

SELEMAT DATANG KE

HIGHER EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA AND AUSTRALIA 2005

A REGIONAL RESEARCH FORUM ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Welcome

The Malaysia and Australia higher education forum is a valuable opportunity for scholars and students in the disciplines of education and Asia Studies to get together and work on areas of mutual interest. This opportunity to develop a bi-lateral approach to exploring higher education can provide a valuable “window” into developments in the higher education sector in both countries. It is also a good opportunity to establish and renew regional linkages, partnerships and networks.

This forum has been supported and funded by the Centre for Asia Pacific Transformation Studies at the University of Wollongong and the International Centre for Excellence in Asia Pacific Studies at the Australian National University. I wish to thank them for the support in being able to bring a group of scholars together.

I hope that this proves to be a productive and memorable experience that enables the bonds and to be strengthened between Australia and Malaysia.

Peter Kell
Convener

HIGHER EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA AND AUSTRALIA 2005
A REGIONAL RESEARCH FORUM ON HIGHER EDUCATION

University of Wollongong

2-4 NOVEMBER 2005

The two-day forum will bring together academics and experts in higher education in Malaysia and Australia. The forum will perform a role in developing an awareness of issues in Malaysia and Australia relating to higher education and sustaining a regional partnership.

This international forum will explore the questions about:

- The impact of globalisation and the changing nature of the global /local economy on the nature and direction of higher education including public and private universities.
- The changing nature of university in fulfilling its mission in teaching and learning, research and community service and developments across nations and within the region.
- The role of higher education in responding developing promoting national growth and regional identity as well as broad concepts of citizenship.

Some of the objectives of this forum are to:

- Continue a regional engagement on issues in higher education.
- Develop a publication to document the forum.
- Establish a formal research link between participants in higher education in the Asia Pacific.

Program

Higher Education in Malaysia and Australia 2005 A Regional Research Forum on Higher Education 2-4th November 2005

Wednesday 2nd November

- 8.00-9.00am Registration – Function Centre Foyer
Arrival Tea and Coffee – Function Centre 1
- 9:00 **Welcome**
Opening Address: Prof Andrew Wells; Dean Faculty of Arts, University of Wollongong.
Introduction: Assoc Prof Peter Kell, Convener of Forum Co-ordinator, Adult Education, Higher Education and VET @ 21st Century Program, University of Wollongong.
Opening Panel: Developments in Malaysian Higher Education
A Situation Analysis of Higher Education in Malaysia
Prof Morshidi Sirat, Director National Institute of Higher Education Research (IPPTN), Universiti Sains Malaysia. Penang.
- 10:30-11:00 Morning Tea
- 11:00 **Developments in Malaysian Higher Education Continued.**
University Education and Employment: Realities, Relevance and Responsibility
Prof Ambigapathy Pandian Deputy Dean, (Graduate and Research Studies) School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang.
Second Panel: Developments in Australia and Opportunities for Bi-Lateral Engagement
Opportunities for Bi-lateral engagements in Research: Conducting On/off-line Collaborative Knowledge Production between Australian and China
Prof Michael Singh, Green, Wired, Safe University Research Strength, University of Western Sydney.
& **Assoc. Prof Yuping Wang**, Visiting Fellow University of Western Sydney, Yuncheng University, China
Conference Papers
“It’s English but it isn’t English”! The Experience of International Students in Australia in Encountering Global English in the Global University
Dr Gillian Vogl & Assoc Prof Peter Kell Faculty of Education, UOW
- 12:30-1:30 Lunch
- 1:30 **Conference Papers Continued**
Shall We Understand Each Other? : Effects of Cross-Cultural Competence on Asian Students Learning Performance
Lakhvin Srinarula, Management & Marketing, Faculty of Commerce, UOW
Mathematics Teacher Education: Modelling Perspectives from Malaysia and Australian Contexts
Dr Mohan Chinnappan, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong
- 2:30-5:30 Wollongong City Tour and visit to Nan Tein Temple
- 7:00-11:00 **Conference Dinner** – McKinnon Dining Room, 2nd Floor, Building 67

