

STOU

e-NEWSLETTER

Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University



Fight against COVID-19

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BY **DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, SUKHOTHAI THAMMATHIRAT OPEN UNIVERSITY**

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LONG LIVE HER MAJESTY
QUEEN SUTHIDA
BAJRASUDHABIMALALAKSHANA



STOU to Promote Research in Corrections



On 28 May 2021, the STOU Institute of Research and Development (IRD) signed the Memorandum of Agreement on Academic Collaboration with the Department of Corrections. The MOA aims to promote research studies in corrections to enhance the academic cooperation between the two institutions, as well as to promote the research and development of standardized correctional work in the treatment of inmates. Associate Professor Dr. Pranee Sungkatavat, Distinguished Member of the University Council, Acting President of Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, together with Associate Professor Dr. Sungworn Ngadgratoke, Director of the STOU IRD has signed the memorandum of agreement on behalf of the university.

GREEN STOU



Knowledge Source

Rajamangalaphisek Educational Park embraces formal, informal, non-formal, and lifelong education concepts to create learning space within the entire campus in order to create a rich and diverse environment that helps us to realize the value of the environment, human-made objects, culture, wisdom and modern technology.



Exercise Space

STOU Exercise Space welcomes personnel, students, families, and the community not only for workout, but also for recreational activities.



Energy Efficiency Policy

STOU exercises paper saving, energy saving and electricity efficiency campaign.

ILC

INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING
AND LEARNING CENTER

The SMART Principles: 1st Batch



Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University organized a training program "SMART Principles" 1st batch during 16–18 March 2021 to improve the quality of teaching and learning support personnel standards in the university's distance learning system to meet national and international levels.

The STOU Distance Education Staff Development Academy (DESDA) organized the 1st batch of "STOU Model for Academic Recognition of Teaching: SMART Principles" at the main conference hall of Pittayaphat Building at the STOU main campus in Nonthaburi. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pranee Sungkatavat, STOU Acting President presided over to the opening and orientation of the program on 16 March 2021. There were 29 lecturers and supporting staff participated. Prof. Dr. Wichit Srisa-an, the Chairman of the University Council, as the UKPSF Principal Fellow, gave a speech and a lecture on "the Orientation of the Overview of the Programme for the Awareness of the Roles and Responsibilities of STOU lecturers and Support Staff."

"The SMART Principles" is the standards framework that STOU co-developed with Advance Higher Education (Advance HE), United Kingdom. Advance HE awards



four different categories of Fellowship, Associate Fellowship (AFHEA), Fellowship (FHEA), Senior Fellowship (SFHEA), and Principal Fellowship (PFHEA), as recognition of expertise. Participants who passed the SMART Principles will be awarded Associate Fellowship (AFHEA). STOU has been supporting our staff to pursue the award for over two years. So far, there are 1 Principal Fellow, 8 Senior Fellows and 6 Senior Fellows. All the fellows from STOU and other universities in Thailand have joined the SMART Principles as Personal Mentors (PMs).

STOU Library and Academic Outreach Services



Book Donation

On 17 March 2021, Mr. Chaiwat Nachom, Director of the STOU Office of Documentation and Information (STOU Library) and the Library staff went to the Library of Non-formal and Informal Education Center in Sai Noi District and the Library of Ban Ta Cha-Yai Sa Khlong Ha Roi Community Learning Center to donate books as part of academic outreach services mission. The two libraries are local libraries in Nonthaburi, where the STOU main campus is located. The donation aimed to disseminate local information about Nonthaburi widely and introduce the 'Nonthaburi Studies' book series to a wider range of people. The book series were published under the project of Local Wisdom in Nonthaburi Studies Development and Dissemination. The STOU Library has published 21 titles in the series.

The donation was accepted by Ms. Chattarot Hutem, Director of the Center for Non-Formal and Informal Education of Sai Noi District, and Mr. Pricha Sanusan, Director of Ban Ta Cha-Yai Sa Khlong Ha Roi Community Learning Center. The event was held at Ban Ta Cha-Yai Sa Khlong Ha Roi Community Learning Center. There were books presentations and mobile exhibitions presented to the participants and the villagers of Khlong Ha Roi Community at the event.

