

Geographers from the University of Victoria collaborate with regional planning experts at the University of Chiangmai to develop better land use patterns in northern Thailand.

Government officials from the island nationals of the south Pacific attend a two-week workshop on the law of the sea at UVic's conference centre at Dunsmuir Lodge in Saanich.

Public health workers in China tackle critical issues in epidemiology with techniques learned from colleagues at UVic.

These particular projects are only dreams at the moment, but they are by no means far-fetched. In fact, many UVic faculty members are already involved in similar activities in Asia. Now the university has taken a major step toward making such international collaboration a central feature of academic life at UVic.

Last spring, the university appointed two senior Asian specialists to head a new coordinating body on campus called the Centre for Asia Pacific Initiatives (CAPI). Ralph W. Huenemann is Professor of Economic Relations with China in UVic's School of Public Administration. Douglas M. Johnston is Professor of Asia Pacific Legal Relations in UVic's Faculty of Law. A third member of the team, yet to be appointed, will probably be a Japanese economist.

Since coming to UVic last summer, Huenemann and Johnston have been busy setting up their headquarters in the Begbie Building and making plans to turn the CAPI into a dynamic focal point for the university's growing involvement in "contemporary public policy issues" in the Asia Pacific region.

Huenemann says CAPI may be new, but it will build its program on UVic's solid base of academic experience in Pacific Rim studies.

"For a long time, there has been a sense that UVic was developing a critical mass of people who know quite a bit about various aspects of Asia," he explains, "and that it would be very useful if you could put all that together in a more systematic way."

In fact, the centre is the culmination of a long period of steady growth in UVic's Asian connections. A dramatic symbol of those connections was the trip five years ago of a delegation from the University of Victoria to China. The delegation, led by UVic president Howard Petch, conferred an honorary Doctor

# ASIA

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UVic's location is ideal for involvement in Pacific Rim studies.

of Laws degree on Madame Soong Ching-Ling, widow of Sun Yat-Sen and one of China's most loved and respected citizens.

That occasion was a milestone on the road to closer relationships between British Columbians and the people of China. It was also an early indication that the University of Victoria recognized the importance of Canada's rapidly developing economic ties to Asia.

Since Madame Soong received her honorary degree before a large audience in Beijing's imposing Great Hall of the People, UVic has experienced an explosion of interest in Pacific Rim studies. The explosions were sparked in part by the enthusiasm of Jan Walls, former UVic faculty member and the driving force behind UVic's commitment to an academic program in Asian history, language and culture.

Walls has since moved to Simon Fraser University, but he did much to sensitize his

colleagues in the administration to the significance of UVic's location on the Pacific Ocean. That location and UVic's demonstrated expertise in Asian studies make the university ideally suited to play a major role in research related to economic growth and public policy development in Asia. By sharing its expertise in other areas like engineering, computer science, law, education and resource management, UVic can also help forge stronger links between Canada and the developing nations in Asia and the south Pacific.

The growing number of Asian students registered in the university at both the undergraduate and graduate levels is one sign that this is already happening. UVic's Extension Department also plays a role in promoting cross-cultural understanding. In addition to its adult education courses on Asian societies, the department runs a summer English language program for students from Koryo International College in Japan. Extension also offers a year-round series of English-language training courses that attract professional students from Japan and other Asian countries.

More and more, however,

the traffic in people and ideas has been flowing in the other direction as well. Today, increasing numbers of UVic faculty and students are visiting Asian universities and becoming engaged in research on local issues, often with academics and government agencies in the region.



*Japanese student at UVic demonstrates homeland customs.*

by Judith Alldritt McDowell

One outstanding example is the on-going collaboration between members of the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria and East China Normal University in Shanghai. Since it was initiated five years ago under a grant from the International Research Development Centre (IRDC), the project has become a showcase for international co-operation in research on educational psychology, curriculum development and classroom methods. Under the direction of Professor Emeritus Ted Owen, the project has involved over 100 students and faculty members from both institutions.

