

TO: Howard Waltman
FROM: Elsie Cunningham
DATE: July 14, 1959
SUBJECT: Ph.D. Participants (#224 -- Ref: #151)

Please find below the answers briefly stated to the questions you raise in your memo No. 151:

1. Mrs. Bach-Lan indicated that she intended to take only one course in a letter to us dated May 25th. Please find attached a thermofax copy of the letter I sent to her on June 15th vis-a-vis the same subject. She recently wrote indicating that she was taking the following two courses:

American Political Ideas and Institutions
The American Party System

I received a letter from Mrs. Bach-Lan with a rather involved explanation as to why she received an incomplete grade in the one course where she took the examination. Included in her explanation were the problems of her daughter's schooling, her housing, her health (she had to visit the dentist several times to have an extraction), and the fact that she felt that 15 credits were too much to carry during her first semester in the states. She is intending to take four courses in the winter semester.

2. Cao Toan is only carrying Statistical Methods during the summer session.
3. Tran Qui Than is still enrolled at Cornell but since there is no summer school, he has returned to Columbia with a list of reading assigned by his faculty advisors to be done during the summer months. He will definitely return to Cornell for the fall semester.

As I understand it, the Committee for Scholarships for those people continuing to study in the United States will meet in September.

cc: Stanley Gabis

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIETNAM ADVISORY GROUP

MAILING ADDRESS : MSU-USOM
AMERICAN EMBASSY
SAIGON — VIETNAM

CABLE ADDRESS : MICHGOVBUR

July 15, 1959

PHS
GENERAL OFFICE:

137, DUONG PASTEUR

TELEPH. NUMBER : 22.022-21.928

SAIGON : 3 8 3 - 3 8 4



TO : Miss Elsie Cunningham
FROM : Mr. Howard L. Waltman *HW*
SUBJECT: No. 157 - Ph.D. Participants

In reviewing the course work of the Ph.D. Participants, I find that there are courses taken for which we haven't any grades. Would you kindly investigate and see why only two marks were received for Mr. Toan during the spring semester? In addition we have not received marks for Mrs. Bach-Lan or Mr. Xuan for their last semester's work.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EAST LANSING

VIETNAM PROJECT • OFFICE OF COORDINATOR

July 30, 1959

To: Howard Waltman
From: Stanley K. Sheinbaum
Subject: Cao Toan Report

Considerable damage may have been done to Cao Toan in your June 16 report to Rector Thong. Every step possible should be taken to rectify this. The D grade for Econ-History of the U. S. which is still recorded in your summary of the Ph. D. candidates was in error. Carter Goodrich had written on June 11 of this, and a copy of his letter had been forwarded to Saigon along with Elsie Cunningham's June 16 memo #202.

Under the circumstances I do not think that we should as strongly consider recalling Mr. Cao Toan as per the recommendation #6 on page 2 of your July 16 memorandum.

The summation of grades in general on the Ph. D. candidates is being seriously questioned by Dr. Gabis and myself. Aside from this slip on Cao Toan whereby much harm can be done, we really wonder if grades do provide an accurate guide to the Rector and his staff for the progress of the doctoral candidates. I would appreciate your discussing this with Lloyd Musolf and Ralph Smuckler and give us the reactions.

SKS/ap

attachments

cc: Gabis
Cunningham ✓

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EAST LANSING

VIETNAM PROJECT • OFFICE OF COORDINATOR

July 31, 1959

To: Ralph H. Smuckler
From: Stanley K. Sheinbaum
Subject: Ph. D. Candidates at MSU

I was joltingly made aware yesterday that a serious problem exists with the Ph. D. candidates on campus. One facet of the issue stems from their impression of how an MSU degree is perceived in Saigon. From what I can determine so far, this is not a matter of a lack of confidence in the standards of MSU. To some extent they feel that upon return to Saigon the perception by others equates their study at MSU with the study or training at MSU of "shortcourse" participants who stay here three, six, or nine months. On campus, Ph. D. candidates are treated by the Project with a difference and with respect; they are given independence in planning their own work to an extent not given to other participants. They receive normal advisory support from their major professors. After all, if they are doctoral candidates we must impute to them a certain level of maturity and intelligence. The real problem comes in their fear of being confused in the minds of their colleagues back in Vietnam with the other participants.

