Two of my papers that describe a research work were presented at the 8th Pacific Rim Conference on Education (PRiCE) in Hokkaido University of Education, Japan, from November 4-5, 2017, (a) Exploring Secondary Cambodian STEM Teachers’ Perceptions about Inquiry-based Science Instruction through a Professional Development Institute and (b) Global Diets: How Do Preservice Teachers’ of Thailand and the U.S. Understand it from a Sociocultural Perspective?

As an organizing institution, ISU has served until the 7th Conference and withdrew its executive membership due to various reasons, e.g., distance and low attendees. However, ISU encouraged faculty members to continue to attend, so I was able to attend this year with the help of COE Research Dissemination Travel Award. I appreciate the financial support of COE. I arrived at Hokkaido on November 3 in the evening and had a chance to chat with some of the international colleagues that I met last year and refresh the key points of the presentation. This year’s theme of the annual meeting was the “Cooperation in Education across Regions and the World,” to which my papers are relevant as I have collaborated with faculty members in Thailand and Cambodia.

The first paper on STEM education in Thailand, as a collaborative research, was presented at 2:00 pm on Nov. 4, 2017. I had 11 attendees in the room and had a conversation about a model of STEM education in different cultures. With my long-time collaborator Dr. Chanphorn Prommas at Burapha University, Thailand, I studied how Cambodian high school teachers understand about inquiry-based instruction through a professional development institute. Dr. Prommas and I went to Cambodia with the help of Minister of Education of Cambodia and provided a workshop on STEM education. Thirty three inservice teachers participated in this study. As part of the study, a two-day professional development was provided high school STEM teachers at Kampong ChheuTeal Institute of Technology in Cambodia, in June 2016. This study reports the results of their understanding and self-efficacy.

The second paper presented on Nov. 5, 2017 the results of a small CTLT’s grant about global diets, which compared preservice elementary teachers’ understanding about global diets in Thailand (N=28; all females) and the U.S. (N=13, all females). This research was also a collaboration research work with Dr. Prommas, which was uniquely designed through multiple conversations through technologies including SNS and instant messages of smartphone. We had ten attendees from five countries, which is typical at this conference. Global diets data included what college students eat every day for 7 days in each location where one is very typical of tropical food and the other is typically western food, which are so different socio-culturally. This study shed on how preservice teachers understand about global diets now moving to unified menu rather than being diversified. For example, ketchup and cheese are seen on shelves at almost all grocery stores around the world. We interviewed four preservice teachers’ understanding about global diets from the socio-cultural perspective.
A couple of benefits that I received as follows: First, both of my research papers were the productivity of a collaborative research with one Thailand faculty member. These two research presentations will bring me great potential to build a professional community network among teacher educators around the Pacific Rim countries. Second, attending PRiCE assisted me in achieving the goal of collaborative endeavor through dialogues, collaborations, and discussion. As a long-time member of this conference, since its inception in 2006, the conference has been invaluable to my increased knowledge and wisdom about global education. At the same time, the conference benefited me in leading, expanding, and deepening the dialogue of teacher education around the world by establishing a network among Asian educators, which helped lead to Global Education as a fulfillment of the COE’s 5-year strategic plan. Third, the PRiCE Conference brought an opportunity for me to gather critical information about the community’s efforts on teacher development in Asian countries. Both research benefited audiences who are interested in teacher professional development innovation at the conference.

In sum, attending the 8th Pacific Rim Conference on Education in Japan brought about the following important benefits. (1) I met a professor from Hong Kong who brought his graduate student who studies special education. He was interested in research methodology and STEM education. I also met a professor who studied about the policy of STEM education in Japan, which brought me a new interest, so I spent more time than any other presentation. Finally, the scholar who visited me at ISU for further information and visited CeMAST for getting information about STEM curriculum. Like these cases, meeting people at the conference created a worldwide professional network for collaboration in various capacities including research, invited speeches and lectures. (2) Several of the attendees at my first presentation, from Japan and Thailand and Hong Kong showed interests and asked how the US model of STEM education worked in a different culture. This question brought a critical aspect to my research of STEM education as my research has been done in foreign countries. Opportunities of sharing ideas and expanding critical dialogues about problems and issues of STEM Education and teacher professional development with scholars from different countries are an important benefit because it brought me fresh ideas and relationship that could lead to potential scholarly productivity. I appreciate the COE Research Dissemination Award that made it possible for me to receive the benefits.