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# 360°

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APR-JUN 2022

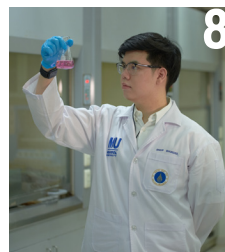
Vol.4 No.2

ISSN: 2672-9512



# SHAPING THE FUTURE





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## EDITORIAL Recognizing MUIC's World-class Education

Accreditation is, simply put, a recognition of a university's quality of education given by its peers. To be recognized by an established accreditation organization like the ASEAN University-Quality Assurance or the American Chemical Society (ACS) is an affirmation that MUIC is indeed performing well—that it is indeed the leading international liberal arts college in Thailand that provides quality tertiary education to its students.

**MU**  
CORE  
VALUE

**MAHIDOL**

**MASTERY** is the apt MU core value for this issue as two MU programs celebrate their ASEAN University Network-Quality Assurance (AUN-QA) accreditation and another program has been recognized by the American Chemical Society (ACS).

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**THE**  
**36<sup>th</sup>**  
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**ANNIVERSARY**

# ACCREDITATION: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MUIC STUDENTS

For the past 36 years, Mahidol University International College's (MUIC) has produced thousands of graduates, a good majority of whom now enjoy successful careers whether in public service or the private sector. This was made possible through the academic excellence of MUIC. Providing students with quality education has **expanded their potentials, shaped their futures** and **enriched their lives**.

One way of achieving and maintaining that academic excellence is through a professional evaluation of accreditation organizations. One of them, the ASEAN University Network-Quality Assurance (AUN-QA), recently accredited two more academic programs of Mahidol University

International College (MUIC), namely, **Computer Science** and **Communication Design programs**. Meanwhile, MUIC's **Chemistry Program** received recognition from the American Chemical Society (ACS). They join a growing list of MUIC programs that have received accreditation.

In this issue, **MUIC 360° Magazine** interviews the executives, faculty members, and students who have played a part in this recent achievement. They share with us how accreditation and recognition by reputable academic organizations ensure that MUIC remains on top of the list of leading universities in Thailand.





**ASST. PROF. DR. PATSARIN  
RODPHOTHONG WONGKAMHANG**  
Associate Dean for Strategic Planning  
and Quality Development

Dr. Patsarin heads the department responsible for facilitating the accreditation of MUIC's academic programs, among other duties. Such an undertaking is part of the college's forward planning or strategic steps in order to keep abreast of the times and also in positioning MUIC to be prepared for the challenges of the future.

**What is the significance of AUN-QA accreditation and ACS recognition to MUIC? In what ways does accreditation enhance the capabilities of MUIC?**

MUIC, as the leading liberal arts college in Thailand, continuously improves its educational offerings—especially in program curriculum structure and content, as well as other support systems—as one of its strategies. Thus, receiving international accreditation reflects MUIC's mission and goal "to be a globally recognized international liberal arts college." Success in this endeavor will increase MUIC visibility within and outside of Thailand. It is also a strong indication that we will continue to develop our education service to meet the students' needs and that of the changing world.

In the process of accreditation, the programs have to review their core products and services. With this revision, programs will see the bigger picture and may realize opportunities for improvement.

**What are the concrete benefits that AUN-QA accreditation and ACS recognition to the learning experience of MUIC students?**

Accreditation bodies are often customer-focused. Students are definitely the most important group of customers. Every change and improvement plan that has been made focuses on making student learning experiences better.





# SCIENCE IN TOP FORM

COMPUTER SCIENCE PROGRAM (AUN-QA) & CHEMISTRY PROGRAM (ACS)

ASSOC. PROF. DR. ARAM TANGBOONDUANGJIT  
Chair, Science Division

Dr. Aram wears two hats—as lecturer mostly of mathematics courses and as Science Division Chair. Teaching **math** courses in MUIC for several years now, he said, “Mathematics is a visual subject. It involves translating **abstract ideas** into **visual images**. So when students have difficulties understanding math concepts, I would ask them to visualize those **concepts** with real world presentation.”

