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Ritsumeikan
Asia Pacific University

APU Story

The Birth of Japan's "Global Cooperative" University



Foreword

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) opened its doors in 2000, a year that also marked the centennial of the Ritsumeikan Academy's founding. Styled as Japan's first truly international university, APU is now preparing to celebrate its own tenth anniversary.

A total of 2,815 international students from some 87 different countries and regions currently study at APU alongside 3,153 domestic students (as of November 1, 2008). The concept underpinning the university's establishment was the global recruitment of students to enable the creation of a multi-cultural campus. This vision of students from all corners of the globe coming together to learn under an equally cosmopolitan academic staff body, supported by a dedicated team of administrative personnel, is one that we at Ritsumeikan have dubbed the "global cooperative" campus concept.

The first steps toward the establishment of APU were taken back in 1994. It was around that time that awareness grew within Ritsumeikan of the need for Japanese universities to begin engaging more genuinely with the challenges of internationalization. It was clear that the Asia Pacific region would play a pivotal role in the global community of the 21st century, and we recognized the need for universities to become capable of educating young people to function effectively at an international level in order to support their region's burgeoning global role.

This book is a record of what took place between those first steps in 1994 and the official opening of APU in 2000, and of the experiences of the university's first students as they struggled to surmount many difficulties and sought to convert the APU ideal into something tangible. The book chronicles the evolution of a vision into a concept and the development of that concept into a definite blueprint, as those involved struggled to address the myriad problems emerging along the way. It also describes the wholehearted efforts of the Ritsumeikan community: both the robust direction provided by the Academy's leaders, and the collaborative energy generated by the faculty and administrative staff. Above all, however, it is the story of each and every student who chose to enroll in APU and take on the grand challenge of turning dreams into reality.

The book also documents the collaboration and assistance furnished by the people of Oita Prefecture and Beppu City, and by countless others both within Japan and beyond.

Its publication is an expression of gratitude to all the individuals, governmental organs, universities, schools, private companies and other organizations that lent their support to the creation of APU.

As mentioned above, students from 87 different countries and regions come together at the APU campus to engage in study, research and extracurricular activities. Interaction within this student body was realized initially through sports, dance and other channels that do not require a common language; now, it is expanding to encompass many fields including academic and cultural pursuits and community engagement. Differences in customs, ways of thinking and, by extension, culture itself, generate both tension and intellectual stimulation; this in turn spawns new endeavors.

APU's academic community is distinguished from other Japanese universities by its multicultural, multilingual character. Leaders from all walks of life and from all over Asia gave their endorsement to the APU project, seeing that this was the kind of university that the 21st century would surely need. They joined the ranks of the APU Advisory Committee, Academic Advisors and other support organizations, and many have come to the campus to deliver public lectures and seminars and talk to the university's students directly. Paramount among the many forms of assistance furnished by these individuals was the job placement support and financial aid that enabled us to welcome students from nations where economic conditions are vastly different from those in Japan. This assistance was instrumental to the birth of APU.

Even after graduating from APU, both domestic and international students still talk of "coming home to Beppu": Beppu and Oita are like adopted homelands for our alumni. Through collaboration with the local community and wider society, a university can ensure that its students not only learn in the classroom but also become involved in life off campus, thereby acquiring important practical life skills. At APU, the processes of internationalization and community engagement go hand in hand. Another important theme running through the APU story, therefore, concerns the university's relationships with Oita Prefecture and Beppu City, and how students are involved in and supported by the local community.

All the different issues surrounding the establishment of APU, some of which I have touched on above, are brought together in this volume and presented not as history in the regular sense, but as a narrative or "story". The subtitle is of course taken from the

“global cooperative” ideal mentioned earlier, but the task of compiling and editing the material herein has made us all more aware of the fact that the university’s creation was in itself a “global cooperative” undertaking, made possible thanks to the collaboration and support of countless individuals. At the same time, this book is a re-affirmation of our resolve to develop APU further, as a university that is attuned to the region in which it is located and prepared to take more bold steps forward in its second decade.

Preface to the English Language Education

This book is an English-language rendition of the Japanese work titled *Ritsumeikan ajia taiheiyō daigaku tanjyō monogatari: sekai kyōgaku no daigaku zukuri*, first published in April 2009. It goes without saying that the original work was written for a Japan-literate audience, not only Ritsumeikan Academy affiliates and higher education practitioners, but the wider Japanese public and Japan specialists overseas. Like APU itself, this work is the product of a country with an unusually high degree of cultural homogeneity, and a university system that has been notoriously averse to any kind of reform – particularly internationalization. For international readers of this English-language version, the depictions of international innovation and cross-cultural interaction are likely to elicit responses considerably different from those felt by the readers of the original work. The English editorial team has, however, sought to preserve the original tone and perspective, conscious of the fact that altering these attributes to suit “international” tastes would diminish the value of the book as a historical document. This book is not only a record of one of the most interesting developments in Japanese higher education in recent times; it is documentary evidence of many of the beliefs and outlooks, aspirations and anxieties behind Japan’s engagement with the wider world in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Different versions of the APU story abound, as do individuals with some claim to authorship of this story. Until now, however, the story has never been told in a concerted manner by the people at the center of it within Ritsumeikan. We sincerely hope that readers will enjoy this volume as a window on the Ritsumeikan Academy, as an important case study on internationalization and regional development in Japan, and as persuasive evidence of the value of international education in Japan – and everywhere.

