

ANNUAL REPORT 2012

THE ASIAN ASSOCIATION OF OPEN UNIVERSITIES



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The beginning of 2011 saw Prof. Wong Tat Meng, Vice Chancellor of Wawasan Open University (WOU) assuming the office of AAOU President. Consequent to this the AAOU Secretariat was relocated to WOU with Prof. Dato' Ho Sinn Chye as the Secretary-General. Dr. Andy Liew, the Quality Assurance Manager of WOU then also provided administrative assistance in managing the AAOU Secretariat.

Due to health challenges caused by a stroke in the early part of 2012, Prof. Wong Tat Meng had opted for early retirement effective from 7th September, 2012. The WOU Board of Governors upon consultation with its Board of Directors of Wawasan Education Foundation had appointed Prof. Dato' Ho Sinn Chye to be his successor as Vice Chancellor of WOU.

In accordance with the AAOU Constitution, Article IX (The President and the President Elect) Part D stipulates that in the event that an incumbent President is no longer able to continue in office due to resignation, retirement or any other cause, his successor (as President of the Association) will be the person who will replace him in the member's institution. In this connection, Prof. Dato' Ho succeeded Prof. Wong as the AAOU President. Dr. Andy Liew was then appointed as the AAOU Secretary-General.

Collection of membership fees have always been a challenge to the AAOU Secretariat. Invoices are forwarded to all members at the beginning of each year and followed by email reminders by the Secretariat to those who have yet to settle their subscription fees. In year 2012, there was an improvement in the collection of membership fees particularly from the Associate Member institutions. Further details are recorded in Item 4 of this report.

This report generally describes the AAOU related activities conducted in 2012 as well as the decisions of the Executive Board and General Body Meetings. This report also incorporates the 26th AAOU Annual Conference 2012 event and some of the actions taken based on the Minutes of the Meetings.

2.0 MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

2.1 AAOU Annual Meetings of the Executive Board and General Body 2012

The 27th AAOU Annual Meeting of the Executive Board (EB) and the 26th Annual Meeting of the General Body (GB) were held at International Convention Complex, Makuhari Messe, Chiba, Japan on 16th October, 2012 in which the Open University of Japan was the host for the 26th AAOU Annual Conference.

Minutes of the EB and GB meetings had been circulated via email to all members for their comments and feedback. Slight errors were noted and changes had been incorporated accordingly. The revised minutes were then forwarded to all members for their retention.

2.2 AAOU Annual Conference 2012

The 26th AAOU Annual Conference was successfully organized by the Open University of Japan from 17th to 19th October, 2012 with the theme *“Expanding the Frontiers of Knowledge Through Open and Distance Learning in Changing Societies”*. The Conference brought together 330 international and local delegates comprising Vice Chancellors and Presidents, scholars, senior administrators and policy makers representing Open Distance Learning (ODL) institutions from 22 countries across Asia, Australia, Africa, Europe and America. The conference was officiated by Mr. Takafumi Goda, the Director-General of Lifelong Learning Policy Bureau of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science & Technology (MEXT), Japan.



Opening Ceremony of the 26th AAOU Annual Conference



This annual conference featured two Keynote Address, four plenary speeches, two special sessions and parallel sessions where 139 oral presentations were delivered.

The Conference deliberations focused on the diverse roles of ODL in fulfilling the needs of the learners. By expanding the frontier of new knowledge, open universities would influence the nature and the direction of change in their societies. The main theme of the conference would look at how best ODL would cope with the changes and how best open universities would shape the future of the changing societies by expanding the frontier of knowledge in education.

The following were the conference sub-themes:

- New trends of ODL studies and practices
- Technology-enhanced teaching and learning
- Innovation in curriculum development and pedagogy
- Student support and learning communities
- Quality assurance
- Open educational resources (OER) and ODL
- Crisis and risk management

The conference invited two distinguished keynote speakers, Dr. Arne Carlsen (Director of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hamburg, Germany) and Prof. Asha Singh Kanwar (President & Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver, Canada).

