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News

Academic Exchange Agreement with Amherst College Extended

Doshisha University and Amherst College (Massachusetts, US) extended the academic exchange agreement for another five years to further promote exchanges in education and research between the two institutions.

At the signing ceremony on June 9, 2014, Doshisha President Koji Murata and Amherst President Biddy Martin signed the agreement, attended by representatives from both institutions.

The founder of Doshisha University, Joseph Hardy Neesima, graduated from Amherst College in 1870, and in doing so became the first Japanese citizen to graduate from an American university. Amherst College is currently noted as one of the top liberal arts colleges in the US.

A conversation took place between the two presidents after the ceremony, where President Murata commented on how the spirit of Amherst is alive and well in Doshisha, adding that Doshisha is committed to strengthening its liberal arts education. President Martin, meanwhile, talked of Amherst College's warm feelings toward Neesima and Doshisha University, at the same time highlighting their importance to Amherst. Doshisha and Amherst have had a cordial, long-standing relationship for more than a century. Amherst College will celebrate the 200th anniversary of its foundation in 2021, while Doshisha will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2025. The talk between the two presidents ensures even closer ties as well as a more productive relationship in the future.



‘Study in Europe Fair 2014’ held at Doshisha University

On May 18, 2014, the Study in Europe Fair 2014 took place at Doshisha University (Lucent Plaza, Ryoshinkan 1F) for the second consecutive year. The fair was co-hosted by the Delegation of the European Union to Japan and Doshisha University. (In the Kanto region, the fair was held at Meiji University on May 16 and 17.)

Forty-three higher education institutions and universities from more than 10 European countries participated in the fair, with about 600 students and adults visiting - about the same number as last year.

At the fair, representatives from participating institutions were on hand to answer questions about study abroad programs in Europe, offering those interested detailed information on items such as application procedures, scholarships and student life. Presentations were also given by the institutions, where the audience listened attentively to the explanations, demonstrating a high level of interest in the fair.

The Mayor of Kyoto, Mr. Daisaku Kadokawa, made a greeting speech at the opening ceremony and was keen to explore the various booths.

The Organization for Promotion of International Cooperation is committed to actively undertaking this kind of initiative to promote study abroad to Doshisha University students.



‘Japan Education Fair in Turkey 2014’ held

On February 1, 2014, Doshisha University held the ‘Japan Education Fair in Turkey 2014’ in the former office of the Consulate-General of Japan in Istanbul (co-organized by the Consulate-General of Japan in Istanbul).

The Japan Education Fair in Turkey 2014 was held as part of MEXT’s Project for University Network for Internationalization (Global 30), primarily targeting students who wish to study at graduate schools in

Japan. Although the fair was held during the winter vacation for Turkish universities, it attracted much attention and was attended by a total of about 270 people, including more than 200 local students from Turkey, members of eight Japanese universities (University of Tsukuba, Kyoto University, Kyushu University, Keio University, Waseda University, Hokkaido University, Rikkyo University and Doshisha University) which set up a booth at the fair, the Consulate-General of Japan and the news media. The event was broadcast on TV news bulletins.

In addition to individual consultations at each university’s booth, there were two special sessions about scholarships given by members of the Consulate-General of Japan in Istanbul. Every booth and session drew many attendees, demonstrating a high level of interest in studying in Japan.

As promoting the admission of well-qualified students from various countries is one of the tasks for the participating universities, the success of the fair provided the assurance that students in Turkey have a high interest in Japanese education, culture and industries.



Book of Professor Hiroki Tanaka (Faculty of Policy Studies) Receives the 14th Sato Prize

A book titled ‘Economic Analysis of Policy Competition among Local Governments in Japan’ (published by Keiso Shobo in August 2013) written by Professor Hiroki Tanaka (Faculty of Policy Studies) received the 14th Sato Prize of the Japan Association of Local Public Finance (in the category of books). The award ceremony took place at the 22nd National Convention of the Japan Association of Local Public Finance held at Fukushima University on May 24, 2014.

The Sato Prize was established based on a donation from Susumu Sato, late professor of the University of Tokyo (Faculty of Economics), with the aim to promote research on financial relations between national and local governments, as well as economy and autonomy of local governments, and also to contribute to fostering young researchers by awarding outstanding books and articles in these fields.

This year, which marks the 14th year since its inception in 2001, two books and two articles were selected from among those published over the last year through strict examination of the selection committee based on the recommendation of the members of the society.

Professor Tanaka’s book was highly regarded for demonstrating the systematic research achievements of the economic analysis of decentralization.



Doshisha Signs Framework Agreement with National Cerebral and Cardiovascular Center

Doshisha University concluded a framework agreement with the National Cerebral and Cardiovascular Center (NCVC; Suita City, Osaka) to promote exchanges in education, research and medicine.

