Harmonizing disparate credit transfer schemes and New-UMAP\(^1\) Credit Transfer System (New-UCTS\(^2\))

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OUTLINE OF THIS PRESENTATION

I. Why do we need academic credit systems in Asia, while “learning outcome” based higher education is being developed internationally?

II. Why do we need an inter-regional credit transfer system (CTS) in Asia?

III. What are some of currently existing CTS in Asia and what kinds of limits do they have?

IV. What is the concept of “Asian Academic Credits” (AACs\(^3\)) as a New-UCTS since 2013?

V. How is this New-UCTS better than the other ones in Asia?

VI. What are the next steps for student mobility with the New-UCTS in Asia and Pacific region
I. Why do we still need academic credit systems in Asia? (Meanwhile, “learning outcome” based higher education is being developed internationally)
1. A large disparity in terms of the quality of higher education in Asia.

2. Many still use fixed coursework and not much “elective courses.” So, NO USE of a credit system (CS), since all students must take all fixed courses. As a result, not much transferred students even domestically.

3. However, credit systems are already existing throughout Asia, but in many cases, merely counting teacher’s workload and not being used to measure “student workload” with “learning outcomes”.

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1. In 1869 at Harvard University, a credit system was developed to measure the student workload of various types of “elective courses” to acquire new knowledge and skills.

2. However, many Asian universities use the 2nd type of credit system, called “Carnegie unit” to measure the teacher’s workload (teaching hours).

3. Asia needs to use CSs for students to acquire new knowledge and skills.

4. Asia needs to use CSs to guarantee the amount of student learning process with learning outcomes.
II. Why do we need an inter-regional credit transfer system (CTS) in Asia?
Major Issues of Credit Transfer in Asia

1. **Requirements of course equivalency:** Many universities and governments only accept foreign credits when the contents of courses are exactly same or very similar (80-100%).

2. **Lack of transparency:** Many universities in Asia do not provide enough detailed information about their contents of education with syllabus, etc. This causes distrust of partner universities in Asia.

3. **Delay of graduation:** As a result, many students cannot graduate on time if they go abroad in Asian region.
What We Need for Regional Student Mobility

1. We need to be able to evaluate the values and quality of new or slightly different kinds of knowledge students acquired from foreign institutions.

2. We need a tool to measure the different amount of students’ workload with detailed learning outcomes and convert them into academic credits at home institutions for CTS.

3. A permeable framework of higher education is needed for Asian universities to promote a trusted and attractive student’s “free mobility” in the Asian Higher Education.

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Importance of “Permeable Framework”

1. **The permeable framework is a set of various tools that measure the amount and magnitude of educational values in each institution**

2. **These standardized measures illustrate specific differences among institutions regarding their educational contents, thereby enabling institutions to improve their level of mutual understanding and trust**

3. **As a result, use of the framework helps promote student mobility among institutions in Asia**

4. **A regionally aligned CTS will be a very useful tool as a part of permeable framework in Asia**
III. What are the some of currently existing credit transfer systems in Asia? What kinds of limits do they have?
Development of Regional Student Mobility in Asia

1. Development of **UMAP** since 2000 with **old-UCTS** -the USCO⁶ Exchange program in Asia and the Pacific

2. Development of **AUN⁴** with **ACTS⁵** since 2009 -AUN Student Exchange program among mainly ASEAN⁶ elite higher education institutions

3. **AIMS⁷** Project since 2010 (formally M-I-T programme) -7 ASEAN nations, S. Korea and Japan

4. Development of the **GMS-UC⁸** with **ACTFA⁹** in 2016 - GMS-UC 24 model universities
Issues of Current CTS in Asia

1. The UMAP’s Old-UCTS & AUN-ACTS originally modeled ECTS\textsuperscript{10} in Europe. ECTS is a very systematic CTS, but does not reflect to Asian conditions.

2. Both programs still have the limited numbers of participating universities (over 100-200?) out of about 12,000 institutions in ASEAN+3 nations.

3. Moreover, no aligned CTS for AIMS & GMS-UC, yet.

4. Thus, a regionally aligned CTS is needed in order to promote student mobility in the region
IV. What is the concept of “Asian Academic Credits” (AACs) as a New-UCTS?
Recent Researches on Student Mobility in Asia

1. “A study on ACTS and credit transfer systems of ASEAN+3 nations” (a mission research of the Ministry of Education, Japan) was conducted during February-March, 2010

2. “A Comparative Table of 13 Asian Countries” & 7 country reports were posted at; http://ir.lib.hiroshima-u.ac.jp /00030722 in early 2011

3. A further study, funded by the Japanese government research grant (KAKENHI-#24402045), was conducted between 2012-2014 and investigated the general framework and conditions of higher education system related to the promotion of student mobility in 24 Asian nations and regions

