



UMT NEWSLETTER

Ocean of Discovery for Global Sustainability

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UMT Celebrates Its 20th Anniversary



The date 20 June 2021 is a very special and meaningful date in UMT's book. It was the date it celebrated the 20th anniversary of its establishment.

"UMT has come a long way to be what it is today, a university getting more recognized by the day not only at the national but also the global level in the field of marine science and aquatic resources," said Prof. Dr Mazlan Abd. Ghaffar, Acting Vice Chancellor, in his speech during the celebration's opening ceremony held online on the day of the anniversary.

"UMT's excellence is a proof of strong dedication by its staff, who have worked tirelessly to propel the university to greater heights," he said.

UMT started off as the Centre for Fisheries and Marine Science, set up by the then Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, (now Universiti Putra Malaysia, UPM) in 1979 to train its students and provide research facilities for the lecturers.

Over the years, a series of changes saw the centre upgraded to one of UPM's faculties, then its Terengganu campus, and lastly its associate campus, University College of Terengganu (KUT), with the degrees conferred by UPM.

In 2001, the government, in response to rapid educational demand, announced KUT as Malaysia's 14th public institution of higher learning having

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full autonomy, with the name changed to Science and Technology University College of Malaysia (KUSTEM).

In 2007, KUSTEM was given a new name, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT).

Today, UMT has close to 2000 staff including management personnel and academicians from various fields and expertise, and it has produced more than 33,000 graduates.

Backed by strong leadership, UMT has undergone several revolutionary changes in its efforts to become a renowned centre of reference for marine science, putting it on par with already well-established universities.

UMT has earned a respectable place in many of the rankings, nationally and internationally. These include being ranked in the top 200 Asian universities in the QS Asian University Rankings 2021, achieving five-star rating in the Rating System for Malaysian Higher Education Institutions (SETARA) 2020, and being ranked at 338 in the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings 2020.

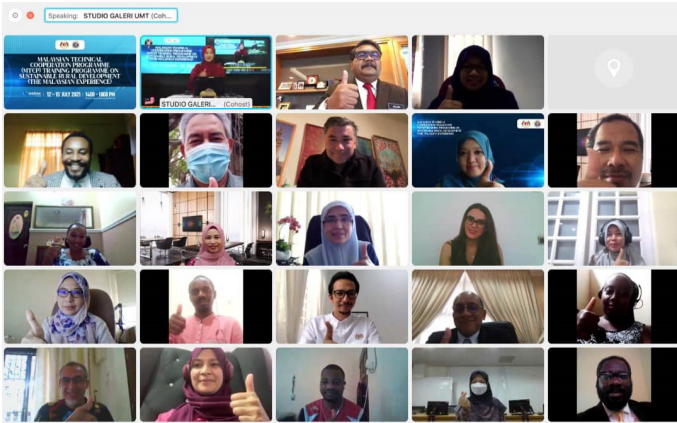
“These rankings have improved UMT’s global visibility and will turn UMT into a 3R and 1D University (Respected, Referred, Relevant, Distinctive), which will increase its international student enrolment and academic as well research collaborations with world-renowned universities,” Prof. Mazlan said.

In conjunction with the anniversary celebration, an online session called The Minds of Vice Chancellors was held, with four former Rectors/Vice Chancellors invited to share their visions and missions during their holding of the post. They were Professor Emeritus Dato’ Dr. Sulaiman Md. Yassin, second KUSTEM Rector and first UMT Vice Chancellor, Professor Dato’ Dr. Aziz Deraman, second Vice Chancellor, Professor Emeritus Dato’ Dr. Ibrahim Komoo, third Vice Chancellor, and Professor Dato’ Dr. Nor Aieni Mokhtar, fourth Vice Chancellor.

“We need to remain innovative and think in global terms, so we can remain as a leading institution in the field of marine science,” Prof. Mazlan said. “We want to be a centre of reference that not only benefits local people but also international communities.”



UMT Co-organises Training Programme for International Participants



UMT recently worked with the Institute for Rural Advancement (INFRA), a training unit under the Malaysian Ministry of Rural Development, and co-organised a training programme offered by the government-initiated Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP).

The training programme, MTCP Sustainable Rural Development (The Malaysian Experience), was open to relevant government officials and technical experts from ministries or government agencies in developing countries. The training programme is among the many offered under MTCP.

The Malaysian government set up MTCP as a platform for helping developing countries improve their human resources in various areas so that they are able to progress. MTCP provides training on public administration, good governance, health services, education, agriculture, sustainable development, poverty eradication, investment promotion, ICT, and banking.

MTCP was first initiated at the First Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Sydney in February 1978, in line with the spirit of the South-South Cooperation. It was officially launched during the subsequent CHOGM in New Delhi on 7 September 1980.

MTCP offers 65 courses and training programmes annually, and thus far they have benefitted more than 34,000 participants from 144 countries.

INFRA is one of the training institutions that have organised several of these training programmes in face-to-face mode since 1998.

