



# ACUCA NEWSLETTER

## Secretariat's News

### ACUCA Holds Management Conference and 25th General Assembly, Ushers in New Leadership

Concluding the term of ACUCA's immediate past leadership headed by Hannam University, the Secretariat at HNU organized the 2023 Management Conference and the 25th General Assembly. An event of this size and gravitas is the first to be held by ACUCA since the COVID-19 Pandemic broke. Preparations have been underway for months leading to the 2-day activity held last October 18 and 19 at Hannam University in Daejeon, Korea. The activities centered on the theme, "Innovation and Spirituality: Trajectories for Christian Higher Education in Asia".

The first day was dedicated to the Management Conference and was opened by a Worship Service at the Hannam University Chapel and then proceeded to HNU's Maker Space where the two-day event would take place. The attendees geared up for a series of lectures and discussions prepared by the Secretariat. At Maker Space, the attendees were welcomed by Prof. Kwang-Sup Lee, who, in his Welcome Remarks, emphasized the importance of such activity in ensuring the future of ACUCA. During the Plenary Session, Prof. Dosoung Choi, President of Handong Global University, delivered his lecture titled "Learning to Engage the VUCA World: Find Yourself in God's Narrative" and warned about the decrease in the number of students who identify as Christians and the youth leaving churches as an obstacle in the advancement of Christian higher education and the faith as a whole. As a solution, Professor Choi talked about the need for universities to adapt to the ever-evolving world emphasizing adopting a trans-disciplinary curriculum that enables more holistic learning and allows "problem-solving that transcends traditional academic boundaries", better-equipping the youth in the real world.





*Scan QR to the view photos from the Management Conference and General Assembly*

Following the Plenary Session, the attendees were given the choice to attend two Parallel Sessions. One session was a Biblio-Theological reflection on the Management Conference theme which broke it into a comprehensive, deeply theological, yet easy-to-digest discussion. The resource speaker, Bishop Emerito Nacpil from the Philippines, gave a multi-perspective dissection of the theme including points on secularity amid innovation, a scriptural and theological interpretation of spirituality, and even a challenge for the academics in terms of how Christian higher education ought to move forward. This session was moderated by Dr. Fr. Viju Devassy from India. Meanwhile, a parallel session on Exploring Learning Innovation in Higher Education through Micro-credentials was given by Dr. Greg Pawilen, also from the Philippines, and moderated by Prof. Kitai Kim, ACUCA Secretary-General. During his discussion, Dr. Pawilen highlighted the role of

micro-credentials, which are short courses or sets of learning competencies, in making education truly more inclusive, accessible, and more responsive to the needs of the learners and society as a whole, as well as, like the ACUCA Micro Degree Program, becomes a tool for collaboration for universities beyond geopolitical borders. Both Parallel Sessions concluded with a Question and Answer Session moderated by Prof. Kitai Kim. The day's formal proceedings concluded with remarks from Prof. Katsunobu Kihara of Doshisha University which was followed by a campus tour, dinner, and social night for all the attendees.

Day 2 was opened with an invocation led by Rev. Wahju Satria Wibowo of Duta Wacana University. ACUCA President Prof. Kwang-Sup Lee formally welcomed the attendees to the 25th General Assembly, followed by a Proof of Due Notice, a Roll Call, and a Declaration of a Quorum by the Secretariat led by Prof. Kitai Kim. The highlights of the proceedings included the ratification of actions taken by the Executive Committee, reports from officers including the Secretariat at Hannam University and the permanent Treasury at Hong Kong Baptist University, the approval of the Revised Constitution and By-Laws, and the acceptance of four (4) new Member Institutions from India, Japan, and the Philippines. Another highlight of the General Assembly was the presentation of the Ad Hoc Committee Report on the Quality Assurance (QA) Framework of ACUCA by Judge Benjamin Turgano of Wesleyan University-Philippines. The report ultimately stressed the importance of QA in enhancing the academic performance of Christian higher education institutions in Asia while emphasizing the retention of each institution's Christian character. Towards the end of the morning session, the General Assembly confirmed the election of the Executive Committee for 2024-2025, discussed other important matters, and adjourned with a prayer by Hong Kong Baptist University Chaplain Rev. Hung Tse and proceeded to a networking session and lunch.

In the afternoon, the attendees were given a tour of the Daejeon Science Research Complex. The attendees gathered once again at Hannam's Maker Space for the formal turnover ceremonies for the newly elected officers of ACUCA. In his final speech as ACUCA President, Prof. Kwang-Sup Lee thanked the ExCo, the Secretariat, and the entire membership for their unwavering support for the association. He gave his commitment that Hannam University will continue to share in ACUCA's mission. Outgoing President Lee then symbolically transferred the powers, duties, and responsibilities to his successor, Prof. Tomoko Ueki of Doshisha University in Japan by means of the bequeathal of the ACUCA pin, a symbolic giving of a token as a symbol of friendship, and the handover of the ACUCA flag. After accepting the symbols, Prof. Ueki gave her first speech as ACUCA President.



This was then followed by the announcement of the 2024-2025 Executive Committee members including the election of the Board Members coming from India, Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand. The membership in the Executive Committee of ACUCA is rotational and institutional but is however represented by either the institution's president or rector or an officer designate. The day's proceedings adjourned with a message from Prof. Ta Chin Wei of Chung Yuan Christian University in Taiwan and a prayer by Rev. Shinwan Pan of Hannam University.

The Management Conference and General Assembly were attended by 92 delegates from eight countries across Asia. The leadership of ACUCA and the Secretariat is grateful for the graciousness and hospitality of Hannam University. HNU is the President of ACUCA for 2022 to 2023 and with the ExCo, led the association into the new normal. HNU's leadership saw the transition of ACUCA's activities from fully online to fully face-to-face, introduced the Micro Degree Program, and thus effectively extended the reach of the organization's mission beyond the limits of its members' campuses.

## 66 students graduate from ACUCA Micro Degree Program

On August 25, 2023, a virtual graduation ceremony was held under the auspices of Hannam University to award sixty-six (66) students who completed various courses under the Micro Degree Program (MDP) of the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA). The ceremony marked the first-ever graduation of MDP since its establishment by ACUCA in the summer term of 2022 with the initiative of Prof. Kitai Kim, ACUCA Secretary-General and MDP Project Leader, and the ACUCA Secretariat at Hannam University, in collaboration with 61 member institutions in eight countries.

