

Faculty of Agriculture Celebrates Its 75th Anniversary

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Celebrating 75 years of academic and research excellence, the UGM Faculty of Agriculture reported this year's milestones in the senate meeting, Monday (27/9). Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture Dr. Jamhari delivered his report on the Faculty's progress in education and student affairs, research, community service, collaboration, alumni, administration, finance, human resources, and infrastructure.

Accommodating the groundbreaking Freedom to Learn-Independent Campus (MBKM) program initiated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, the Faculty has set several adjustments to its 2019 curriculum. Students can now take part in classes outside the study program for a maximum of 20 credits and attend lectures offered by other universities for up to 40 credits.

"The 2019 curriculum provides opportunities for students to take part in off-campus activities starting in semesters 6 and 7. The 2019 cohort and beyond have a large number of credits for elective courses. In addition, students in semesters 4 and 5 can take courses across study programs and faculties at UGM. We are now halfway through completing the program guide," said the Dean.

He continued, the pandemic has resulted in the limitation of inbound and outbound student



exchange activities. Each program is held in an online manner. In 2020, four agriculture students attended online programs at Ibaraki University. In the 2021/2022 academic year, there was an increase in the number of students taking international classes, namely 22 students at Gyeongsang National University, Ibaraki University, and Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology.

“Funding-wise, taking online classes is relatively cheaper. Hopefully, more students will have the opportunity to study at overseas universities even though the classes are online,” he explained.

UGM Rector Professor Panut Mulyono agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic had forced university administrators to adapt to fully online learning and teaching. Due to the rapid spread and development of information technology, the pandemic not only serves as a new form of disruption but also as an accelerator of existing disruptions. Before the pandemic hit, higher education institutions took a slow approach in implementing online learning despite technology and regulations being available already.

“Amid the tremendous chaos the COVID-19 has caused, it has guided and spurred us on to accelerate the changes we should have made a long time ago. It reminds us to act out of the ordinary and be more responsive, anticipatory, and innovative. COVID-19 motivates us to create extraordinary new approaches to adapt, survive, and thrive,” said the Rector.

Multiple helix collaboration presents as an effort to help produce innovation that can solve the country’s problems. The MBKM program is expected to function as one of the catalysts in the collaboration process. The nature of the MBKM program demands a synergistic and strategic multiple helix partnership between the government, universities, business and industry stakeholders, professional associations, society or community, philanthropists, and the media.

“Congratulations to the Faculty of Agriculture for its participation in this MBKM initiative. We are proud of the Faculty’s achievements in various fields,” said Panut.

On this occasion, Professor Susanto Sumowiyarjo delivered his speech entitled *Local Wisdom and Sustainable Agriculture*. As a mosaic of culture and nature, Indonesia has local wisdom spread across all regions, born and raised by local tribes. Local wisdom is similar to problem-solving-based knowledge that sees the environmental reality as not just an object but a fellow subject. Some cases of local wisdom are proven to be more environmentally friendly in addition to increasing agricultural production.

“For example, the Dayak people have local wisdom about farming methods that solve environmental problems and economic needs. Those forms of local wisdom that are no longer relevant to the

demands of the times need to be modified based on current science or ceased. Those that remain valid must be protected, preserved, developed, and utilized optimally to support sustainable agriculture in the future,” explained Professor Susanto.

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