Host Institutions and Themes of AAOU Annual Conferences

1987 Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University / University of the Air Bangkok / Tokyo
AAOU Inaugural Meeting and Research Conference

1989 Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad
Open Universities of Asia: Problems and Prospects

1990 Universitas Terbuka, Jakarta
Interactive Communication in Distance Education

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Open and Distance Learning: Ideology, Pedagogy and Technology

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Open and Distance Learning: Ideology, Pedagogy and Technology
Introduction

The Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) was founded by a number of open universities in the Asian region in 1987. These universities realised the significant contribution of distance education in democratising the provision of learning opportunities. They also shared a common belief that distance education can be developed through friendship and close exchanges among institutions of open higher learning.

The founding institutions were:
• Indira Gandhi National Open University, India
• Universities Terbuka, Indonesia
• University of the Air, Japan
• Korea National Open University, Korea
• Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan
• Sri Lanka Open University, Sri Lanka
• Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Thailand

Objectives

- To widen the educational opportunities available to all the people of the region and to improve the cost-effectiveness of member institutions by exchanging management information, teaching materials and research
- To help promote education by distance teaching systems, and develop its potentialities
- To help promote professional and ethical standards amongst distance educators
- To co-operate with official bodies and others directly or indirectly interested in education at a distance
- To facilitate co-operation with other similar regional and international bodies in all the above objectives
- To carry out other activities conducive to the attainment of the above objectives.

Worldwide Membership

As of October 2000, the AAOU has 49 members (28 full and 21 associate) from 20 countries spread across Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe and North America. It has enjoyed steady and sustained growth since its formation. Total student enrolment in AAOU member institutions exceeds 4 million and at least 10 of its member institutions have reached the rank of ‘mega-universities’.

Membership Categories

Institutional Membership

Full members: dedicated open and distance teaching institutions located within the Asian continent.

Associate members: all institutions active in promoting or delivering education by the distance mode through departments, faculties, centres or schools of external or off-campus studies.

Supporting Membership

Donor supporting members: individuals and organisations wishing to make significant financial contributions in support of the Association’s objectives.

Corporate supporting members: business corporations wishing to be linked to the Association in a mutually beneficial way.

Individual supporting members: individuals wishing to contribute to the Association’s activities.

Activities & Services

AAOU Annual Conference

The Annual Conference is the main activity of the Association. It is hosted in turn by member institutions from different countries. Each year, hundreds of academics, administrators and students from different parts of the world gather in this forum to discuss the latest issues and exchange research findings. The Conference takes the form of keynote and plenary addresses and parallel sessions for paper and poster presentations. Satellite workshops are also held.

Publications

Papers presented at the Annual Conference are normally published as Proceedings or edited books. Members may purchase these from the Conference Organisers at special discounts.

Inter-University Staff Exchange Scheme

The Inter-University Staff Exchange Scheme was introduced in 1997 to facilitate staff training and development amongst member institutions. In 1999, Indira Gandhi NOU and OU Hong Kong provided six fellowships to enable visiting fellows from member institutions in Bangladesh, India, Iran, Hong Kong and Sri Lanka to undertake training and research visits. All awardees were extremely satisfied with their experience and considered it very beneficial to their career development. For the years 2000/2001 another four to six fellowships have been provided by IGNOU and the OUHK. More can be expected as the scheme gains further support.

AAOU News

A newsletter of the AAOU, AAOU News, keeps members informed of the Association’s activities and provides a forum for regular information exchange.

AAOU Net [http://www.ouhk.edu.hk/~AAOUNet]

The AAOU Net connects member institutions and provides an additional electronic communication channel on a formal and informal basis. Features such as discussion groups, Members’ Corner and hyperlinks to Asian journals and institutions on open and distance education are most useful for exchanging views, disseminating information and keeping up-to-date with activities in AAOU member institutions.
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International Linkages

The AAOU enjoys a close collaborative relationship with international and regional agencies and organisations such as

- The UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (PROAP)
- The Commonwealth of Learning (COL)
- The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE)
- The World Bank
- The Asian Development Bank

Executive Board (1999 - 2001)

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               Yunnan Radio and TV University
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Hong Kong SAR The Open University of Hong Kong
India           Dr B R Ambedkar Open University
               Indira Gandhi National Open University
               Karnataka State Open University
               Kota Open University
               Nalanda Open University
               Netaji Subhas Open University
               Yashwantrao Chawan Maharashtra Open University
Indonesia       Universitas Terbuka
Iran            Payame Noor University
Japan           University of the Air
Pakistan        Allama Iqbal Open University
Palestine       Al-Quds Open University
The Philippines The University of the Philippines Open University
Sri Lanka       The Open University of Sri Lanka
Thailand        Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University
Vietnam         Hano Open University

Associate Members
Australia       Open Learning Agency of Australia Pty. Ltd
               The University of New England
               Acadia University
               Simon Fraser University
               SPACE, University of Hong Kong
Hong Kong SAR   Madurai Kamaraj University
               Maulana Azad National Urdu University
               Mother Teresa Women’s University
               Osmania University
               SNDT Women’s University
               The Institute of Company Secretaries of India
               University of Jammu
               University of Mumbai
Malaysia        Universiti Teknologi Mara
               Universiti Sains Malaysia
New Zealand     The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand
The Philippines Polytechnic University of the Philippines Open University
South Africa    Technikon SA
Turkey          Anadolu University
United Kingdom  The Open University

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