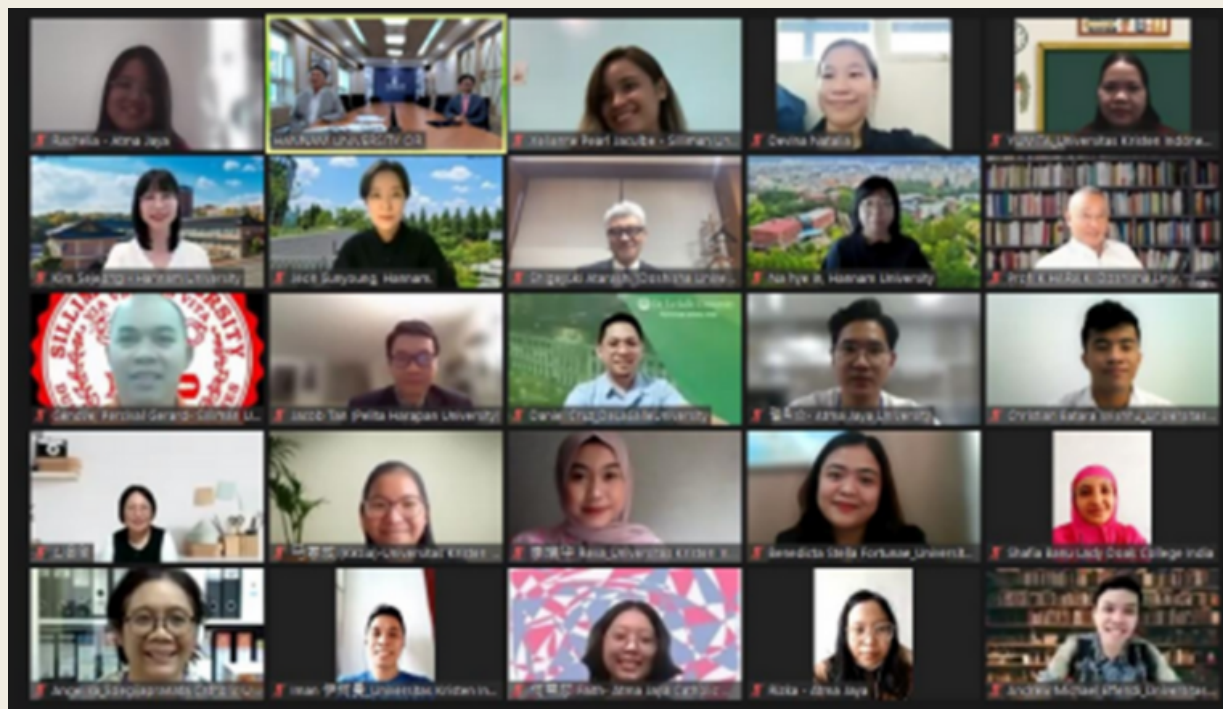
The students completed the courses in Korean Language 1 and 2 (47 graduates), Mandarin Chinese 1 and 2 (16 graduates), and Strategic Family Business Management and Social Impact (3 graduates). Prof. Kim stated that MDP was created to promote collaboration and exchange among 61 member institutions in 8 countries. "We have in our hands tremendous resources that can be utilized in good pursuits and to help our students in our member institutions obtain these kinds of credentials. That was the primary objective of the program", he added. It aimed to help students in member institutions obtain credentials in Korean, Mandarin Chinese, and Strategic Family Business Management and Social Impact. Since the start of MDP and through three academic terms (Summer 2022, Winter 2022, and Summer 2023), a total of 417 students have completed these courses.

The ceremony was presided over by Prof. Kitai Kim and Prof. Kim Chul, Dean of Global Relations at Hannam, representing the President, Prof. Kwang-sup Lee. In his message, Dr. Chul Kim congratulated the graduates and stated: "You have made history as the first to complete the Micro Degree Program. You lead the way for future learners of this program and cemented your role as collaborators of ACUCA, ushering in a new age of continuing education and bridging peoples, institutions, and countries."



During the ceremony, two graduates, Christian Batara Wishnu of Indonesia and Daniel Cruz from De La Salle University Philippines, gave testimonies. Christian Batara Wishnu thanked ACUCA, its officials, and the instructors for their competent and patient teaching “in a learning atmosphere that was fun and conducive to learning” the Korean language. Daniel Cruz, one of the three students who earned

the Micro Degree in Strategic Family Business Management and Social Impact, who also is pursuing his MA while managing two enterprises, said the Strategic Family Business Management course provided him with the crucial tools and concepts “to navigate challenges,



foster growth, and ensure the sustained success of our own family business. At the same time, the Social Impact program reinforces the notion that enterprise must transcend mere profit-seeking. As entrepreneurs, we must be responsible for creating a positive impact for the community and society.”

Dr. Chuchi S. Montenegro, an instructor in Basic Python Programming, who was represented at the ceremony by a colleague Percival Genove, spoke on behalf of the other instructors and said that the MDP’s achievement celebrated the power of collective growth and shared knowledge, where collaboration, inclusivity, and friendships were formed.

Prof. Kitai Kim announced that starting January 2024, Doshisha University of Kyoto, Japan, will be handling “in its good hands” the Micro Degree Program as it assumes the responsibility for serving as ACUCA Secretary-General and Secretariat.

## ACUCA MICRO DEGREE PROGRAM

**WINTER** TERM 2024



learn  
more  
about the  
MDP here



## 162 students from ACUCA member institutions completed Summer 2023 Micro Degree / Certificate Program

In June 2022, the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA) launched the Micro Degree/Certificate Program (MDP) with the support of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA). This program is a flagship initiative of the Hannam University ACUCA Secretariat and is designed to help students from member institutions continue their education amidst the challenges of the pandemic. The MDP program has seen a high completion rate and an increasing number of students expressing interest in enrolling in future courses.

Over the summer of 2023, 162 students from 21 institutions completed short-term online courses offered by ACUCA. These courses were taught synchronously daily for three weeks in July and August — Basic Python Programming, Korean Language, Mandarin Chinese, Strategic Family Business Management, and Social Entrepreneurship. The courses were taught by fourteen faculty members from five ACUCA member institutions.

**Mandarin Chinese:** Hsiu-Ting Hsu, Chi-Hua Lu, Guan-Yu Chen, and Yu Chi Tong, all from Chung Yuan Christian University of Taiwan.

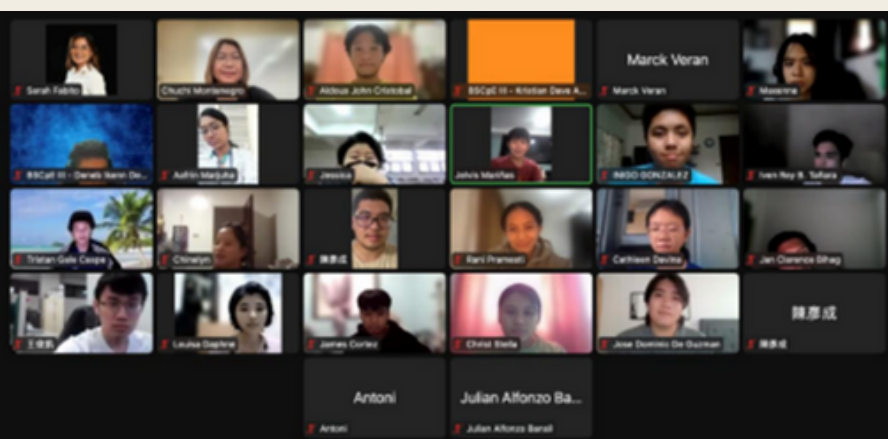
**Korean Language:** Kim Sejeong, Shin Unyoung, Jeon Sun Young, Lim Yeyoung, Na Hye In, Lee Eunki, and Jo Sounghun all of Hannam University, South Korea.

**Basic Python Programming:** Dr. Chuchi Montenegro of Silliman University, Philippines;

**Strategic Family Business Management:** Prof. Donald Tan of the Universitas Pelita Harapan of Indonesia, and

**Social Entrepreneurship:** Prof. Michael Meallem of Payap University, Thailand.

Prof. Kim underscored that “apart from providing students with supplementary education and credentials, the MDP program also encourages faculty research and collaborations among its member institutions. The program allows member institutions to pool their resources and individual specializations to benefit all member institutions and their students.”