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English Editorial Team

<INDEX>

Foreword	1
Chapter 1 Shaping the Dream	5
The 1990s Vision	5
At the vanguard of internationalization	5
The questionnaire from Oita	8
Impressing Hiramatsu at BKC	10
Announcing the launch of a new university	12
The Vision Takes Shape	13
Jūmonjibaru, Castle in the Sky	13
Asia Pacific Studies	15
Setting up an Advisory Committee	17
“A university for the world, for Japan, and for humanity”	17
The role of Gaishi Hiraiwa	19
A global lineup of Academic Advisors	21
The beach that farewelled the Tenshō Youth Mission to Europe	22
Chapter 2 Challenges Abound	24
Preparations fall into place	24
Recruit those students!	25
The onset of the Asian Financial Crisis	25
New institutional partnerships	27
Grilled by the Ministry	28
“We’re so glad to see you!” An appreciative welcome for the international students 29	
“Come up the Myōban way”: Attracting Japanese students . . . and their parents	30
The dual-language education system	30
An educational first in Japan	30

APU’s dual-language system: Made in Singapore?	32
A multi-cultural campus	34
Academic program development: Groping in the dark	34
Designing the undergraduate colleges	34
The “glasswork” of subject timetabling	35
Grades questioned repeatedly by persistent international students	37
Inter-cultural exchange in the classroom: “Understanding the Asia Pacific” seminar classes	38
Different country, different lecturing style	40
Japanese audiences overwhelmed by international student performances in “language weeks”	42
Reflections on teaching and learning infrastructure	43
Different cultures of apology	43
A year of rumors	44
APU House, the international dormitory	45
Employment for graduates: No margin for error	46
The opening ceremony and centennial celebrations	46
Chapter 3 Promoting APU Locally . . . and Globally	48
Student recruitment: A global undertaking	48
Establishing offices outside Japan	48
An uphill struggle for the Office of Korea	49
Conquering disbelief	49
Discussing prospects for high school education in the Asia Pacific era	51
The wave of internationalization in Korea’s high schools	51
China: Transcending differences	53
Recruiting students is the state’s responsibility	53
Evolving partnerships	54

The network expands	55
Indonesia: Successful networking	56
Starting from scratch	56
Scholarships: the ultimate stumbling block	57
Thailand: High hopes for APU	58
Setting up office at home	58
The genesis of student recruitment in India	60
Dr. Verma, a true Japanophile	60
The students arrive	61
New arrivals from around the globe	61
The Beppu Office	62
The first task: Finding an office location	62
Ritsumeikan University students lend their support	63
The Presentation from APU	64
Finding accommodation	65
Campus construction work: A triumph of engineering	66
No soil wasted	66
Exhaustive environmental measures	67
Chapter 4 The World to APU, APU to the World	69
AP House, a cultural melting pot	69
The midnight welcoming party	69
New cultures, new surprises	71
The “flower festival” incident	73
APU-style intensive learning	74
Studying for their lives	74
Pioneers of the Accelerated Program	75

A trailblazer’s ordeal	75
Making his own history	77
First steps to global citizenship	77
Preparing for a global society	77
Launching a new apparel brand in Vietnam	79
A future in academic research	79
Graduation ceremonies for the President and Vice-President	80
A certificate from the students	80
Chapter 5 True Stories: APU Campus Life	83
Pioneering club activities	83
The pitch-black tuba	83
International students and “Wadaiko”	84
The trials and tribulations of the Campus Festival	85
Held back by the foreign players’ quota: From soccer practice in a park to an overseas tour	86
The broadcasting club	88
Ko-Ko-Korea	89
“We can do it!”	89
Establishing the APU Clubs Association	90
Events galore	92
The World Students’ Summit	92
The World History Textbook Exhibition	93
One’s 1 and the World Students’ Summit	95
The International Exchange Sports Event	96
The Cafeteria: Nourishing a cosmopolitan food culture	99
International exchange begins for Co-op staff	99