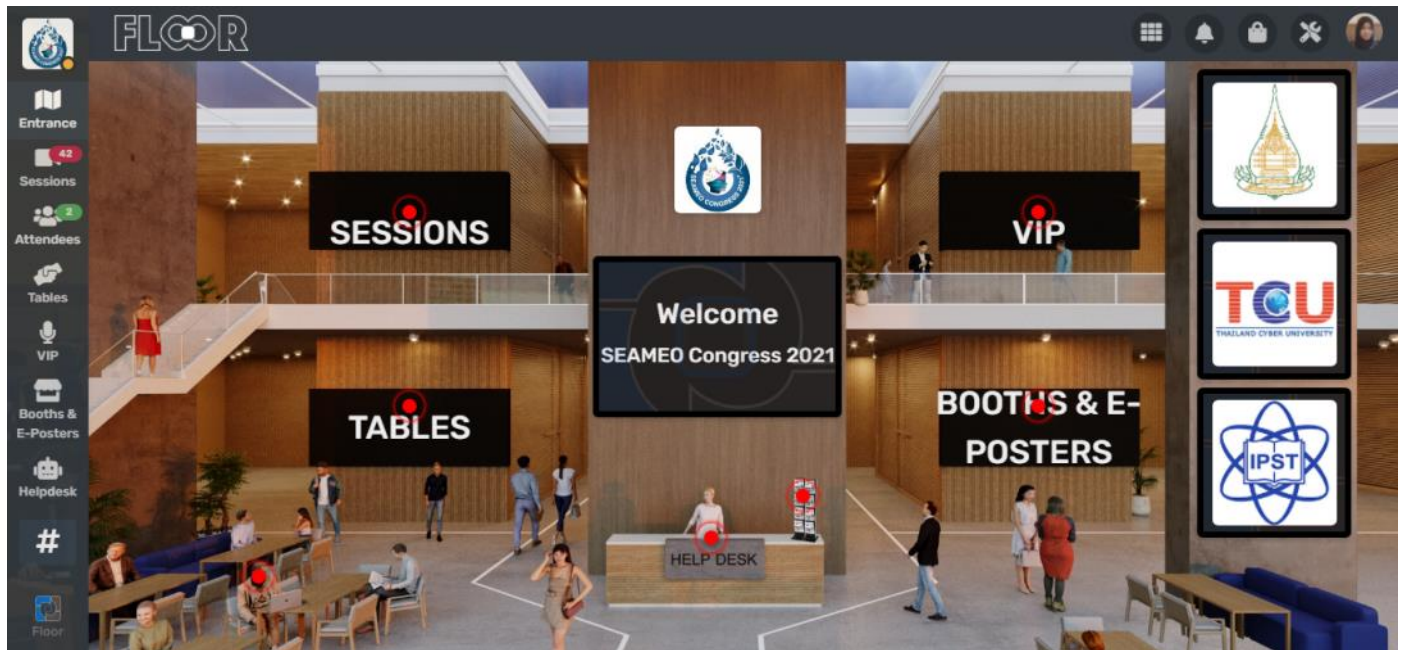


Pathum Thani Legend through Mon Scriptures

On 16 March 2021, the STOU Office of Documentation and Information (STOU Library) participated in the event "Pathum Thani Legend through Mon scriptures" at Wat Sala Daeng Nuea, Pathum Thani, to present the works of Nonthaburi as a neighboring province. The event was co-organized by the Pathum Thani Provincial Cultural Office and Wat Saladaeng Nuea. Mr. Chaiwat Chuenkosoom, Governor of Pathum Thani Province presided over at the opening ceremony.

Nonthaburi and Pathum Thani are related geographically and culturally. The activities, therefore, provide knowledge about ethnicity, arts and culture, and traditions. The event highlighted a talk "Pathum Thani Legend through Mon scriptures," which featured Mr. Pisan Boonphuk, a local expert and scholar in Nonthaburi studies and palm leaf scriptures, and Mrs. Woranuch Soonthornwinit, former Director of the STOU Library as the moderator of the session. There were also exhibitions displaying books, Nonthaburi products, and various knowledge booths, including 'palm leaves scriptures wrapping,' exhibition on 'The palm leaf scriptures and the Waterbourne trade,' 'Lifestyle, Culture and Traditions of Mon People,' online exhibition entitled 'Bai Lan Mon' and online audio program entitled 'The waterborne trade of the community of Ban Saladaeng Nuea, Pathum Thani.' The STOU Library staff gave a demonstration of how the palm leaves scriptures are wrapped. The event participants included academics, researchers, writers, lecturers, students, monks, and people from the Ban Saladaeng community.

