

The University of Economics (UE) of the Vietnam National University-HCMC came into being one year before, on July 17, 1996. It consists of the former HCMC University of Economics, HCMC University of Finance and Accountancy and Faculty of Economics of the HCMC University.

This integration met with difficulties originated from worries of teaching staffs and officials of units included in the UE. These worries posed a serious problem for the UE leadership in the first stage of integration.

One of advantages of the UE is a similarity among its unit members in process of training and curricula, but at this stage of integration, there are many differences between them, to a certain extent, in ways of



THE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS ONE YEAR AFTER ITS ESTABLISHMENT

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managing an educational institution, therefore these features must be taken into consideration in the process of making these units a unified organization.

Based on this outlook and current conditions, the UE Party Committee and directorate have worked out their integration program with the principle that stability is a basis for development. Keeping to this principle, the UE leadership have carried out their program step by step and at the same time, concentrated on solving the most urgent problems and linking different stages of the program together. Main goal of the first stage of the program is to reorganize the machinery and this goal is considered as a precondition for the integration process. In reorganizing the machinery, the first work is to unify

governing bodies and offices which are responsible for directing and managing the integration process. The second task is to unify faculties and departments, because operation of these faculties and departments is, to some extent, stable and independent. The machinery, after reorganization, has been able to direct and manage smoothly all operations of the University.

Since its establishment, the UE within the Vietnam National University-HCMC is responsible for teaching all branches of economics which are included in five main economic disciplines within the system of national education. Nine faculties have been formed in the UE, including the Faculty of Ideology and Economic Politics of the former HCMC University. In order to control training quality, the UE has set up

two departments: Postgraduate Department and Part-time Education Department.

The UE staff, including lecturers and officials, consists of some 690 members, some 450 of them are lecturers, and over 40% of these lecturers had Masters or higher degrees. Students of all faculties in this year amounted to 44,000, half of them are taking sandwich courses. Many of them working in different provinces from Thừa Thiên-Huế to Cà Mau, are taking on-the-job training courses.

In present situation when the University has just been established, the amount of student is big, its teachers come from many sources, the task of solving organizational problems and stabilizing its operations requires concerted efforts, a series of responsibility and appropriate measures. In reality, the joint effort made by the UE Party Committee, Directorate and its staff has helped the UE stabilize its operation and complete its first stage of integration. This shows itself in the great success of the UE Party Congress and the UE Staff Congress. These congresses have reflected the common will and determination of all Party members, teachers and officials to unify and develop the University stably. This success also provides a basis for encouraging achievements of the University in its first year of operation.

1. Training

This is the most important task that the UE leadership and the staff have spent the greatest efforts on to complete. It's worth noting that as an integrated institution, there are



certain differences between curricula of its unit members. The University leadership have decided to unite the system of curricula by making adjustments to curricula of the first stage of training and perfecting the training program of the second stage in which students can get credits from all faculties. This task was completed basically and new curricula were taught in this school year 1997-1998. In this school year, the University also set up a pilot scheme to teach in English certain subjects included in curricula of the Faculties of Economics, Business Administration and Foreign Trade-Tourism. To unite the system of curricula, it's necessary to compile standard textbooks and courses because they constitute the core of the system of curricula. In this spirit, the University has been determined to build the system of standard textbooks with a view to standardizing the amount and quality of knowledge supplied to students and putting an end to a situation in which lecturers could teach anything at their will. As initial results, certain textbooks had been approved by the UE Scientific and Training Council and were officially in use in this school year. Other standard textbooks are being compiled and will be completed in this school year.

2. Scientific research

Besides building the system of standard textbooks, researches on theoretical and applied sciences were carried out incessantly. Last year, dozens of research projects ordered by the Government, Ministries and the University itself were carried out, some of them were complete perfectly. The University con-

siders scientific research as one of its main tasks and has financed them to a certain extent.

3. International cooperation

This activity is maintained and developed. Besides four projects to supply Master courses in cooperation with foreign institutes (Fulbright Projects, Franco-Vietnamese Research Project, Vietnam-Netherlands Project and Cooperative Project between the UE and Quebec University) and a program on post-graduate studies in cooperation with the AIT, other cooperative programs have been carried out well. This operation resulted in 5 scientific seminars held by the UE in cooperation with foreign researchers and the amount of lecturers sent to make studies abroad. In addition, the University has helped many lecturers and students to make studies at many Chinese universities or visit foreign countries in an effort to improve their outlook and knowledge. The University also considers the expansion of international cooperation as an important task and as a basis for the integration into the world education service and for the struggle against being educationally backward.

4. Facilities for study and finanUE control

In an effort to modernize facilities for study and teaching, the University has made the best use of its limited sources of finance. In the school year 1997-1998, the University will put in use a 5-storeyed study complex including many laboratories, libraries and conference rooms. The University will pay the better part of the expenses of this

building.

The cash flow of the University is disclosed every year and a plan to distribute its finances among departments and faculties has been completed. This is considered as a final precondition for the integration process.

5. Social work and community activities

The UE leadership consider participation in social work as a way to teach students in morals and traditions. Last year, the University raised funds for the building of 14 houses for revolutionary families in HCMC, the Western South and central Vietnam. In addition, the University undertook the task of caring for 11 heroic mothers.

The University also supports operations of the Trade Union, Youth League and Association of Students, therefore these organizations have helped the University a lot. Particularly, the Youth League and Association of Students have organized many useful activities affecting well the morals and conscience of students. These activities have produced good effects on the young people as a whole.

Besides achievements, there are also certain shortcomings in operations of the UE, however, we can affirm that up to now, the stability of the integrated University of Economics has been established. All teaching staff and officials consider it as a great achievement obtained at the first anniversary of the University and as a preparation for the next stages of development.

From now on, the orientation of the UE for the coming years is set: it should develop into a prestigious training and research center in the South and prepare itself for the integration into the world's higher education systems. This orientation requires a joint effort of all members of the UE staff and many effective measures to realize it. The following are three long-term goals the University has set itself:

- Modernizing knowledge and skills of the teaching staff.
- Standardizing objectives of the training program and curricula, and
- Modernizing facilities for study and teaching.

On the occasion of the first anniversary of the University, the UE leadership believe that all the UE staff, with a strong sense of joint responsibility, will make a great step forward in order to celebrate the fifth anniversary by 2001, the first year of the twenty-first century.