

## **Status Of Quality Assurance At The Center Of Academic Resource, Chulalongkorn University**

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In 1996, Ministry of Education / the Ministry of University Affairs (now Office of the Higher Education Commission) announced the policy to encourage all universities to establish quality assurance system. The National Education Act of 1999 indicated the importance of quality assurance in education, mentioning internal quality assessment (IQA) which is the responsibility of each academic institution, and external quality assessment (EQA) which is the task of newly established public organization—the Office of the National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA).

Chulalongkorn University realizes that quality assurance would assist all departments and divisions to further develop organizational effectiveness and would generate the public trust. The university, then, introduced a quality assurance system, starting as policy guidelines at the University Council's meeting on July 27, 2000. Departments and divisions are was allowed to select the QA system suitable for their activities. The university established a system called CU-QA 84, comprising 4 standards, namely, CU-QA 84.1 for teaching, CU-QA 84.2 for research, CU-QA 84.3 for administration and support, and CU-QA 84.4 for academic services. The mission of CU-QA is to improve the system of quality assurance, the information system and resources of academic and research process, to monitor the practice of quality assurance, to put the feedback and evaluation into practice to improve academic activities.

The year 2003 marked the first external assessment by the ONESQUA from the end of November to early December. The assessment has been set to perform once every five years.

The quality assurance activities are cooperated by the CU-QA Division. The campaign "Learning and Sharing" has started since 2004, focusing on the e-Document Quality Management System and the deposit of knowledge on QA best practices of internal and external agencies. Moreover, the CU-QA activities are centered around the update and improvement of CU-QA standards, for example the Chulalongkorn University Curriculum Quality Assurance (CU-CQA) will be added as part of CU-QA 84.1.

In 2005, the CU-QA Quality Prizes/Awards was first announced to promote value creation for the quality audit, to encourage participation in CU-QA activities, and to be used as a tool for learning and sharing among faculties and institutes within the university.

### **CU-QA 84.3 the Center of Academic Resources (CAR)**

The first step in developing a QA system for CAR was to study and assess QA systems that would be suitable for the Center's operations. CAR chose to follow CU-QA 84.3 of the university. At first, committees such as Quality Assurance Management Committee, Internal Audit Committee, and Customer Satisfaction & Demands Assessment Committee were assigned. A Quality Manual (QM), Procedure Manuals (PM), and Work Instructions (WI) have been produced as guidelines for operations. The quality policy of CAR is to "develop management and service systems to ensure maximum customer satisfaction."

The internal quality assessment started in January 2002, focusing on each department's performance. Once the IQA had been completed, the external quality assessment were scheduled in March 2002. The Center fulfilled all requirements and received the Certificate of Approval from the University in November 2002.

In 2003, It was required that all units within the university provide the Self-Assessment Checklist (SAC) and present Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and be ready for the assessment of the ONESQA, in November. The first risk evaluation of CAR was done.

The first surveillance audit was also performed on July 22, 2004. The second risk evaluation was done this year.

The CAR was awarded the CU Quality Prize in September 2005 in the category "5S and Safety" as a result of hard work and dedications. The 5S philosophy: Seiri-Organization or Screened, Seiton-Neat or Systematic, Saeso-Clean or Spotless, Seiketsu-Standardization or Sanitary, and Shitsuke-Discipline or Self-disciplined has been employed at CAR since 1999.

### **Key Success Factors (KSF)**

Key success factors of the CAR QA system include the following:

1. Management support – The CAR administrators at all level have realized the importance of QA activities and have provided support all along.
2. Staff cooperation and unity – The Center has organized a member of activities and received full cooperation from staff. The 5S campaign, for example, has received favorable response from all members of CAR.
3. Awareness and Commitment – In promoting QA activities, not only staff but also customers are well-aware of CAR's commitment for excellence.
4. Communication – CAR has employed various channels of communication such as radio programs, websites, magazines, leaflets and brochure to convey CAR QA operations.
5. Confidence – Because of the commitment of CAR administration, staff are confident in their efforts to improve the quality of service. The QA system has also created trust or confidence from all stakeholders of CAR. This can serve as avenue for building a close tie between CAR and its stakeholders.

To obtain and maintain the quality of service at CAR, many activities has taken place. The CAR QA-office is responsible for monitoring and collecting data concerning user satisfaction with the assistance from the QA Committee and the Reader Service Department, Central Library. The user surveys have been done to identify user needs and satisfaction. This effort also indicated that the results from the surveys have provided valuable information for planning and decision making related to quality enhancement. It also shows that the CAR is very responsive to customers requirements. Furthermore, QA activities can also be used as method for public relations, making stakeholders to better understand and support the operations of the CAR which enable the CAR to maintain the high quality service for the long time.