SEAMEO Congress 2021



The SEAMEO Congress 2021 for Education, Science and Culture, gathered regional and global leaders and experts virtually on April 28–29, 2021. Honorable speakers invited by the Ministry of Education of Thailand and Malaysia and SEAMEO, as well as academia invited through selection of submitted abstracts, presented papers and initiated discussions under the overarching theme of “Transforming Southeast Asian Education, Science and Culture in the Digital Age”.



SEAMEO CONGRESS 2021 provided a platform for conversations on innovations, breakthroughs and best practices in Education, Science and Culture to achieve SDG4 2030 into and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Congress also examined sustainable development platforms, networking and strategic collaboration among education actors and stakeholders in Southeast Asia and beyond for enhancing the quality of learning and ensuring wider access and relevance of education in the region.

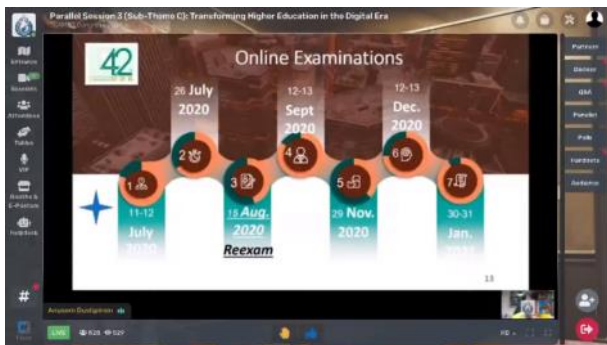
The Congress featured diverse topics that supported the transformation of Education, Science, and Culture that could effectively contribute towards the promotion of human development at the community, country, regional, and global levels. SEAMEO Congress 2021 had 6 plenary sessions and 13 parallel sub-sessions, each with paper presentations and discussions corresponding to one of the 9 sub-themes chosen for the congress – 1. Reimagining People Transformation Toward SDGs; 2. Building back better: Actions for Digital Transformation in AI Era; 3. Transforming Education in the Post-COVID 19 Era; 4. Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and the New Normal: Balancing Reforms for Achieving the SDGs; 5. Southeast Asian Education and Future’s Agenda; 6. Transforming Education System and for Quality and Excellence; 7. Building A Future for the Alpha Generation; 8. Post-COVID-19 Pandemic Reform and Innovation; 9. STEM Education Design for Improving

the Quality of the Workplace.

More than 15,000 participants from 65 countries with diverse backgrounds in education attended the 2-day event. More than 104 speakers from 22 countries presented at the SEAMEO CONGRESS 2021.

Speakers also included leading policy makers, education leaders, researchers, teachers and youth with more than 60 paper presenters from the region and beyond. As similar as face-to-face conferences, in this event participants could also visit 50 virtual booths provided by the SEAMEO partners, as well as 50 e-Poster presentation booths.

Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU) joined the SEAMEO Congress 2021 as a SEAMEO Partner. There were 3 speakers and 2 presenters joining the virtual sessions.



STOU also organized virtual booths showcasing the university operations in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Somporn Puttapithakporn, Acting Vice-President for Education and Learning Support joined the event as a speaker in Parallel Session 3 "Transforming Higher Education in the Digital Era" on Thursday 29 April 2021 at 10.15–11.30 hrs.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Walisa Romsaiyud and Asst. Prof. Dr. Pimpaka Prasertsilp from the School of Science and Technology shared their research studies in Parallel Session 4 "School Improvement to Strengthen STEM Education" on Thursday 29 April 2021 at 11.30–12.30 hrs.



Dr. Adirek Vajrapatkul from the School of Economics presented his research work in Session B "Teaching Innovation and Research in TVET" on Wednesday 28 April 2021 at 17.45–19.00 hrs.

Dr. Worravit Nakpan from the School of Health Science presented his research work in Session E "Research at classroom and school levels" on Wednesday 28 April 2021 at 17.45–19.00 hrs.

During the many waves of the coronavirus disease 2019 or *COVID-19* in Thailand, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University has been following the guidance of the government and the *Centre for Covid-19 Situation Administration* (CCSA) to help slow down and hopefully prevent the spread of the disease.

STOU has implemented various preventive measures to fight against the rapid spread of COVID-19. All the buildings and open spaces on campus are cleaned and disinfected. The risky spots in the elevators and the staircase handrails are cleaned every 3 hours. Face-to-face meetings, seminars, and training sessions with more than 50 participants are restricted. The staff is asked to employ a Work from Home (WFH) plan during the peak of the three waves. The government D-M-H-T-T measures is reminded at all times.