“Lifelong Learning an opportunity for All”	
Keynote speaker	Dr. Arne Carlsen, Director, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hamburg, Germany
Video Streaming	http://aaou2012.ouj.ac.jp/video01.html
“The dynamics of changing societies and the dynamic role of ODL in creating the future”	
Keynote speaker	Prof. Asha Singh Kanwar President & Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver, Canada
Video Streaming	http://aaou2012.ouj.ac.jp/video02.html

The Conference Host also engaged four distinguished professors and administrators to conduct the following plenary sessions:

“Building knowledge societies in e-merging Asia: Is OER a solution or is wishful thinking?”	
Plenary speaker	Emeritus Prof. Gajaraj Dhanarajan, Wawasan Open University, Penang, Malaysia
Video Streaming	http://aaou2012.ouj.ac.jp/video03.html
“New pedagogies and new technologies: Threat or opportunity for distance educators?” [Online Session]	
Plenary speaker	Prof. Terry Anderson, Professor, Centre for Distance Education, Athabasca University, Canada
Video Streaming	http://aaou2012.ouj.ac.jp/video04.html
“The expectation on the Open University of Japan: From the standpoint of higher education policy”	
Plenary speaker	Ms. Kumiko Bando, Director-General, Higher Education Bureau, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), Japan
Video Streaming	http://aaou2012.ouj.ac.jp/video05.html
“Managing quality assurance in a mega university”	
Plenary speaker	Rector of Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia President of the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE)
Video Streaming	http://aaou2012.ouj.ac.jp/video06.html



Two special sessions on “*Crisis and Risk Management - The Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11: What should we learn?*” and “*e-ASEM Special session at AAOU2012 Annual Conference*” were also organized.

2.3 AAOU Awards and the Winners

(i) 2012 AAOU Meritorious Service Award

Four nominations were received for the 2012 AAOU Meritorious Service Award (MSA). The nominees were:

- Prof. Dato' Dr. Wong Tat Meng
- Prof. Dr. Zhang Deming
- Prof. Dr. Tae Rim Lee
- Prof. Dr. Tian Belawati

However, to avoid conflict of interest, Prof. Dato' Dr. Wong Tat Meng, who was also the President of AAOU then, had declined the nominations.

The nominations were assessed and evaluated by an Adjudication Committee chaired by Prof. Yoichi Okabe, President of The Open University of Japan and assisted by Prof. John Leong Chi Yan, President of The Open University of Hong Kong, Prof. Emeritus Tan Sri Dato Dr. Anuwar Ali, Vice Chancellor of Open University of Malaysia and Prof. Upali Vidanaparathirana, former Vice Chancellor of The Open University of Sri Lanka.

The Adjudication Committee had unanimously recommended Prof. Dr. Tian Belawati to be awarded the 2012 AAOU MSA. The President accepted the recommendations and this was also endorsed by the Executive Committee.

(ii) AAOU Best Paper Award

The Adjudication Committee (AC) for the 2012 Best Paper Award consisted of the following persons:

Chair: Prof Asha Kanwar
President, Commonwealth of Learning

Members: Prof. Danny Wong Shek Nam
Vice-President (Academic), Open University of Hong Kong

Professor Dato' Dr. Ansary Ahmad
President and CEO of Asia e-University

Prof. Cheong Hee Kiat
President, UniSIM, Singapore

The Academic Sub-Committee of the Conference Organising Committee had selected thirteen papers for further evaluation by the Adjudication Committee (AC). The AC assessed the thirteen papers and shortlisted 6 papers as the 2012 BPA finalists. The details of the six finalists are as follows:

	Title	Author(s)	Institution
1.	<u>Paper No. 011:</u> OERScout: Autonomous clustering of open educational resources using keyword – Document matrix	Ishan Sudeera Abeywardena Choy Yoong, Tham Chee Seng, Chan Venkataraman Balaji	Wawasan Open University University of Malaya Commonwealth of Learning (COL)
2.	<u>Paper No. 013:</u> Comparative study on the usage of Internet-based plagiarism - detection service presenting two distance learning courses: Wawasan Open University Perspective	Choo Hong, Loo Lai Cheng, Tung	Wawasan Open University



	Title	Author(s)	Institution
3.	<u>Paper No. 158:</u> Floundering among adult learners in classrooms: Fact or fallacy?	Nantha Kumar Subramaniam Maheswari Kandasamy	Open University Malaysia
4.	<u>Paper No. 199:</u> Innovative teaching in plant physiology course to induce deep learning approach in students in open and distance learning system	Prasad Senadheera Pradeepa Perera J.M.D.R.Menike	The Open University of Sri Lanka University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
5.	<u>Paper No. 318:</u> Development of an assessment tool to measure the prior experiential learning of adult learners: The case of Wawasan Open University	Kooi Teik, Liew Ai Ping, Teoh Phalachandra Bhandigadi	Wawasan Open University Universiti Sains Malaysia Wawasan Open University
6.	<u>Paper No. 335:</u> Vicarious learning from reading the good performance of peers' assignments and the tutor's feedback on them in a large web-based course	Young-Sook JUNG Jihoon SUNG Younghee WOO	Korea National Open University Sungkyul University Korea National Open University