Since 1983, grad student Andrew Marton has spent two years in Shanghai doing research for a Masters degree. He also demonstrated classroom techniques to teachers in a Chinese middle school. "It was a fantastic learning experience for me," says Marton. "China was exciting because it is so different from anywhere else I've ever been."

Economists at the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRRP) – a national think tank with its headquarters on the UVic campus – are co-operating with Chinese economists and trade officials on a series of policy papers. They are studying problems that Pacific Rim countries face in gaining access to markets in the rest of the world.

Last summer, IRRP organized a research workshop on the changing shape of government in the Asia Pacific region, attended by senior academics and administrators from 10 Pacific Rim nations.

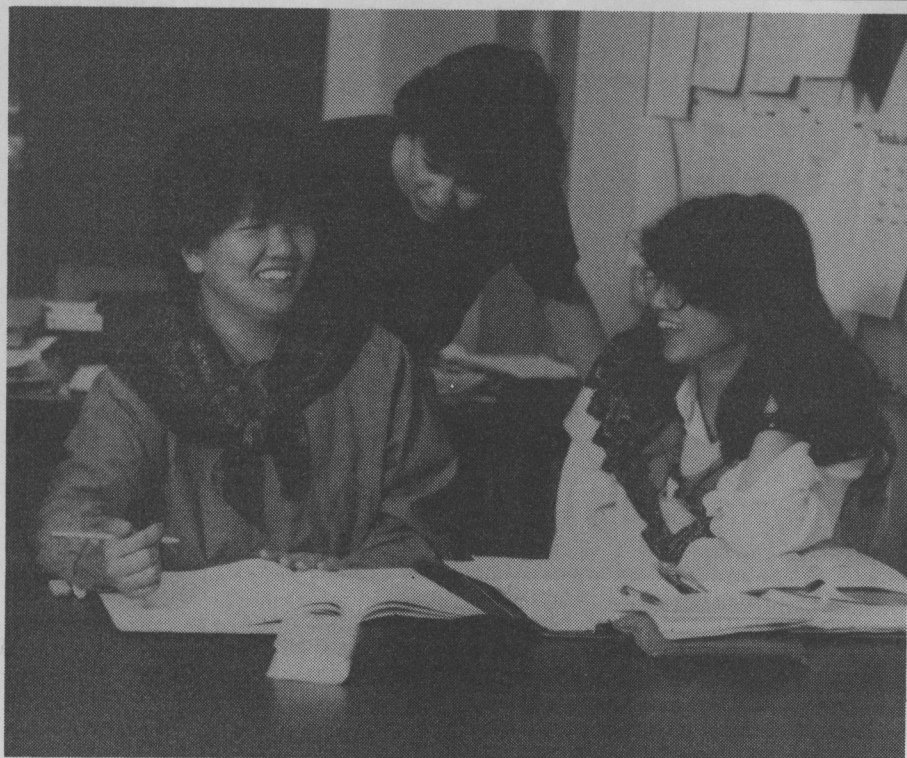
Other projects are in the planning stage.

Last year, faculty members from the School of Nursing visited Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong and Singapore to investigate the possibility of joint research on subjects of mutual interest. A group of five faculty members in the department of economics and geography has applied to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for funds to help researchers at Chiangmai University in northern Thailand develop a computerized data bank to facilitate more effective management of rural development projects.

