



ACUCA NEWS

ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN ASIA

"Committed to the mission of Christian higher education of uniting all men in the community of service and fellowship."



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ACUCA MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

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Chung Chi College, CUHK
Hong Kong Baptist University
Lingnan University

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Petra Christian University
Satya Wacana Christian University
Universitas Kristen Indonesia
Maranatha Christian University
Duta Wacana Christian University
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Universitas Pelita Harapan
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Sanata Dharma University

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Aoyama Gakuin University
St. Andrew's University
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Sogang University
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Mission College
Payap University
Assumption University
Christian University of Thailand

Service Learning for Higher Education

Yoshi Hongo

Director, Service Learning
International Christian University

Service learning combines the student's service experience with learning. What is so special about it?

What makes service experience a learning experience? Based on our experience at International Christian University over the past decade, this article outlines the key structure and ingredients of what we, and our students, believe to be an effective Service Learning process.

The word "service" may mean different things to different people. It may refer to facility, function, help, occupation, military force, religious ceremony and many others. In some Japanese colloquial expressions, service even means a discount. For Christians, of course, it signifies our acts of dedication to God and to his people. It is this Christian spirit that laid the foundation for our program at ICU together with our intention to bring our learning to this field.

For the purpose of constructing our Service Learning courses and their credit requirements, however, the current working definition of qualified service at ICU has the following criteria: i) The internship takes place at an NGO, NPO or public institution which can provide supervision and with whom ICU has mutual consent of student(s) performing service activity, ii) the service is of minimum thirty days long, and iii) the work and the contribution of the student is provided free of charge.

Does the learning take place automatically if students go through these service/internship experience?

Students will inevitably acquire some learning out of any experiential program. Service learning, however, achieves a high level of intentionality in

students' learning, thus making it an uniquely effective pedagogy for higher education today and for the future.

In our context of university-level education, we link the service and learning to effect systematic and integrated academic programs by bringing students out of class rooms and putting them into communities, both within and outside of Japan. It requires a program structure with appropriate courses to prepare and support students prior to, during and after their actual service experience. It also calls for support systems, organization and staff to maximize educational value. Most importantly, we believe that the systematic usage of reflection and its various methods is the key ingredient for making the service a truly learning experience for the participants.

It is this reflection that allows students to connect their service experience to their academic learning and to their general awareness. This introspective process allows the students to have both a personal yet objective view of what all the observations and experiences signify. Without this reflective component in the program, the service will remain simple volunteer work or a practicum experience.

Reflection can take a variety of forms and modes, at different stages, and of different domains in the wholeservice learning process. At our program at ICU, students typically take two courses to study about service learning and conduct reflective activities prior to their actual service. They begin pre-activity reflection, such as group discussion, essay-writing, researching and interview sessions.

During their service activity in the field, students are required to keep a journal in such a manner that it will be conducive to later reflective activities as well. Students are also encouraged to have discussions and communication with people they work with as well as with other service-learning participants, faculty advisors and Service Learning Center staff at ICU.

Upon their return from the service sites, students have further opportunities to reflect on their experiences.

Discussion with fellow service learning participants and advisors, paper-writing and presenting of their experiences all provide reflectional opportunities of various sorts. Some are formal, others informal. Some are planned, others spontaneous. Some are individual-based, others group-oriented.

Systematic mapping of these opportunities for reflection

at different stages are intended to enhance the effectiveness of learning. It is of particular importance to mix individual and group activities to enhance overall learning. In fact, it is our hope that the experiencing element of these explicit reflective activities may lead to an acquisition of tacit process skill.

These reflective activities cover issues and matters of different domains: i) personal, ii) field work thematic and iii) academic. These are not necessarily independent of each other, but being able to analyze their own experience logically, the result and process itself become more useful for the students in their later professional and academic career as well as in their personal growth.

We believe that Service Learning and its reflective components will have much to offer in the future of higher education.

Management Conference Notice

We would like to take this opportunity to invite all members of ACUCA to join us at the upcoming ACUCA Management Conference, to be held at Chang Jung Christian University (www.cjcu.edu.tw/english/) in Tainan, Taiwan between the 28th and 30th October of 2009.