On 18th October, 2012, the BPA Adjudication Committee further evaluated the six finalists based on the quality of their presentations. Three papers were selected as winners of the BPA competition. The results were approved by the President and announced during the closing ceremony. The BPA medal winners were:

BPA Medal	Author & Institution	Title
Gold Medal	Liew Teik Kooi & Phalachandra Bhandigadi (Wawasan Open University) Teoh Ai Ping (Universiti Sains Malaysia)	Development of an assessment tool to measure the prior experiential learning of adult learners: The case of Wawasan Open University
Silver Medal	Ishan Sudeera Abeywardena, Choy Yoong, Tham (Wawasan Open University) Chee Seng, Chan (University Malaya) Venkataraman Balaji (Commonwealth of Learning)	OERScout: Autonomous clustering of open educational resources using keyword – Document matrix
Silver Medal	Young-Sook Jung & Younghee Woo (Korea National Open University) Jihoon Sung (Sungkyul University)	Vicarious learning from reading the good performance of peers' assignments and the tutor's feedback on them in a large web-based course

(iii) AAOU Young Innovator Award

The Young Innovator Awards (YIA) Adjudication Committee for 2012 comprised the following members:

Chair: Prof. Madhulika Kaushik
Education Specialist (Higher Education), Commonwealth of Learning

Member: Prof. Aminur Rashid
Vice Chancellor, Bangladesh Open University



Dr Grace Javier Alfonso
Chancellor, The University of the Philippines Open University

The Academic Sub-Committee of the 2012 Conference Organising Committee recommended seven papers for evaluation by the YIA Adjudication Committee. The details of the seven papers were as follows:

	Title	Author	Institution
1.	<u>Paper No. 019:</u> Reaching the unreached – IGNOU's interventions in Tihar Central Jail	Kaushalendra Pratap Singh	Indira Gandhi National Open University
2.	<u>Paper No. 022:</u> Open learning, accreditation & resource: Rabindranath Tagore's idea on mass education	Dr Manan Kumar Mandal	Netaji Subhas Open University
3.	<u>Paper No. 026:</u> Networked learning: A new paradigm of teaching and learning in ODL	Dr Tung Lai Cheng	Wawasan Open University
4.	<u>Paper No. 072:</u> Independent learning skill, competence and job performance of graduate of Universitas Terbuka: Graduates and supervisors' perceptions	Dewi Juliah Ratnaningsih	Universitas Terbuka

	Title	Author	Institution
5.	<u>Paper No. 154:</u> Web-based learning through mixed-initiative interactions: Design and implementation	Nantha Kumar Subramaniam	Open University Malaysia
6.	<u>Paper No.174 :</u> Automatic content filtering and publishing by email for the UP Open University doctor of communication program learning management system	Ria Mae H. Borromeo	University of the Philippines Open University
7.	<u>Paper No.201 :</u> Analysis of the cultural factors affecting the proper design of website and electronic courseware for e-Learning in ASEAN	Jintavee Khlaisang	Chulalongkom University

The YIA Adjudication Committee assessed the seven papers and selected the following three papers as the winners of the YIA category:

YIA Medal	Author & Institution	Title
Gold Medal	Nantha Kumar (Open University Malaysia)	Web-based learning through mixed-initiative interactions: Design and implementation
Silver Medal	Ria Mae H. Borromeo (University of the Philippines Open University)	Automatic content filtering and publishing by email for the UP Open University doctor of communication program learning management system



Silver Medal	Kaushalendra Pratap Singh (Indira Gandhi National Open University)	Reaching the unreached – IGNOU's interventions in Tihar Central Jail
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3.0 MEMBERSHIP

(i) Termination of membership

The following member institutions had discontinued their AAOU membership effective from 2012:

- a) Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training
- b) Simon Fraser University
- c) The Open University of United Kingdom

(ii) Change in the name of the member's institution

Two member institutions had informed the AAOU Secretariat that the name of their institutions had changed. The details are as follows:

- d) Shanghai Television University had officially changed its name to Shanghai Open University on 25th July, 2012 and was approved by the Ministry of Education of China as well as the Shanghai Municipal Government.
- e) Korea Cyber University (KCU) accepted the cordial invitation to join Soongsil University and the name of KCU was officially renamed as Korea Soongsil Cyber University on 20th June, 2012 upon obtaining approval from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Republic of Korea.

