

Newly Concluded University-Level and Faculty-Level Exchange Agreements

Gifu University Concluded a MOU with Universitas Sebelas Maret



Gifu University concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Universitas Sebelas Maret, Republic of Indonesia, on July 8, 2013.

Founded in 1976, Universitas Sebelas Maret is situated in an ancient city called Solo (present-day Surakarta City) in Central Java, Indonesia. Universitas Sebelas Maret is one of the most popular universities in Indonesia. It has well-developed facilities for students, including dormitories, a medical and public health center, a library, and sports and welfare facilities. Also, with highly advanced information facilities and equipment in place, the university offers "e-learning" programs in each department via the Internet.

Before the conclusion of this university-level MOU, the Faculty of Applied Biological Sciences at Gifu University signed an Agreement of Academic Exchange with the Faculty of Agriculture at Universitas Sebelas Maret on March 28, 2012. Also, the United Graduate School of Agricultural Science at Gifu University entered into a MOU with the Graduate School at Universitas Sebelas Maret on March 30, 2012. Since the conclusion of these two agreements, both Gifu University and Universitas Sebelas Maret have been actively engaged in holding collaborative lectures and courses for undergraduate and graduate students.

With the latest signing of the MOU with Universitas Sebelas Maret, the number of Gifu University's sister universities overseas now stands at 44.



The Faculty of Engineering at Gifu University Concluded Agreements with the School of Engineering at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Spain and the Faculty of Science and Technology at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia



The Faculty of Engineering at Gifu University entered into an Agreement on Student and Faculty Exchanges with the School of Engineering at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Spain, on July 9, 2013. They also concluded an Agreement on Faculty and Student Exchanges with the Faculty of Science and Technology at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (The National University of Malaysia) on January 22, 2014.

Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, consists of three major schools: Social Sciences and Law, Humanities, and Engineering. It is a research-oriented university where approximately 20% of graduates go on to graduate school every year. Most of the classes are conducted in English to meet the requirements of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA, known as the "Bologna Process"). In the field of engineering, students are able to study a wide range of courses such as aerospace, bioengineering, energy, and electrical engineering.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia was founded in 1970 through the enthusiasm and support of the Malaysian citizens. Located in Bangi, Selangor, about 35 kilometers southeast from the capital city of Kuala Lumpur, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia is one of the five public research universities recognized by the Malaysian government. Since its foundation, the university has been highly praised for its research and academic programs, its involvement in local communities, and its internationalization efforts both at home and abroad. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia has a total of thirteen faculties, of which the Faculty of Science and Technology is the largest.

It is hoped that the latest signing of those faculty-level agreements will invigorate educational and research activities through lively exchanges between faculty, staff, and students in the future.



From Gifu University Overseas Offices

Dhaka Office (Bangladesh) is Relocated to the University of Dhaka

The Gifu University Dhaka Office was established in August 2009 within an office building in Dhaka, Bangladesh. In July 2013, the office was relocated to the University of Dhaka, one of the sister universities of Gifu University.

The newly installed wooden signboard bearing Japanese meaning "Gifu University Dhaka Office" at the new Dhaka Office was created through the cooperation of the Kurayama Forest Education Research Site (in Gero City, Gifu Prefecture) of the Faculty of Applied Biological Sciences at Gifu University. The signboard presentation ceremony was held at Gifu University on July 3, 2013, during the Second UGSAS-GU* Roundtable & Symposium, in which eleven universities from South and Southeast Asia participated. Dr. Akira Komiya, Director of the Office for Academic Globalization, directly handed the signboard to Dr. Shahid Akhtar Hossin, Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Dhaka.

With the relocation of the Dhaka Office to the University of Dhaka, we anticipate using the office for more educational and research exchanges in the future.