The bread debacle	99
Teaching Japanese manners	101
Chapter 6 Engaging the Community on all Fronts	102
Reaching out beyond the campus	102
Overnight in a samurai residence	102
A top-class infectious disease response program.....	104
A committee grown out of residents’ information sessions	104
The JC Members who bluffed their way through Cambodia	104
Introducing APU to Cambodians	104
Kamegawa, an unlikely multi-cultural community.....	105
“Enjoy English Conversation”	105
Cross-Culture Seminars	106
FIFA World Cup 2002: Nakatsue Village in the limelight.....	107
The tragic death of Ketchecmen	107
“Coming home” to Oita	108
Soaking up the hot springs.....	108
Communication skills.....	108
A community engagement networking university	109
Beppu’s “APU-ist” citizens have their say	110
By Tanaka Shun’ichi (host family)	110
By Chikuhama Nao and Ōkubo Satoru (Former employees of Beppu City Hall Waste Disposal Department).....	111
By Satake Ken’ichi (former Food and Beverage Manager, Kijima Kōrakuen Hotel)	111
By Ajimu Hisanori (Yamaguchi Corpo, Kamenoi Driving School).....	112
Kondō Kenichi and Kondō Yoshiwa (“Ponytail” Hairdressing Salon)	113
Bharti Ahuja (APU graduate; now owner of an Indian restaurant in Beppu).....	114

The joy of hosting students	114
 Wanted: Host families	114
Chapter 7 Onward, APU	117
 President Monte Cassim speaks.....	117
 AP House: A multicultural and educational community	118
 APU: A university where students are serious about their studies	118
 The next leap forward for APU	119
 Inheriting the APU “DNA”	120
Postscript.....	121
 Declaration on the Occasion of the Opening of APU	122
 From the World to APU (International student numbers and countries/regions of origin)	123
 List of Advisory Committee members at the time APU opened.	130

Chapter 1

Shaping the Dream



The “twin towers”: APU’s most familiar landmark viewed from the main entrance.

Late one night in January 2009. A shared room in the AP House dormitory. A Japanese student and an international student.

The Japanese student is working on a presentation to give in class the next day.

“Hey, could you give me a hand with this English?” she asks.

The international student, who has been working on an essay, comes over to take a look.

“Perfect!” she laughs.

“Thanks. When I give my presentation tomorrow there’s sure to be plenty of discussion, and criticism. I want to be able to hold my own. When it’s over, let’s go and eat some ethnic food at the cafeteria.”

This would seem like a bizarre scene to many people in Japan. But at APU, it is perfectly normal.

For the students gathered here from 87 different countries and regions around the world, the vision sketched by Ritsumeikan in the 1990s has finally given birth to the reality of multicultural life.

The 1990s Vision

At the vanguard of internationalization

The start of a new decade in 1990 marked the beginning of a period of momentous change. The early years of this decade were also those in which the university students of today were born. In Japan, the prospect of an ongoing decline in birthrates and a rapidly ageing society loomed large. Confronted with the certainty of a fall in the population of 18-year-olds (the university entrance age in Japan), universities throughout the country were under pressure to make major changes. Almost all the

universities in the “college town” of Kyoto joined forces in 1994 to launch the Consortium of Universities in Kyoto (initially called the Kyoto University Center) and institute a system of reciprocal course credit.

Dramatic shifts were taking place across the globe. The long-standing Cold War regime, centered on the dual powers of the United States and the Soviet Union, came crashing down together with the Berlin Wall in 1990 and the collapse of the Soviet Union the following year. The world map was being re-drawn. In Asia, too, a transformation was underway. Asian nations were experiencing remarkable economic growth, and the Chinese economy made its first genuine appearances on international markets. Japanese consumers witnessed “price-busting” as markets were flooded with goods from countries where labor was cheap.

Meanwhile, the Japanese economy had lost momentum, and soon found itself on the threshold of a long period of zero growth. Japan in the 1980s had been acclaimed for its international competitiveness, and the country was surging forward on the back of manufacturing export growth underpinned by science and technology. The 1990s, however, brought the collapse of this “bubble,” and the economy was ravaged by the storms of financial globalization. This was the start of an era of anguish and disorientation as Japan sailed further and further off course.

It was in this era that the seeds were sown for what would later become Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU). In 1991, with the support of The Asahi Shimbun Company, Ritsumeikan organized an International Academic Symposium, at which it presented a Declaration of Global Citizenship. The keynote address by the Chancellor of Ritsumeikan at the time, Ōminami Masateru, advocated the creation of “an institution of global standing; an ideal university” underpinned by internationalization, a deeper engagement with information technology, the pursuit of humanistic principles and the promotion of accessibility and openness. From this point on, the question of what would constitute an “ideal university” became a regular topic of debate at the Board of Trustees and other meetings throughout the Ritsumeikan organization.