I think the situation is further compounded by their having been brought over in the same status with Bui Dich. This was an error of the grossest sort, and I am increasingly surprised despite the many forwarnings in his case he was sent in the doctoral category. He has neither the maturity nor motivation in the academic sense for what is involved. There are strong reasons to believe that the other candidates resent being classified with him.

The confusion with the "short-course" participants is further emphasized because those participants receive a certificate. Please give some careful thought to the continuation of issuing those certificates. As we all know,

Dr. Ralph H. Smuckler

-2-

July 31, 1959

they are meaningless documents. It is true that the recipients receive some ego satisfaction from them. However, I am almost convinced that the gain is greatly offset by the damage done to any other MSU certificate or degree as a result.

The specific issue at hand arises in the case of Mr. Phat. He has requested permission to transfer to another university; given his frame of mind and other complicating considerations, we will probably grant him that permission if he persists. Although there may be a slight loss of time in his advancement toward the degree as a result, I am reasonably convinced that it would be in his interest to transfer as well as that of the Project because of various relationships on campus. However, I think he'll be persuaded to remain, but the possibility of a shift will continue for a while.

SKS/ap

cc: Gebis ✓
Cunningham

July 31, 1959

Memorandum For Record

FROM: Howard L. Waltman

SUBJECT: Review of Ph.D. Program, July 29, 1959
Meeting attended by:

Rector Vu Quoc Thong
Dr. Smuckler
Dr. Musolf
Mr. Van
Mr. Waltman

On Wednesday morning, July 29, the above group met to review the Ph.D. program.

The basis for the review was my memorandum, of July 16, to rector Thong and Dr. Smuckler. At the meeting it was decided that we would:

1. Reject Mrs. Hue's application for a scholarship.
2. Award a grant to Mr. Xuyen, provided that he agrees to minor in Sociology, Political Science, or Public Administration.
3. Award grants to Messrs. Long and Thuyet provided that they receive the required clearance by the Committee on Overseas Studies. Mr. Thuyet's award shall be contingent, also, upon his agreeing to minor in Political Science or Public Administration. Some concern was expressed over Mr. Long's future plans, and the sincerity of his intention to return to the N.I.A. It was agreed that this question should be resolved by the N.I.A. Rector Thong said it was being investigated by the appropriate agencies.
4. Award one additional grant for doctoral study, providing that all three of the people presently under consideration for scholarships eventually study under our program. The

additional candidate should be able to major in Public Administration and minor in Sociology. The N.I.A. will initiate a search for such a candidate.

5. Require all candidates in the United States to complete their dissertations prior to returning to Vietnam.

6. Recall Mr. Dich in December if his work does not show considerable improvement and if he is denied admission to graduate school.

7. Recall Cao Toan at the end of his year if his work during the next six months does not show considerable improvement.

8. Maintain regular contacts with the Ph.D. participants. Responsibility was assigned to Professors Quynh and Hach. It was agreed all Ph.D. participants would be instructed to submit periodic reports to the Institute.

9. Instruct Professor Quynh to visit all of the Ph.D. candidates now in the United States, for the purpose of reporting their progress to the Institute and reassuring them in their work. Rector Thong stated that he would instruct Mr. Quynh to do this and asked that Dr. Smuckler inform the Coordinator.

10. Plan and take the necessary action to integrate the Ph.D. candidates into the faculty of the N.I.A. upon their return or sooner when possible. Rector Thong indicated that integration prior to their return is unlikely, although he did not foresee any problem after they had completed their degree work.

11. Encourage all candidates to work to their maximum capacity, and complete their degrees in the shortest possible time. The Institute will encourage the participants to do so.