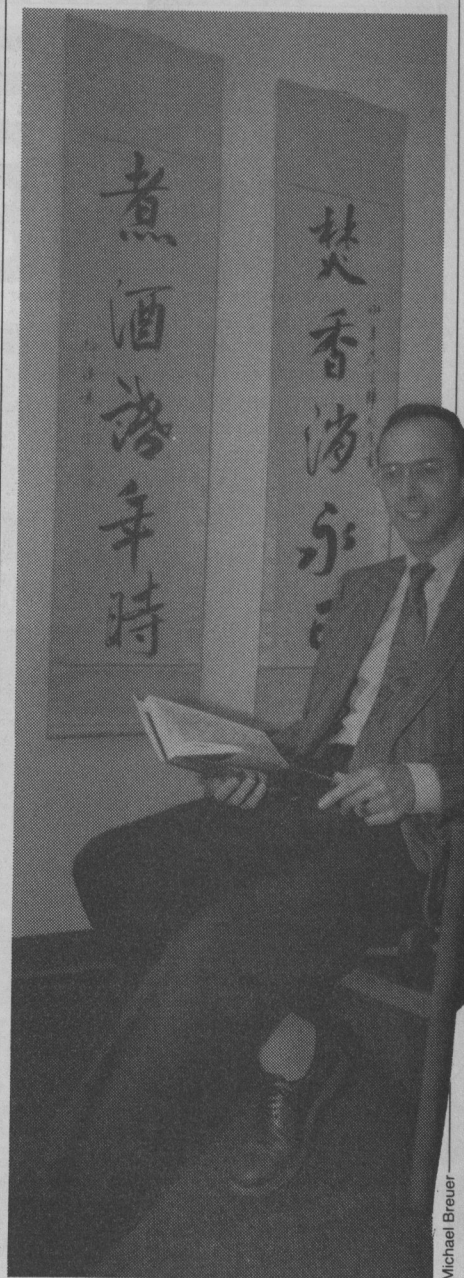
These are only a few examples of the developing links between UVic and the countries of the Pacific Rim. One of the jobs facing Douglas Johnston and Ralph Huenemann at the Centre for Asia Pacific Initiatives will be to bring all these separate activities together in a more coherent program.

Johnston and Huenemann have dozens of ideas for new projects, but they agree that one of their first tasks will be to establish a central "clearing house" for information about research and other on-campus activities related to Pacific Rim issues. UVic will be linked to similar clearing houses at UBC and SFU through a computerized data base located at the Asia Pacific Foundation in Vancouver. The objective is to make CAPI a resource for people in the local community who have business or professional interests in the Asia Pacific region.

"The idea," says Huenemann, "is to have one place with an identity and a phone number. If anyone wants to know something



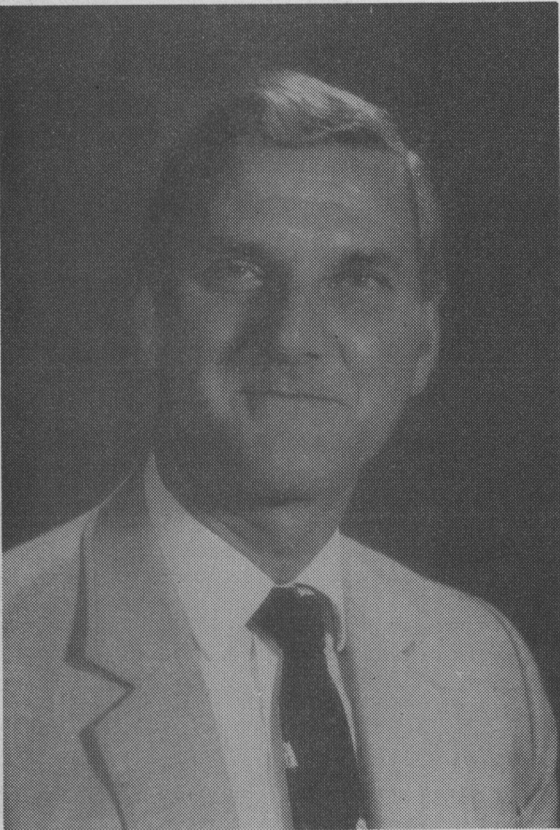
*Students from Koryo International College study English at UVic.*



*Ralph Huenemann*

*"The idea is to have one place with an identity and a phone number. If anyone wants to know something about the Pacific Rim, that's where they start."*





Douglas Johnston

*"... a lot of enthusiasm, and lots and lots of ideas."*

about the Pacific Rim, that's where they start. We believe that's going to be useful for people both on and off the campus."