He believes that mathematics is an important **foundation course** for all **Science** majors (especially **Chemistry** and **Computer Science**). “Mathematics is a language tool for all science majors. It allows scientists to communicate the **quantitative** aspect of their subjects. This includes accurate measurement in chemistry, rate of change of different quantities in **physics**, binary number systems for representing information in computer science.

As division chair, one of his tasks is to ensure that the Science Division effectively shapes the future of its students through the academic excellence of its science programs. One way of keeping the Division in top shape is by having its programs undergo accreditation by relevant institutions, in this case, AUN-QA and ACS.



“

AUN-QA ACCREDITATION ALLOWS THE DIVISION TO CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE AND MONITOR THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION. IT WILL ALSO BRING RECOGNITION NOT ONLY TO THE DIVISION BUT ALSO TO THE COLLEGE IN TERMS OF ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARD IN THE ASEAN REGION. WE HOPE THAT IT WOULD HELP ATTRACT STUDENTS IN THE ASEAN COMMUNITY TO STUDY WITH US, THEREBY INCREASING THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE SCIENCE PROGRAMS.

”

# AT THE CUTTING EDGE

ASST. PROF. DR. KANAT  
TANGWONGSAN  
Faculty Member,  
Computer Science Program



As a faculty member of the **Computer Science** program, Dr. Kanat strongly believes that it is in the front ranks of computer science programs in Thailand: “Our CS program is positioned to stand out as one of a kind.”

He explained: “We teach computer science as a rigorous science discipline, starting out focusing on foundation and mathematical aspects of **computing**, yet drawing on real-world scenarios/applications as a playground. Delivery happens through a set of well-designed introductory and **core courses** that integrate ideas across various areas of computing. This makes learning more engaging and fun than the siloed arrangement of traditional subject areas.”

He added that the x-factor is their **tightly-knit community**. “We are at a size where students and faculty members know each other personally, creating an ideal

environment for personalized education. Students are supported to further their interests and passions; they have access to faculty members who have the (technical) expertise and care deeply about these students' success and growth. Overall, this means the students get to work on many hands-on team-based projects over the years, fostering their **technical** and **teamwork** skills.”

“

OUR GRADUATES—IN FACT, OUR STUDENT **INTERNS**—ARE HIGHLY PRIZED IN THE **COMPUTING INDUSTRY**. THEY HAVE **STRONG ANALYTICAL SKILLS, DEEP THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING, AND UP-TO-DATE PRACTICAL TECHNICAL SKILLS.**

”



# ACHIEVING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS



**ASST. PROF. DR. MANCHUTA DANGKULWANICH**  
Faculty Member, Chemistry Program

Dr. Manchuta was part of the team that obtained the **American Chemical Society (ACS)** recognition for MUIC's **Chemistry** program. The process started in August 2019 and concluded in January 2022, a rather long timeline having been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

She explained that the ACS recognition of the Chemistry program is the first in the **Asia-Pacific** and the third outside of the United States. "Gaining the **recognition** shows that our chemistry curriculum is **world-class, broad-based,**

**rigorous** and **aligns** with the standards of ACS-approved four-year **bachelor's degree programs** in the United States. These guidelines cover various aspects of chemistry education, crucial for training students to become effective scientific professionals, including **curriculum, faculty** and instrumentation," she added.

The ACS recognition had a positive impact on the curriculum revision in 2020. "We refocused on core chemistry and **natural science** subjects and introduced

“

WE DO OUR BEST TO PROVIDE WORLD-CLASS CHEMISTRY EDUCATION TO PREPARE OUR STUDENTS FOR THE CHANGING WORLD AND GAINING THE ACS RECOGNITION VALIDATES THAT.

”

a compulsory two-credit polymer course. **Applied chemistry** specialties are now offered through our partners (Flinders University for a double degree track and Siriraj Hospital for a BSc+MSc track). This is one example of many tangible benefits to our students enrolling from 2020 onwards," she explained.