It was agreed also that Miss Kim Sa would return to Vietnam prior to resuming her studies at the University of Philippines. For the first few months she would be on the MSUG payroll, at a salary equivalent to her future compensation at the Institute. The Institute will advise us as to what her salary will be.

At the earliest possible time (probably three months), she will be integrated into the Institute staff. Miss Kim Sa will work in the Library under the immediate supervision of Miss Heyman until Miss Heyman's departure, and then

the general supervision of Dr. Finkle.

Dr. Smuckler indicated at this time that Miss Kim Sa could not be considered a completely trained Librarian. Her age and lack of practical experience make it doubtful that she could assume responsibility for the operation of the Library. However, under adequate supervision, and with a reduction in the amount of materials arriving during this period, she should be able to do the job until Miss Ti's return in May. It was agreed that Miss Kim Sa will return to the Philippines to complete her degree after Miss Ti's return, providing she displays the interest and professional potential to justify the additional 2 year training investment.

Elvin
WGS

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIETNAM ADVISORY GROUP

MAILING ADDRESS : MSU-USOM
AMERICAN EMBASSY
SAIGON — VIETNAM

CABLE ADDRESS : MICHGOVBUR

GENERAL OFFICE :
137, DUONG PASTEUR

TELEPH. NUMBER : 22.022 - 21.528
SAIGON : 3 8 3 - 3 8 4

August 3, 1959

TO: Miss Elsie Cunningham
FROM: Mr. Howard L. Waltman *HW*
SUBJECT: No. 162 - PH.D. Participants

Attached you will find a record of the recent meeting held on the Ph.D. program.

The decisions recorded in the memorandum are self-explanatory.

Will you kindly contact Mr. Xuyen at the earliest possible time and inform us as to his reaction to the condition imposed on his grant. Please note also the decision to allow Professor Quynh to take a week or two in visiting the Ph.D. participants.

cc: Dr. Musolf

Attachments:

Please discuss with Quynh.



August 7, 1959

TO: Elsie Cunningham
FROM: Howard L. Waltman
SUBJECT: No. 164 - Participant Nguyen Duy Xuan

What date was Mr. Xuan actually transferred from USOM to MSU?



TO: Howard Waltman
FROM: Elsie Cunningham
DATE: August 12, 1959
SUBJECT: Ph.D. Participants - Ref. No. 162 (#252)

With regard to the minutes of the meeting at the N.I.A., we are wondering exactly how much of the information given in this memo is to be released to the Ph.D. participants. We particularly had in mind those general requirements concerning No. 5 -- the completion of dissertations, and No.'s nine and ten. We presume that the information about particular individuals is not to be revealed.

Since I had no idea of how long before Mr. Quynh would hear directly from the N.I.A. regarding his new role with respect to visiting the Ph.D. participants, I sent him a letter listing those Ph.D.'s currently in New York City. He is due to leave New York next week. In addition, I shall arrange a stopover in East Lansing for Quynh and will bring Ky from Ann Arbor for a meeting with him. He has already seen Xuan when he was in Nashville during the early part of July. I do not believe it is necessary for him to return there.



Miss Elsie Cunningham

August 12, 1959

Mr. Howard L. Waltman

Ms 165 Reference your Memorandum No. 169
Buu Dich Records

Attached are the records you requested in your memorandum. It took us quite some time to track down the grades for his baccalaureate of 1957. I am sorry for the delay and hope that these records assist in resolving Mr. Dich's position.

Enc. 2

TO: Howard Waltman
FROM: Elsie Cunningham
DATE: August 18, 1959
SUBJECT: Ph.D. Participants (#259)

Please find attached the preliminary planning on the Graduate Economics Seminar.

