

The College of Education Abroad

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The increased involvement of American universities in programs of international educational exchange in the second half of the twentieth century has had many implications for the University of Hawaii. Two programs are centered in the College of Education.

THE THAILAND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROJECT

The first major international project for the College began in 1958, when the University of Hawaii was invited by the International Cooperation Administration (the foreign aid arm of the United States State Department and now re-named the Agency of International Development) to undertake a contract in Thailand in the field of vocational education. The contract required an evaluation of the resources of the College of Education, as well as those of the University as a whole, in vocational education. While a program in one of the more academic fields wherein the University had greatest strength would have been more desirable, there was a realization that Thailand, as well as most of the lesser developed nations of the world, could see in the area of vocational education its avenue to economic betterment. Thus, the invitation was accepted and the project was planned.

Thailand, with a centralized Ministry of Education, had in 1958 more than seventy Carpentry Schools. A team of ten University

of Hawaii members was asked to assist in the conversion of eighteen of these schools from the hand operation level into modern vocational high schools of the American pattern. Programs had to be set up in the basic trades of auto mechanics, machine shop, welding and sheetmetal, building construction, basic electricity, and radio.

An additional dimension to the program with attendant greater responsibility came with its adoption by the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). The program was re-named the SEATO Skilled Labor Project. Thereafter, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, France, the United States, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Thailand became involved, and these countries have been making contributions of varying kinds. SEATO is interested in the development of a reservoir of skilled workers in Thailand for both economic and military reasons.

Basically, the College of Education project, as with most AID assistance programs, consists of three facets: technical assistance, participant training, and commodities.

The University of Hawaii faculty team has worked cooperatively with counterparts from the Vocational Educational Division of the Thai Ministry of Education in the various aspects of the program. Because of the need for the training of a corps of shop teachers, a Teacher Development Center was established in Wat Thepnari,

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Bangkok. To date, 120 teachers from the eighteen project schools have been given training for six-month periods. This training includes familiarization with the power machines and attachments, techniques of shop organization and operation, and the preparation of instructional materials suitable to their shops and schools. University of Hawaii team members have, in addition, visited the schools and advised on conversion procedures for power operations and on building modifications. These developments were so timed that the Thai teachers were able to return to their schools prepared to initiate the new curriculum with increased confidence and skill.

The key to the entire program of technical assistance has been the cooperative relationship between the American advisors and their counterpart Thai officials. While the eagerness of the latter makes it all too easy to forget this, the advisors have felt that to be most effective, their technical assistance should end as soon as practicably possible and they should leave leadership in Thai hands.

A predictable requirement for the insurance of a long-range continuing program of vocational education in Thailand is the provision for advanced training opportunities in the United States for certain key personnel. Toward this end, fifteen Thai educators have been brought to Hawaii for combined programs of observation and participation in school and shop situations appropriate to their needs and interests. Nine headmasters of project schools and six subject-area supervisors have spent periods of time from six to fifteen months, mostly in the technical schools of Hawaii. It should be acknowledged here that, without the cooperation of the State Department of Education of Hawaii, this phase of the program could not have been carried out.

It is possible that originally the commodities included in the assistance program were more highly esteemed by the Thais than the technical assistance. Unquestionably, equipment does make possible maximum practice in the acquisition of desired skills and provides a bench-mark for the level of achievement to be attained. However, there was quick agreement between Americans and Thais about the equipment needed. Thailand, as the host country, provided funds for converting the buildings and installing all equipment or supplies to be found in that country. The University of Hawaii has purchased with dollars all machinery which has been installed in the eighteen schools.

Results of a program such as this cannot, of course, be measured at this early date. Some facts, however, are revealing: 120 teachers have been trained, 71 shops in 18 schools have been renovated, and 3,500 students are at present in

training in these schools. The three-year program has the dual function of preparing the students either directly for industry or for entrance into the Technical Institute. All persons connected with the project realize that success must be measured by the extent to which desirable changes occur and last and whether or not there is a steady increase in the number of schools converted.

With the attainment of the original goals of the project, project members are shifting attention and effort to the following:

1. Continued up-grading of all shop teachers. The short-term training in skill occupations is sufficient to start the instructional program but not for long-term teaching.
2. Assisting teachers of related subjects such as mathematics and science. They must be helped to meet needs of students of many occupations.
3. Pre-service training of new teachers. Additional teachers are needed for increased enrollments and for replacement of teachers in the shop program.
4. Extending the curriculum. The school program must meet community needs and provide experiences to prepare students for employment.