Dr. Manchuta is optimistic that the Chemistry program's students will benefit much from the ACS recognition. "Graduates from ACS-approved programs in the US are better prepared for technical **employment**, and so should graduates from **ACS-recognized programs** outside of the US. Aside from a comprehensive chemistry curriculum, one concrete example is that our MUIC students have access to **modern instruments** both at MUIC and MU-FRF (Mahidol University Frontier Research Facility) as parts of their coursework."

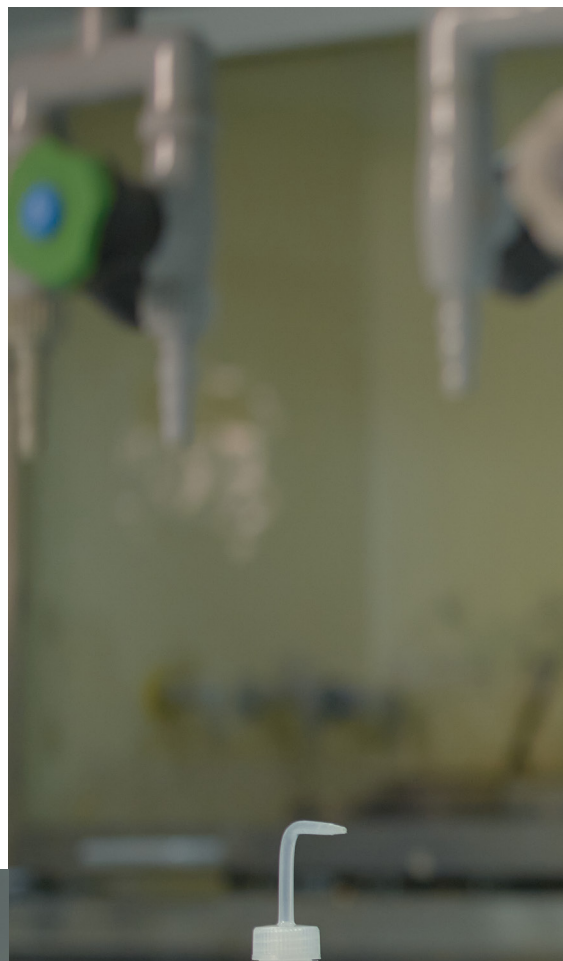


# SHAPING HIS FUTURE

“

HAVING TWO MINORS PROVIDES ME WITH MANY PERSPECTIVES ON A GIVEN PROBLEM AND HOW TO EFFICIENTLY SOLVE IT. MY **CHEMISTRY MINOR** IS FOCUSED ON QUANTITATIVE TOPICS WHILE MY **COMPUTER SCIENCE MINOR** FOCUSES ON NUMERICAL SIMULATION AND MACHINE LEARNING.

”