Thursday 3rd November

- 8:00-9:00 Registration, Arrival Tea and Coffee – Function Centre Foyer
- 9:00-10:30 **Third Panel: Research Teaching and Learning in Malaysia**
- Internationalisation of Higher Education in Malaysia*
Assoc Prof Vincent Pang, Associate Dean (Research and Innovation)
Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.
- Braving New Worlds in Higher education: Sharing Common Grounds, Mediating Diversity and Difference in New Contexts and New Communities*
Assoc Professor Koo Yew Lie, School of Language and Linguistics,
Universiti Kebangsaan Negara, Kuala Lumpur
- 10:30-11:00 Morning Tea
- 11:00-12:30 **Research Teaching and Learning in Malaysia Continued**
- E-Learning at USM: Moving towards the Future*
Dr Rozinah Jamaludin, Lecturer in the Centre of Instructional Technology and Multimedia,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
- Environment Sustainability and the Role of the Higher Education Institutions:
A Case for the Agenda on Energy Efficiency*
Assoc Prof Shanthi Balraj Baboo School of Communication, Universiti Sains Malaysia
- 12:30-1:30 **Lunch**
- 1:30-3:00 **Conference Papers**
- Quality Issues in Australia Offshore Education*
Dr Fion Lim, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne
- Women and Academic Careers in Malaysia*
Dr Michelle Lunn, Lecturer School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work,
Massey University, New Zealand
- Building a Capability Development Model for Professional School Leaders in Thai Education*
Koolchalee Chongcharoen, University of Wollongong
- 3:00-3:15 Afternoon Tea
- 3:15-3:45 *Australian Quality Assurance in an Australian University: A Case study Report*
Huai Nathan Jiang, Ed.D Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong
- 4:00 Visit to Wollongong Mosque (This visit may be earlier depending on the declaration of Hari Raya)

Friday 4th November

- 8:00-9:00 Registration, Arrival Tea and Coffee – Function Centre Foyer
- 9:00-10:00 **Fourth Panel: Research Directions Opportunities for Bi Lateral Collaborations**
Dr Lenore Lyons: Director Centre Asia Pacific Social Transformation
Network Studies, University of Wollongong.
Dr Tim Scrase: Deputy Director Centre Asia Pacific Social Transformation
Network Studies, University of Wollongong
- 10:00-10:30 Morning Tea
- 10:30-12:30 **Future Directions for Australia Malaysia Collaboration**
Groups to work on:
1. Future networks and opportunities for bi-lateral & multi-lateral research
 2. Publications and other research outcomes
 3. Workshops in Malaysia in the future.
- 12:30-1:30 Lunch
- 1:30 **Wrap Up Session**
Chair: **Dr Peter Kell**
- 2:30 **Close and Farewell**
- 3:00 Coastal Tour to Stanwell Park and Visit to Hindu Temple.

Abstracts of Presentations

A Situation Analysis of Higher Education in Malaysia

Prof Morshidi Sirat, Director National Institute of Higher Education Research (IPPTN),
Universiti Sains Malaysia. Penang

Abstract

Malaysian higher Education is and continues to be impacted by the forces of globalisation but local responses and the consequences may vary somewhat. The objectives of this paper therefore is to present a situation analysis of higher education in Malaysia, focusing on what is unique and peculiar to Malaysia, and highlighting lessons learnt since the democratization and massification of higher education in the late 1990s. While trade in education services is an important angle to pursue in this report, data limitations and definitional problems have made this not feasible for now. However, comments and observations will be made based on current development and trends in this area. Realizing the importance of trade in education services in the current era the government has taken appropriate steps to address data limitations and constraints.

University Education and Employment: Realities, Relevance and Responsibility

Prof Ambigapathy Pandian Deputy Dean, (Graduate and Research Studies), School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang.

Abstract

Higher education today is experiencing major challenges and its connection to workplace literacy is one area that demands attention as the workplace is in the midst of a number of dramatic transformations. In addressing the new realities, the discussion on workplace literacy has to go beyond technological advances to focus on knowledge building and the openings for employment as a critical dimension in developing the higher education curriculum. This paper argues that University education must be relevant to the new realities of the workplace and this responsibility falls on numerous sectors of societies that must be active in constructing their learning processes and living environments. This paper examines the employers sector to unveil the employer perceptions on workplace cultures and routines and its impact on the trends of employment. The paper also examines the employer perceptions on fresh graduates and their capacity to adapt to the new realities of their working life.

Based on the findings of studies conducted in Malaysia recently on unemployment among graduates and university curriculum, this paper reports that the lack of new knowledge, skills, cultural understanding and students' attitude emerged as concerns of the employers. The final part of this study raises the question of responsibility and the role of the university and the employer sector in constructing workplace literacy.

Opportunities for Bi-lateral engagements in Research: Conducting On/off-line Collaborative Knowledge Production between Australian and China

Prof Michael Singh, Green, Wired, Safe University Research Strength, University of Western Sydney.