It is anticipated that Dr. Gabis will meet with the Political Science and Public Administration people at the Political Science Convention in Washington during the second week of September.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

VIETNAM ADVISORY GROUP

MAILING ADDRESS : MSU-USOM
AMERICAN EMBASSY
SAIGON — VIETNAM

GENERAL OFFICE:
137, DUONG PASTEUR

CABLE ADDRESS : MICHGOVBUR

August 19, 1959

TELEPH. NUMBER : 22.022 - 21.528
SAIGON : 3 8 3 - 3 8 4

TO: The Coordinator

FROM: Howard L. Waltman *HLW*

SUBJECT: No. 173 - Your Memo: "Ph.D. Candidates at MSU" and "Cao Toan Report".



I would like to comment on several points made in the above two memoranda.

1. The confusion with the "short course" participants anticipated by the Ph.D. candidates at MSU is certainly significant. The certificate presented to the "short course" people is in certain ways a meaningless document. However, it is not meaningless to many of the returned participants and their supervisors. Personnel Administration in Vietnam is so heavily diploma oriented that documents bearing the slightest resemblance to bon-a-fide, meaningful diplomas often assume an importance that is difficult to imagine. This year we presented the diplomas by sending them with letters to the Secretary of State under whom the participants work. The letters reviewed the training for which the certificate was being awarded and asked that they present them to the returned participants. Several recipients of these certificates have thanked me and mentioned that the diplomas have been placed in their dosiers at the Fonction Publique. I do not know whether this has or will result in positive results, but it certainly has not just been passed over.

I would urge that we continue granting certificates to the participants and not stop in anticipation of the 2 or 3 Ph.D. Degrees which will eventually be granted. By the time our Ph.D.s at MSU are ready to receive their diplomas, The degree, I hope, will mean a more to them than the piece, of paper.

2. I would like to examine your observation on the damage done to Cao Toan by my report to the Rector on the Ph.D. program.

The first report from East Lansing on Cao Toan indicated that he received a "C+" and a "D" in his two courses, without

indicating which mark was for which course. Carter Goodrich's letter indicated that a mistake had been made (again without indicating the course). From the size of the mistake, it appeared as though the "C+" should become a "B-" rather than the "D" or "B".

The important issue is to consider how we can improve feedback on the Ph.D.s, because grades do not, as you suggest, provide accurate guide to the progress of the Ph.D. participants. We did it this time to stimulate discussion and a program review with the NIA. We do not intend to submit marks regularly.

The alternative is a more subjective, personal evaluation of their work and efforts. We do not have sufficient information to do this, and I question whether you have the facilities for gathering it. If you can this would certainly be more desirable. Feedback on the Ph.D.s is especially important, because the Institute must think of the Ph.D.s as theirs, since integration (most of the Ph.D.'s are not NIA employees), and eventual utilization depends on it. Presenting progress reports and consulting on decisions is one way of getting involvement.

It is unlikely that there will be disagreement on people presently in the States, so that you need not to be concerned about Cao Toan being hurt. If his work improves during the next six months and you feel that he should continue, the NIA will go along with an extension.

3. I am surprised to learn that Phat is considering a transfer to another institution. I would like additional background on this if you have it. Part of my surprise is that I have had regular and personal correspondence with Phat since his departure, and there has never been a word indicating that he was unhappy at MSU. I have written to him asking if there are any problems.

4. Mr. Buu Dich was not sent in the same capacity as the other Ph.D. candidates. He was sent with the understanding that if he was not accepted as a graduate student, or if his work was not satisfactory, that he would be considered a regular participant and returned at the end of the year. The NIA and Mr. Dich were fully appraised of his status, and the reasons for it.

August 19, 1959

To: Howard Waltman
From: Stanley Gabis
Subject: Reporting System for Ph. D. Participants

Several of the participants on campus and elsewhere have received a letter from Rector Thong instructing them to report to the Institute on a monthly basis regarding their work. It is Elsie's feeling, as well as my own, that it would be far better to have the participants submit reports to Rector Thong at the end of each academic quarter or semester, whichever is the case. I think monthly reports to Rector Thong would tend to take on the character of routine performance which would have little meaning and would end up as an imposition on all parties concerned.

Please be advised that the information concerning Rector Thong's request for monthly reports has come to me unofficially. I am sure you will appreciate far better than I what is involved in approaching Rector Thong on this matter. The key point is that we would want to avoid any feeling on Rector Thong's part that the participants have violated his confidence.