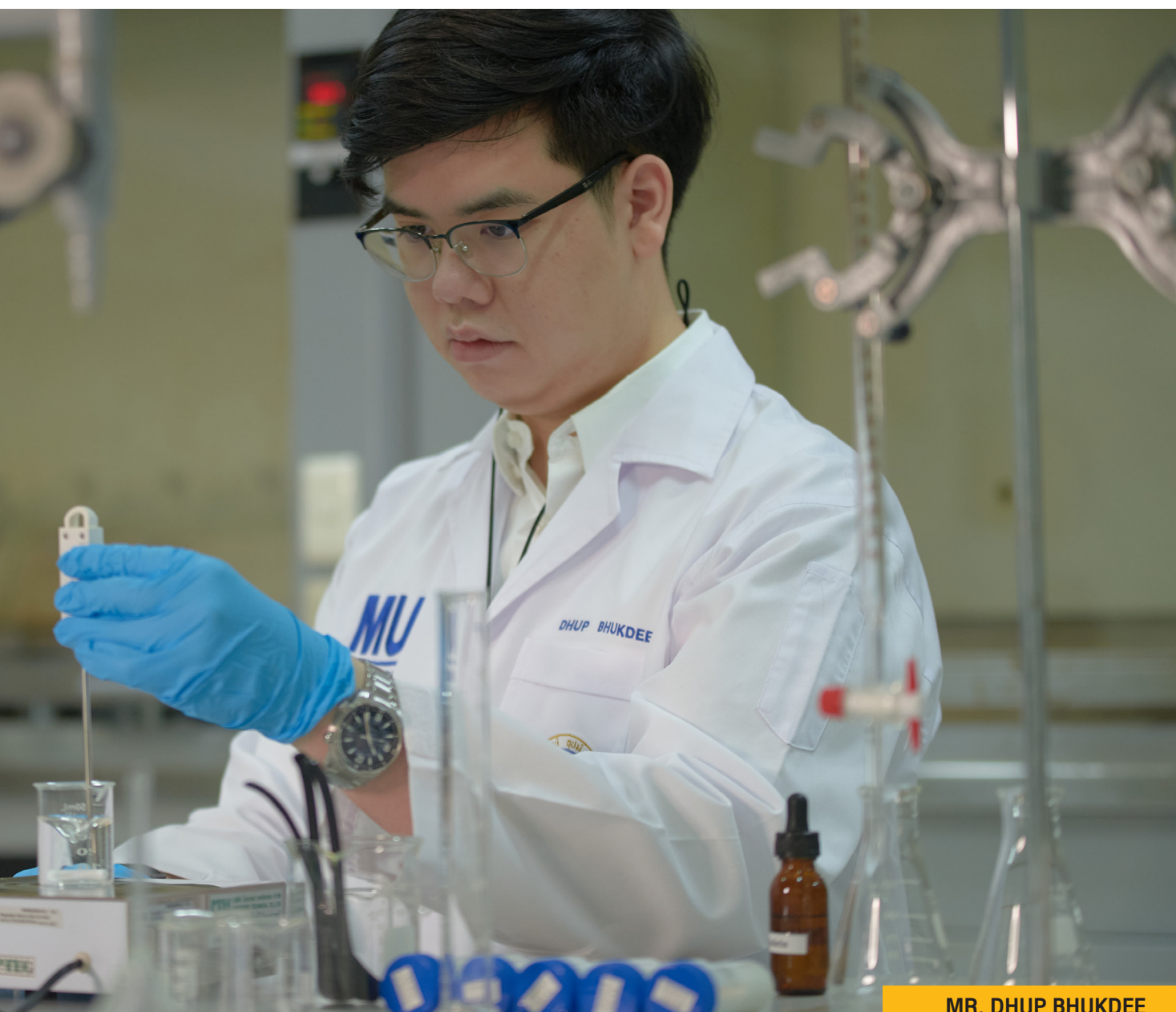
Mr. Dhup Bhukdee is a senior Biological Sciences student minoring in both Chemistry and Computer Science. He recently finished his academic requirements and will soon graduate this year with a string of achievements—winning the **Gold Medal in the Young Rising Stars of Science Award** (2021), co-authoring a **research paper** in the **Journal of Chemical Education** in July 2020, among other notable feats.

Equally impressive is Mr. Dhup's success in minoring in both chemistry and computer science and completing his Biological Sciences degree with **first class honors** in just four years.

He explained how each program complements the other: “Chemistry gives more depth and another perspective to what is taught in biology.” On the other hand, he said, “computer science adds a new way and **logical thinking** into solving problems efficiently.”







**MR. DHUP BHUKDEE**  
ICCS and ICCH minor

He credits his **intellectual growth** to his **mentors** in the Science Division. "It was only after I attended some classes and talked to instructors that my interest was widened and led me to decide to take chemistry as a minor and later computer science. Since my mentors know my interests and plan, they provided me with many opportunities."

Mr. Dhup now has several **career options** available to him: He currently serves as a **research assistant** to his **thesis advisor** while he is applying for **graduate studies**. If this plan falls through, he said he would likely work as a **data scientist** or a **consultant**.



