

Regional Network for Korean Studies in Southeast Asia: Promotion of Korean Studies at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP)

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To cite this article: Oum, R. (2022) Regional Network for Korean Studies in Southeast Asia: Promotion of Korean Studies at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP). *Cambodia Journal of Basic and Applied Research (CJBAR)*, 4(1-1), 1–5.

Abstract

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to be here on behalf of the President of Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Prof. Dr. Nguyen Van Khanh, Rector of University of social Science and Humanities, Prof. Chung-suk Suh, Executive Director of Korean Research Institute, UNSW, Organizing Committee and all related stakeholder who organizing the strategic event.

Introduction

The Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) is Cambodia's oldest and one of the largest public universities. It hosts more than 12,000 scholarship and full-fee paying students, across a diverse range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs. It is unique in Cambodia for offering specialist degrees in fields including the sciences, humanities and social sciences, as well as professional degrees in fields such as information technology, electronics, psychology, social work, and tourism. RUPP also provides Cambodia's foremost degree-level language programs through the Institute of Foreign Languages. Due to its many achievements, RUPP has full membership of the ASEAN University Network (AUN).

RUPP has over 497 full-time staff. All of its 350 academic staff members hold tertiary qualifications, including 17 PhDs and 309 Masters Degrees. They are supported by over 137 administrative and maintenance staff. In addition, the university maintains links with Cambodian

and international NGOs, local and international universities and government ministries. As a result, various international and non-government organizations and government offices regularly contribute visiting faculty members to help expand RUPP's capacity.

RUPP is located on three spacious campuses. The main campus lies roughly five kilometers from the center of Phnom Penh. Adjoining the main campus is the Institute of Foreign Languages, which boasts peaceful landscaping features alongside its modern architecture. Roughly one kilometer further from town lies RUPP Campus II, in which the departments of History, Sociology and Philosophy reside.

Vision

The Royal University of Phnom Penh will continue to be the leading higher education institution in Cambodia, focused on excellence in teaching and learning, committed to research for the development of the country and making a contribution to Cambodian society.

Mission

The Royal University of Phnom Penh has as its mission:

1. To educate graduates who strive for excellence in their chosen academic fields and in their capacity to put this knowledge to work;
2. To foster high-quality research which will assist the development of new knowledge and create paths for national development;
3. To conduct research and provide service to the public and private sectors for the advancement of national self-reliance;
4. To continuously expand its programs to respond to emerging needs in Cambodian and regional society; and,
5. To promote cultural preservation, exchange and development.

Goals

1. The Royal University will achieve accreditation from the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia of its institution and programs within the next three years.
2. Each department will have both teaching and research as part of their mandate and will be able to demonstrate excellence in these areas.
3. A graduate school of arts and sciences will be established within the next two years.

4. The Royal University of Phnom Penh will have an integrated Information and Technology system.
5. Community service will be integrated into various departments and programs.

Government Links

The support of the Royal Government of Cambodia, particularly the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) is critical to the Royal University of Phnom Penh. All degrees and programs at RUPP have been approved by the Government.

Government support covers utility costs, staff salaries, and important resources such as some computers and laboratory equipment. The Prime Minister and other government representatives also regularly participate in the University's graduation as well as other ceremonies throughout the academic year.

ASEAN University Network (AUN)

In 1999, RUPP became a member of the ASEAN University Network (AUN). The AUN, established in 1995 to enable capacity building and collaboration among South East Asian higher education centers, provides opportunities for staff and students to attend training courses and conferences in other ASEAN nations.

International Links

RUPP has a strong international focus. It has signed Memoranda of Understanding with many international universities. These MOU provide for academic cooperation between the universities, including staff and student exchanges and curriculum development assistance. In 2011-2012, the RUPP holds active MOUs with the following universities and research centers in Australia, China, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, Lao PDR, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Vietnam, USA and Thailand.

Link with International Organizations

RUPP has also fostered direct links with donor groups such as bilateral, multi-lateral and NGOs across the world.

Background of Korean Studies at RUPP

The Korean Department located in the Institute of Foreign Languages offers the degree of B.A. which is designed for the practical needs of learners. The B.A. course combines study of

the written and spoken language along with courses that focus on Korean culture, society, literature, history and business. It aims to cover the advanced-level Korean language and a wide range of Korean cultures.

The B.A. program is undertaken over a four-year period. All students are required to successfully undertake the university Foundation Year Program and in their second and third years, they are required to focus on intensive language training. The fourth year is devoted to applying and furthering their language skills through courses that involve reading and analyzing advanced texts and literary works.

A Korean language short course was established in October 2002 with support from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Cambodia. The first course was offered by an instructor provided by the Korean Research Foundation (KRF), affiliated with the Ministry of Human Resources in Korea.

In March 2007, the University officially established a Bachelor of Arts in Korean language through a grant from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. A good number of students have applied to take the degree since then. The Academy of Korean Study (AKS) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) have continued to support the Department of Korean language.

There are two types of programs offering at the Department of Korean: Bachelor of Art in Korean Language and Non-degree Korean Language Course.

Cambodia-Korea Cooperation Center

Cambodia-Korea Cooperation Center (CKCC) is a project funded by Korean Government through Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in the amount of USD 7,450,000 for the period of five years in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and the Royal University of Phnom Penh.

The project title is the “Project for the Establishment of a Human Resources Development (HRD) Center in Cambodia.” CKCC is located in the RUPP’s main campus. The project is implemented by KOICA and RUPP with clearly define their responsibilities.

Project's objectives

The main objectives of the project are as follows:

- Strengthen capacity building for human resource development in Cambodia.
- Provide human resource development programs in order to reinforce the professional knowledge of professors and students at RUPP.
- Improve the capacity of government officials and teachers and instructors of relevant organization.

Operation of the center

- KOICA will be responsible for the pilot program for the operation of the center during the project period in cooperation with RUPP.
- RUPP will be responsible for the operation of the center in cooperation with KOICA after the project period.
- The center will provide various HRD programs such as Korean Language, ICT, Korea's Development Experience, Entrepreneur course and Cultural Exchange.

The CKCC will play an important role not only in strengthening human resource development in Cambodia, but also in promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between both countries, Cambodia and Korea.