Students who completed the MDP Summer 2023 courses appreciated the excellent teaching, enhanced knowledge and skills, camaraderie across borders, and encouragement to collaborate. Overall, the MDP program has been successful in providing students with quality education and fostering collaboration among member institutions. Here are some of their comments:

### Basic Python Programming students

*“The engaging course turned out to be an illuminating journey into the realm of coding, where I not only learned the fundamental syntax of Python but also gained insights into the art of problem-solving.”*

*“The professor is an expert in the field, ensuring a high-quality learning experience. Overall, this program equips students with the knowledge and tools needed to excel in their chosen careers.”*

*“The lectures were engaging...What made the experience even more enriching was the chance to connect with fellow students from various universities. Collaborating on assignments and group projects fostered a sense of camaraderie, as we shared ideas and tackled coding challenges together.”*

### Social Entrepreneurship students

*"I appreciate Mr. Meallem's effort in the class in explaining thoroughly and being lenient on students since we all have different educational backgrounds and schedules. I admire how he entertained questions in every class and recommended videos to watch to supplement the topic. Because of these, I was able to submit decent reports and even got nice comments from him."*

*"I must say, that the social entrepreneurship course exceeded my expectations in many ways. The instructors were not only knowledgeable but also incredibly considerate, with Prof. Mike standing out for his exceptional skill in fostering an engaging learning environment. The class discussions were thought-provoking, and I appreciated the diversity of insights brought by my fellow classmates. The program's focus on practical application made the learning experience more impactful, enabling me to connect theory with real-world scenarios effectively. Overall, it's been an inspiring journey that has expanded my horizons and left me with a deep appreciation for the program's thoughtful design and the exceptional efforts of Prof. Mike."*

### Strategic Family Business Management students

*"Classes like these are a great way of bringing multiple perspectives together to make learning easier and Prof. Tan's personality was a bonus to me. I am grateful for this opportunity."*

*"The program offers a well-rounded education with a strong emphasis on practical skills and real-world applications. The professor is an expert in the field, ensuring a high-quality learning experience."*

### Mandarin Chinese students

*"I was so happy that I got a chance to explore a new language and a new set of classmates, which made me enjoy the lectures."*

*"Our instructor was excellent. She not only catered and adjusted to each student's strengths and weaknesses, but she also encouraged good rapport among the class. Considering the class was only 3 weeks, we were able to learn a lot due to her high level of competence in teaching."*



### Korean Language students

*"The instructors are very nice in teaching the Korean language especially to us that don't have any background in Korean language. I was happy that I was able to read and write Korean only after a few days! Classmates are also fun! Ms. Yeyoung and Ms. Sejeong are the best!!! Thank you ACUCA!"*

*"The course was fun and insightful. The teacher also taught us very well. They are patient enough and enthusiastic when teaching. They also tried to communicate with us in English when we had difficulty understanding the material."*



## **ACUCA Executive Committee Meets in Taiwan to Discuss Key Issues and Plan for the Management Conference**

The Executive Committee (ExCo) of the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA) met in person for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was held at Chung Yuan Christian University (CYCU) in Taoyuan City, Taiwan last July 6 and 7, 2023.

The ExCo members were hosted by Chung Yuan Christian University and were welcomed by CYCU Vice-President Dr. Ying-Yi Hong, on behalf of CYCU President In-Ming Lee. The meeting was formally opened by ACUCA President Prof. Kwang-sup Lee, expressing his gratitude towards those in attendance for their unwavering support for the association. The two-day meeting kicked off with a report from Hong Kong Baptist University, the ACUCA permanent Treasurer, represented by Rev. Hung Tse, wherein the detailed current state of ACUCA's finances and other matters vital to its operations which serve institutions and communities across nine Asian countries. This was followed by the report of the Secretariat, presented by the Secretary-General, Prof. Kitai Kim, which highlighted the application of two (2) new members, namely, Ferris University in Japan and Women's Christian College in India, which the ExCo approved and warmly welcomed. In addition, the current progress of ACUCA's most recent flagship program, the Micro Degree Program (MDP), particularly detailing its successful pilot year with hundreds of enrolled learners and faculty members participating. Finally, the 2023 Summer Term commences on the 24th of July this month.

ACUCA continues to be grateful to the United Board for its trust and confidence in the association as it continues to evolve and thus, implement new programs and projects that benefit its members and their respective greater communities. Also part of ACUCA's continued growth, the ExCo commissioned a team led by retired Judge Benjamin Turgano, Board Member for the Philippines, in crafting a Revised Constitution and By-Laws set to be ratified by the General Assembly in its meeting in October of this year. The revised constitution would usher in a new era of a stronger and more future-proofed ACUCA.

Finally, the ExCo discussed matters pertaining to the General Assembly (GA) and Management Conference, the biggest gathering of the representatives of all ACUCA member institutions. This series of meetings, discussions, and lectures are set to take place in October of this year at Hannam University in South Korea.





The ExCo approved the theme: Innovation and Spirituality: Trajectories for Christian Higher Education in Asia which seeks to explore the intersections of innovation and spirituality in Christian Higher Education in Asia, as well as the role Christian HEIs could play in catalyzing innovations by developing sustainable and innovative programs that are grounded in Christian values. The ExCo Meeting was attended by ACUCA President Prof. Kwang-sup Lee, Doshisha University Prof. Katsunobu Kihara, officer designate for Japan, serving as ACUCA Vice-President and assisted by Doshisha VP for Global Affairs Prof. Shigeyuki Atarashi, International Affairs Office personnel, Yuko Shimomura and Ikuko Sugiwaka. Also present was HKBU Chaplain and officer designate Rev. Hung Tse, ACUCA Secretary-General Prof. Kitai Kim, and Members of the Board, including Lady Doak representative Asst. Prof. Hannah Sophiah Samuel for India, Atma Jaya Catholic University Vice Rector Dr. Yohanes Eko Prasetyanto for Indonesia, Christian University of Thailand President Asst. Prof. Dr. Suluck Pattarathammas for Thailand, Chung Yuan Christian University officer designate Prof. Ta Chin Wei for Taiwan, and Wesleyan University – Philippines Judge Benjamin Turgano for the Philippines, accompanied by International Linkages Focal Person April Macan and staffers Prince Rhomel V. Pillagara and Christian Jan Robert S. Fausto. This is the first ExCo meeting held in person as previous meetings were held online due to travel and safety restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 Pandemic. This meeting sends a message of hope as the world slowly but surely, by the Grace of God, recovers from the pandemic.



## Members' News

### SU BOT renews McCann's presidency



Through a board action on May 27, 2023, the trustees of Silliman University (SU) reappointed Dr. Betty Cernol McCann to be president for another term, allowing her to serve the University until 2027.

McCann made history on December 14, 2016 when the Board of Trustees (BOT) unanimously voted her to be the 13th and first woman president of SU after an extensive screening and selection process. She assumed office on June 1, 2018 after being installed in a formal turnover ceremony at the SU Church. Her original term ended on May 31, 2023.

#### Earth Advocacy

Under her leadership, SU positioned itself as a champion for the environment. At the start of her term, she institutionalized the University's commitment to becoming an environment-friendly and sustainable campus by implementing the SU Environmental Principles, Policies, and Guidelines. She strongly pushed for the University to improve its waste management, following zero waste principles; engage in energy conservation, renewable energy utilization, and biodiversity conservation; and reduce its carbon footprint.

Her administration's commitment to environmental sustainability led to SU's declaration of a climate emergency. This highlighted SU's initiatives to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, including the use of solar power and renewable energy on campus, among others. It also articulated SU's long-term plan to help mitigate climate change. Among these initiatives were the identification of pathways to make the University carbon-neutral by 2030; the promotion of more action-oriented climate education and service learning; and the creation of a University Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Committee with cohorts to generate ideas and implement discussed actions.