There is the added problem that the participants who are requested to render this report are not considered members of the NIA staff, but are still considered accountable to the agencies from which they came. This has caused some degree of confusion among several of the participants.

There is another matter: we have been giving some thought to restructuring relationships which have existed between the Department of Political Science and the Vietnam Project. In recent months it has become apparent that in planning the work of advanced degree participants that there are a number of decisions affecting them which can best be made within the immediate environs of the Department. As an example, Mr. Phat desires very much to by-pass the Master's degree and work directly on the Ph. D. This is strictly a Departmental decision. Furthermore, all graduate students in the Department are under the general supervision of the graduate advisory who, incidentally, is now Bruce Smith. What this boils down to is that in the past the degree participants have tended to develop a dual identification with respect to their academic program. Some confusion and misunderstanding has developed, and we are trying to remedy this. Our present

Howard Waltman

-2-

August 19, 1959

thinking is that academic program responsibilities for degree participants might be more effectively discharged directly within the Department rather than having these responsibilities divided between the Department and the Coordinator's office. I will keep you informed as to developments and would be glad to receive any reaction from Saigon.

STG/ap

cc: Smuckler

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EAST LANSING

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC SERVICE

SCHOOL OF POLICE ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY

TO: Stanley T. Gabis
FROM: Elsie Cunningham *ELC*
DATE: August 19, 1959
SUBJECT: Ph. D. Participants

In the report of the N.I.A. meeting regarding Ph.D. participants, one of the points noted is to the effect that the Institute will maintain regular contacts with the Ph. D. participants through Professors Nguyen Quang Quynh and Hach.

Prior to this meeting Waltman suggested that some members of the N.I.A. staff be appointed to maintain regular contacts with the Ph.D.

Waltman also suggested that the participants be requested to submit periodic reports. However, there was no mention made in either Waltman's recommendation nor in the minutes of the N.I.A. meeting indicating that this would be a monthly report. Several of the participants have already received an official letter from Dr. Thong instructing them to write to the Institute on a monthly basis regarding their work. It would seem more appropriate and less of an imposition if the Ph. D. were requested to submit a report at the end of each academic term. In addition, perhaps we can alleviate some of the pressure on the participants by forwarding portions of their report to you.

There is the added problem that none of the Ph. D. can yet be considered members of the N.I.A. staff. Therefore, in actual fact they are still responsible to the agencies from which they came.

Elsie
J 29

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIETNAM ADVISORY GROUP

MAILING ADDRESS: MSU-USOM
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CABLE ADDRESS: MICHGOVBUR

GENERAL OFFICE:
137, DUONG PASTEUR

TELEPH. NUMBER: 22.022-21.928
SAIGON: 383-384

August 25, 1959

TO: Elsie Cunningham
FROM: Howard L. Waltman *HLW*
SUBJECT: No. 177 - Ph.D. Participants (Reference your memo
No. 252)

Our decision to require all Ph.D's to complete their dissertations prior to departure seeks to avoid unfinished degrees because of dissertations. This rule should be judiciously enforced to avoid creating the impressions that the Ph.D. candidates have an unlimited amount of time to complete their degrees. Three years should remain the objective and if additional time is needed the Coordinator ~~office~~ has the prerogative to recommend an extension.

You cannot do anything at this time regarding the integration of the Ph.D. candidates into the NIA faculty. This matter will have to be handled from this end.



