

## Improving Personal Mastery Through a Nurturing Program for First Year Students at a Private University in Chiang Mai, Thailand

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### ABSTRACT

*Student dropout rates during the first year of university are a problem globally, and particularly in Thailand, where some research has highlighted dropout rates of up to 35%. This paper aims to tackle university dropout rates in the first year of university at a private university in Thailand. The paper argues that general education courses provide an ideal platform from which to launch a nurturing program aimed at curtailing student dropout rates. Two theories of personal mastery and mastery learning are investigated as potential approaches to designing a nurturing program that can be used to assist students in their transition from high school to university, and in turn reduce the chance of dropping out of university. Results show how the nurturing program was designed based on an investigation of classroom problems and discussions with experts. Example activities and lesson plans from the resulting mastery leaning nurturing program are shown, before introducing future work which will go a step further to analyze the effectiveness of this program. It is envisioned that this work could be built upon to improve students' personal mastery and lifelong learning, which could eventually have effects on university dropout rates and wider society.*

**Keywords:** Personal mastery, Mastery learning, General education, Dialogue, Dropout rate