# SUCCESSFUL CAREER

**MR. CHATTARIN RUCHAWAPOL**  
Alumnus (Chemistry, Class of 2019)

“

MUIC'S CHEMISTRY PROGRAM HELPED PROVIDE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ME AS A RESEARCH SCIENTIST. STAFF MEMBERS AND INSTRUCTORS GAVE THEIR BEST IN FACILITATING MY ACADEMIC GROWTH.

”

Mr. Chattarin enjoys a successful **career** as CEO and Head of **Research and Development** of H.G. Health (Thailand) Co., Ltd. which focuses on beauty and **skincare cosmetics** with DNANON as its main skin care brand.

He credits part of his career **success** to his studies in MUIC's Chemistry program. He explained, "Because of **hands-on-learning** and **critical analysis skills** achieved during my undergraduate degree, especially integrated **laboratory** and my **senior project** courses, I can manage to solve technical issues. For instance, the **concepts of solubility, chemical profile, physical chemistry**, and so on pave the way for my understanding of real-world business and how the combination of

chemistry and other science fields of knowledge can be improvised to do such amazing work."

Looking back, he shared what he believes as the strength of MUIC's Chemistry program: "Chemistry is one of the most **fundamental** courses, which leads to the understanding of other courses such as **food chemistry**, the physical and chemical profiles of numerous scientific labs including **biology** (human metabolism), **physics** (temperature, mass, or anything we can physically measure), and **mathematics** (energy calculation)."

He is confident of the quality of fellow **graduates** from MUIC that he does not hesitate to hire them "There are many successful MUIC graduates in both business and science fields that I have met and currently work with. **Science graduates** from MUIC have the potential to get hired by top companies because they have a **solid grounding** in the most fundamental courses and they can easily learn to **adapt** in the company they work in."





# A MILESTONE IN COMMUNICATION DESIGN



Dr. Dynaya Bhutipunthu, who was then Program Director of Communication Design when it was starting to undergo AUN-QA accreditation, explained that the accreditation is very important in the development of the program.

The **accreditation**, which took place over a period of two years, required the following steps:

- **Research** into leading Thai and global **arts and design programs**, criteria and best practices of leading industry organizations as well as **21<sup>st</sup> Century designer skills, career opportunities** and **global trends**;
- Aligning (and revising accordingly) the current curriculum in response to research results;
- Refining the curriculum to the structure of the **Outcome-Based Education (OBE)** approach of AUN-QA;
- Reviewing exit plan, **thesis project** and **exhibition showcase**, ensuring they are aligned with the main expected learning outcomes;

THE ACCREDITATION IS A CONFIRMATION THAT WE HAVE CREATED A **HIGH-QUALITY, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNICATION DESIGN PROGRAM** THAT BEST SERVES THE NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS, STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNICATION DESIGN FIELD IN THAILAND AND ULTIMATELY IN THE WORLD.



- Submitting the curriculum to the university committee for feedback and revision;
- Writing the SAR (**Self-Assessment Report**) of the program, participating in a series of workshops, **experts' reviews**, and revisions; and
- Documenting preparations for AUN-QA **assessment review**.

Asked in what concrete ways does the accreditation benefit the program, Dr. Dynaya said, "The process of applying for accreditation involved interviewing experts in the industry, **alumni**, and current students which helped us truly understand the kinds of skills students need to learn and the type of environment we must provide to lead to the **success** of our graduates. It helped us to further develop the program and will eventually benefit related fields in Thailand."

**DR. DYNAYA BHUTIPUNTHU**  
Faculty Member,  
Communication Design Program

# ONE OF THE LEADING PROGRAMS

The recent AUN-QA accreditation of the Communication Design Program was very significant because it is the **first and only program** of its kind in Thailand and **ASEAN** to be accredited by AUN-QA.

Ajarn Ploy, a faculty member of the Communication Design Program, indeed sees this as a major achievement for it enabled the faculty to take a step back, assess the program and the academic and practical needs of the CDP students, and implement necessary **improvements**.