At the signing ceremony held at Kambaikan, Imadegawa Campus on May 20, 2014, NCVC President Nobuo Hashimoto and Doshisha President Koji Murata signed the agreement, attended by representatives from both institutions.

NCVC is the only national highly specialized medical research center in the Kansai area, and is known as the top organization for cardiovascular research and treatment in Japan.

Both institutions will engage in collaborative research in medicine and engineering, which will form a bridge between Doshisha’s research in science and engineering (as well as life science), and NCVC’s research based on high level clinical experiences and technologies. The project will be expanded to include an educational collaboration in the near future.

While promoting exchanges between researchers from both institutions, we will design specific plans at the Collaboration Promotion Council which will be established based on the agreement.



Doshisha's International Student Team Wins Japan Business Model Competition

The Japan Business Model Competition was held at Microsoft Japan Shinagawa Office in Tokyo on February 22 and 23, 2014. A team of five international students currently enrolled in the Graduate School of Science and Engineering, Graduate School of Life and Medical Sciences, and Doshisha Business School won first place in the category of undergraduate and graduate students.

The Japan Business Model Competition takes place as a domestic competition of the International Business Model Competition (IBMC), one of the largest competitions of its kind in the US. The competition focuses on 'identifying and precisely defining the assumptions of the new venture, testing those assumptions in the field, and then pivoting (changing) based on the lessons learned', which ensures a high quality competition connecting students to actual new venture opportunities.

The team earned first place for the project, 'A Business Model for Bamboo Plaques'. The bamboo plaque is a soundproofing panel made from bamboo fibers. It is highly regarded for its environmentally friendly and antibacterial properties, as well as for its high practicality. Team member Mohamed Ali Benabbes commented that he wanted to commercialize the product in the near future.

The team's win means it now proceeds to the World Final which will be held in the US in May.



Welcome Event for New International Students 2014 Spring 'Open Lounge'

From April 2nd to 4th, the Office of International Students held 2014 spring semester welcome event "Open Lounge" at the International Community Lounge on both Imadegawa and Kyotanabe campuses. The event was held in a relaxed and friendly manner over tea and snacks. Through presentations and informal chats with participants, the aim of this event is for new international students to get to know about Kyoto and Doshisha university by talking with other students, as well as to let them know that the International Community Lounge is a place where they can drop by and make new friends.

During the Open Lounge period, a total of 115 students from different countries, including the US, China, Korea, Iran, Vietnam, Philippines, Morocco and so on visited and enjoyed talking with Japanese students, as well as current international students. Participants socialized by introducing their country and exchanging information about student life, such as, the famous *ohana-mi* spots in Kyoto, club activities at Doshisha University and so on. We hope that they will keep in touch and form friendship from this event.



Welcome Event for New International Students 'Disaster Prevention Training'

On June 21st, Office of International Students held "Disaster Prevention Training" as a welcome event for the new international students. Although the weather forecast was for rain, fortunately, it wasn't rain after all. International students: 18 and Japanese students: 3 participated.

First of all, at Kyoto City Disaster Prevention Center, after the orientation, we took part in the simulated training programs. At "Disaster Education Video Room", we learned the histories of past disasters such as earthquakes that happened in Kyoto and their terror were introduced by using Hi-Vision Visual System. Next, at "Typhoon Simulation Room", using the wind-making equipment with a wind speed of 32 meters per second, we experienced the difficulty of doing something in a typhoon. It seemed that the participants were barely able to stand. At "Earthquake Simulation Room", earthquake intensity 4-7(on the Japanese scale) was simulated, and we learned how to prepare against an earthquake. We were told to get under the table and hold on to the table leg when the earthquake happened. After the session, there were a lot of questions from the international students, concerning how to protect ourselves. At "Fire Fighting Room", participants shot water and extinguished a picture of fire on a screen. They learned how to use a fire extinguisher properly. At last at "4D Theatre", we experienced the simulation when an underground mall was flooded. And we learned the difficulty of opening the door when the underground space was flooded.

International students learned about natural disasters in Japan and how to protect themselves in an emergency. Also most of the Japanese students had never participated in these simulation program, they renewed their awareness of significance of preparation for natural disaster.



Start of 'Clinical Application regarding Cultured Human Corneal Endothelial Cell Transplantation to Bullous Keratopathy' Announced

On March 12, 2014, a joint research team comprising members from Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine, Doshisha University Faculty of Life and Medical Sciences, and Shiga University of Medical Science announced at a press conference that clinical trials of cultured human corneal endothelial cell transplantation have started at Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine. At Doshisha University, a team including Professor Noriko KOIZUMI and Assistant Professor Naoki OKUMURA (Department of Biomedical Engineering, Faculty of Life and Medical Sciences) has been working on this research.



