NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Over the past few months, I have been conducting numerous sessions for all junior academic staff on the topic, "Engaging in Academic Research and Scholarly Initiatives" under the now phased out New Academic Staff Induction (NASI) facilitated by INTELLECT. It was interesting to discover that many staff are unsure of their research strengths and are quite 'idealist' about the research they want to focus on. There are some questions that each and every one of us academics need to ponder before we start our journey. They include the following: (1) Why do we want to be an academician? (2) What do we expect to get out of this career? (3) What is the role of an academic? Is it mere lecturing? Researching? Sharing new knowledge? Community engagement?

If the main aim of being in Taylor's University is because you need a job to pay your bills and therefore you are happy just teaching and doing nothing more than that, then this is not the university for you! Taylor's University is not a typical private college that has been upgraded to become a University-College and now a full-fledged University. Taylor's University aims to be a strong research university or at least a good teaching university that is well supported by faculty members who are strong in their research capabilities. Only with good research capabilities can you become a good teacher. The majority of the top world class universities across the globe are strong research universities. Thus, the faculty members in the universities must be mindful of their niche research strength that will position them above their peers.

Hence, the first step in understanding your strength as an academic is to carry out a self-audit, to evaluate your domain expert area and to understand how this expert knowledge you possess will evolve over the years. This includes your education self-evolution, knowledge fusion and evolution at work place. By understanding and auditing yourself, you can ensure you become an expert in your selected domain rather than "a jack of all trades". This is important so that you know how to prioritise your effort and maximise your strengths while balancing your role as an academic.

In this third issue of INSIGHT, we have continued to highlight some of the major research initiatives and accolades that have further escalated the research strengths of Taylor's. The School of Engineering, in collaboration with Naza World unveiled the Taylor's Solar Vehicle. Further collaborations were also initiated with several visiting professors from the Griffith University, Australia. We continue to win research excellence awards and recognition with the latest one being the 'Certificate for Excellent Paper Award' in the International Conference on Chemical, Biological and Environmental Engineering in Singapore. Our postgraduate students outshine other students to emerge the top 10 best research poster presentations out of more than 100 other presentations at the Malaysian Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Conference in Kuala Lumpur recently.

In the third quarter of this year, we also announced the successful recipients of Batch 1 of the Taylor's Research Grants Scheme (TRGS) totaling RM136,780. The Research and Scholarly Development Committee (RSDC) had a tough time shortlisting and trimming projects according to the finite funding that we have. We do hope that the 2012 budget will be increased to give more staff the opportunity to work on grants that will eventually translate into high impact publications and capacity building.

Another three Study Guides were published for the Master's programme by Taylor's Press for the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts. Three research centres are introduced in this issue of INSIGHT, namely the Centre for Research & Innovation in Tourism (CRIPT), Centre for Research in Law & Development in Asia (CRELDA), and Centre for Research in Education and Instructional Technologies (CREDIT).

Another eventful quarter of milestones! Surely our research positioning in Malaysia should be enhanced. Do contact the Centre for Research & Development if you require any assistance in moving your research agenda. Cheers.

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