The theme of the conference this year will be, "Service Learning and International Cooperation." Confirmed keynote speakers include: Professor Edward Kwan Yiu Chen (Former President of Lingnan University) and Dr. Betty Cernol-McCann (Vice President, United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia).

Aside from the keynote presentations and concurrent sessions, Chang Jung will be setting aside an exhibition

area for ACUCA members to promote their institutions.

Members are encouraged to introduce their international programs, and inter-institutional networking will be facilitated. There will also be a Presidents' and Chaplains' meeting for more specific, deeper discussion of the issues related to the conference topic.

We encourage you to register for this conference, which we feel will provide an excellent opportunity to bring our skills together in the development of Christian leadership in Asia.

More details, including online registration, are available at the Chang Jung Christian University Conference website : www.cjcu.edu.tw/~2009ACUCA/

The ACUCA Student Mobility Scheme



Vanina Jade Chua, a student at Ateneo de Manila University, spent the fall 2008 semester at Providence University in Taiwan.

When I was still a freshman at Ateneo de Manila University in the

Philippines, I had no idea that I would be joining our school's student-exchange program, called Junior Term Abroad (JTA), for the students of the School of Management. Living in another country, staying away from my comfort zone, my sweet home and being totally free popped into my mind when I heard the term JTA. So, I came here.

Studying in Providence University was a marvelous experience for me. I have learned not only from the professors and books but also from everyday life. Each day was a chance to learn something new: to explore new things, to meet foreign friends, to go out of my comfort zone, to adjust to the new environment, to budget my daily

expenses, to solve difficulties and problems, and to be an encouragement to those who have stumbled and fallen.

Though the days of my stay here were limited, I brought back the extraordinary memories that I had during my stay, as well as the experiences I had here. I know that some of my friends may forget me, or I might not clearly remember everything I had read.

But one thing is for sure, I won't forget how my life was during my stay here, how my friends comforted me and had fun together with me, and how the people around me helped me whenever I encountered difficulties and hardships.

I thank everyone for being part of my life while I was away from my family--my teachers for being so kind and knowledgeable, my friends for making me feel like I'm still at home, and the staff here at the various offices and departments, specifically the Office of International Affairs, for helping me along the way. Most especially, I want to thank God for giving me this gracious opportunity to become a stronger, braver, and a more understanding person.

News from the Members

Lingnan University Hosts Liberal Arts Conference 2009

– "The Coming-of-Age For Liberal Arts Education in 21st Century Asia-Pacific"

Lingnan University (Lingnan) hosted "The Coming-of-Age For Liberal Arts Education in 21st Century Asia-Pacific" Conference on 19 May 2009 to celebrate Lingnan's progress in introducing liberal arts to Hong Kong and the region a decade ago. The conference, officiated by Mr Michael Stone, Secretary-General of University Grants Committee, also serves as a platform for discussion on the long-term development of liberal arts education in the region.

Two overseas speakers, Professor David Oxtoby, President of Pomona College in the US and Professor Peter McCagg, Dean of International Affairs at International Christian University (ICU) in Japan, were invited to relate their experience in advancing liberal arts education in their respective institutions.

In his presentation "Liberal Arts Education for the 21st Century: From Claremont to Asia", Professor Oxtoby compared the "professional training" of higher education with the liberal arts approach, then argued that the latter is of critical importance for the challenges of the 21st century. He also drew comparisons between the US and Asia in liberal arts education. Professor McCagg's presentation was on "Nurturing Liberal Arts Education in Japan: The Case of International Christian University", in which he shared his experience at ICU and provided an analysis on the challenges for his university.

Echoing the views shared by the two overseas speakers, two speakers from Lingnan: Professor William Lee, Associate Vice-President (Academic Affairs) and Professor

Richard Davis, Chair Professor & Head, Department of History, presented their experience in developing liberal arts education at Lingnan. Professor Lee spoke on Lingnan's strategies in the implementation of the new 4-year university system in his topic, "Liberal Arts Education at Lingnan University: Preparation for the 4-Year System".

"A Medley of Liberal Arts Models: A Teacher's View" was presented by Professor Davis

who drew upon his personal experience as faculty member at three prominent University-Colleges: Middlebury College, Duke University and Brown University. He also discussed the potential for replicating the best liberal arts practices for Lingnan.

