

# International Workshop on Geographic Curricula Benchmarking and Development in Faculty of Geography

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YOGYAKARTA- Faculty of Geography UGM held a Workshop entitled *International Geographic Curricula Benchmarking and Development*. The event opened by Dean of the Faculty, Prof. Dr. Suratman, Thursday (21/7), becomes a means of sharing experiences among domestic and foreign participants about geographical education, especially for the undergraduate program.

According to Dr. Muh. Aris Marfa'i, M.Sc., Chairman of Bureau of Foreign Cooperation, Faculty of Geography this workshop accommodates stakeholders from universities in Southeast Asia to present their experiences. They openly discussed issues and strategies for future development of Faculty of Geography in their respective countries. "Geography deals with the relationship between natural and social processes that form the environment and we interpret the changes of the relationship between the environment and society," Muh. Aris said.

Muh. Aris added that geography study program really explains how people can adapt and reshape the natural environment to support their life. The rapid increase in population and the need for natural resources have significantly impacted on the natural environment, including global warming, natural disasters and other environmental issues.

Therefore, geography science currently has a strategic position to provide solutions to issues of natural environment. Various managements of scarce resources and environmental crisis become an interesting topic for geographers. "Therefore, higher education becomes one of the public institutions which is responsible to provide solutions related to problems of environmental issues through research and education," he explained.

Therefore, it is not wrong if the workshop is aimed at reviewing and analyzing the existing curriculum design, implementation and evaluation, expectation of students' competency, and



identifying some general trends and practices that are implemented successfully. "Based on the experiences of each participant, efforts to develop best practices should be made to improve the quality of competence-based curriculum for graduate students that are expected," he said.

In addition to Dr. Godfrey Yeung Kwok Yung from National University of Singapore, the workshop was also attended by faculties from several countries in Southeast Asia, among others, Prof. Dr. Khairulmaini Osman Saleh (University of Malaya, Malaysia), Darlene J. Occena-Gutierrez, Ph.D. (University of the Philippines), and Dr. Wichai Srikam (Geographical Association), and 18 universities in Indonesia.

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