When the Dumaguete "Smart City" reclamation project was proposed, McCann was among the "Smart City" reclamation project was proposed, McCann was among the academics and environmental scientists who signed a statement, warning about the dire effects of the project on the marine protected areas of the city as well as on the livelihood of fisherfolks. This position against reclamation was reaffirmed by SU's BOT. In a statement, the BOT said that experts from SU have determined that reclamation projects, like the one proposed by the Dumaguete City government, will harm and disturb marine ecosystems not just in the city but also in other locations.

The BOT statement also mentioned that reclaimed land is prone to being weakened by earthquakes, which makes it dangerous for its inhabitants, especially since there are active fault lines near Dumaguete.

### **Forging Alliances**

Linkages with other universities were also strengthened during McCann's presidency. She was elected president of the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA) from 2018-2021, which allowed her to lead 62 member institutions in eight countries. Established in 1976, ACUCA is a community of Christian higher education institutions in Asia committed to working together to strengthen their educational programs anchored in Christian tradition and to assess the relevance of their institutions' offerings in the midst of a changing society.

In 2019, she assumed the presidency of the Asian University Digital Resource Network for Local Knowledge (AUDRN-LK) up until the present. AUDRN-LK is an educational network of academic institutions in the Philippines and other Asian countries that serves as a collaborative hub to promote the (re)discovery and use of local knowledge in higher education and expand 21st-century digital and critical literacy through capacity-building initiatives. This collaborative project was funded by the United Board for Christian Higher Education (UB) under the Local Knowledge Initiative program in 2009. Presently, it has evolved into an independent and sustainable network of colleges and universities in the Philippines and continuously expands its partnership with other academic institutions in Asia.

### **Digital Transformation**

McCann strongly encouraged and supported SU's design and implementation of innovative digital solutions, aligned with technological advancements and changes in the educational environment.

The SU Technology Business Incubation Program assists innovators, scientists, and aspiring entrepreneurs to develop, test, and vet ideas; and create a product prototype. It also acts as an "accelerator," helping facilitate conversations with venture capital corporations. It will soon have its own building in San Antonio, Sibulan following the generous donation of U-Bix Corporation through its president, Atty. Edilberto Bravo.

The global pandemic in 2020 put on hold many activities around the world, affecting all sectors including education. However, SU thrived because of the Silliman University Online Learning (SOUL), a flagship program designed for online distance learning. With the resumption of face-to-face classes, SOUL continues to lead the integration of information and communications technology (ICT) in the SU teaching-learning environment by initiating the development of online programs; implementing eLearning strategies to optimize teaching and learning, research and development, and extension and community engagement; providing a training facility for technology-based processes in numerous avenues for learning; and evaluating both its hardware and software capacities for improvement and upgrading.

During McCann's term, SU's utilization of digital technology accelerated, resulting in initiatives such as the continuous retooling and upskilling of faculty and staff, SU Library's digitization and modernization, digitization of university processes, and creation of the Dr. Mariano C. Lao Global Studies Center of Silliman University.

### **ACSCU Appointment**

McCann has also been designated as acting president and vice president of the Association of Christian Schools, Colleges, and Universities (ACSCU) by its Board of Trustees on August 14, 2023. ACSCU is a network of Christian schools whose mission is to integrate Christian spirituality with academic excellence. It is one of the five major associations that compose the Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations of the Philippines.



## DLSU-D signs academic partnership with University of Saint Joseph-Macau



DLSU-Dasmariñas and the University of Saint Joseph-Macau signed a two-year memorandum of understanding on academic partnership during the 29th ASEACCU International Conference.

The partnership centers on faculty and student exchange, research collaboration, and exchange of resources, among others.

DLSU-D was represented by Br. Francisco de la Rosa VI FSC while University of Saint Joseph-Macau Rector Stephen Morgan signed in behalf of USJM.

The signing was witnessed by Dr. Sonia Geme-tiza and Dr. George Francisco from the university's International and External Affairs division.

## Ukrida Celebrates the 78th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Indonesia

In the spirit of patriotism, the entire academic community of Ukrida gathered to commemorate the 78th anniversary of Indonesia's Independence Day.

The love for one's country can start by loving smaller circles, such as family or work environment. Embracing this spirit of love for the nation, the entire academic community of Ukrida held a ceremony to celebrate the 78th anniversary of Indonesia's Independence Day on Thursday, August 17, 2023, at the campus grounds of Ukrida. The ceremony was presided over by Rector Ukrida, Dr. dr. Wani Devita Gunardi, Sp. MK(K), with Albert Saputra Zebua, a student of the 2020 Informatics Program, entrusted as the Parade Commander. In attendance at the ceremony were Dr. Dra. Mina Sulastri, M.S., the Executive Director of YPTK Krida Wacana; Dr. Oktavia, S.E., M.S.Ak., the Vice Rector II; and Denni Boy Saragih, SKM., M. Div., M.Th., Ph.D., the Vice Rector III.



The rector of Ukrida, in her address, reminded everyone to continue striving to achieve Ukrida's vision, which is to become a leading institution in national and international higher education, based on Christian values. She emphasized the importance of upholding the LEAD values as the culture of Ukrida. She also encouraged the community to view this year's Independence Day celebration as an ongoing endeavor to realize Ukrida as a campus of change and leadership. Following the ceremony, a series of enthusiastic competitions were held, participated in by both staff and students. As one of the top Christian campuses in Indonesia, Ukrida continues its efforts to make a tangible impact on the nation and the country through its various educational initiatives.

## SCU Encourages New Students' Adaptation and Innovative Abilities



The spirit of joy continues to be echoed by Soegijapranata Catholic University (SCU) or Unika Soegijapranata. Creating a pleasant campus environment is a form of SCU's commitment to serving its students.

The Chancellor of SCU, Dr Ferdinandus Hindiarto, assessed that welcoming new students was a good start in introducing a culture of joy at his institution. Especially with the abandonment of the culture of "violence" in the implementation of Study Orientation and Campus Introduction (OSPEK). "We have started to abandon the "gojlok" model for quite a long time, and now we have a new joyful culture. "Let's start the joy", said Dr. Ferdinand.

Diving into the world of lectures itself is a turning point for prospective students. Dr Ferdinandus interprets this as a challenge for his institution in encouraging the rapid adaptation of new students to the world of college . Creating adaptive and innovative students is SCU's main point in implementing the 2023 New Student Integrated Provisioning (PTMB) which was held at SCU Campus 1, Bendan (29/8). "We want to encourage new students to learn to adapt quickly from school to college," said Dr Ferdinand. He assessed the importance of new students' adaptability in facing different learning situations and environments. He also invited new students to always be innovative. "Solve the problems they face by looking for other alternatives," he stressed.

By introducing the Soegijapranata Learning Model learning system , SCU is also preparing new students for lectures which will start next Monday (4/9). An Introduction to University Bodies and Institutions session was also given to students to improve their adaptability, especially in approaching lecturers and educational staff (tendik). SCU also presented material on the work theme "Innovative Adaptive" and introduced the history of SCU hymns and marches to new students.

SCU fully supports student involvement of up to 75% in PTMB compared to lecturers and students who are only 25%. " Hoi Aristoi , how do students process and when they leave they have the competence of a leader," said Dr. Siswanto, Head of the SCU Student and Alumni Development Institute (LPMA), as well as Chair of the 2023 PTMB Committee.

