# International College Model as It Should Be

# รูปแบบวิทยาลัยนานาชาติที่พึงประสงค์

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## Abstract

The phenomenon of globalization and internationalization has called the intention from many industries, higher education industry is also taken into account. Universities across the world realized and well-understood the importance and benefits of international programs, therefore, plenty of international programs were offered to students especially in these recent years. According to this fact, the competition in education industry is no longer restricting to domestic level but it goes beyond nation boundary as well. However, little is known about the model of international program/college in Thailand and yet received attention from researchers. The objective of this study was to study and identify the possible international college model in Thailand. The data was gathered via official website of each university, government papers, and related published research, there were 22 universities being studied under this research. The research showed five different international college models in Thailand. Most of Thai international college were classified as type 2 model; International college that offers its own international program, however, programs are not overlapped with

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those Thai programs offered by each individual faculty, and type 3 model; International college that offer its own international program, however, programs are overlapped with those Thai programs offered by each individual faculty.

**Keywords:** international college, higher education, university, model

**บทคัดย่อ**

กระแสยุคโลกาภิวัฒน์นี้ได้สร้างความตื่นตัวและได้รับความสนใจจากหลากหลายอุตสาหกรรม ตลาดอุดมศึกษานับเป็นหนึ่งอุตสาหกรรมที่ได้รับผลกระทบเช่นกัน มหาวิทยาลัยทั่วโลกได้ตระหนักและเข้าใจถึงความสำคัญและประโยชน์ของหลักสูตรนานาชาติ ดังนั้นจึงทำให้มีหลักสูตรนานาชาติเปิดใหม่อย่างมากมายในช่วงหลายปีที่ผ่านมา ด้วยหลักเหตุผลนี้ ได้ส่งผลให้การแข่งขันของตลาดอุดมศึกษาไม่ได้ถูกจำกัดอยู่เพียงแต่ในประเทศเท่านั้น การแข่งขันแย่งชิงนักศึกษาในระดับนานาชาติก็รุนแรงขึ้นเช่นกัน อย่างไรก็ตาม การศึกษาเกี่ยวกับรูปแบบของหลักสูตรนานาชาติ หรือวิทยาลัยนานาชาติที่พึงประสงค์ในประเทศไทยนั้นยังไม่เพียงพอ วิจัยฉบับนี้จึงมีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาและระบุถึงรูปแบบวิทยาลัยนานาชาติที่เป็นไปได้ในประเทศไทย เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยคือข้อมูลที่เกี่ยวกับมหาวิทยาลัยที่เป็นกลุ่มเป้าหมายของงานวิจัย ซึ่งได้รวบรวมจากเว็บไซต์ทางการของ แต่ละมหาวิทยาลัย ข้อมูลจากรัฐบาล บทความและวิจัยที่ได้รับการตีพิมพ์ กลุ่มตัวอย่างในการวิจัยคือมหาวิทยาลัยทั้งในและนอกกรุงเทพมหานครฯ จำนวน ๒๒ แห่ง ผลการวิจัยพบว่า มีรูปแบบของวิทยาลัยนานาชาติที่แตกต่างกัน ๕ รูปแบบ มหาวิทยาลัยของไทยส่วนใหญ่นั้น จะเป็นรูปแบบที่ ๒ (บริหารจัดการหลักสูตรนานาชาติที่ไม่ซ้ำกับหลักสูตรภาคภาษาไทย) และ รูปแบบที่ ๓ (บริหารจัดการหลักสูตรนานาชาติที่ซ้ำหรือคล้ายคลึงกับหลักสูตรภาคภาษาไทย)