Bullous keratopathy is a pathological condition in which the corneal endothelial cells are damaged or impaired due to various factors such as surgery and disease, resulting in corneal haze and vision impairment. Human corneal endothelial cells do not normally regenerate *in vivo*. This clinical research aims to recover the corneal transparency of patients with bullous keratopathy by the infusion of corneal endothelial cells cultured *in vitro*.

Under the approval of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare in March 2013, the treatment was provided to three patients between December 2013 and February 2014. The results verified the safety of this treatment and good therapeutic efficacy, such as recovery of vision, was achieved. This was the first clinical trial for cultivated human corneal endothelial cell transplantation in the world, and is expected as a new treatment replacing corneal transplantation.

Doshisha University has been undertaking research on cornea-related regenerative medicine since 2003. Researchers have established a basic technology for efficiently culturing human corneal endothelial cells, which had been considered difficult, using ROCK inhibitor, TGF- β inhibitor, and mesenchymal stem cell conditioned medium, etc., and verified the clinical usefulness of the cell infusion therapy using animal models. Doshisha University will advance the research by solving various challenges emerging from clinical trials, and aim to make the therapy available to patients globally.

Kazuki Ono (Graduate School of Culture and Information Science) Receives Best Paper Award at ICDS 2014 in Spain

From March 23 to 27, 2014, the 8th International Conference on Digital Society (ICDS 2014) was held in Barcelona, Spain, organized by the International Academy, Research and Industry Association (IARIA).

At the conference, Kazuki Ono (graduated in 2013 from the Graduate School of Culture and Information Science, former member of Media Informatics Laboratory) and Associate Professor Kenji Hatano (Media Informatics Laboratory, Graduate School of Culture and Information Science) received the Best Paper Award. From among the papers presented at ICDS 2014, the award was given to researchers who prepared excellent submission and camera-ready papers, with the quality of the presentation also taken into account. The selection was made following careful consideration by the program committee and the chairperson of ICDS 2014.



In the presentation, Ono and Hatano proposed a method to avoid misguided analysis when analyzing Japanese syntax with a complicated structure.

Doshisha University's overseas offices were established in order to further promote its rapid and effective internationalization. At our overseas offices, we are implementing mainly public relations activities to increase the profile of Doshisha University, while at the same time making the most of the characteristics unique to each office. In addition, we are undertaking various efforts to recruit overseas students, support our students while they are studying overseas, and provide on-site support to members of our faculties while they are overseas.

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Message from Director of International Center

“Globalization” is a much more complex phenomenon than is usually thought.

I have often been struck by the difference in what people mean by “globalization.” Some people mean by it the getting out of more or less narrow confines of one’s own “natural” value system and perspective toward a broader multiculturalist perspective and a greater tolerance of other cultures; some people mean by it a form of homogenization and obliteration, through the imposition of “global standards,” of the unique features of one’s own “native” environment and culture.

The former seems to be prevalent in academia and the latter in business world, and within academia itself, the former is more conspicuous in traditional humanities and the latter in social sciences, particularly economics. The “global talents” mean in the former a mental attitude to relativize one’s own culture and to be open-minded toward other cultures, while the keywords in the latter are “localism” and “sustainability,” if not “nationalism,” which all resist the hegemony of homogenizing superpower.

The internationalism, one of Doshisha’s three educational principles is to be located equivocally but quite significantly somewhere in between the two. Doshisha has been determined to educate its students to be receptively open-minded toward an immense variety of human cultures in the world, and to send out its graduates thus nurtured as persons able to contribute, according to their “conscience,” to the globalized world we all find ourselves in now.

For this purpose, I believe our Organization for the Promotion of Global Cooperation as a whole will remain a vital nodal point where difficult challenges can be met and constructive solutions can be worked out for this ever-globalizing “brave new world.”

Nobuyoshi Saito
Director
International Center

Dear Partners,

When you read this newsletter (early August), students in Doshisha will be studying so much for their final exams. Once they're finished, they will be enjoying the so anticipated summer vacation!

The Doshisha staff will also take vacations by shift, but we are already preparing to receive the new students who will enroll in this Fall semester.

There are three sections in our Office of International Students: first is the Section for International Admissions which handles the entrance examination for international students and public relations.

The second and third are the Section for International Students at both Imadegawa and Kyotanabe campuses, and they are in charge of supporting currently enrolled students.

For all international students interested in pursuing their studies in Japan, Kyoto and Doshisha University, be at ease as we will embrace you with the *omotenashi* (hospitality) spirit.

Warm Regards,
Office of International Students



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