Assoc. Prof Yuping Wang, Visiting Fellow University of Western Sydney, Yuncheng University, China

Abstract

The internationalisation of research and educational researchers is on the agenda in many countries. The trans-national engagement of researchers is expected lead to, and reward improvements in the positioning of its educational researchers within local/global multilingual knowledge economies and societies. At the least efforts to deepen and extend bi-lateral engagements between researchers in Australia and other Asian countries, could counter the image of the omnipresent Australian university presence in the region solely as a hawker of educational wares, forever touting for full fee-paying undergraduate students. However, the contribution that collaborative, on/off-line educational research between two or more countries might make to the internationalisation of research and researchers in higher education is not without challenges and complexities. This presentation explores several dimensions of these issues. To begin this presentation, we briefly explain the context that led to the writing of this paper and the approach to research that has evolved with it. We then describe some of the difficulties of engaging in bi-lateral research. This informs our discussion of the challenges and complexities of online collaborative research, an alerts to some the cautions to be taken in conducting future on/off-line collaborative research. We conclude with some strategies that are worth considering in furthering bi-lateral engagement in research.

“It’s English but it isn’t English” ! The Experience of International Students in Australia in Encountering Global English in the Global University

Dr Gillian Vogl & Assoc Prof Peter Kell Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong

Abstract

The globalisation of higher education has been characterised by trans-national recruitment of students as well as practices designed to promote the “internationalisation” of the university. This internationalisation of the university includes the increased use and reliance on English as the lingua franca of higher education.

This paper explores the experience of “international” students in an Australian university in negotiating university life and life in Australia through the medium of Australian English. This paper draws on qualitative research including focus groups and individual interviews with approximately 50 students from Asia in a public Australian university.

The research documents the experiences of Asian students on living and studying in Australia and the experience of negotiating the “academy” and the Australian community. The research principally explored the use of English in teaching and learning, getting on in the community and meeting and working with Australian students.

The research also explores several “myths” associated with international students in Australia that have been perpetuated by “populist” press campaigns maligning “low standards” in higher education and claims that “poor” English inhibits interaction between Australian and international students. The research found significant evidence to challenge many taken for granted assumptions about international students and makes recommendations on policy for universities. This research is part of a trans-national research program funded by the Global Development Network of the World Bank.

Shall We Understand Each Other? : Effects of Cross-Cultural Competence on Asian Students Learning Performance

Lakhvin Srinarula, Management & Marketing, Faculty of Commerce, UOW

Abstract

An increasing number of Asian students are choosing Australia as a place to further their higher education. This internationalisation of Australian academic institutions presents an added challenge for student support services and teaching staff. Academic support programs which address culturally-based academic differences are imperative. Such programs need to be culturally sensitive and inclusive in order to contribute to the success of Asian students. Asian students who are familiar with more traditional book-centred learning approaches where the teacher is viewed as the transmitter of knowledge need to be helped to actively engage in the critical learning pedagogy typical within Australian universities.

This study aims to provide insights to inform the development of effective and culturally sensitive learning/teaching environments in the host cultural context, Wollongong University. The research highlights cross cultural awareness between Asian students and native speaking teachers as well as domestic peers. It also explores the challenges and difficulties of Asians students, native-speaking teachers as well as domestic students are facing in the multicultural learning environments both in classroom and social contexts. In particular, the study advances our understanding of how cross cultural competence affects learning/teaching performance. Finally, this paper collaborates multi-cultural perspectives and presents the cultural based approaches for effective learning/teaching environment in Wollongong University.

The qualitative research approach will be applied through the use of interviews and surveys. The target groups are the undergraduate Asian and Australian students and native-speaking teachers in the undergraduate level. Data collected will be analysed and presented in the form of recommended approaches enhancing the effectiveness of teaching/learning in multi-cultural environments.

Mathematics Teacher Education: Modelling Perspectives from Malaysia and Australian Contexts

Dr Mohan Chinnappan, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong

Abstract

In this forum, I will seek to identify and analyse some of the challenges for K-12 mathematics teacher educators and researchers in Australia and Malaysia. Specifically, the discussion will attempt to identify concerns of both countries in the following areas:

- What is the nature of teacher knowledge that drives mathematics learning outcomes in the classroom?
- How do teacher knowledge assist in the construction of appropriate models of mathematics concepts and principles? This question has particular relevance in the context of using English in Malaysian mathematics classrooms.

Cultural diversity and its impact on what teachers regard as rich learning experiences

How can we share resources such as digital technologies in supporting classroom mathematics teachers?

