
GC 2012-5653: STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE UTM-DTU INTERNATIONAL SUMMER COURSE ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

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UTM-DTU International Summer Course on Sustainable Consumption and Production

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Since 1998, intensive joint courses have been offered under the MUCED-DUCED cooperation between Malaysian and Danish universities. Joint courses were part of an introduction for Danish students to more long-term projects in host countries under the Traineeships and Field Studies programme. These intensive courses have been an effective method for promoting intercultural development, applying new approaches to teaching and learning, exploring new areas of academic study and developing collaboration with stakeholders outside the universities.

Under the Asia-Link project on Problem-oriented Project Based Learning in Environmental Management and Technology 2005-2007, these courses have become a useful method to introduce improved teaching techniques, interdisciplinary and problem-oriented approaches, as well as to provide Malaysian academics and students the opportunity to utilise and experience these methodologies. The first of three planned intensive courses under the project, the Life Cycle Management (LCM) course provided an exciting learning and social experience for the participants. The course focused on applying the tools of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) in a Malaysian context. Using problem-oriented project based methodologies; the participants have achieved skills conducting Life Cycle Checks as well as more detailed LCAs using dedicated PC tools. They gained experience on the problems of applying LCA in the particular context of Malaysian waste and energy systems.

Continuing the same collaborative efforts, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and DTU were offering a new International Summer Course on Sustainable Production from 1st - 19th June 2009. Drawing upon the experience from previous joint courses, this International Course was conducted within a new industrial growth area in the southern part of Peninsular Malaysia-Iskandar Development Region (IDR) - which encompasses an area about 3 times the size of neighbouring Singapore. This course served as one of the UTM's elective courses for the postgraduate students as well as a short course (one week) for the industrial participants. The following year, starting from 7th of June until 25th of June 2010, UTM in collaboration with DTU conducted the course again for the second time in which it 40 students from both universities have participated. Last year, the same course was conducted in DTU from 20th of June until 8th of July. 21 UTM students will be travelled to DTU to take part in the 3 weeks course. Realizing the significance of this course to UTM specifically and country in general, this year, Ministry of Higher Education, has allocated a special budget to sponsor the students' trip to DTU.

In a nutshell, UTM-DTU International Summer Course 2011 can be proclaimed to be very successful since it has not only exposed the students to an innovative learning approach, but it has also enabled them to experience and venture into different working cultures. The Individual feedback received from numerous participants after the program indicates that the program was very interesting and beneficial in many aspects including harnessing the students' soft skills such as team-working, interpersonal skills and problem-solving. Hence, there is a clear need for such event to be conducted as an annual program to ensure many more will get the opportunity to learn about sustainability in a different light.