IU Signs Agreement with Mahasarakham University in Thailand

A high-level delegation of vice presidents, deans, and directors from Mahasarakham University (MSU) in Thailand, headed by President Adulya Viriyavejakul, spent a two-day visit at Indiana University Bloomington in mid-November. Their purpose was to sign an “Agreement of Friendship and Cooperation” between MSU and IUB’s Office of International Programs. MSU already has existing articulation agreements with IUPUI’s School of Engineering and Technology and the Department of Computer and Information Science whereby undergraduate Thai students may transfer to the Indianapolis campus to complete the last two years of their Bachelor of Science degrees.

Located in northeastern Thailand, MSU was originally established as a College of Education in 1968, evolved into a branch of Srinakharinwirot University in 1974, and then eventually received its own charter in 1994 to become a comprehensive university. It now comprises 14 faculties and several research institutes, centers, and support units. It has a current enrollment of more than 20,000 students studying in 49 undergraduate programs, 26 master’s degree programs, and several doctoral degree programs. As a young university, it is actively seeking to expand its linkages with educational institutions abroad. A major goal of the new formal IU–MSU agreement is to draw on IU’s broad expertise to help them expand their doctoral programs and learn more about the infrastructure of a major U.S. research university.

One of the areas MSU has targeted for expansion is the creation of new Ph.D. programs in the field of education. The Thai delegation first attended a formal signing, followed by a luncheon hosted by IU’s Dean for International Programs Patrick O’Meara, and senior administrators and faculty of the School of Education. Meeting the delegation were Dean Gerardo Gonzalez and Associate Dean Peter Kloosterman, as well faculty members Elizabeth Boling (Instructional Systems Technology), Barry Bull (Education Leadership and Policy Studies), Carry Buzzelli (Curriculum and Instruction), Bradley Levinson (International Education), and Martha Nyikos (Language Education). Others attending were David Jones (Center on Southeast Asia) and Timothy Diemer (School of Engineering and Technology) from the IUPUI campus, and OIP Associate Dean Charles Reafsnnyder and Assistant Deans Judith Rice and Roxana Ma Newman.

The remaining day and a half were devoted to individual and group meetings with School of Education professors to plan details for an exchange of faculty in the near future. Three areas in education that MSU is especially interested in developing are doctoral programs in educational administration, educational technology, and curriculum and instruction. IU education faculty will consult at MSU on curriculum development and doctoral degree programs while MSU faculty will come to IU for short-term visits related to their specializations. Helping to coordinate the delegation’s visit at the school were Heidi Ross of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and chair of the school’s International Programs Committee, and Rose Vondrasek, OIP program associate for administering IU’s international affiliations.

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