**คำสำคัญ: วิทยาลัยนานาชาติ การศึกษาในระดับอุดมศึกษา มหาวิทยาลัย รูปแบบ**

## 1. Introduction

Education services have become a commodity in international marketplace and is essential for individuals and the nation as a whole (Bunchapattanasakda and Lertjanyakit, 2015). In the past decades, significant changes have been brought to the Thai educational system especially in a higher education level. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2013). While international program has existed throughout the history, it has become more salient in recent years. The reason behind this dramatic transformation is not restricted to the phenomena of globalization, internationalization, and especially the establishment of ASEAN Economic Community in the end of 2015 (Mills and Rudd, 2008; Chmielecki, Nauk and Seliga, 2012). The government itself also attempts to reform the structure of education to equalize the educational quality in Thailand with world class standard.  With abovementioned sense,

the acquisition of knowledge in 21$^{st}$ century is highly competitive (for both education institutes and students). The direction of education that has been received a great popularity among universities worldwide; mainly in a country using English as a second language, is to provide international curriculums for undergraduates and postgraduates. (Mills and Rudd, 2008). However, universities have different ways to administrate their international programs regardless the type of establishment; for example: in Kasetsart University, every international program is operated under the supervision of each faculty; Bachelor of Science Program in Tropical Agriculture is managed by Faculty of Agriculture while Bachelor of Economics is managed by Faculty of economics (Kasetsart University, 2015,. Kasetsart University does not have any physical unit or office to responsible for courses and international student affairs. However, some universities realize the importance of international centre and then established an international college to be responsible for all the courses within the university; each faculty is not eligible to have their own international program, Mahidol University for instance (MUIC, 2015). Little is known about the model of international program or international college in Thailand and yet received attention from researchers. The result from study will facilitate educational institutions to manage its affairs more efficiently and effectively (in terms of management and its administration) and may sustain its performance in long run.

## 2. Purposes of the Study

This study aimed to investigate rationalities affecting the different choices of international program and/or international college model. Specifically, the study attempted to study and identify the possible international college model in Thailand

## 3. Literature Review

The education especially in international domain has been significantly affected by the phenomena of globalization (Brown and Oplatka, 2006). The selections of educational establishment of students become more and more complex. It is not only the greater number of students competing against each other for the best university (at least being the best in their opinions) but the courses offered from colleges, universities, or other educational institutions worldwide are swelling as well. It is also worth mentioning that the competition between universities extends far beyond domestic encounter regardless university types; public and private within Thailand. Competition across national borders is also getting fiercer (Brown and Oplatka, 2006). One of the key options that gain popularity among universities, in order to jump into international market and build international image for its establishment, is

to provide international programs. Referring to international context, Hudzik (2012) investigated key players that have a significant role influencing the success of university to create international environment; 1) academic deans and chairs, 2) campus support and service units, 3) individual faculty, 4) rectors, VCs, presidents, provosts, DVCs, 5) international office. The importance of international program is justified as follows Hudzik (2012):-

      1. The core objective of universities and any educational institutions is to pass on knowledge from academic personnel to students. The students are then expected to transform theoretical knowledge that they have accumulated into practices for the best outcomes for organization, social, and nation and especially become efficiently compatible in international market.  This, more or less, forces education establishments to have international affairs.

      2. The customer of higher education institution is not only students and graduates but social, potential employers and business are considered as customers as well. The development of information technology system and internationalization has changed the way people live their personal and working life. People are now be able to commute to other countries rather than working in their birthplace. Those who are responsible for preparing students for entering into international labor market successfully are universities and educational institutions. The traditional courses using local language as an instructional media are no longer adequate when it comes to internationalization.

      3. International program is perceived as a tool for establishments to exhibit its corporate social responsibility as it creates the international relations directly and indirectly. Moreover, international coalition between host country and its partnership facilitates the nation as a whole to develop mutual understanding towards cultural differences, diversity and international experiences.

      Another study concerning with the international program of higher education was authored by Hudson Polak and Sandstrom during 2013-2014 (European Parliament, 2015). This paper was quantitatively conducted through the use of questionnaires, the target sample group was directors (or equivalent) in higher education level all over the world (6,800 places in total). However, only 1,336 questionnaires were returned, which yield a respond rate of 19.65 %. The research result showed that the importance of international program is varying from one country to another (the details are fully given in Table1).