4. Those 24 nations and regions are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei-Darussalam, Cambodia, China, East-Timor, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Macao, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, South-Korea, Sri-Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, The Philippines, Vietnam
General Tendencies of Asia Higher Education

General Tendency of Three Indicators:

1. NO USE OF “STUDENT WORKLOAD”: but 38-48 hours of student workload per academic credit

2. 13-16 HOURS of CONTACT (teaching) HOURS in class per academic credit

3. 30-40 CREDITS PER YEAR as an average number of credits per year

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The Concept of Asian Academic Credits (AACs)

A proposed framework of credit system is;

One AACs(New-UCTS) ≒ 38-48 hours of Student workload,

(including 13-16 hours of teaching (academic) hours)

*Student workload is the total amount of hours students spend for study, including not only lectures, but also homework, lab, writing term papers, etc.

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New Developments in Asia

1. UMAP has adopted the concept of AACs as a New-UCTS from 2013

2. The SEAMEO-RIHED is now reviewing a possible use of the concept of AACs as a part of their new credit transfer scheme, temporarily called, “ACTFA” for future development of student mobility among ASEAN nations, particularly with AIMS and GMS-UC

3. ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting’s one working group recently included the concept of AACs as a part of proposal to the ministers’ meeting this fall. Under this proposal, AUN-ACTS is also a part of international comparison table with AACs.

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V. How is the New-UCTS better than the others in Asia?
Usefulness of New UCTS (=AACs)

1. New UCTS will allow many Asian institutions to transfer most of their credits on a one-to-one basis among themselves.

2. The proposal progresses to an even more developed (possible) conversion table below with Asian and other regions.
The Conversion of New-UCTS with Other Systems

The proposal continues to an even more developed (possible) conversion table below with Asian and other regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nations &amp; Systems</th>
<th>New-UCTS (Asia)</th>
<th>USA (2/3)</th>
<th>ECTS (Europe)</th>
<th>CLAR&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt; (Latin America)</th>
<th>CATS&lt;sup&gt;13&lt;/sup&gt; (UK)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit Conversion</strong></td>
<td>1 UCTS (=AACs)</td>
<td>≧1 credit</td>
<td>≧1.5 ECTS</td>
<td>≧1.5 CLAR</td>
<td>≧3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student workload</strong></td>
<td>38-48 hours</td>
<td>≧45 hours</td>
<td>37.5-45 hours</td>
<td>37.5-45 hours</td>
<td>Converted from ECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching hours</strong>*</td>
<td>13-16 hours</td>
<td>≧15~16 hours</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This chart requires more detailed explanations regarding each indicator
Practicality, Limit and Further Challenge

1. **PRACTICALITY**
   Simple conversion of credits with not only other Asian & Pacific universities, but also universities throughout the world (at least over 100 nations)

2. **LIMIT & FURTHER CHALLENGE**
   No function exists to measure the level of difficulty or the equivalency of course contents by itself.

   Thus, we need transparency, compatibility, and quality assurance of teaching curriculums, especially using New-UCTS based upon “Student workload” and “Learning Outcomes” effectively.

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VI. What are the next step for student mobility with a new-UCTS in Asia and Pacific region?
Future Tasks (1)

1. Promotion of “student’s workload” to measure academic credits

2. Utilize the concept of New-UCTS (=AACs) for internationalization of Higher Education

3. Use “learning outcomes” with New-UCTS to show details how students acquire new knowledge
Future Tasks (2)

4. Improve the transparency with detailed information, (e.g., information package & syllabus)

5. Use a study plan form (e.g., Learning agreement)

6. Improve internal quality assurance and provide diploma supplement type of information to show how and what kind of knowledge and skill students acquired
THANK YOU

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Glossary

1. **UMAP**: University Mobility in Asia and Pacific
2. **UCTS**: UMAP Credit Transfer Scheme
3. **AACs**: Asian Academic Credits
4. **AUN**: ASEAN University Network
5. **AUN’s ACTS**: ASEAN Credit Transfer System
6. **ASEAN**: Association of Southeast Asian Nations
7. **AIMS**: ASEAN International Mobility for Student Programs (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam), [formerly M-I-T project]
8. **GMS-UC**: Great Mekong Subregion-University Consortium
9. **ACTFA**: Academic Credit Transfer Framework for Asia
10. **ECTS**: European Credit Transfer System
11. **SEAMEO-RIHED**: Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization-Regional Center for Higher Education
12. **CLAR**: Latin American Reference Credit
13. **CATS**: Credit for Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (in UK)
Some References on Credit Transfer Systems


Some Recommended References

