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English News


05 JUN USM TO EXPAND ITS OFFSHORE PROGRAMMES

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MEDAN, NORTH SUMATERA, 5 June 2015 - Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) plans to expand its offshore programme offerings using a new model of collaboration with foreign institutions of higher learning, which includes the offering of double degree programmes.


Speaking at a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing ceremony between USM and Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi here today, the Vice-Chancellor of USM Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman stated that USM will begin offering double degree programmes with a number of higher education institutions in Germany, France and Japan this year, especially at postgraduate level.


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"This is the method through which USM will position itself as a world class university albeit using our own formula in order to optimise resources and minimise management costs," explained Omar.

Commenting on the MOA signing with Indonesian counterpart Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi today, Omar noted that this was a maiden effort by USM to offer its distance education programme abroad through a foreign university – in this case, in Indonesia. He emphasised that it is an effort well worth pursuing as it possesses huge potential that needs to be tapped.

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As far as the Ministry of Education Malaysia was concerned, Omar stated: "USM has been given approval to offer this undergraduate-level programme as it is in line with our national Higher Education Development Plan (PPPM-PT) which emphasises the concept of life-long learning and online learning which we have been running at USM's School of Distance Education since 1974."

To begin with, an estimated 100 students will be offered places here for the Bachelor of Social Sciences USM degree whereby the Indonesian university will provide facilities for distance learning using USM's existing online learning courseware.

Medan, North Sumatera is the eighth location to offer USM's academic programmes. Existing USM campuses are located in Penang (four), the Health Campus in Kelantan, the Medical Campus in India and the Postgraduate Campus in Kuala Lumpur.


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"I would also urge the two parties to engage in long-term collaboration including at postgraduate level in view of USM's successful partnering with a university in Batam, Indonesia that has produced a number of graduates with Doctorates in Business Administration (DBA) recently in April. Perhaps we could explore the possibility of offering Engineering degrees through distance learning like we used to in the past," added Omar.

At present, USM has over 7,300 distance learning students who make up 20% of the total number of undergraduates with more than 95% PhD holders making up the academic staff who utilise various latest online education technologies to deliver course materials.

The Rector of Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi Dr. H. M Isa Indrawan meanwhile lauded the agreement with USM, stating that it was a very meaningful accomplishment especially since planning for this programme had begun since 2004.


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"This is a very carefully thought out agreement as it was designed following detailed and serious study to ensure that the needs of both parties were catered to, more so to increase access to higher education using the latest technology for qualified Indonesians," he said in his speech to mark the occasion.

At present, an estimated 30% of the Indonesian population are qualified for higher education and as such, the Indonesian government has set specific terms and conditions with regards to distance learning to ensure quality control.

"Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi will set up a special task force to ensure that the joint programme with USM is smoothly implemented. We hope to offer many more programmes especially in Science and Technology through similar collaboration to achieve our target of becoming a world class university that can also collaborate with other renowned universities from around the world," he added.

Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi which was established by the Professor Dr Haji Kadirun Yahya Educational Foundation in 1956 to facilitate social development was actively involved in tertiary education development in 1997. It is acknowledged as the best private university in North Sumatera, Indonesia.

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Also present at the signing ceremony was the representative of the Professor Dr Haji Kadirun Yahya Educational Foundation Ibu Siti Khatijah, USM's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International Affairs) Professor Dato' Dr. Ahmad Shukri Mustapa Kamal, USM's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Professor Dato' Dr. Adnan Hussein, Dean of the School of Distance Education Associate Professor Dr. Mustafa Fadzil Farid Wajidi, Managing Director of Usains Holding Sdn Bhd Edwin Gomes, senior officials of Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi as well as several senior lecturers from USM.

The USM Vice-Chancellor will also be attending meetings with several universities in Medan besides meeting up with 100 USM alumni and launching the ASEAN Students' Entrepreneurship Network during this visit. - Translation: Dr. Nurul Farhana Low Abdullah/Text: Mohamad Abdullah



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