INFRA collaborated with UMT to hold one of this year's programmes from 12-15 July via online platform in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

INFRA's decision to collaborate with UMT was due to UMT's ability to host the programme online for large audience as well as provide academic resources to gauge the programme's effectiveness, said Dr Nurul Hidayah Mat, UMT lecturer at the Centre for Fundamental and Continuing Education. Dr Nurul Hidayah was appointed as director of the online training programme.

The four-day programme was filled with eight live lectures by Malaysian experts on rural development, with four of them from government agencies and another four from UMT. Also, four UMT academicians served as moderators to ensure smooth running of each session.

The programme was attended by 23 participants from 11 countries including Chile, Azerbaijan, Jordan, Uzbekistan, Qatar, the Philippines, Indonesia, Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana, and Pakistan.

"The programme that was held from 2-6 PM Malaysian time to accommodate the time differences in the participants' countries went well thanks to UMT's comprehensive facilities," Dr Nurul Hidayah said.

Participants also said that they learned a lot about Malaysia's approach regarding rural development and that it is an approach the governments in their countries may emulate, she said.

Dr Nurul Hidayah added that INFRA was more than satisfied with the commitment UMT had given to ensure the smooth running of the programme.

"We will compile a complete report on the training programme and forward it to INFRA," Dr Nurul Hidayah said. "An article will also be published that discusses the effectiveness of this first-time online MTCP training programme."

RV Discovery: The Pride of UMT



RV Discovery looks like any other vessels. There is nothing unique about its design. Its uniqueness, however, lies with another aspect. The vessel belongs not to a shipping company or a maritime agency, but to a university, UMT.

UMT made history by becoming the first Malaysian university to ever own a vessel, and to this day remains the only one to do so. But being in the record book was not the goal, so for the past ten years since RV Discovery became UMT's very own, the university has put it to good use to achieve the vision and mission.

"A sophisticated asset such as RV Discovery is needed by a university like UMT, which focuses research related to marine science," said Professor Dr Mazlan Abd Ghaffar, Acting Vice Chancellor. "Also, with the vessel equipped with modern research tools, it complements well the teaching and learning, as it allows students to gain first-hand experience and later become dynamic graduates that can keep in line with technological changes in the maritime industry."

The plan to own a vessel existed long before UMT was changed to its current name in 2007. When the university was still known as Science and Technology University College of Malaysia (KUSTEM), it was the first rector, Professor Dato' Dr Mohamed Mahyuddin Mohd Dahan, who initially proposed the idea.

The construction of RV Discovery began in 2008, and on 3rd September 2011 the vessel was officially launched by Tuanku Nur Zahirah, UMT Chancellor.

RV Discovery is 35 metres long and weighs 300 tons. The vessel can accommodate 12 crew members and 23 passengers at any one time. It is capable of sailing 4,000 nautical miles without refuelling, and can travel at a speed between 12.6 and 13.6 knots.

RV Discovery is fitted with sophisticated scientific equipment, including electronic maps, travel

assistance tools, water level measurement equipment, heat and water temperature sensors, audio equipment that can function as far as 30,000 feet under the sea, a loading tool that is able to lift and lower loads weighing five tons, pyrogen fire suppressions system, saltwater treatment facilities to supply drinking water, dry and wet laboratories, and a room for data processing.

Befitting its purpose, RV Discovery has been involved in several important scientific expeditions on the South China Sea and Malacca Straits, ferrying researchers from UMT, local agencies such as Petronas, and international organisations from China and Holland.

RV Discovery has also participated in a few series of Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA) in Langkawi, with the news receiving coverage in national newspapers.

Thus far, it appears that the RM15 million RV Discovery has served its purpose well, helping UMT achieve its objectives in many areas.

Though it looks just like any other vessels, RV Discovery is the only one with a university as its owner. And that proud owner is UMT.



UMT's Academic Programmes Receive Full Accreditation

Two of UMT's newly offered postgraduate academic programmes have recently gained full accreditation from the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) after it gave the endorsement following its visit to the university for the said programmes' evaluation.

With the accreditation, the Master of Computer Science (By Coursework) and Master of Information Technology (By Coursework) programmes are now nationally recognized and have met the quality assurance requirements.

"Ensuring that academic programmes offered by UMT are of highest quality and competitiveness is a goal UMT's top management has constantly stressed," said Prof. Ts. Dr Noor Maizura Mohamad Noor, Director of the Centre for Academic and Quality Management (PPAK), which is responsible for managing academic affairs including the quality of academic programmes both at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Academic programme accreditation is a form of certification of the quality of programmes offered and of compliance towards the Malaysian Qualification Framework (MQF), which plays an important role in improving the quality and reputation of Malaysia's higher education system.

MQA is a statutory body set up to implement the MQF and is responsible for monitoring and overseeing the quality assurance practices and accreditation of national higher education.

The process of accreditation for academic programmes at UMT is coordinated by PPAK. "PPAK compiles all accreditation-related documentations for reference by MQA," Prof. Noor Maizura said. PPAK also functions as UMT's internal quality assurance centre. "PPAK always strives to ensure that the quality aspect of academic programmes is complied with," Prof Noor Maizura said.

