

UGM Holds Gathering for International Students

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Universitas Gadjah Mada held another *International Student Gathering* at the front yard of Office of International Affairs UGM (OIA UGM), Friday (5/11). The gathering was attended by several foreign students from various countries who are currently studying at the university.

International Student Gathering is an event of the Office of International Affairs UGM and organized 2-3 times a year. With this event, it is expected that foreign students can exchange experiences between senior and new students.

Vice-Rector for Cooperation and Alumni of UGM, Dr. Paripurna, S.H., M.Hum., LL.M, stated that *International Student Gathering* is a form of service for international students. Moreover, by occupying a new building block, OIA UGM is expected to continue improving the quality of service for foreign students at UGM.

"I hope that the new building will provide an additional service for foreign students. OIA UGM is always committed to the service so that the students are happy to be here," he said in the opening of International Student Gathering.



With this kind of event, Paripurna truly hoped that the foreign students can feel happy and content as if they are at home. Because, in OIA UGM, they can consult any problems during their study here.

Head of Sub-directorate of OIA UGM, I Made Andi Arsana, S.T., M.E., Ph.D., added that the gathering is a form of OIA UGM's concern toward foreign students who are studying at UGM. The students came at a different time, so with the gathering, they can get along and share experiences.

"For instance, senior foreign students give some tips on how to live in Yogyakarta based on their own experience. Rather than knowing the information from us (local people), foreign students would be more convinced if they hear it from fellow foreign students," he said.

Made Andi Arsana informed that international students at UGM encounter both academic and non-academic problems. He considered that non-academic problems are dominant and very influential on academic problems, such as the stress of being away from home and financial issues.

For that reason, OIA UGM facilitates foreign students during their learning process at UGM. In fact, OIA UGM continues to play the role of a family by helping the students to identify and solve the problems they encounter.

"For example, regarding the eruption of Merapi today, we try to keep them from panicking. We want them to see us as a family and tell us about anything. It is bond and friendliness that we create."

Andi Arsana said that the number of international students at UGM continues to increase. By the end of 2017, there are 1,700 international students from 78 countries studying at UGM.

Most of the international students majored in social sciences program, particularly in cultural and language studies. Even so, some of them also study exact sciences, such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, and pharmacy.

The International Student Gathering was enlivened with culinary delights from various countries. The event also presented a sharing session by two international students, Dina Shaya from Ukraine and Hoang Trung Kien from Vietnam, regarding their experience of living in Yogyakarta and studying at UGM.

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