Table1: Top three most important benefits of international program by regions

| | World | Africa | Asia-Pacific | Europe | Latin America/Caribbean | Middle East | North America |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increased international awareness | 1* | | 1 | 3 | 3 | | 1 |
| Improved quality of teaching and learning | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Enhanced international cooperation and capacity-building | 3 | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | |
| Strengthened institutional research and knowledge production | | 1 | 3 | | | 3 | |
| Enhanced internationalization of the curriculum | | | | | | | 2 |
| Enhanced profile for the institution | | | | | | | |
| Increased international networking by faculty and researchers | | | | | 1 | | |
| Others | | | | | | | |

Source: European Parliament, 2015, pp.64

**International programs in foreign countries**

        The format of higher education in each country is different, more or less, owing to diverse environment and factors within the country for example; governmental support, university readiness, facility availability, accessibility to academic database or even the level of national English literacy (as far as international program is concerned). Therefore, to make this study becomes more rigid, this paper will only focus on information from the country receiving world recognition in terms of high standard/quality of its education which are South Korea, Finland, Netherland, United State of America, United Kingdom and Japan (Lepi, 2014).

## 1. Countries where English is used as an official language

For those countries where English is widely used across the nation as an official language (including United State of America and United Kingdom), the definition of "international program" is differently interpreted. However, it is believed that the education in these countries has a high level of internationalization; mainstream internationalization, deep internationalization, and comprehensive internationalization (Hudzik, 2012).  Regardless of the meaning and the interpretation of internationalization, it is accepted that there is no exceptional standard that can apply to every country across the world. It is depending on the capability of the universities or educational institutions to handle, in a different manner, with its environment in order to achieve its objectives.

## 2. Countries where English is used as a second language

In the past decades, many countries have experienced aging population phenomena (owing to the rising life expectancy of middle age of the country). As one of the countries that are damaged by this matter, the higher education in Finland was reformed in 2004 by its ministry of education. The major strategy was to merge scattered higher education institutions together; this significantly reduced the number of universities in Finland. The samples of successful merger are as follows:-

- 2009: the integration of three institutions in Helsinki and reestablished as Alto University. This is the only university in Finland that is now entirely using local language for undergraduate level (Alto University, 2015)

- 2010: the merger between Kuopio University and Joensuu University, and reestablished as Eastern of Finland University (UEF, 2015).

With this given reason, there are only 16 universities in Finland these days. English becomes major language in every university except undergraduate at Alto University as abovementioned. However, some government policies, aiming to promote its internationalization to the world, are contradictory. Ministry of education and Ministry of culture of Finland requested every university to create unique image that can differentiate one establishment from another, but at the same time uniform key performance indicators were used. Eventually, universities are struggling to have their own identity (European Parliament, 2015). The importance of internationalization in education perspective has raised the concern in Japan since nineteenth century. Top Global University Project was then introduced by Japanese government. This forced universities to improve their teaching quality and get ready for being future-employee-production base (and quality graduates will in turn affect the

economic growth of the nation).  Moreover, the government aimed for tenfold boost in number of international students in Japan from 10,000 to 100,000 within the year of 2000. By that time, governmental supports were fully given to international students; accommodation service, scholarship, international student center, so on and so forth (Horie, 2002). After all, over 100,000 international students enrolled in Japan. However, the statistic showed that Japan confronted the problem again as the number of international students was patently dropped (Figure 1).

Figure1: The number of international students in Japan
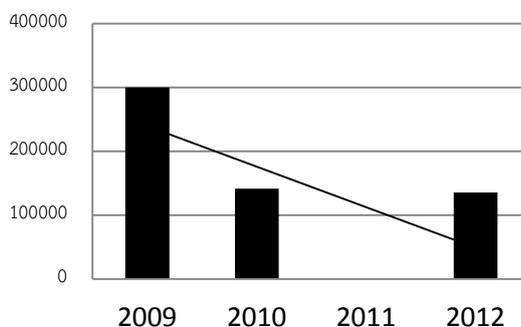


Japanese researchers believed that there were two main reasons that can explain this phenomenon. Firstly, students and parents have been blinded by a false belief about radioactive chaos and secondly, major natural disasters occurring incessantly including Tsunami, earthquake, volcano exposure. With all these reasons, Japan was taken a step back and less mentioned in world educational competition while Korea becomes more and more involved in international education. The conclusion from above discussion indicated that there is no best administration format for international college because universities and institutions differently received governmental supports. Moreover, environment and context are also diverse. Even there is no absolute solution for internationalization but the importance of international program is extensively accepted and globally received attention.