"As the university leader, I am grateful because SCU still has great trust from people throughout Indonesia," said Dr Ferdinand. Given the increase in the number of new SCU students by more than 10% compared to last year. Lampung, Medan, Wamena, to Central Kalimantan are some of the origins of new students who will carry out PTMB 2023 for the next 5 days. Psychology, Communication Studies, and Medicine are some of the favorite study programs for new SCU students this year. "We will continue to improve so that the improvement is good," he stressed. [SCU/Hil Public Relations]





## YPPH Breaks Ground on 16th SDH School in Karawang

As part of its long-standing commitment to provide international-standard Christian education in Indonesia and drive national education development, Pelita Harapan Educational Foundation (YPPH) on Friday (1/12) established new Sekolah Dian Harapan (SDH) school in Rolling Hills Lane, Karawang, West Java.

The K-12 school, to be built on 16,000 sqm plot of land, is expected to begin operating in July 2025 with a total full-phase capacity of up to 1,000 students. SDH group of schools now enrolls more than 13,000 students across Indonesia. As with its sister schools, SDH Karawang will be equipped with modern facilities such as basketball court, football field, library, smart classroom, collaborative learning space and more to stimulate student creativity and promote collaboration.

“SDH Karawang aims to bridge students to renowned universities at home and abroad. Through a holistic education, we are committed to unlock students’ full potential — academically, non-academically, and character-wise,” said YPPH executive director Stephanie Riady, adding that education will play a key role toward the achievement of Golden Indonesia Vision in 2045.

Acting head of Karawang Regency education, youth and sport (Dikpora) Cecep Mulyawan congratulated the establishment of SDH Karawang and lauded it as an exemplary collaboration between the public and private sector in providing quality education to the people in the region and beyond.

With the addition of SDH Karawang, YPPH now operates 54 educational institutions spread from Sabang to Merauke, from metropolitan cities, lower-tier cities to the hinterland, in its pursuit to provide transformational education based on true knowledge, faith in God and godly character to all.



## Blogs

### Studying in Taiwan: An Experience of a Lifetime

**Hagimori Keito**

*Meiji Gakuin University  
Japan*

Host Institution: Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, Taiwan  
Spring 2023

From February to June 2023, I had an experience of a lifetime as an exchange student at Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. While studying abroad, I learned about Southeast Asian culture and history and studied the Chinese language. We studied the characteristics of Southeast Asian countries, their foreign policy, and their history with the EU, the U.S., and China.



Unlike many that I heard of, I didn't have much of a hard time during the program but if I had to say, the food was a little difficult. The food was generally greasy, with a lot of fried foods and dishes cooked in a lot of oil. The university dormitory where I lived did not have a kitchen, so I ate every meal outside. However, I am still thankful that the food at the street stalls was very cheap and tasty. Dumplings were especially my favorite.

As I stayed in Taiwan, a characteristic exhibited by people living there, both residents and foreigners, that surprised me is that they expressed their thoughts and did what they wanted to do without worrying about what others around them thought. For example, there were quite a few unusual sights in Taiwan that are common in Japan, such as people making regular phone calls on the train or going out in very comfortable clothing. When I was in Japan, I felt a lot of peer pressure to be the same as everyone else, but I learned that I don't have to do so.

Furthermore, Taiwan has more religious believers than Japan, and there were festivals at temples every weekend. The ornaments and temples are quite splendid, showing the strength of people's religious beliefs. In addition, although there are some differences from Japan in food, clothing, politics, religion, etc., in general, Taiwan is more tolerant than Japan and accepts anything that is good, which I thought was wonderful. Taiwanese and other international students from other countries spoke very good English, and I was embarrassed because I could not speak English or Chinese properly. I even hated going to class sometimes. However, the international students around me were very supportive and kind thus, they listened and tried to understand me despite the language barrier, and I was able to successfully earn all my credits because of them. Of course, I worked hard on my own to learn the language, but the cooperation of those around me was empowering.

When I encountered a problem in terms of study or language, I overcame it by exercising at the on-campus gym, having dinner with friends, or doing volunteer work. Although there were a few hard times,



I still enjoyed my life in Taiwan every day, and now that I have returned to Japan, I miss the days I spent in Taiwan very much. I have many memories of Taiwan, such as the kindness of the people, the delicious food, and the natural environment.

Taking advantage of being a local university student, we also visited several National Museums freely. It is such a privileged to visit National Museums multiple times during a week. Sometimes, the school administration even distributes limited free tickets for sports events, exhibitions, and performances to students.

In the last week of my study abroad, I participated in the Dragon Boat Festival, a traditional Taiwanese festival, with about 30 other international students. At first, we were not able to show our strength because we could not coordinate our calls, but gradually we were able to coordinate our calls and everyone's feelings came together, and we ended up getting the second place in our category. It was difficult to have smooth conversations and practice because of our different languages, but we were able to make it work thanks to the united efforts of the local support staff, teachers, and everyone's determination to do their best. I was able to have such an experience at the end of the program, and I felt the joy and happiness of working with people from other countries when things went well.

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In retrospect, I gained two things from this trip: language skills and life experience. My language skills were greatly improved by the daily Chinese classes and conversations with my friends. I also took English classes, so I think my English level also improved a little. Furthermore, studying abroad allowed me to meet various people from different countries and broaden my horizons. For example, I met people from various backgrounds, such as a high school girl from Indonesia who came to Taiwan to get a job and a person who quit her job to come to Taiwan to study Chinese.







The greatest benefit was that I was able to meet many things that I would never have known or realized if I had not gone to study abroad and had been living the same life in Japan for a long time.

And because of these, I am grateful to the International Center at my university in Japan and in Taiwan where I studied abroad for their kindness and support. I thank my home university for giving me a scholarship and for facilitating communication with my host university. My deepest gratitude also goes to my host university in Taiwan for taking such good care of me and for frequently holding events for international students which allowed me to make many international connections.

I have not yet found a clear dream or job for the future, but I would like to be active in a job where I can use the language and communication skills that I gained from this study abroad experience. I think it was a really good experience for me to learn about Taiwan's history and the economy of Southeast Asia, which I would not have known if I had stayed in Japan. Studying abroad was a series of new discoveries that offered me the chance to further broaden my knowledge and experience. Indeed, it is an experience of a lifetime.



## A Korean in the Land of Smiles: Forging Connections and Enjoying Fellowship

**Prof. Kitai Kim**

*Professor and Associate Dean of Global Relations  
Hannam University  
ACUCA FMS Recipient 2022-2023*

I had the honor and privilege to participate in the ACUCA Faculty Mobility Scheme (FMS) at the Albert Laurence School of Communication Arts (ALSCA) at Assumption University (AU) in Bangkok, Thailand. My objectives were three-fold. First, as ACUCA Secretary General, I wanted to share information with the AU international office regarding the newly created Micro Degree Program (MDP) as well as other ACUCA related issues. Second, as Associate Dean of Global Relations at Hannam University (HNU), I wanted to finalize the Memorandum of Understanding between HNU and AU that was started by Professor Kkonteeneung of AU who participated in the ACUCA FMS at Hannam University earlier this year. Finally, as the chair of the Department of Global Media & Culture at the Linton School of HNU, I wanted to examine the challenges and benefits of “English Medium Instruction (EMI)” as well as benchmark the ALSCA.

My first meeting at AU was with Director Glen Chatelier and Dean Marissa Chantamas. I have known Director Chatelier for a few years as he was the Officer Designate when AU was an ACUCA Executive Committee member. I wanted to ask for his and AU’s assistance with the ACUCA MDP program in regard to student participation and faculty involvement. As all courses at AU are taught in English, AU students and faculty are excellent candidates to participate in the MDP. I really looked forward to visiting AU to spend time with Director Chatelier as he is well known in Asia as a seasoned international relations veteran who is a role model for many faculty and staff. Spending time with him is always edifying.