“It helped us in ensuring the quality of our teaching and learning by allowing us to examine our curriculum in order to identify **strengths and weaknesses**, as well as the requirements of our students and stakeholders that enable us to solve problems efficiently.”

Asked about the **capabilities** and **potentials** of their students, Ajarn Ploy replied, “The strength of the CDP students is their **creativity**. They take advantage of their rough and raw **craftsmanship** to create their own **unique style**.”

## AJARN PLOY NIKADANONT

Faculty Member,  
Communication Design Program



THE COMMUNICATION  
DESIGN PROGRAM'S  
AUN-QA  
ACCREDITATION  
SIGNIFIES ITS  
QUALITY STANDING  
IN THE ASEAN LEVEL.  
YES, WE ARE ONE  
OF THE **LEADING**  
**PROGRAMS.**





# MENTORING YOUNG ARTISTS

**MS. CHANAKAN ROJANAPENKUL**

4<sup>th</sup> Year Student, Communication Design



For Ms. Chanakan Rojanapenkul, a 4<sup>th</sup> Year Communication Design student, a typical day in their **studio class** can only be described as “hectic, experimental, yet **fun** day.”

She explained, “Our professors start by assigning our task, and then we try to figure out our own **solution** to achieve our target. It's hectic because everybody's all over the place; no one really knows where to start, and no one really knows how the audience will perceive our works. But it's fun for me because I get to see all the **successful** yet weird **outputs** I have made.”

She emphasized the importance of such a learning process: “These classes train me by allowing me to **experiment** independently and recognize my capabilities at my **own pace**. The professors would only guide us to what they believed could help solve our problems rather than telling us what's supposed to be the correct answer or method. Our professors believe that we learn more through **experience** than on only **theories**.”



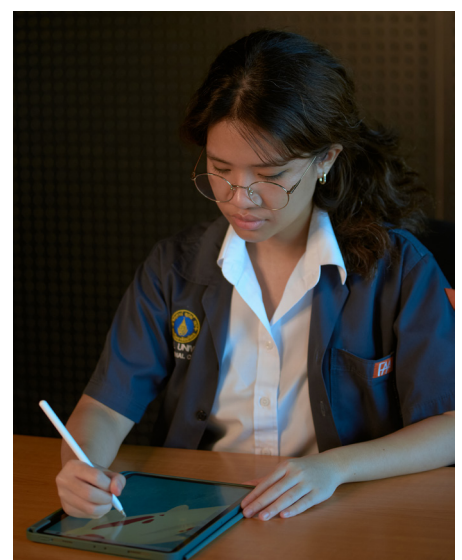
Most important is the strong support that students receive from their teachers. “My mentor, Ajarn Dow (Dr. Dynaya Bhutipunthu), encourages me to slowly figure out how to solve the problem I am facing and be able to give **alternative solutions**. And she also praises me when I achieve it.”

In the end, all of these lead to **success**. One of Ms. Chanakan's achievements is having her team's entry (a post-COVID travel app for Gen Z called “Scooch”) be accepted in **ImaginAsia 2021**.

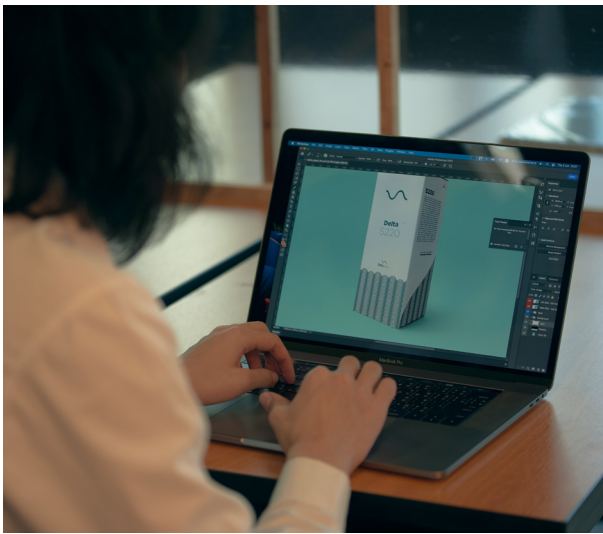
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THE CDP PROGRAM PROVIDES US NOT ONLY WITH KNOWLEDGE BUT ALSO VALUABLE EXPERIENCE AND A WARM FAMILY ENVIRONMENT.