Internationalisation of Higher Education in Malaysia

Assoc Prof Vincent Pang, Associate Dean (Research and Innovation), Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

Abstract

The Vision 2020 of Malaysia has brought about a wide spectrum of changes to the nation. Among them, the government aims to make Malaysia a centre of excellence for higher education in the region. Various initiatives have been engaged to realise this aim. These include the revision of Education Act, the enactment of new education related Acts, the establishment of a new ministry of higher education, and the internationalisation of higher education. This paper presents the context of the internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia as well as its academic, economic, and socio-cultural benefits to the nation. It also discusses the issues and challenges pertaining to this endeavour.

Braving New Worlds in Higher education: Sharing Common Grounds, Mediating Diversity and Difference in New Contexts and New Communities

Koo Yew Lie, Centre of Language Studies and Linguistics, University Kebangsaan Malaysia

Abstract

This paper focuses on new contexts and new communities in the design of new (research) futures. I will illustrate the paper with examples of research done in the past and current ones which I am involved with either on my own or with colleagues in Malaysia, Australia, Singapore, China and the rest of the world. I will use them as points of entry to consider possible research strands.

For new contexts, I look at cultural and economic globalisation, internationalization, indigenous environments, the nation-state, the role of South East Asian Languages and the English language for forging new and sustainable knowledge. The mediations, interfaces, transitions and inter-actions between situated local vernacular/indigenous, and international, cosmopolitan and global knowledges I suggest may perhaps be threads of further inquiry in situations characterized by paradoxes, tensions and challenges. .

As for new communities, I will draw upon research and collaboration projects in higher education to explore how and in what ways researchers from Australia and Malaysia have looked at heterogeneous meaning-makers and their processes of meaning-making in terms of complex interactions with discursive, interactive and broader sociopolitical and economic structures. In this regard, linguistic, epistemic and cultural meaning-making especially through the use of the English Language region have been the focus of research. These studies whilst establishing common grounds recognize the challenges of diversity and difference in the communities and contexts that researchers are working with. For the future, a network of research projects into sustainable knowledge producing communities, may be a possible line of enquiry looking at multiple and interacting sites as webs of knowledge production, between local communities with other local communities and structures eg. cultural producers in Singapore, Malaysia and Australia, internationalizing institutions in Australia and Malaysia, diasporic communities across the globe. A reflexive consideration of the relationship of English to other Asian languages in meaning-making, the role and processes involved in performing local ontologies and ways of meaning-making for knowledge creation in education, cultural production, science and technology, environment, civil society and peace-making for planetary survival may perhaps be other lines of inquiry.

E-Learning at USM: Moving towards the Future

Dr Rozinah Jamaludin, Lecturer in the Centre of Instructional Technology and Multimedia, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

Zulham Hamdan, Center for Knowledge, Communication and Technology, USM

Nagarajah Lee, Faculty of Information Technology & Quantitative Sciences, UiTM

Abstract

As Knowledge, Communication and Technology (KCT) plays crucial role in the restructuring of the educational system in this new millennium, e-learning is seen as an effective mean to stimulate this process, especially on the teaching and learning aspect. The introduction of e-learning has become an important factor in reshaping the educational environment, particularly in the Higher Education System (De Boer et al, 2002).

This article is a case study of the development of e-learning environment adopted in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). The blueprint of the e-learning project was thoroughly studied and comparisons were made with the various e-learning models used by other institutions of higher learning for example. UNIMAS, MMU, and UNITAR.

This discussion offered in this paper is divided into three parts. Firstly, the framework of analysis of e-learning model in USM is defined. Secondly, comparisons were made between various models used by other institutions of higher learning. Finally, this paper offers a framework to evaluate the effectiveness of the e-learning framework as well as its implementation at USM.

Environment Sustainability and the Role of the Higher Education Institutions: A Case for the Agenda on Energy Efficiency

Assoc Prof Shanthi Balraj Baboo School of Communication, Universiti Sains Malaysia

Abstract

Over the recent decades, environmental issues have become a key area of international debate. As we move into the 21st century, we must be aware that the world today faces unprecedented threats to its well-being where the people of the world are making demands on natural resources that are undermining the ecosystems that support us. The community that makes up higher education is often seen as a microcosm of the larger society where we live, work and play with teaching and learning practices that will lead in the creation of a healthy and environment-caring world.

This paper highlights the importance of building of an energy-efficient campus in Malaysia. Taking the case-study of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), the paper reports the initiatives of a projects that aims to equip staff and students with knowledge, skills and competence that engages teaching and learning as part of social practice and as an area of developing critical awareness on the problematic relationship between environment and the lives of the campus community. Underlying this project is a concern to develop new forms of learning that give commitment to collaboration and social change and to provide opportunities that advance the idea that students can make a difference. The paper outlines the works of science and arts academic members and students who are involved in the development and implementation of collaborative energy efficiency projects to enhance critical awareness on energy efficiency and to use these projects to get something done constructively in their community.