*UGSAS-GU: The United Graduate School of Agricultural Science, Gifu University



Introducing the Activities of the Gifu University Shanghai Office (China)

By Office Representative : **Dr. Yu Ping**



The Gifu University Shanghai Office was established in Shanghai, China, on May 11, 2009. The office has three main missions:

1) the promotion of international academic exchanges among Gifu University and universities and research organizations in China, 2) the facilitation and implementation of collaborative educational programs between Gifu University and its sister universities in China, and 3) the arrangement and execution of collaborative and cooperation activities that Gifu University considers necessary.

Since its establishment, the Shanghai Office has sent Gifu University's reference materials to many universities, senior high schools, Japanese language schools, and other institutions in China in the hopes of attracting more Chinese students to study at Gifu University. The office also has made a number of presentations at events in China such as the Japan Education Fair and the Study Japan Fair. Furthermore, the office provides Gifu University with information about prospective Chinese students wishing to study at Gifu University and provides support for Gifu University faculty and staff visiting Shanghai, China.

International Weeks in 2013

In fiscal year 2013, the Office for Academic Globalization held two International Weeks (Spring and Fall) following the first International Week held in 2012. In the International Week in Fall 2013, a variety of international exchange programs and events were arranged with the aim of turning students' interests toward the world affairs. We will continue to improve the quality of these programs in collaboration with each of the faculties and cooperating organizations to promote the internationalization of Gifu University.

International Week in Fall 2013

Poster Session (November 5-26)

Using a corner of the dining hall in the student cooperative, we held a poster session by international researchers and students studying at Gifu University.

Researchers and students from Iran, Spain, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Croatia introduced the beautiful landscapes, foods, and other aspects of their home countries through photographs posted on the multiple boards. Their impressions about people and life in Japan were also on display on the boards in both English and Japanese.



“Special Lounge” (November 18)

As a special edition of the monthly “English Lounge” held at Gifu University, a “Special Lounge” was held on November 18 for speaking Japanese, French, and Korean.

About 30 participants joined the group of their choice and studied the basics of the respective languages with the help of native speakers. International students also enjoyed speaking Japanese with the Japanese students.



Network Meeting with Local Companies (November 13)

In order to provide international students of Gifu University with opportunities to interact with local companies, a Network Meeting with Local Companies was co-organized by the Gifu Shinkin Bank Ltd.

A total of 15 companies in and around Gifu City attended and made presentations about their business operations at home and abroad. After the meeting, a reception was held for the companies' representatives, international students and Japanese students to exchange opinions and information with each other.



Network Meeting with International Exchange Support Organizations (November 20)

To express deep appreciation to the local companies and organizations that provide continued support to the international students studying at Gifu University and also to facilitate friendship among these organizations and our faculty, staff, and international students, the 17th Network Meeting with International Exchange Support Organizations was held on November 20 with representatives from local companies and support organizations.

At the meeting, Dr. Fumiaki Suzuki, Vice-Director of the Office for Academic Globalization, made a presentation entitled “Collaboration Between Universities and Regions in the Age of Internationalization.” At the reception afterward, an international student from Iran made a slide-show presentation about his home country that captured the interest of many participants.



“Lecture to Bridge the World” (November 15)

Mr. Eiji Hiranaka (currently a business advisor to the Business Division, Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation), who has many years of experience working at the Japanese Embassy in Indonesia and in the field of higher education, was invited as a guest speaker at the Gifu University “Lecture to Bridge the World.”

In his lecture entitled “Why Indonesia Now?” Mr. Hiranaka discussed a wide range of topics, from Indonesia's history, culture, and geographical features to its politics and economy. About 70 people from Gifu University and elsewhere attended and listened intently to his unique experiences and deep insights about Indonesia.



Potluck Party (November 22)

As the final event of the International Week in Fall 2013, the annual Potluck Party was held on November 22.

A total of 43 people enjoyed the party. Japanese students, international students and researchers, faculty and staff, and their families had a great time together sharing the dishes they brought in while speaking Japanese and many other languages. In everyone's favorite “Raffle Drawing” a total of 4,500 yen was collected and donated to the Japan Red Cross for the victims of Typhoon Haiyan, which hit the Philippines in November 2013.