During my benchmarking of the ALSCA, I wanted to examine if there were areas where our two colleges could collaborate in regard to student and faculty exchanges. I was very impressed with the ALSCA’s facilities and program. The school has excellent media studios as well as state-of-the-art technical equipment for media production of all kinds. The programs that the ALSCA offers students are also impressive and designed to help students enter the workforce immediately upon graduation. It was apparent that the ALSCA has far greater facilities for media production whereas the Linton School focuses primarily on media and cultural studies.

As such, there is the opportunity for mutual exchange where students from both universities can benefit from the strengths of each university. Dean Marissa Chantamas expressed great interest in having AU students attend HNU’s Korean Studies Summer Program (KSSP) in order to provide her students with the opportunity to experience the Korean language and culture. Our meeting resulted in an agreement for HNU to create a summer program specifically designed for AU students and their interests.





Both HNU and AU provide classes in English. A major difference is that AU provides all courses at the university in English whereas HNU provides classes taught in English only at the Linton School. As I am interested in English medium instruction (EMI), I wanted to benchmark the ALSCA regarding this subject. Dean Chantamas and Professor Suriya shared their personal experiences as well as their students' experiences and performance related to EMI. I was surprised to discover that both universities share almost identical issues and challenges of offering EMI courses to non-native speakers of English. We discussed this issue in depth and provided suggestions to one another on how best to deal with the challenges of EMI instruction.

The best part of the FMS program was the opportunity to share valuable personal time with Rev. Bro. Dr. Verayuth Boonparm (Vice President for Academic Affairs), Dr. Vindhai Cocracul (Advisor for Academic Affairs), Prof. Marissa Chantamas (Dean of the ALSCA), Professor Suriya (Associate Dean of ALSCA), Professor Khonteeneung ALSCA), and Director Glen Chatelier (The Office of International Affairs). I was able to talk, dine, shop, and travel together with them and got to know them very well. They took time from their extremely busy schedules to spend valuable time with me for which I am incredibly grateful. I'm not sure if I can ever repay their hospitality. I am happy to say that I can now call them friends as well as colleagues. This, I believe, is the best aspect of the FMS; creating special relationships with friends in other Asian countries that hopefully will last a lifetime.





## Challenges and Growth: My Transformational Experience in a Japanese Exchange Program

Xie Pei Qing

Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages  
Taiwan

Host Institution: Sophia University, Japan  
Spring 2023



In this exchange program, I chose two Japanese language courses and one general education course. I believe that these two Japanese language courses have been immensely beneficial for my Japanese listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. For instance, the articles in the textbook mostly revolve around social issues, naturally exposing us to more challenging vocabulary and expressions.

In conversation classes, the teacher gives us ample time to practice Japanese, helping us identify the problems of speaking and solve them. And we would be required to do better in the next conversation class.

In the Business Japanese course, the most impressive and rare learning experience was the opportunity for students to visit a local Japanese company and gain insights into the inner workings of a company.

Moreover, since students here come from various cultural backgrounds, I have gained new knowledge through exchanges and gradually enjoyed interacting with people from different parts of the world. I've also made friends from various countries.

During the learning process, there's also been a lot of exploration of Japanese culture. In my spare time, I visited shrines and temples, delving into their historical backgrounds. At times like these, I deeply appreciate my ability in Japanese, as it enables me to directly read local architectural history introductions and information.

While enjoying the joy of acquiring new knowledge and experiencing new things, it hasn't been without its challenges. When I first arrived in the bustling metropolis of Tokyo, the complex transportation system and long walks were quite disorienting. In this regard, I owe thanks to straightforward transfer apps and the assistance of my friend who has been living in Japan for half a year and is familiar with tram schedules. Also, thanks for the extended periods of walking, which have significantly improved my physical fitness in just four months.

Through this exchange program, my life experiences have been greatly enriched in various aspects. It's not just about learning; it has also influenced my personal values and perspectives on how I approach things. I've become even more curious about this world and more self-assured in facing any challenges or trying new things.

## Gratitude and Reflection: My ACUCA-Funded Journey in Japan

**Wong Man Ying**

*Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages  
Taiwan*

Host Institution: Sophia University, Japan  
Spring 2023

During my 4-month stay at Sophia University in Tokyo, I have studied the subjects of Chinese Literature (taught in Japanese) / Industrial and Organizational Psychology /Industrial Theory/ Consumer Behavior/ Advanced Japanese/ Business Japanese.

With the exception of Chinese Literature, Advanced Japanese, and Business Japanese, which were held as face-to-face classes with other students, all of the other courses I chose were online. It is because I am not an undergraduate in business administration and I don't have any relevant knowledge. I was afraid that it would be difficult for me to keep up with the classes taught in full Japanese. It is true that you can re-listen to the part of the lecture if you cannot keep up, but the downside is that you are all on your own. There was not much opportunity for you to meet other students, and you had to remind yourself to keep up with the course schedule. Actually, I regretted choosing too many online courses since I may have more chances to know more people at school.

Nevertheless, I made lots of new friends at the dorm and also when joining extracurricular activities. I participated in a school event called "Japanese Cafe" aimed at promoting language exchange. There were many Japanese and international students participating in the event. During the event, we were divided into groups to play games. We were divided into two groups and each group would get to know each other for around 30 minutes. Most of the Japanese participants wanted to interact with foreign students so they are very nice. We exchanged Instagram accounts and even created LINE groups for future connections. But after all, it is up to everyone to make an effort to keep in touch with each other as the time for you to interact with the group members was not long enough. Before I left Tokyo, I invited and had lunch with a Japanese girl who I had a good conversation with during the event.

The "Yukata Day" is a fun and unique tradition at Sophia University. Almost every student wears a yukata to school on that day. Although I had to buy or rent a Yukata myself, I think it is worth doing so. There were a lot of people taking photos around the campus and even the teachers took the initiative to take photos with students during class time. It was such a great day that you could experience Japanese culture.



I also participated in a sushi-making event in Yokohama organized by an outside organization. Actually, it wasn't really an organization. It was just a former student from Sophia who loves intercultural exchange gathered her family members and her friends to organize events for exchange students yearly. They were very friendly and the event was well organized. They invited a sushi chef who owns a sushi shop in Shibuya to teach us the skills from killing the fish to making sushi. We had a great sushi meal on that day. Before I left Tokyo, I went out with one of my Japanese friends who I met at the event and I am so happy to hear that she is planning to visit me in Taiwan.

Apart from the above activities, I spent a lot of time visiting Tokyo with my friends at dorm: shopping in Shinjuku and Ikebukuro, sightseeing in Odaiba, photo-taking with the Tokyo Tower, coffee shop hunting in Meguro, snack-hunting in Asakusa, taking purikura in Shin-Okubo, visiting otter café in Harajuku, joining the Sumidagawa Firework Festival, and hiking at Mt Takao, etc. Thinking about all this makes me miss my friends already. I hope to see them all again soon.

I would like to thank ACUCA for providing financial support to me. Without the support from ACUCA, I would not be able to make my dream of studying in Japan come true. Also, I would not be given the chance to meet all of the wonderful people I met in Japan in the past 4 months and have these unforgettable memories in my life.