The evaluation process by MQA accreditation panel during their visit to UMT towards the end of 2020 included reviewing and evaluating original



documents; visiting the premises, laboratories, lecture rooms, equipment and educational resources on programmes being evaluated; interviewing the management team, academic staff, and students; and observing the teaching and learning activities.

The Master of Computer Science and Master of Information Technology programmes are offered with the objectives of encouraging professional graduates to discover their untapped potentials in related fields and to seek new knowledge to remain competitive and innovative.

Duration of each programme is one year for full-time students and 2 years for part-time students. They are required to complete 44 credit hours, which comprise course lectures, postgraduate colloquium project, and dissertations that need to be submitted at the end of the programme.

The first cohort enrolled in the second semester of 2018-2019 academic session. They graduated 23 April 2020.

"I hope that with this accreditation, the quality of the two programmes continues to improve," Prof. Noor Maizura said. "In the near future, they may even be recognized at the global level."

UMT's Academic Programmes Train Future Aquaculturists



Aquaculture is now a global industry, with promising and expanding opportunities.

Aquaculture, also known as aquafarming, is the farming—breeding, rearing, and harvesting—of finfish, shellfish, and aquatic plants in all types of water environments for food production or recreational purposes.

In Malaysia, it used to be that starting aquaculture-related careers required only a secondary school certificate, with training given later while on the job.

However, an increasing number of employers in this industry with more higher-level posts to fill now prefer job candidates who are graduates in aquaculture-related fields.

UMT produces these graduates through its academic programmes that train future aquaculturists, and it has been doing so for the past 20 years.

“Higher-level aquaculture careers, including high-level management and government positions, often require graduate-level education, either a diploma or a degree in aquaculture,” said Prof. Dr Mhd Ikhwanuddin Abdullah, director of the Institute of Tropical Aquaculture and Fisheries (AKUATROP), which was recently recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education as Higher Education Centre of Excellence (HICoE) for Research and Innovation.

“Sufficient knowledge gained through in-depth education is critical whether working in a finfish or shellfish hatchery or as a fisheries technician, fish culturist, or hatchery manager,” he added.

According to Prof. Ikhwan, two of UMT's undergraduate programmes, Bachelor of Science

in Agrotechnology (Aquaculture) and Bachelor of Applied Science (Fisheries), offered by the Faculty of Fisheries and Food Science are very comprehensive and provide students will all types of relevant knowledge, covering topics in fish spawning, hatchery maintenance, aquatic plants, fish diseases, aquatic ecosystems, fish nutrition, and water quality monitoring.

“In addition, courses on biology, chemistry, and math, and even business and marketing add to the students' knowledge base,” he said.

UMT also offers Master of Science (MSc) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in aquaculture and fisheries at the Faculty of Fisheries and Food Science and AKUATROP.

“Students of MSc and PhD programmes in aquaculture and fisheries may tailor their research directions to their research or career interests, such as fish nutrition, water quality, aquaculture engineering, fish genetics, hatchery production and fish pathology,” Prof. Ikhwan said.

After completing their programmes in aquaculture, whether diploma, undergraduate degree, master's degree, or doctorate, graduates may apply for jobs as research officer, fisheries officer, extension officer, fisheries manager, fisheries technician, schoolteacher, or university lecturer.

“The field of aquaculture is diverse and expanding dramatically, and for those who are willing to work hard, a career in this aquaculture field will be both exciting and extremely rewarding,” Prof Ikhwan said.

“If people are passionate about working with finfish, shellfish or other aquatic species, aquaculture is the right fit for them.”



VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL UMT ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM 2021

UMTAS 2021

acculturating sustainable research in pandemic paradigms

23-25 NOV 2021 | UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU

Call for Papers

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) is pleased to invite you to participate in the 15th Virtual International UMT Annual Symposium 2021 (UMTAS 2021) that will be held from the 23rd to 25th November 2021. This symposium aims to bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results in all aspects of science and technologies.

With the theme “acculturating sustainable research in pandemic paradigms”, UMTAS 2021 aspires to explore the initiative, advanced knowledge, and potential of scientific and technological innovation in improving human livelihood as well as sustaining environmental equilibrium. The 2021 symposium that marks the fifteen anniversary of UMTAS will be carried out virtually via the Cisco Webex application.

IMPORTANT DATES

15 AUG	Abstract Submission Deadline
20 AUG	Abstract Acceptance Notification
19 SEP	Full Paper Submission Deadline
30 SEP	Paper Acceptance Notification
15 OCT	Camera Ready Deadline
15 OCT	Payment Deadline

CONFERENCE TRACKS

- Energy, Environment and Sustainability
- Coastal and Offshore Engineering
- Computer Science
- Electronics and Instrumentation
- Mathematics and Statistics
- Marine and Freshwater Sciences
- Food and Agricultural Sciences
- Fundamental and Applied Sciences
- Management Sciences and Policy
- Education

FEES AND PAYMENT

Abstract and presentation only	Full paper and publication in Scopus journal	Full paper and publication in Scopus proceedings
RM180 USD50	RM1800 USD500	RM600 USD180

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



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