Messages from International Students



My Life in Japan

Research Student from the Republic of Croatia, English Education Major,
Teacher Education Course, Faculty of Education By **Posta Silvija**

I came to Japan in October in 2012. I think that Japanese culture and life are very different from those in my home country, Croatia. I did not worry about life in Japan very much before coming to Japan, but I ended up encountering many surprises in Japan because of the vast differences in culture and life between Japan and Croatia.

In Croatia, I worked as an English teacher. In Japan, I am an international researcher studying under the teacher training program of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. This program takes one and a half years to complete. After coming to Gifu University, I started to study Japanese for the first time in my life. The course was very busy and fast-paced, like a "Shinkansen" bullet train. But despite such high speed, I came to understand Japanese little by little. I felt thrilled every time I understood even the simplest Japanese. When it comes to Japanese, though, studying kanji characters is still the biggest hurdle for me.

I also enjoyed studying English education with Gifu University students. I had a chance to visit some schools to observe English classes. I was impressed by the new English teaching methods adopted at those schools. While engaging in various unique English activities, students there were studying English in earnest. They seemed to be very fond of studying English. Some of the students said to me, "You look like an English-language woman."¹⁾ This comment really amused me.

During my stay in Gifu, I came in contact with Japanese culture for the first time in my life. At the Gifu University Festival, I put on kimono and took many pictures with my friends. My family and my friends in Croatia said I looked very exotic in kimono when they saw my pictures. I also studied tea ceremony and Aikido, a martial art. I felt my heart become peaceful when I attended tea ceremony lessons. Through my Aikido training, I realized that some skills would be convenient to use, but I do not recommend using them every day. The cultural traditions of Gifu include cormorant fishing, persimmons, and paper lanterns. I was amazed to see how paper lanterns are made. With great patience and a high level of precision, it took about one hour to complete a single lantern. I also had a great time observing traditional cormorant fishing in the river.

I am very interested in Japanese culture and there are still many more things I want to study and experience in Japan, but I have to return to my country soon. I will bring my knowledge about Japanese culture and many fond memories of the kind people in Japan back with me to my home country.

1) Editorial Note: The students meant that Silvija appeared to be a native speaker of English.



Enjoy Studying Abroad

From Republic of Korea, Second Year of Master's Program,
Mechanical and Systems Engineering Division, Graduate School of Engineering By **Song Byungsoo**

Unlike in the past, it is not so difficult to find people who are planning to study abroad to realize their dreams, who are about to start their life overseas, who are already studying abroad, or anyone who is involved in studying abroad in one way or another these days.

However, if we make light of studying abroad, it is easy to end up wasting our time and effort. I hope that my reflections on studying at Gifu University for the past three years will be of help to those who are interested in studying abroad in the near future.

First, I recommend having a clear purpose and goal for studying abroad. I was enrolled at Seoul National University of Science and Technology, a sister university of Gifu University. When I was in my junior year, I started to think about my career and my future. I was majoring in Industrial Engineering and Die Engineering, so the United States, Germany, and Japan came to mind first because die technologies in those countries are superior to those in South Korea. Soon I learned that Gifu University had made outstanding achievements in die engineering through support from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, so I decided to apply to Gifu University as an exchange student. After enrolling at Gifu University, I attended classes in my field of study while studying Japanese for one year. Because I was not so good at Japanese before coming to Japan, I had many difficulties in classes and in adapting to life in Japan, but thanks to help from many people, I truly enjoyed studying at Gifu University. My wonderful experience at Gifu University propelled me to go on to the Graduate School of Engineering at Gifu University.