(iii) New membership applications

In 2012, AAOU Secretariat received four applications for AAOU membership. All the applications were approved; and the categories of membership for the four institutions are indicated in the following table:

	Institution	Type of membership
1.	E-Open School of Mongolian University of Science and Technology	Associate Member
2.	International Culture University	Full Member
3.	Mahatma Gandhi University	Full Member
4.	The Arab Open University	Associate Member

These institutions had remitted their membership fees and hence their membership commenced from January 2013.

4.0 AAOU STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REPORT FOR YEAR 2012

According to the audited statement of accounts, there was an opening balance of USD 267,622 at the beginning of year 2012. The total membership fee income for year 2012 was USD 31,164 consisting of USD 24,649 from Full Members and USD 6,545 from Associate Members. AAOU has granted a subsidy of USD 3,000 to meet a portion of the cost for conducting the 26th AAOU Annual Conference. A quantum of USD 7,699 was also spent to cover the auditor's fees, creating and maintaining the AAOU website, the production costs in developing materials for the Executive Board and General Body meetings as well as the *AAOU Journal*. This also covered the airport excess baggage cost to transfer the conference materials from Penang, Malaysia to the conference venue in Chiba, Japan.

The closing balance as of 31st December, 2012 was USD 290,569 which reflects a net increase of USD 22,947 (9%) in the Association's funds.

5.0 THE AAOU INTER-UNIVERSITY STAFF EXCHANGE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

The AAOU Inter-University Staff Exchange Fellowship Programme is developed to provide a platform for capacity building and the establishment of sustainable partnerships



as well as fostering the exchange of knowledge and promotion of mutual understanding among staff of the open universities of Asia.

In 2012, the following three institutions had offered fellowships to deserving candidates from AAOU member institutions:

- a) Korea National Open University (KNOU)
- b) Universitas Terbuka (UT)
- c) Wawasan Open University (WOU)

The details of the recipients and the titles of their research proposals are indicated as below:

Fellowships offered by Korea National Open University			
Name	Designation	University	Research proposal titles
Sharker Md Numan	Associate Professor, School of Science and Technology	Bangladesh Open University	Prospects of technical and vocational education through open and distance learning system in Bangladesh
Muhammad Zaheer	Assistant Professor Management Sciences	Virtual University of Pakistan	Comparing quality assurance practices of Virtual University of Pakistan and KNOU
Sungworn Ngudgratoke	Deputy Director of the Institute for Research and Development	Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University	A comparative study on research productivity between STOU and KNOU: The role of individuals, policy and contextual factors

Fellowships offered by Universitas Terbuka			
Name	Designation	University	Research proposal titles
Guo Qingchun	Professor, Teaching Evaluation and Teaching Supervision Office	Open University of China	Quality Assurance of ODL
Vu Bich Thuy	Staff of Center for Training Cooperation	Hanoi Open University	Online learning practices in Center for Training Cooperation, HOU - situation and difficulties
Fellowships offered by Wawasan Open University			
Name	Designation	University	Research proposal titles
Jean A. Saludadez	Associate Professor, Faculty of Management and Development Studies	University of the Philippines Open University	Digital media as agents in the accomplishment of open and distance learning
Dr. Kunchon Jeotee	Faculty Member, Office of Registration, Records & Evaluation	Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University	A study and guidelines for development of e- assessment in STOU and WOU

The AAOU Secretariat expressed their great appreciation to the three institutions for their participation and support in 2012. The President invited and urged more members to come forward and participate in next year's AAOU Inter-University Exchange Fellowship Programme.



6.0 AAOU JOURNAL

The *AAOU Journal* issue [Volume.6 (No. 2)] scheduled for publication in March 2012 did not materialize as the number of papers received was inadequate.