Quality Issues in Australia Offshore Education

Dr Fion Lim, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne

Abstract

"A Singapore Polytechnic graduate will need to take 11 units (1.5 years) for a degree in Business with Australia University A in Singapore but to take 16 units (2 years) for a same degree by Australia University B. Is this difference a marketing issue or is there a real quality differentiation that warrants a difference in duration and quality? Are students and employers aware of the differences? Who ensures the quality then?"

Academics are increasingly concerned about quality assurance for offshore education. Offshore education is perceived by some to be lower in quality, not on par with on-campus programs, and the students' entry requirements are lower.

My dissertation is to investigate the existing quality assurance mechanisms for offshore education. I believe there is a need for a more active role from the host country to protect the 'customers' taking the program in the country and that there should be more transparent quality assurance systems to ensure a common standing for similar programs delivered by Australia universities offshore.

Quality is defined differently by different stakeholders in education. For Australia offshore education, 68% of the partners are either "privately owned" or "privately operated". Is there a possible conflict as a result of "quality" as "Fitness for purpose" or as "value for money"?

The research aims to contribute to the higher education industry by revealing any existing gaps between the expectations of customers (students and future employers) and funders (the business partner and/or university). The research also aims to highlight areas for improvement in the existing quality assurance systems for offshore education.

Women and Academic Careers in Malaysia

Dr Michelle Lunn, Lecturer School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University, New Zealand

Abstract

How do the career experiences of women academic's in Malaysia, an Islamic country, compare with those of academic women in the secular west? In this workshop comparisons will be drawn between the narratives of women in Malaysia and western analyses of career as identified in the literature and interpreted through my own experience as an academic woman working in the New Zealand University system. The research investigates the experiences of women in the early to mid stages of their academic careers focusing particularly on the process of establishing oneself within the academic hierarchy.

Building a Capability Development Model for Professional School Leaders in Thai Education

Koolchalee Chongcharoen, University of Wollongong

Abstract

This study focuses on Thai professional school leaders' capabilities and a capability development model for professional school leaders in Thai education. The study adopts a qualitative design within a constructivism paradigm to answer the two research questions:

1. What are the key capabilities that Thai school leaders should have?
2. What forms of professional development are required for capability development model?

The selected participants are totally fifty experts and the stakeholders who have profession in areas of educational policy, training and development, both public and private sectors. The research participants are: twenty experts of educational administrators in the policy level and the professional development and training experts in universities; twenty experts in development and training in the public and private training sectors and the professional principals; and ten experts and stakeholders will be four representatives from both groups of expert (two experts from the policy level and two experts from the practical level) and six stakeholders from the groups of teacher and parent (three teachers and three parents).

The methods will be used to collect data are interview and focus group. The interview will be conducted with two groups of experts. The first group of interview who are twenty experts in educational administration at policy level and professional development and training experts in universities will be explored the perspectives in the policy level on professional school leaders' capabilities as well as their perspectives on the capability development model. The second group of interview who are twenty experts in development and training in the public and private training sectors and among professional principals will be explored the perspectives in the practical level on professional school leaders' capabilities and also their perspectives on the capability development model. After the interviews have been completed, the results from both groups will be combined and analyzed against the literature then the focus group who are ten experts and stakeholders will be asked to collate final results about the professional school leaders' capabilities and the capability development model.

Australian Quality Assurance in an Australian University: A Case study Report

Huai Nathan Jiang, Ed.D Candidate, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong

Abstract

Quality assurance in higher education is a contemporary and international phenomenon. In Australia, quality assurance has become a core managerial approach to higher education at government level and also has impacted on the universities in all the areas.

This study is part of a case study research on how quality assurance is conducted in an Australian university for a doctoral degree. This study focuses on what the characteristics of quality assurance are in an Australian university through a case study approach.

In the case study research, a qualitative research approach is used in data collection, description, comparison and analysis. The data will be gathered through a government policy review, a review on the institutional policies, and an open-end interview. All the participants selected in the interviews are the staff members from different levels at the individual universities.

The data from the government policy review, institutional policy review and interviews will form a triangular relationship in the case study research. This triangular relationship will respond to the research question and sub-questions, including the characteristics of Australian quality assurance.

The results of the government policy review include outcome-oriented, indicators as dimensions, universities as enterprises, and open information to the community. This presentation will explore the new relationship between government and university emerged in quality assurance.

This presentation will report on the development of this research project and the implications of quality assurance in higher education.