File

August 31, 1959

TO: Elsie Cunningham
FROM: Howard L. Waltman
SUBJECT: No. 184 - Ph.D. Participant Mr. Pham Van Thuyet

Mr. Pham Van Thuyet, after consultation with Milt Taylor and Frank Childs, has decided to apply to Harvard, M.I.T. and Stanford. Will you kindly write and get these application forms. It would probably expedite things if they sent them to you and you forwarded them here, because last year some of schools kept me waiting 2 and 3 months.

cc: Musolf

Elsie has original af



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

VIETNAM ADVISORY GROUP

MAILING ADDRESS: MSU-USOM
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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADVISOR

GENERAL OFFICE:

137, DUONG PASTEUR

TELEPH. NUMBER: 22.022-21.528

21.891-21.991

September 2, 1959

TO: Coordinator

FROM: Chief Advisor

SUBJECT: Reporting System for Ph.D. Participants



You have received some information from Howie Waltman in response to your August 19 memorandum on this subject. Let me add Lloyd Musolf's comments and my own. We agree that the department should have academic program responsibility. Certainly they should come under the jurisdiction of a regular academic advisor although I assume they will have to continue to rely on some contacts with the Vietnam Project office on financial and similar administrative arrangements. Lloyd Musolf points out that the main advantage aside from simplicity to having the participants responsible to the department is the fact that in this way they will not be coddled or expect to be given special privileges.

I am afraid that Rector Thong's request for monthly reports from all participants is an overeager response to suggestions we have made to him from time to time. That is, we have wanted him to become active in contacting Ph.D. participants since they are to be future faculty members at the Institute. Evidently, his reaction has been to go all the way and overdo his involvement, which is unfortunate. I think for the most part this type of request from Rector Thong can be ignored by all but the Ph.D. participants. I hope that from your end you are encouraging them to keep up an active interest in the NIA and to correspond actively with future faculty colleagues, the Rector and Vice Rector, and others who might keep them continually informed about the developments of the Institute. I do not feel this has to be on a month to month basis, but an occasional contact would be advisable. I assume that Professor Quynh is contacting the Ph.D. participants before he returns to Saigon. Have you arranged this?

Annex
RHS/dcm

September 11, 1959

To: Ralph H. Smuckler
From: Stanley T. Gabis
Subject: Mrs. Nguyen thi Hue and her Ph. D. Aspirations ✓

A short time ago you notified us that Mr. Hue's application for Ph. D. support had been rejected by the NIA. You will recall that Mrs. Hue has been studying at Ann Arbor under Ferrel Heady. She is definitely receiving her Master's degree in public administration in the near future and is regarded by Ferrel Heady as having good prospects to finish her Ph. D. with emphasis in public administration. Heady thinks Mrs. Hue compares well with the average run of American graduate students at Michigan and very well in contrast to foreign students. She is presently doing intern work in the Governor's office in Lansing and her supervisor, Jerry Miller, reports very favorably on her work. I understand that she did very well when she was in Puerto Rico under the auspices of the Asia Foundation.

I am attaching the original of her letter to me in which she indicates that she's willing to commit herself to serve with the NIA upon completing her degree. I strongly recommend that the case of Mrs. Hue be reopened with a view of providing her financial support to complete her Doctorate. I have talked with her and found her to be energetic, intelligent, and articulate. From my conversation with Heady and Miller the time estimates which she includes in her letter for completing her degree are realistic.

STG/ap

attachment

September 11, 1959

To: Ralph H. Smucker
From: Stanley T. Gabis
Subject: Ph. D. Participants

I refer to your memo of September 2, 1959, subject "Reporting System for Ph. D. Participants". I think we are in complete agreement concerning the role of the Project in relation to participants registered in the Departments. This matter was really not clear at the time I became Assistant Coordinator. I found myself with academic program responsibilities and was not able to discharge them adequately because of my remoteness from the Department. I agree with you that the Vietnam Project Office should confine itself to "financial and similar administrative arrangements".

We shall do all we can to encourage participants to correspond actively with future faculty colleagues, the Rector, and the Vice Rector. Do you think that there may be status problems which may hamper an effective reporting system?

I saw Professor Quynh just before he left for Saigon, and he informed me that he saw all of the participants. We had a long talk about this. I had the feeling that he was generally satisfied with their work here and that his judgments were very discerning. As I mentioned in a previous memo, we went into the case of Phat's transfer, and he approved.

STG/ap

cc: Waltman
Cunningham