Second, it is important to build up all kinds of experiences by actively studying and having fun. Studying abroad does not always guarantee success in your life. Of course, there are people who failed in their study abroad and returned to their home countries or who are wasting their time while studying abroad. As far as I know, those who tend to fail either study too hard or spend too much time on entertainment. Needless to say, studying is the first duty for any student, but hanging out with friends is also important, particularly while studying abroad. Indeed, it is important to go out and make friends and actively communicate with each other to get a deeper understanding about local customs and life and to obtain useful information about the country you are studying in. Such day-to-day experiences will certainly enrich your vocabulary. On the other hand, if you spend too much time on entertainment, you will lose sight of your initial purpose for studying abroad and you will end up wasting your money and time on nothing more than a long sightseeing excursion. Striking a balance between studying and leisure is, I believe, the path to success for studying abroad.

Finally, if you have a chance to study abroad, please try to enjoy it to the fullest. In this world of 7 billion people, those who can experience study abroad are truly the lucky ones. By creating, carrying out, and enjoying this wonderful opportunity yourself, I believe you can discover yourself one step closer to making your dreams come true.



My Experience Studying Abroad as an Exchange Student



There is something inside me that will never change

Senior, Training Course for School Teachers,
Faculty of Education By **Rika Kanetake**
currently studying at San Diego State University

About five months have passed since I started my life in San Diego in the United States.²⁾ It is now winter break, so I have been traveling and spending my time preparing for next semester. When I first arrived in San Diego, everything I saw and heard was completely new to me, but little by little I have become accustomed to life here. From the beginning of next semester, I plan to start volunteering at a shelter for the homeless and women and children who have been abused.

I imagine I will be asked on various occasions if I changed after studying abroad, so when I asked myself this question at this turning point during my study abroad in San Diego, I realized there is something inside me that will never change. I was surprised to find that, for better or worse, there is a part of me that stays the same no matter where I am, who I am with, or what language I use. Maybe that is because I was already 20 years old when I started my new life abroad, or maybe it is because I was born this way.

Either way, I think I can say that what I cannot change is an integral part of who I am. This realization gave me some clues about what really matters to me in my life. I believe it was easier for me to realize this integral part of me in a completely different living environment than that of Japan.

Five months of studying at San Diego State University have passed very quickly, but I rediscovered many things that I had been taking for granted for years. Life with four roommates of different nationalities and cultures has been quite exciting and eventful every day. This year I have to prepare for entrance examinations to graduate schools in Japan, but I will enjoy my life in the United States while doing my best to study for the examinations.

2) Editorial Note: This essay was written in early January 2014.



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GIA

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Gifu West Rotary Club

Gifu East Rotary Club

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International Cultural & Friendship Association

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Hatsukaichi International Association

Ono Kyodai-kai

Sepia-kai

Greater Nagoya Initiative

Nagoya Homestay Volunteer Center

National Institution For Youth Education

Gifu Tourism and Local Products Promotion Division, Gifu Prefectural Government

Nara Prefecture

Gifu Goodwill Guides Network

Japan-Mongolia Culture Association

GIFU PREFECTURE JAPAN-CHINA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

The OISCA international

Flag Art Exhibition

Hashima City International Exchange Association

We Need Your Support

We would like to ask for your contributions to the Gifu University Fund (for international exchange programs) to improve and develop international exchange activities at Gifu University. Scholarships for privately financed international students, subsidies for researcher exchanges, scholarships for short-term study abroad programs (outbound), and subsidies for cross-cultural understanding programs are supported by the Fund. Please visit the website below and get an application form.

Gifu University Fund URL (only in Japanese) : <http://www.gifu-u.ac.jp/fund/>

Donations made to Gifu University qualify as special donations designated by the Minister of Finance (Ministry of Finance Notification No. 154, April 30, 1965) under Article 78 (2)-[2] of the Income Tax Act, as well as Article 37 (3)-[2] of the Corporate Tax Act. Such designated donations are eligible for contribution deductions under the Income Tax Act. They are also recognized by the Minister of Finance as designated donations that are eligible for inclusion in deductible expenses under the Corporate Tax Act.

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