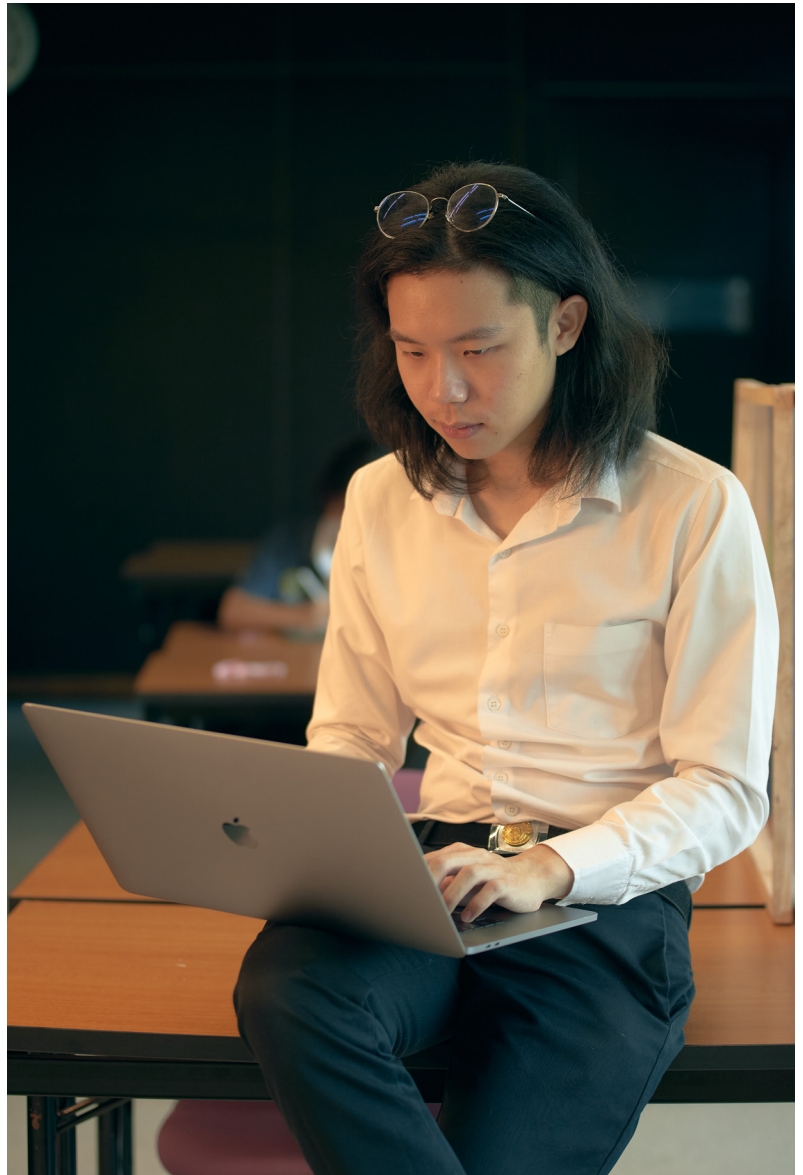
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# READY FOR PRO- FESSIONAL WORK



**MR. POOM SUKSIRIVECHARUK**  
4<sup>th</sup> Year Student, Communication Design



“

MUIC'S  
COMMUNICATION  
DESIGN PROGRAM  
DOES NOT SIMPLY  
TRAIN YOU TO BE  
A PROFESSIONAL  
DESIGNER BUT ALSO TO  
BE A **CRITICAL THINKER**  
WHO KNOWS HOW TO  
APPLY CREATIVE AND  
DESIGN THINKING TO  
ACHIEVE **SOLUTIONS** TO  
PROBLEMS.