A panel discussion was held in the afternoon with the presence of five graduates of Lingnan and overseas liberal arts colleges who shared their experiences and views in liberal arts education. Now leading figures in their professional fields, the panelists talked about how liberal arts education influenced their personal growth and career. The conference, attended by some 130 local and overseas scholars and professionals, was covered in the English and Chinese media.



The accompanying photo shows Professor Chan Yuk-Shee, President of Lingnan University (left) and Mr Michael Stone.

Hong Kong Baptist University sets up office in Beijing to strengthen ties with Mainland counterparts

Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), together with Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University United International College (UIC), established a presence in Beijing, China's capital, with the opening of an Office on 13 March 2009.

The office was set up to enhance student recruitment efforts on the Mainland and to strengthen communication with our counterparts there. Officiating guests included Professor Xu Jialu, former Vice-

Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the PRC and Chairman of the UIC Council; Mr. Wilfred Wong, Chairman of the Council and the Court at HKBU; and Professor Ng Ching-fai, President and Vice-Chancellor, HKBU.

In his address, President Ng said that the Beijing Office will help both HKBU and UIC communicate effectively with prospective undergraduate and postgraduate students and their parents as well as strengthen ties with alumni.

UIC, which was jointly founded by Beijing Normal University and Hong Kong Baptist University in 2005, offers 13 undergraduate programmes through its Divisions of Business and Management, Humanities and Social

Science, and Science and Technology. Faculty members come from more than 20 locations around the world while students are from the Greater China region as well as Korea, the UK, France, Nigeria and Mali.



President Ng said he was pleased to note that, following a visit of Guangdong Provincial Committee Secretary Mr. Wang Yang to UIC, the higher education section of the Regional Development Outline Plan for the Pearl River Delta highlighted the possibility of inviting Hong Kong universities to run tertiary education institutions there.

He believes that the convergence of the Mainland and Hong Kong in the education sector will have a positive impact. "I am proud that HKBU is a forerunner in achieving the goal of higher education collaboration," he said.

The Beijing Office is located at 10/F of Hui Bin Plaza on 8 Beichendong Road in Chaoyang District, Beijing.

News From the Secretariat

ACUCA General Secretary Report: 6th Pan-Asian Initiative on Service Learning / 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional conference on Service Learning

As a way to prepare for the upcoming ACUCA management conference on Service Learning, I attended the 6th Pan-Asian Initiative on Service Learning / 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Service Learning, which was held at Lingnan University, Hong Kong from June 1 through 5, 2009. The theme of the conference was "Crossing Borders, Making Connections: Service-Learning in diverse Communities."

The conference emphasized the importance and the need for international cooperation in the development and enhancement of Service Learning. Nearly one hundred people crossed borders to discuss and exchange ideas on Service Learning. Unlike myself, who has very little knowledge and experience in Service Learning, most participants have been practicing Service Learning at their institutions for some time, or they are at least familiar with the concepts of Service Learning.

Dr. Edward Chen's keynote speech was a perfect start for a person like me who needs "Service Learning 101". He described the rationale of Service Learning in this fast-changing, globalized society, and pointed out the key factors for the success of Service Learning Programs. His speech along with other plenary talks made a distinction between Service Learning and traditional volunteer programs. Service Learning is the concept that links the educational curriculum and the community to facilitate a lifelong commitment to serve and learn. Unlike standard volunteer programs, a process of reflection through a structured course is essential before and after participation in a Service Learning Program. It also stresses the reciprocal nature of the concept - students do not just help, they learn from the community, the community subsequently learns from the students. The presentations on Service Learning cases in diverse communities such as China, Taiwan, India, Thailand, Myanmar, and South Africa provided a more practical understanding in how the Service Learning concept can be facilitated and implemented to meet different needs in different contexts.

After attending this conference, I have been greatly encouraged to think about new possibilities among ACUCA members to promote Service Learning through which ACUCA's Christian identity can be strengthened and enhanced. I hope the ACUCA conference in October, 2009 will be an arena where ACUCA member institutions can share their enthusiasm, get encouraged, and inspired to serve.



Dr. Shinhye Kim,
General Secretary of
ACUCA at the recent
Pan-Asian initiative
on Service Learning

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