## A Semester of Learning and Personal Transformation in Japan

**Thendrel Venkhataaram**

*Lady Doak College  
India*

Host Institution: International Christian University, Japan  
Fall 2023

I got selected by the International Christian University, Japan, for the Fall semester exchange program. Right from the selection results I was guided very well by the ICU personnel about each procedure. The courses offered are diverse. I opted for four courses — International Migration and Ethnicity, Communication Technology and Society, Foreign Policy Analysis and Peace and Intergroup Relations. I got the opportunity to explore different courses. Many orientations were conducted to help us with our stay in Japan. We were given personal mentors to assist us.

I got the chance to study in my different fields of interest and learned in depth about the struggles of immigrants and refugees which has created a great impact on me. I now understand what a refugee goes through in their lives. It was fascinating to learn about the entire process behind framing a foreign policy in a country. The history of the development of different communication technologies made me realize that we have come a long way and now we are entirely dependent on technology on an everyday basis.

The classes were very interesting.



The teachers were very friendly and clear with their instructions. We were informed about the entire semester in the first class. Many ice-breaking sessions took place in the first couple of classes. Students used different types of gadgets to take notes. I got the chance to become friends with students from different parts of the world.

During class discussions all our views and approaches were different. I learned a lot about different cultures and lifestyles. I interviewed some immigrants and got to know about the struggles they faced after migrating. Japanese people are very helpful. Many of my Japanese friends helped me to settle down here. I volunteered in some events that took place at the university. I got an opportunity to interact with a few old age people who had no one as their family. Japanese culture gives a lot of respect to other people. Even though Japan is a very well-developed country, the after-effects of the war are still evident. We can see many disabled people here in Japan.

My experience in Japan has made me a responsible person. I learned a lot from everyday challenges. Now I learned how to manage finances. These three months of my life have played a great part in molding me as a person. I can confidently face the upcoming challenges in life by myself now. My approach towards education has changed. I can help my friends by sharing my experience here.





## Journey of Growth: A Reflection on my Study Abroad Experience

**Suguro Yuki**

Meiji Gakuin University  
Japan

Host Institution: Handong Global University, Korea  
Fall 2023

I was so nervous before I came to Korea because my English was not good and had no friends at Handong Global University. However, I enjoyed my studying here overall. I had an orientation week before the semester started, and it was the hardest time for me because I had to speak English all the time and that was the first experience to use English that long. I have overcome the orientation week. I am grateful to my teammates who worked together for a week and my supportive freshman buddy.



Through my studies in Korea, I would like to emphasize that classes here were interesting and new experiences for me. All the classes had many discussions time or presentations and that surprised me because we hardly have discussions or presentations at my home university. I found it very difficult to discuss because I didn't have many experiences. I learned it is important to have my own opinion on everything. However, it is still difficult to tell my opinion in English, so I hope to improve in the next semester. At the same time, I found it interesting to discuss because when I was in Japan, most students had the same opinion, or even if they had a different opinion, no one disagreed with them. Here, however, there are students from various countries with diverse ideas, and it was very interesting to hear their opinions.

Also, one of the greatest assets of my study abroad experience was the very good friends I made here. As I mentioned before, I built a very good relationship with my two roommates. We were always together and talked a lot. We had very deep conversations about our culture, international relations, and our future. I hope to meet that I can talk to about anything. Also, students from Japan supported me a lot. They listened to my worries over dinner together.

It was a great relief for me to have the opportunity to speak in my language even though I was in a foreign country. I stayed here only for 4 months, but they were already very special to me, and I am very grateful to them.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the support people from my friends, the International Office of my home university, and the Office of International Affairs at Handong Global University. Also, I appreciate ACUCA and my parents for supporting me financially and giving me this wonderful opportunity. I am sure that this experience will be valuable for me in the future. I also hope that other students will have a chance to study abroad through this program and be able to learn all over the world.



## **A Global Sojourn of Learning, Friendship, and Self-Discovery**

**Divya Kasthelia**

*Lady Doak College  
India*

Host Institution: Silliman University, Philippines  
Fall 2023

My Study Exchange Program proved to be an exceptionally enriching experience, spanning academic, cultural, and personal dimensions. Upon my arrival at the university, the vibrant Founder's Day parade immediately immersed me in a dynamic atmosphere where international students congregated. This served as a perfect introduction to my diverse group of friends from various countries, and throughout the program, I had the privilege of learning about their unique cultures, traditions, and perspectives, fostering enduring friendships that transcended geographical boundaries.

In terms of academics, I enrolled in the physics department, engaging in subjects such as modern physics, meteorology, experimental physics, and fundamentals of scientific reporting. The curriculum went beyond theoretical learning, incorporating hands-on experiences through experiments and the utilization of various software and websites. This practical approach significantly enriched my understanding and skill set, offering a holistic learning experience beyond conventional classroom methods.



I express my sincere gratitude to the Principal of Lady Doak College, the International Study Centre, and Lady Doak College's management for selecting me for this program. Special acknowledgment goes to the faculty in the Department of Physics for their unwavering support and motivation, playing a pivotal role in encouraging me to undertake this transformative journey. Additional thanks extend to the management of Silliman University, particularly Miss Glynnis C. Casino, who guided and took care of me during my stay in the Philippines. The faculty members in the Department of Physics at Silliman University and the dorm manager of Edith Carson Hall have significantly contributed to my positive experience.



I would also like to express my appreciation to ACUCA (Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia) for offering the Student Mobility Scheme (SMS) program. This opportunity has been instrumental in broadening my horizons and fostering cross-cultural understanding. Amidst the academic and cultural learnings, the personal growth I experienced was profound. The program challenged me to navigate unfamiliar situations, fostering adaptability and resilience. Special thanks go to my family, especially my father, Sahaya Arul Raj, for believing in me and supporting my decision to participate in this transformative program. In summary, the Study Exchange Program not only allowed me to acquire valuable academic knowledge but also facilitated the formation of lasting connections, an appreciation for diverse cultures, and substantial personal growth. It was a comprehensive journey that I will forever cherish for its profound impact on both my academic and interpersonal development.





## Reflections

### Transformations in God's Hope

**Rev. Shinwan Pan**

*Chaplain*

*Hannam University, Korea*



***So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being! (II Corinthians 5: 17)***

Officially, the pandemic's gone, but it has already produced many painful losses. One of my neighbours lost her father without saying goodbye. At his illness, she rushed into his hospital bed but found that he had already fallen into a coma. And, to make matters worse, he was forced to be buried in a hurry without a funeral, and without a memorial service. She was not allowed to say, "I love you." she had no chance to say, "He is a great person and wonderful dad." And she did not get the support she deserved.

Even on this beautiful campus, few students had been seen for more than 2 years. It looked like a ghost town. All of the buildings were locked, and prohibited from entering without an authentic ID. It means our young students experienced persistent and multiple losses.

They lost some human contact with their professors, friends, and classmates. It was almost impossible to make new friends and spend time together. They lost the opportunities to explore what they were interested in. One of my students said, "Last year it was the most difficult time I'd ever had. I had no pleasure or happiness at all. Moreover, I had no interest in having fun. My sense of fun was gone. I was losing control of my mind."

The young students also felt that their future was broken and their ways to success were shattered. They saw their routine way of living broken down. Suddenly they felt they were forced to lose control of most of their daily lives. Therefore, they saw fear, anxiety, and despair increasing. And their sense of meaning was disrupted. Borrowing the theologian Paul Tillich's term, it may be called "the shaking of the foundations."

When something terrible happens and the sense of meaning disintegrates to some degree, embarrassment or emptiness soon follows. It's called 'crisis.' In the case of a crisis, suddenly and severely we have lost confidence in the self, the world, and the future. The more terrible it is, the greater the crisis is.

