, CURTIN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, DEAKIN UNIVERSITY, AND LA TROBE UNIVERSITY.

MOST OF THESE AGREEMENTS COVER THE EXCHANGE OF FACULTY MEMBERS/STAFF, AND RESEARCH COOPERATION. ALL INVOLVE SOME FORM OF ACADEMIC COOPERATION, SUCH AS JOINT PROGRAMS OF INSTRUCTION, JOINT SUPPORT FOR LIBRARIES, JOINT WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS.

AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST CHANGE FROM TIME TO TIME, REFLECTING PROPERLY, CHANGES IN SCHOLARLY INTERESTS OF STAFF MEMBERS. WE MUST BE MORE EFFICIENT IN THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION CONCERNING RESEARCH PRIORITIES. THERE ARE SOME AREAS IN WHICH WE HAVE ACCESS TO UNIQUE RESEARCH MATERIAL. THESE ARE AREAS IN WHICH IT WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS FOR SCHOLARS FROM ABROAD TO COLLABORATE. AND THERE ARE OTHER AREAS IN WHICH IT IS ADVANTAGEOUS FOR OUR SCHOLARS TO GAIN EXPERIENCE ABROAD. THE IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT AND FUTURE COMMON INTERESTS IS SOMETIMES SLOW, WHICH IS SURPRISING, IN VIEW OF THE VAST IMPROVEMENTS IN COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE. EVERY FACULTY MEMBER IS NOT FAR FROM A FAX MACHINE. WE MUST LEARN TO REGARD INSTITUTIONS IN AUSTRALIA AS BEING NEXT DOOR AND TAKE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT WE ARE DOING AND WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO DO.

3. WE SEE THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE WILL BE INCREASINGLY AN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION. ACADEMIC STANDARDS WILL BE KEPT TO A UNIFORMLY HIGH LEVEL BY INCREASING USE OF "VISITING COMMITTEES" WHICH HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF KNOWING THE STANDARDS OF VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS. AS WE WORK TOWARD COMMON HIGH STANDARDS, OUR STUDENTS CAN INCREASE THEIR PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES AND HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR A FEW MONTHS OR AN

ACADEMIC YEAR WITHOUT SERIOUSLY INTERRUPTING AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AT HOME.

ANOTHER WAY IN WHICH INSTITUTIONS CAN BECOME INTERNATIONALLY ORIENTED IS BY THE CHOICE OF SUBJECT MATTER FOR RESEARCH OR INSTRUCTION. CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY IS IN A GOOD POSITION TO FOSTER THE STUDY OF TRIBAL CULTURES WHICH NATURALLY LEAD US INTO MYANMAR, LAOS, VIETNAM AND KAMPUCHEA. WE CAN INCREASINGLY BECOME AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE FOR THE WHOLE REGION. THE READY AVAILABILITY OF NATIVE SPEAKERS OF THE VARIOUS LANGUAGES OF INDO-CHINA COULD MAKE CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY THE PLACE OF CHOICE TO STUDY THESE LANGUAGES. CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY IS ALSO A LOGICAL HOME FOR AREA STUDIES RELATED TO THE REGION.

CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY WISHES TO DEVELOP OPERATING LINKAGES WITH CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AROUND THE WORLD--IN AUSTRALIA, EUROPE, AND NORTH AMERICA--WHEREVER. THIS WILL COME ABOUT NATURALLY AS WE DEVELOP DOCTORAL PROGRAMS IN MORE SUBJECT AREAS. BUT RIGHT NOW WE SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER OR NOT THERE ARE SPECIFIC THINGS THAT SHOULD BE DONE RIGHT AWAY.

4. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION INCLUDE THOSE RAISED HERE

-COMMON ACADEMIC STANDARDS: HOW TO ESTABLISH COMMON ACADEMIC STANDARDS; HOW TO FIND SUPPORT FOR VISITING COMMITTEES, HOW TO MAKE THE MOST USE OF TRAVEL BY DEPARTMENT HEADS, DEANS, AND REGISTRARS FOR THIS PURPOSE.

-RESEARCH PRIORITIES: HOW TO COLLECT AND DISTRIBUTE RESEARCH ABSTRACTS, RESEARCH GRANTS ALREADY MADE, RESEARCH GRANTS UNDER CONSIDERATION, PROPOSALS IN DRAFT, ETC.

-NEW PROGRAMS OF INSTRUCTION: WHAT NEW FACULTIES, PROGRAMS OF INSTRUCTION, OR NEW COURSES ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION AT THIS TIME?

-COMMUNICATION NETWORKS: WHAT NETWORKS ARE ALREADY OPERATING? WHAT LINKAGES ARE SERVED ONLY BY FAX?

5. ACTIONS

-IMMEDIATE: EACH UNIVERSITY SHOULD DESIGNATE A COMMUNICATOR WHO WILL REGULARLY KEEP IN TOUCH WITH COUNTERPARTS AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

-IMMEDIATE: EACH UNIVERSITY SHOULD EXCHANGE A SUMMARY OF PLANS FOR EXPANDING GRADUATE RESEARCH. IF THERE IS SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE THAT TENTATIVE PLANS WILL BE ANNOUNCED, THIS AVAILABILITY DATE SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED.

-LONG-TERM: PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT, RESEARCH FACILITIES WHICH MIGHT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO VISITING PRE- AND POST- DOCTORAL SCHOLARS.

-LONG-TERM: SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBLE SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR POST- AND PRE-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS.

IN CONCLUSION, I WOULD LIKE TO SAY A FINAL WORD. CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY IS IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A MORE RESEARCH-ORIENTED UNIVERSITY WITH MORE REGARD FOR EVENTS AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS. WE MAY HAVE STARTED AS AN INSTITUTION AT THE "END OF THE ROAD" BUT WE ARE DEVELOPING AN INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS AND AN INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK. AS WE FIND OPPORTUNITIES TO LINK UP WITH UNIVERSITIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES CAN BE USED TO ACCELERATE OUR OWN DEVELOPMENT.