Huenemann and Johnston are firm believers in the "synergy" between university research, public policy and economic development. Under their direction, CAPI will try to open new lines of communication between academics, professionals, industry representatives and government officials with interests in the Pacific Rim. A major function of the centre will be to organize frequent intellectual exchanges like the recent IRRP workshop on government and politics in the Asia Pacific Region.

CAPI's focus on "contemporary public policy issues" also means that the centre will try to interest international development agencies in funding training programs for professionals and high level government officials from southeast Asia and the island states of the South Pacific.

"In many of these countries, officials are struggling with massive human problems," says Johnston, "and they have a great need for the kind of professional expertise that Canada has to offer."

Johnston already has experience with organizing training programs in the region. Last year in Singapore, he directed a successful training course on ocean boundary making for southeast Asian government officials.

Dean William Neilson from the Faculty of Law at UVic has also organized courses on legal education taught by Canadians in southeast Asia.

CAPI hopes to sponsor similar training courses in areas such as trade policy, resource management, computer technology, public administration, and public health and disease control. Courses could be offered either at Dunsmuir Lodge or at various locations in Asia.

The centre will also try to facilitate new research projects that have a practical application to the policy needs of the region: a project in marine biology would provide information related to fisheries management or a computer science project would develop a data base appropriate for public health programs. The centre has a mandate to seek research funds from private foundations and government agencies such as CIDA or the Asia Development Bank.

"Sometimes, projects don't get off the ground because no one has the time or energy to go after outside funding," says Huenemann. "So it's partly a matter of bringing some money into the university that wouldn't otherwise be there and partly a matter of looking at UVic skills in a variety of areas, asking how they can fit into needs and possibilities in the Asia Pacific region, and then trying to make things happen."

Now that CAPI is up and running, expectations are blossoming in various corners of the university. In the School of Nursing, Dorothy Kergin is thinking about a project to train nurses in Malaysia using the distance education program already developed for British Columbia students.

"We're just dreaming about this now," says Kergin, "but if it develops, it will happen in connection with the Asia Pacific centre."

Dr. Geoffrey Potter is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education and an expert on educational technology. "I hope the centre will facilitate lots of transPacific activities," he says. "It should make my life easier because I have big plans to set up offcampus centres for UVic using videos, computers and teleconferencing."

Potter says there is a huge demand for distance education in southeast Asia because of the shortage of university places. He also thinks UVic should be doing more to help meet the needs of developing countries in the Pacific Rim.

"Education is closely linked to economic development, trade and economic stability," he explains, "and UVic can provide education over there for much less money than it costs to send students here because once you start using satellites and other kinds of technology, it's easy to get across oceans and mountain ranges."

For Howard Petch, CAPI's role also extends far beyond the boundaries of the university. He says the centre could contribute to Canada's changing place in the world economy.

"In recent years, our markets have been shifting to Pacific countries," he explains, "and we need to understand those countries better in order to compete effectively."

Petch hopes the centre will become "a major research facility but one that is also action-oriented." In his view, it should be "a place where academics and others could use the methodology of strategic analysis to identify opportunities in the region and develop policy options to support Canada's interests."

However, action requires resources, and CAPI's assets are limited at the moment to three half-time professors, a secretary and three graduate fellowships. But no one seems too concerned about that for the time being, least of all Douglas Johnston and Ralph Huenemann. They've sorted their objectives into "low cost" and "high cost" projects, and they're convinced that CAPI will eventually act as a magnet for outside funding from international agencies.

In the meantime, there is no shortage of things to do that don't cost money, including making more plans for the future.

"We're just at the beginning now," admits Huenemann. "What we have to offer at the moment are enthusiasm and ideas."

"A lot of enthusiasm," echoes Johnston, "and lots and lots of ideas."