

## INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN ASIAN CULTURES AND THEOLOGIES (IASACT)



## THEOLOGIES OF AGING: INTERFAITH WISDOM FOR FLOURISHING IN LATER LIFE

### Program Overview

IASACT 2026 invites faculty members from across Asia to engage in a transformative exploration of aging through the lenses of theology, ethics, spirituality, and cultural practice. The program blends two weeks of online mentoring with two weeks of immersive, in-person residency at Payap University, located in the spiritual heart of Chiang Mai.

### Program Dates

- Online Orientation & Mentoring: June 1–14, 2026
- In-Person Residency at Payap University: June 20 (Arrival) – July 3, 2026 (Departure)

### Program Objectives

- Examine religious interpretations of aging and elderhood.
- Foster interfaith dialogue on care, dignity, and spiritual continuity.
- Support scholarly research and publication on aging.
- Build a vibrant learning community for ongoing collaboration.
- Integrate whole person education into aging studies.

### Program Structure

- Pre-Residency (Online): One-on-one mentoring, orientation, and research paper drafting.
- In-Person Residency: Plenary lectures, reflection groups, writing workshops, cultural immersion (temple visits, artisan villages), and interfaith dialogue.

### Eligibility

Faculty members (any discipline) from Asia with interest in aging, theology, interfaith dialogue, and whole person education.

### Expected Outcomes

- Research paper for publication
- Lifelong learning community and alumni network.
- Pedagogical resources for integrating aging themes in curricula.
- Enhanced visibility of IASACT as a United Board initiative.

## Sub-Themes for Proposals

Applicants are invited to submit abstracts on one of the following inter-disciplinary sub-themes:

1. Sacred Time and the Spiritual Arc of Life
  - Exploring how religious traditions interpret the journey of aging and the meaning of time in later life.
2. Intergenerational Ethics and Theological Memory
  - Examining the transmission of values, stories, and ethical frameworks across generations within faith communities.
3. Elder Care and Compassion in Religious Practice
  - Investigating models of care, dignity, and compassion for elders in various religious contexts.
4. Aging and Whole Person Education
  - Integrating spiritual, emotional, and intellectual dimensions of aging into educational and scholarly practices.
5. Theologies of Mortality and Legacy
  - Reflecting on beliefs about mortality, legacy, and the spiritual significance of life's final stages.
6. Gender, Age, and Spiritual Agency
  - Analyzing how gender intersects with aging and spiritual leadership or agency in faith communities.

## Why Payap University?

Payap University offers a spiritually rich, interfaith environment with a Divinity School deeply connected to the United Board. The McGilvary College of Divinity of Payap University was established in 1889 and prepares quality leadership for the Church of Christ in Thailand. McGilvary offers Bachelor and Master degrees in the fields of theology, philosophy, and comparative religions. Its campus culture, hospitality, and proximity to temples and cultural centers make it an ideal setting for theological reflection and cultural engagement.

## Application Process

- Submit an abstract proposal (max 500 words) on one of the six sub-themes.
- Selection will be based on originality, relevance, and interdisciplinary approach.
- The online application is now open and closes on **January 31, 2026**.
- Selection results will be announced in **February 2026**.
- For selected participants, the United Board covers local program costs, including meals, training, and accommodation for **June 20 – July 3, 2026 (13 nights)**.
- Travel costs (airfare, visa, insurance) must be arranged by participants or their institutions. However, travel subsidies are available.



### Apply Now

Abstract submission  
(up to 500 words).

**BEGIN YOUR APPLICATION →**

#### Dean

**Dr Maher Spurgeon**

Consultant, Director for South Asia  
United Board for Christian Higher  
Education in Asia

#### Associate Dean

**Dr Duangsuda Sribuaai**

Dean of McGilvary College of Divinity  
Payap University