## 3. International program in Thailand

The research about the importance of internationalization in Thai education context especially about the proper format for international college is scarce. OECD Thailand (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) conducted a research and collected information about international programs available across the nation in 2012 (latest

information). The information about higher education students' information, higher education institutions, statistics about number of students, courses, is given respectively.

Table2: Five top ranked international students in Thailand from 2005 to 2012

|   | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | China (1,615) | China (2,698) | China (4,028) | China (7,301) | China (8,993) | China (9,329) | China (8,444) | China (6,965) |
| 2 | Myanmar (489) | Myanmar (631) | Vietnam (751) | Laos (1,301) | Laos (1,254) | Laos (1,311) | Myanmar (1,481) | Myanmar (1,198) |
| 3 | Laos (436) | Vietnam (599) | Myanmar (749) | Myanmar (999) | Myanmar (1,205) | Myanmar (1,301) | Laos (1,344) | Vietnam (980) |
| 4 | Vietnam (409) | USA (521) | Laos (664) | Cambodia (984) | Vietnam (1,141) | Vietnam (1,100) | Vietnam (1,290) | Laos (833) |
| 5 | Japan (307) | Laos (493) | USA (527) | Vietnam (895) | Cambodia (1,009) | Cambodia (944) | Cambodia (955) | USA (746) |

Source: Office of Higher Education Commission, 2015

The number of international students in Thailand has continuously increasing year by year from 2005 until 2010 which was the period where Thailand was free of political violence and very stable in terms of economies and politics. The watershed was the political deadlock in 2010. It was mainly due to political unstable and riots; United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship in 2010, protest at Suvarnabhumi International Airport and closure of airport in 2010, Bangkok Shutdown group in 2013, and Thai coup d'état by Royal Thai Armed Forced in 2014.

Table3: The most popular international programs in Thailand among international students

|   | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | BBA* (279) | BBA (1,148) | BBA (1,575) | Thai language (1,927) | Thai language (3,075) | BBA (2,340) | BBA (3,136) | BBA (2,014) |
| 2 | Marketing (267) | Thai language (832) | Thai language (1,101) | BBA (1,739) | BBA (2,376) | Thai language (1,564) | International business (1,212) | Thai language (987) |
| 3 | Thai language | Marketing (414) | Marketing (517) | English (717) | International business | English (1,140) | Thai language | International |

|  | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | (214) |  |  |  | (960) |  | (1,180) | business (914) |
| 4 | English for Business (159) | International business (241) | International business (412) | International business (656) | English (801) | International business (745) | English (740) | Thai language (550) |
| 5 | Business (134) | Thai studies (230) | English for Business (308) | Marketing (521) | Marketing (589) | Thai language (616) | Marketing (565) | Marketing (465) |

* BBA; Bachelor of Business Administration Source: Office of Higher Education Commission,2015

Table4: Most popular Thai universities among international students

|  | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Assumption University of Thailand (2,558) | Assumption University of Thailand (3,023) | Assumption University of Thailand (3,011) | Assumption University of Thailand (4,179) | Assumption University of Thailand (2,661) |
| 2 | MCU* (1,329) | MCU (1,354) | MCU (1,274) | MCU (1,276) | Mahidol University (1,186) |
| 3 | Mahidol University (1,069) | Mahidol University (1,311) | Mahidol University (1,251) | Mahidol University (1.233) | Chulalongkorn University (725) |
| 4 | Burapha University (591) | Ramkhamhaeng University (632) | Ramkhamhaeng University (1,199) | Ramkhamhaeng University (1,004) | Kasem Bundit University (598) |
| 5 | Mission College** (487) | Chiang Rai Rajabhat University (549) | Burapha University (787) | Dhurakij Pundit University (625) | Bangkok University (567) |

Source: Office of Higher Education Commission, 2015

* Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

** Granted university status in 2009 and is now called Asia-Pacific International University

## 4. Research Methodology

This study aims to understand different model of international college of each university, therefore, the sample of this research must represent the whole population and have sufficient model for being studied. Research team agreed to select the university base on these criteria:-

- long and continual year of operation

- good reputation and well recognized in local level and being accepted in national level

- have variety courses offered in both Thai program and English or international program

- considered as public or private university

From these criteria, there are 22 universities taken into account (15 public universities, and 7 private universities).