As an open and distance education institution, there are only a small number of students that are required to come to the campus every once in a while. However, there are over 2,000 staff members working on campus. STOU promptly responded to the COVID-19 situation to protect our staff. During the first wave in Thailand, the STOU COVID-19 Center was formed for the supervision and monitoring of coronavirus disease, especially within the campus. An internal hotline was set up to support the mission of the center. A building entry protocol was put into place.

There were knowledge-sharing sessions regarding the COVID-19 disease held for the staff. The STOU Savings and Credit Cooperative Limited provided the COVID-19 insurance for all staff members. To facilitate and enhance the WFH scheme, we have employed various virtual platforms for both office work

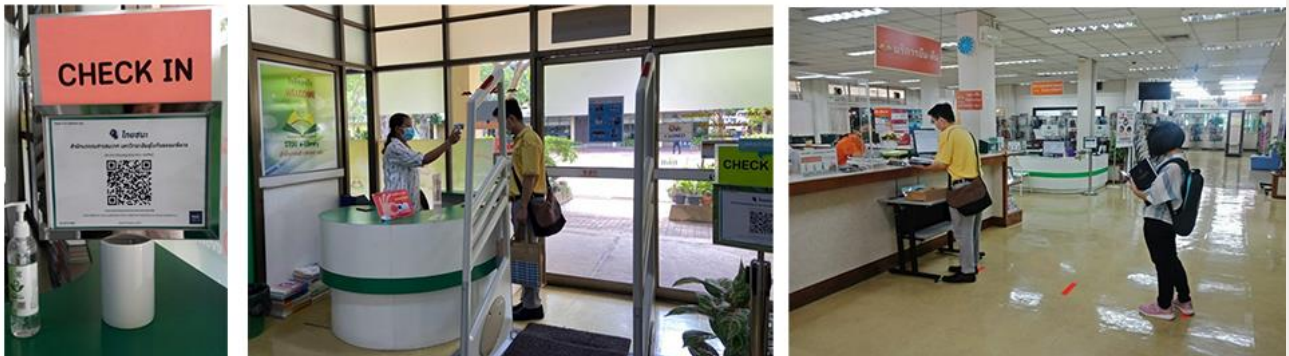


STOU FIGHT *against* COVID-19



and teaching work. Training sessions for many platforms are conducted e.g., Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, and WebEx.

Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19, on-site student services are restricted. The library services were changed to conform with the preventive measures, including face-mask wearing and social distancing. Library book sterilizer is used to sterilize the returned books and other media before putting them back on the shelves. The STOU Library promoted the 'Ask a Librarian', which provides online catalog searching service to students and all users.



The lockdowns have also limited face-to-face activities for STOU students. Training and intensive tutorial sessions are either postponed or shifted to online. One of the most important activities affected was the examination. As on-site examinations could not be done, some were postponed at first. Despite this, STOU attempted to keep up with the yearly planning. In July 2020, STOU conducted its first online examinations. Students could choose to enter online examinations or to wait out the lockdown for face-to-face examination. The online examinations were applied to both non-degree and degree programs. Currently, an STOU online examination web page is developed to help the students with planning, getting ready, and reporting on problems regarding the online examination. The successful rate of online exams reached over 80% during the third wave. The university strives to enhance the online examination process and other services to facilitate the students as much as possible.





During these hard times, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University takes concerns also for the community and the society. STOU is located in Muang Thong Thani, a large housing estate of Nonthaburi, which is a neighbor to Bangkok. We are close to many healthcare facilities and are honored to provide little help for them. STOU has donated bottled drinking water for the 6 different facilities included the COVID-19 Emergency Operation Center of Nonthaburi, Institute for Urban Disease Control and Prevention – Bang Khen, Thammasat Field Hospital, Pranangklao Hospital, Chest Disease Institute, a field hospital in Nonthaburi, and Pakkred 2 Hospital. Over 40 staff members of STOU have also volunteered in COVID-19 Vaccination center at the Impact Forum in Muang Thong Thani during 21-23 May 2021. For celebrating the 42nd University Foundation Anniversary, STOU staff members came together and donated a total of 142,000 baht to 11 hospitals all over the country.

Over a year of the war against COVID-19, STOU has responded to the situation at our best. We've served our staff, students and the community with the greatest effort. We're in this together and we will go through this together. STOU will never stop to grow whether as an educational institution or as a part of the community and the society.