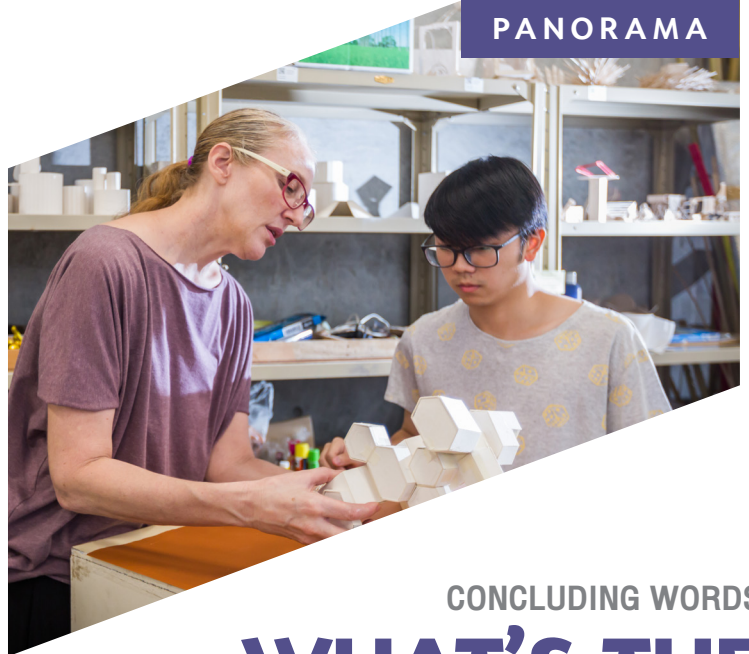
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According to Mr. Poom Suksirivecharuk, the Communication Design Program prepares its students to be ready for **professional work** even before graduating. “By the time we reach our third year, we would have already learned all the major **fundamental skills** that are required for us to take a simple freelance job or enter a **design competition**. Many CDP ajarns and alumni share news about design competition, **internships**, jobs and other **career opportunities** anytime there is one available.”

He said that under the program, each student is allowed to grow at

his own pace. “We all go through each design step at a different speed.” However, he added that “when it comes to a team project, students learn to **respect** their fellow members' design methods and thus **synchronize** our respective paces to work within the given **timeline**. In the program, not only do they teach us the **hard skills** of different **techniques** and **design tools**, in both digital and traditional platforms, but, more importantly, the CDP studio class also develops our **soft skills** through activities that require **teamwork** and more.” This results in success for most of the students' individual and team projects, Mr. Poom said.





CONCLUDING WORDS

# WHAT'S THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AUN-QA ACCREDITATION TO YOUR PROGRAM?

“

**Accreditation** such as AUN-QA forces us to look real hard at ourselves in the mirror, and describe all the blemishes and beauty spots. This is definitely not something we'd normally do—it's just too uncomfortable. In a way, the exercise has helped highlight our strengths and weaknesses. It has given us an opportunity to identify and articulate roadblocks that the program needs help with.

”

**DR. KANAT TANGWONGSAN**  
Faculty Member,  
Computer Science Program

“

The Communication Design Program at MUIC is the first and only program of its kind in Thailand and ASEAN to be accredited by AUN-QA. This is greatly significant in terms of the development of the Communication Design Program and in turn will also benefit related fields of study in Thailand. It **motivates** us to continue **improving** the program to be the **best** and for the **benefit** of our students. Our ultimate goal is that the program's graduates are equipped with **portfolios** to apply for any communication design **job opportunities** anywhere in the world

”

**DR. DYNAYA BHUTIPHUNTU**  
Faculty Member, Communication  
Design Program

As can be seen from the above quotes, the recent AUN-QA accreditation and ACS recognition achieved by the Computer Science and Communication Design programs and Chemistry Program, respectively, demonstrates MUIC's continuing endeavor to achieve world-class standards and make it the top international liberal arts college in Thailand.



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International College



# LET MUIC SHAPE YOUR FUTURE!

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