

Report of the Round Table Discussion : Symposium Session Assessment and General Observations

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The Round Table discussion was held at the end of all discussions on September the eleventh. The executive attendees from CMU were the Vice President for Academic and Education Quality, the Vice President for Student Development, and the Vice President for International Relations and Alumni Relations. The two moderators were Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sermkiat Jomjunyong from CMU and Prof. Dr. Yumiko Takagi from KU.

The Round Table focused on assessing the symposium overall, reflecting on the academic results of the symposium, with brief reports from the chairs of each session, general observations and impressions, comments on collaboration and joint research possibilities, an introduction to student exchanges and the links between CMU and KU, and some comments on the Sixth Joint Symposium between KU and CMU to be hosted by KU in 2016. After the session, CMU sent KU the final minutes and these were checked by all the KU committees.

Reports on the contents of respective sessions

Social Sciences and Humanities: there were shared issues, such as the development of community-based tourism and special needs learners. Potential collaboration on English language education was also commented on. Participants discussed how to conduct interdisciplinary research for the next symposium. It was commented that more CMU participation should be encouraged. As this was the first CMU-KU symposium to include Education, the CMU Faculty of Education asked that they be given more information to be better integrated next time. The Faculty of Education at CMU has proposed joint research on students with learning disabilities and would like to incorporate this into the next symposium although there was some concern about the difficulty of language issues hindering progress.

Economics and Business: these covered wide-ranging presentations, but the economics of tourism and trade was the central theme of most papers and participants commented that they would like to extend this theme to next session. The Chair indicated that he was willing to be the middleman to facilitate this.

Engineering: there were few shared areas of research. KU said it would canvas professors on the KU campus to see if there were any matches with expressed CMU interests at this meeting. Comments included ideas on how to improve collaboration as the current matching process has not worked so well and will have to be started anew.

Medicine and Nursing: the most promising area for CMU-KU future research collaboration or publication proved to be in the neurological diseases, mental health, and prevention of lifestyle diseases. Prospective areas in cross-disciplinary studies with engineering and other specialties cannot solve diseases with medicine/nursing alone. Comments focused on developing a joint project in Laos using JICA and other sources of funding. There was also an interest expressed in possibilities of activities in Myanmar.

Agriculture: there is a history of long-standing research connections between CMU-KU. Areas of future interest include agrochemical, enzymatic, and food safety research. Participants indicated that joint agriculture symposiums once or twice a year would be desirable. Comments focused on the fact that CMU students needed more information on how to join and integrate effectively with the symposium. It was also noted that it would be valuable to add a presentation session for students, beyond posters only, in order to involve them more and enable them to develop and practice their professional skills.

Joint research possibilities

This was the first CMU-KU symposium to offer a special issue journal to publish the best research from the meetings. RAC proposes creating a joint funding for research between CMU and KU. The symposium has been an excellent opportunity to develop personal relationships which are critical in developing shared research and interests. Research into dementia offers a potential area for joint collaboration – that of a project using Chiang Mai as a treatment site to reduce costs. CMU and KU have collaborated for over twenty years in agriculture, and we must continue working to strengthen our other collaborations from now on as well. Thai and Japanese societies have many shared characteristics. Ideas for future areas of research and collaboration included population, food, energy and the environment considering social needs and universities'

social responsibility also focusing on interdisciplinary approaches. There were also comments on the JICA project in medical research with engineering researchers on medical imaging and ICT.

The next symposium, the Sixth Symposium

The next symposium will be held at KU in 2016. Further details will be finalized later. As mentioned above, one area to focus on was the need to try to incorporate more CMU students in the various student activities. The Round Table discussion proved to be a very valuable opportunity for participants from all the various faculties' sessions to air their concerns and ideas about a wide range of aspects concerning the CMU–KU symposia this time, and on previous results, with an eye on the future shape and style of the symposia. These points will be inherited and discussed by the next symposium.