



SIS News – International

## AU to Provide Fellowships for Myanmar Students

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*Professors Pek Koon Heng, Derrick L. Cogburn (l) and Dean Carola Weil of the School of Professional and Extended Studies (r) met with Dr. Zaw Oo, AU alumnus and Chief Economic Adviser to Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.*

Three AU faculty joined a historic delegation of U.S. higher education institutions organized by the Institute of International Education (IIE) that included representatives from ten U.S. schools to visit nine Myanmar universities as part of a broader higher education initiative. Founded in 1919, IIE designs and implements programs of study and training for students, educators, young professionals and trainees from all sectors with funding from government agencies, foundations and corporations.

SIS Professor Pek Koon Heng said, “While political and economic liberalization seem to be making progress, reform of the country’s education system – to decentralize its top-down nature, promote English language capacity of its academic faculty, restructure curricula and internationalize course offerings and exchange programs – still must await passage and implementation of its higher-education bill, currently being drafted by the country’s legislators.”

In Rangoon, Associate Professor and Executive Director of COTELCO and the Institute on Disability and Public Policy (IDPP) for the ASEAN Region Derrick L. Cogburn announced that AU will provide at least two fellowships funded by The Nippon Foundation to qualified students from Myanmar to complete SIS’ online master’s degree in International Affairs focused on Comparative and International Disability Policy (CIDP). The master’s program, which is facilitated by the IDPP, is conducted entirely online with a two-week face-to-face residency in Bangkok this August. The fellowships are available for persons from one of the ten countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), with preference given to students who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, or mobility impaired.

“The CIDP master’s program and fellowships offer exciting and unique opportunities that enable students from around the world to become international disability policy leaders in the public, private, and NGO sectors,” said Professor Cogburn.

According to Heng, the fellowships are just the beginning of an educational partnership with Myanmar.

“Looking toward the future,” she said, “I anticipate that the keen current interest of AU faculty and students in establishing links with Myanmar institutions may well produce further ideas for grants and fundraising initiatives in such areas as internships, research, teaching and capacity building, with student exchanges perhaps becoming possible over the longer term.”

Source: <http://www.american.edu/sis/news/040113-Myanmar-Trip.cfm>