### Autonomous public universities

| | |
|---|---|
| Burapha University | Chiang Mai University |
| Chulalongkorn University | Kasetsart University |
| KonKaen University | King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang |

King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok

King Mongkut's University of Technoloy Thonburi

| | |
|---|---|
| Mahidol University | Naresuan University |

National Institute of Development Administration

| | |
|---|---|
| Prince of Songkla University | Ramkhamhaeng University |
| Srinakharinwirot University | Thammasat University |

### Private University

| | |
|---|---|
| Bangkok University | Dhurakij Pundit University |
| Hat Yai University | Kasembundit University |
| Payap University | Siam University |
| Sripatum University | |

## 4. Result and Findings

To make this research becomes more rigid, universities without international college but having international programs were also studied, as it had better understand how these establishments operate and look after international students. According to the collected

information in the prior section, two types of universities were mainly categorized; centralized administration (only administrative function without teaching burden) and international college (with teaching burden). Details for each are fully given.

**1) Centralized administration**

**1.1) 100% centralized administration for enrolling and registering**; International college operates under this condition acts as international centre and/or representative for every faculty within the university. It is only responsible for recruiting prospective students for international programs, and managing every course registration for students in a pipeline as well. However, none of international course is provided and operated by this type of international college.

**1.2) International college that offer its own international program, however, programs are not overlapped with those Thai programs offered by each individual faculty.** International college manages and administrates its own programs (have lecturers and all studying facilities on campus).

**2) International college with teaching burden**

**2.1) International college that offers its own international program, however, programs are overlapped with those Thai programs offered by each individual faculty.** International college is not only responsible for recruiting potential students but burden of teaching is also taking into account. However, programs offered may be the same as or similar to Thai programs provided by individual faculty. Any programs using different name but having similar course modules also fall into this category.
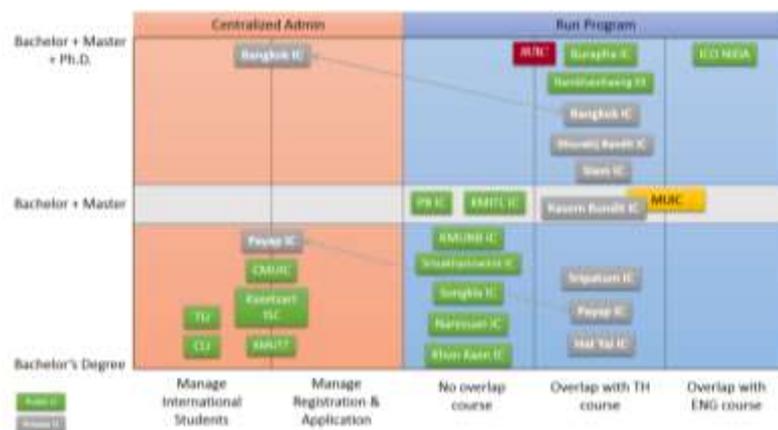
**2.2) International college that offer its own international program, however, programs are overlapped with those international programs offered by each individual faculty.** International college offered its own international programs for students by which programs may be the same or having similar course title with those international programs provided by individual faculty.

**2.3) Special international college;** international college that acts as a centralized administration and also offers international programs (wholly operated under international college). However, course title may be the same or similar to Thai programs.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

After analyzing results from previous section it is found that the majority of international college model was in type two (self administration with no overlapped courses) and type three (self administration with no overlapped course with Thai programs) (Figure2).

Figure2: The summary of international college model



Source: Developing from this research

From above figure, it is obvious that majority of autonomous universities had type two international college; offer its own international program, however, programs are not overlapped with those Thai programs offered by each individual faculty. Contradictory, most of private universities, or almost every private university, had type three international college; offer its own international program, however, programs are overlapped with those Thai programs offered by each individual faculty. Mahidol University (MU) and International College of National Institute of Development Administration (ICO NIDA) shared some characteristics in common. International college of these two universities offered international programs that are similar to international programs taught by individual faculty but course title may be adjusted and different. Comparing to those that international college does not exist; Office of International Affairs is substituted. However, university differently named this establishment. Regardless of how it is called, this establishment is responsible for disseminating and being contact point (ifneeded) between international students and faculty, and support international students in every possible way.

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