Hence, only one issue of the *AAOU Journal* was published in September 2012. The Volume 7 (No. 1) issue was produced in CD-ROM format to promote a socially responsible message and simultaneously reduce production costs. This issue contained eight papers of which six were the Gold and Silver Winners of the 2011 Best Paper Award and 2011 Young Innovators Award, while the two papers were submitted by academic staff from the Open University of Malaysia and the Open University of Sri Lanka.

The details of the eight papers published in this issue are as follows:

	Titles	Authors	Institutions
1.	Implementation of Facebook study groups as supplements for learning management systems (LMS) in adult ODL environments	Ishan Sudeera Abeywardena & Tham Choy Yoong	Wawasan Open University
2.	Assuring the quality of online teaching and learning: The case of Wawasan Open University	Liew Teik Kooi Teoh Ai Ping	Wawasan Open University Universiti Sains Malaysia
3.	Instructional design strategies for stress-reduced online collaboration in Asia's high context culture	Insung Jung & Sook-Kyoung Choi Masayuki Kudo	International Christian University Hokkaido Institute of Technology

	Titles	Authors	Institutions
4.	Course delivery and module learning via learning objects (knowledge map) in mobile learning environment	Sheng-Hung, Chung and Ean-Teng, Khor	Wawasan Open University
5.	Augmenting the learning management system of the UP Open University	Al Francis D. Librero	University of the Philippines Open University
6.	Enhancing learning through the discussion forum	Nantha Kumar Subramaniam	Open University Malaysia
7.	Innovative practices in ODL – The experience of Open University of Malaysia	Chiam Chooi Chea Lim Tick Meng Phang Siew Nooi	Open University Malaysia Sunway University Malaysia
8.	Contribution to research when engineering is taught through ODL: A Sri Lankan case study	Kolita S. Weerasekera	Open University of Sri Lanka

7.0 AAOU COOPERATIVE INITIATIVE

Regional Symposium on Open Educational Resources (OER)

The symposium entitled *A Regional Symposium on OER: An Asian Perspective on Policy and Practices* was held in Wawasan Open University (WOU) from 19th to 21st September, 2012. The main organisers for this event were WOU, DISTED College Penang and International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The partners for this symposium were the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), UNESCO, COL and AAOU.



This symposium had successfully brought together more than 80 international and local delegates comprising policy makers, institutional administrators, scholars, international advocates and practitioners.

The three-day symposium considered the organics of the relationship between the use of OERs and the ambitions of nations to enhance access and improve equity for all especially in higher levels of learning. The symposium also focused on issues in relation to access, equity and the use of OER in higher education. The symposium featured five sessions, with a keynote presenter and four to five paper presentations for each session. The sub-themes for each session were:

- (i) Sustainability
- (ii) Quality
- (iii) Policy
- (iv) Technology and
- (v) Practice

The reputable speakers who delivered the keynote presentations for all the sessions were:

- a) Opening Session: Dr. Gwang-Jo Kim, Director UNESCO Bangkok
Regional trends, achievements, issues on access to knowledge and contents: Asia Pacific perspectives on OER
- b) Prof. David Wiley, Bingham Young University, USA
The OER COUP: A research framework for open educational resources
- c) Prof. Asha Kanwar, President, Commonwealth of Learning, Canada
Ten years of OER: Enlarging the circle?
- d) Prof. Mangala Sunder Krishnan, Indian Institute of Technology, India
Technology-enabled and technology-enhanced open educational resources
- e) Prof. Som Naidu, Charles Sturt University, Australia
Engines for education: Integrating open educational resources in learning and teaching

- f) Prof. Wayne Mackintosh, CEO, OER Foundation and The OER University, New Zealand

The OER University: A sustainable model for more affordable education futures

- g) Closing Session: Dr. Grace J. Alfonso, Chancellor, University of the Philippines Open University

Open Educational Resources (OER) in Asia in a digitised world

8.0 THE 28TH AAOU ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN 2014

The Executive Board at its 27th meeting invited Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) and The University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) to consider hosting the 28th AAOU Annual Conference in 2014.

However, UPOU had to withdraw from this bidding exercise as they would be organizing a major event in 2014, “The Second International Conference on Open and Distance e-Learning” in Manila. In the end only OUHK had submitted their proposal to host the 2014 AAOU Annual Conference.

9.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Overall, the Year 2012 was a reasonably eventful and successful year. The Association wishes to record its heartfelt gratitude to all members of the AAOU Executive Board and General Body for their unyielding support and cooperation. The AAOU is also grateful to COL for their continued sponsorship support.