Better to accomplish these objectives, the team is moving to the campus of the Teacher Education School at Theves, Bangkok.

THE PAKISTAN PROJECT

A second opportunity for the College of Education to assist with a vocational education project abroad came in 1961. A team of four members has been sent within the last six months to Pakistan. As with the Thai Contract, the second

project is sponsored by SEATO, with AID providing most of the financing. At present, two large schools are nearing completion, one each in Karachi and Dacca. Since these are administered by both the Ministry of Labor in Pakistan and the Labor Division of AID, they require not only a somewhat different approach to the project but an entirely new vocabulary. For instance, the schools are referred to as Training Centers, the word *education* becomes *skill training* and the students automatically become trainees. There is even a slight temptation, easily overcome, to describe the University campus as a Factory!

Unlike Thailand, the country of Pakistan had a history of vocational training programs while it was still a colony of the United Kingdom. Thus, the job is not one of basic training in new skills but rather of up-grading both students and teachers. The interchange of ideas and procedures has underscored the differences between American and British methods of vocational education. As with the project in Thailand, the three major aspects of the program in Pakistan are technical assistance, commodity assistance, and participant training.

In the light of the involvement of the College of Education, University of Hawaii, in programs of assistance to the educational systems of Thailand and Pakistan, as well as of the other international programs now under way throughout the campus, it might be well at this time to look closely at the effects upon the University. What benefits from these programs have been derived by the University and its faculty, individually and collectively? What problems have been faced or still confront the University in

its continuing efforts to participate in this admittedly vital kind of world leadership essayed by the United States since World War II?

Other universities, the American Council on Education (1), the Ford Foundation (2), and the Institute of International Education (3) have all examined these complex problems.

PARTICIPATION VALUES

What are the values and advantages to a college or university from this participation? First and foremost, perhaps, is the modicum of assurance concerning our own survival as a result of changed needs in other parts of the world. To paraphrase John Donne, "No campus is an island unto itself." It is to our own advantage to assist other nations to stand on their own feet and thus to resist the snares and domination of antagonistic ideologies.

Then, all would agree with the Committee on Educational Interchange Policy that, among other values, this activity permits the university to carry out such basic functions as the development of the intellectual and moral excellence of the individual on a world-wide scale. It strengthens the scholarly function of the university: the advancement of knowledge and learning throughout the world. Also, it facilitates scholarly communication and research and contributes to the intellectual growth of future scholars.

American faculty members replenish their own intellectual resources, develop new ideas for research projects, find their points of view becoming less parochial, and become aware of cultures and concepts not previously within their ken. Their experience undoubtedly affects the content of their courses, and they are better equipped to advise students, both American and foreign, on many

subjects. Finally, the exchange of faculty members directly infuses international elements into the curriculum of the university.

EXAMINING THE PROBLEMS

While less compelling than potential values, the problems associated with such international projects can be vexing and critical. Solutions are being worked out and agreements on common practices are being reached on such problems as the following:

1. Adding students from foreign countries to an already overcrowded campus strains faculty resources and plant facilities. American students may be deprived of laboratory space, instructor's time, and, in some cases, admission to certain classes.
2. Evaluating and assimilating foreign students on a university campus are complex problems. These students need counsel about courses, help with housing and food, and the opportunity to meet American students and families.
3. Adhering to quality standards is a process complicated by the vast differences in the amount and quality of education background offered by foreign students.
4. Setting up and maintaining an admissions program must give opportunity to foreign students on the basis of academic promise alone.
5. Sending faculty abroad under technical assistance programs may seriously deplete a university's own resources during a period of expanding student enrollments and instructor shortages.
6. Selecting and preparing staff members for their overseas

assignment must be shared by the university, even if it is not the sponsoring agency, because these men will be representing, in part, their own universities.

7. Replacing staff members sent or lent abroad may offer many problems.
8. Exchanging professorships, on an international basis, must guarantee proper matching as to quality of background and teaching field.
9. Insuring that faculty members are aware of these problems includes helping them to understand particularly the reasons for certain necessary adjustments.

In summary, it would seem that American colleges and universities are committed to increasing international education exchanges as to faculty, students, and programs. The members of the faculty of the College of Education at the University of Hawaii, both as a faculty and as individuals, can make their best contribution to this worthy extension of campus services by intelligently appraising the ramifications of such involvement and being prepared to offer those resources which they possess. History reveals that an educational system which fails to meet the challenges of the society of its time inevitably will be replaced by a system which can and will. Our responsibility today is to meet the challenge of educational service abroad.

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