At last, sooner or later, this disruption in the sense of meaning brings about changes in the ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. The bigger the crisis is, the greater the change is. It means, the more terrible pandemic we had, the more terrible consequences followed. Even violence against the world or the self may ensue.

Today's Bible verse is II Corinthians 5: 17. It tells us that we're "new creations." It says, "everything old has passed away; new things have come into being." The sentence "new things have come into being," can be equally translated into "the old has become new." It's about human change. Change means 'becoming somebody different,' or 'becoming something different.' But, new creation is more than change. So, I prefer the word 'transformation' rather than 'change.'

What's the transformation? In a crisis, we're eager to go back to the past. In other words, we're preoccupied with thinking, if only it were not for the crisis, or if only the viruses could have been gotten rid of. In fact, it's impossible to return to the past. It's just wishful thinking to deny the stressful reality. Even now, it's impossible to avoid its painful and stressful consequences in many different areas. So, it is also impossible to return to the old self. How can we erase the painful experiences of the pandemic in our memories? Absolutely not. We can't delete them because they're essential parts of ourselves. They can't be deleted, but they can be reorganized. Even the smallest one or the least one, will not disappear from my memory. To relieve the pain in the memory, the past is reinterpreted differently and reorganized into the new self. This is the reason why we are a new creation. That's why transformation is preferred rather than change. The transformation is proclaimed in today's Bible text.

Another question pops up. The transformation is for better? or for worse? Every crisis has an impact on us. Certainly, the pandemic has impacted us. Is it positive? or negative? St. Paul's phrase, "new creation" implies human wholeness, as written in Romans chapter 8. In the chapter he talks about "those who live in accordance with the Spirit (v. 5)." And he says, "the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace (v. 7)." Now, 'life and peace' sound appealing more and more globally. It's the transformation for the better. But he also talks about the negative transformation. The negative transformation is the pessimistic reality of "those who live according to the flesh (v. 5)." According to him, it's the vicious cycle of "living in fear," "purposelessness," "decay," and "death."

What happens after the crisis? Now, what's going on in our colleges and universities? Particularly, how about our students? After the pandemic, are they transformed for the better? or for the worse? In fact, there are more and more indicators of their mental health deterioration. Their levels of anxiety or depression have increased. And hatred and violence are escalating domestically and globally. Then, to carry out the positive transformation, what are we supposed to do?

How do we shift from the negative transformation to the positive transformation? St. Paul's positive transformation begins when we are Christians or believers. The Bible verse says, "If anyone is in Christ." It means we are in the right relationship with God. It's called faith traditionally. Now, the word 'faith' sounds too simplistic or too static. We live in a highly individualistic society. We have the assumption that every element in the world is an agent, acting actively and spontaneously. Even the relationship is not the entity but the process. And no individuals are predetermined how to think, how to feel, and how to act. So, without autonomy, there is no relationship. In other words, without autonomy, there is no intimacy. So, the right relationship presupposes autonomy and intimacy. Now, it's better to think of hope, to understand faith. Hope has validity in referring to our right relationship with God.

Hope is not optimism. Optimism is the belief that positive outcomes are inevitable. But, hope is a motivation to work hard and endure hardship toward a goal, even if we're skeptical of any possibility of a positive outcome. So, in hope, we can approach God, even in situations where we are skeptical of God's provision. In other words, hope means not taking God's provision for granted, but it's a mindset facilitating our work towards God's purpose, even in terrible hardship. Hope involves not just being motivated, but also feeling confident that we can achieve goals. Our hope in God is the confident affirmation that God will complete what God has begun. According to psychologist Charles Snyder and his colleagues, hope has another component, the pathways of thinking. When we get a pathway thinking, we can think of many different ways of achieving goals. Our hope in God is also the belief that God will make use of many different and creative ways to perform God's will. God's hope enables us to formulate new ways to get over hardship and reach God's purpose. Therefore, hope is especially beneficial for people in challenging situations.



With the hope for God, the shift to positive transformations will take place. With hope for ourselves, the hope for our neighbours and strangers, with the hope for the world and the future, we can stop the negative transformations and move to the positive transformations on our campuses.

We are the VIPs of our universities and colleges. We're working to cultivate God's hope in our students, staff, and faculties. We are also engaged in promoting God's hope in our societies and countries. How is it possible to nurture it?

Hope really matters in the minority. Hope is especially crucial when we're suppressed or oppressed, and especially when we're in need of some powerful motivation to help us find new ways to reach our goal and work hard towards its achievement. In St. Paul's lifetime, Christians were minorities. In Asia, most of us, Christians are minorities. How can minorities influence the majority? How can minorities shake the confidence of the majority and make the whole society seek out new information about the situation and look for God's hope? According to social psychologist Serge Moscovici, the key factor in minority influence is consistency. There's temporal consistency, it's the consistent attitude across the past, the present, and the future. On the other hand, there's situational consistency, it's the consistency between in-class and out-of-class, or on-campus and off-campus. It means that when we live in the consistent hope for God, we can cultivate God's hope in our students, higher education institutions, and societies. Especially when we are forced to be positioned in dire and terrible situations, our consistent hope for God can cultivate God's hope.

We're called to be a new creation. We deserve positive transformations. This transformation begins and grows in our hope in God. God's hope can be cultivated by our consistent God's hope.

May God's hope be with you!

*(A sermon delivered to kick-off the 2-day ACUCA conference held at Hannam University campus)*



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## Messages

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**Professor Kwang-Sup Lee**

*President, Hannam University*

*President, ACUCA (2022-2023)*

### **Message to Payap University on their 50th Founding Anniversary**

On behalf of the entire ACUCA community, congratulations on attaining the incredible milestone of your 50th anniversary! This is a historic occasion that symbolizes not only Payap University's long history but also the numerous achievements and contributions you've made to education and society over the last five decades.

As one of the twenty-two founding institution members of ACUCA, Payap University has played an important role in encouraging collaboration, mutual understanding, and shared ideals among member institutions. Your dedication to offering high-quality education, encouraging diversity, and cultivating an innovative attitude has surely affected the lives of countless people and left an unforgettable impression on the academic landscape.

May this anniversary be a time for reflection on past accomplishments as well as a celebration of the beautiful community you have created. Your commitment to creating a welcoming and encouraging learning environment has given generations of people the confidence to follow their passions and make significant contributions to society. As you celebrate this milestone, know that ACUCA stands in solidarity with you, celebrating Payap University's accomplishments and anticipating years of shared success. Your dedication to promoting education as a catalyst for good change is in line with ACUCA's core values.

Cheers to another 50 years of prosperity, progress, and good deeds! In the years to come, may Payap University remain an inspiration for academic achievement and a catalyst for progress. Again, congratulations on this amazing achievement. As you begin the next leg of your remarkable journey, may the Payap University community be surrounded by a spirit of celebration, accomplishment, and possibilities for everyone.

ACUCA stands united with you in applauding Payap University's accomplishments while eagerly anticipating years of shared success. Your commitment to education as a catalyst for positive change aligns with ACUCA's core values.

Here's to another 50 years filled with prosperity, progress, and acts of kindness. May Payap University continue to serve as a source of inspiration, for excellence and a driving force, for progress in the years.



## Messages



### **Celebrating the 67th Anniversary of Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana**

**Professor Kwang-Sup Lee**

*President, Hannam University*

*President, ACUCA (2022-2023)*



### **Message to Universitas Kristen Indonesia on their 70th Founding Anniversary**

**Professor Kitai Kim**

*Associate Dean of Global Relations, Hannam University*

*Secretary General, ACUCA (2022-2023)*

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