Thus, by 1994, there was a common feeling within the Ritsumeikan Academy that the future was not something that could be relied upon: it would require careful consideration and active molding. 1994 was the year in which discussion on Ritsumeikan’s centennial project was initiated.

“You can’t come up with a grand vision for a centennial project if you’re worried about how much it’s going to cost. I want you to forget the question of money for the moment and concentrate on drawing up a proposal.” These were the orders given by Kawamoto Hachirō, then Ritsumeikan’s Senior Executive Trustee (Chairman from November 1995; now Advisor). Kawamoto’s words expressed the idea that the centennial must be more than a mere ceremony: the expectation was for an initiative on a grand scale, an accomplishment that people would look back on with awe and appreciation as they celebrated Ritsumeikan’s bicentennial one century later.

The task of formulating the “grand vision” of which Kawamoto spoke was entrusted to a group of faculty and administrative staff members mainly in their 40s and 50s. The New Ritsumeikan Academy Planning Committee for the 21st Century was formed in May 1994 to undertake wide-ranging and exhaustive discussion around the issue of what shape Ritsumeikan should take in the 21st century. The Committee became a

forum for open, animated and sometimes heated debate over different visions and scenarios. This debate was fueled by the spirit of dynamic reform that had driven Ritsumeikan throughout the 1980s. The question was how to convert this dynamism into concrete plans for the next century.

Universities are no different from companies, or indeed nation-states, in that as soon as they fall into a fixed pattern of operation they begin to decline. It is vital to retain a certain reformist energy, demanding constant re-assessment and renovation of one's own work. "Never stand still, never be satisfied" is the maxim here.

Many members of the 21st Century Committee acknowledged the importance of internationalization, and it was agreed that the internationalization process should be centered on the concept of "the Asia Pacific era." APEC (the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum) had been launched in 1989, and as Ritsumeikan began to explore ideas for a new university in 1994, the city of Osaka was preparing to host the APEC Leaders' Summit. The Asia Pacific region was the subject of much attention in Japan.

"The 21st century will be the Asian era. With its vast wealth of untapped resources, its diverse cultures and large populations, Asia will be the next major global powerhouse. Japan must commit itself to the cultivation of human resources – both leaders and specialists – for the region encompassing not only Asia but also the Pacific." This is the kind of shared awareness that grew out of the assortment of opinions canvassed in the 21st Century Committee. In the next century, Ritsumeikan needed to move forward with genuine internationalization and work to become a hub for the development of the Asia Pacific region.

But what exactly did "genuine internationalization" signify in the university context? Within the Committee there was already a deep-seated awareness of the problematic relationship between Japan and international students. Doubts were expressed over the extent to which Japan as a nation was involved in the cultivation of skilled personnel for developing countries. Some Japanese professors were pursuing academic exchange initiatives with partners overseas, some Japanese students were studying abroad on a one-off basis, and a few international students were coming to Japan to study too; but how much was the higher education sector in Japan, a highly developed nation, really contributing to education and training at a global level? This was of the Committee's major misgivings about the Japanese university system. The other concerned the extent to which Japanese students themselves were actually able to access intercultural experiences. Students born in multi-ethnic societies such as the U.S. and Australia, for example, grow up surrounded by different cultures. Where Japanese firms setting up operations overseas fail in their efforts to blend in, American companies seem to be able to merge naturally with the local culture and people. The reason seems to lie in the difference between Japan and those countries that are home to a diversity of cultures. Citizens of such countries are conditioned from a young age to deal with conflict arising from diversity, and this conditioning stands them in good stead when it comes to international engagement. Ritsumeikan's idea was to provide Japanese students with the opportunity to study alongside an equal number of non-Japanese students, and thereby equip them with the skills to succeed on the international stage without even having to leave Japan. This notion formed the basis for the multi-cultural environment we see at APU today.

Ritsumeikan University itself had been working assiduously to boost its intake of non-Japanese students. But such students could not be recruited in large numbers from within Japan. People interested in Japan tended to enroll initially in Japanese language schools, learn Japanese, and then go on to enter universities. The pool of candidates for admission was thus limited, and international student populations at Japanese universities remained low. The national government had been advancing a plan to recruit 100,000 international students to Japan, but the actual figure, even including exchange students in addition to enrollments in regular degree programs, was little more than 30,000. Without a major effort to recruit students directly from overseas, the internationalization of Japanese universities was not likely to go anywhere.

Acknowledgment of this state of affairs generated many different suggestions within the 21st Century Committee. One academic who had spent time at an American university pointed out that campuses in the U.S. tend to be open 24 hours a day, with students completely absorbed in their studies. Japan too, it was suggested, needed to create a university where students actually study in earnest, and the best way to achieve this was through a major intake of international students: cultural diversity would provide the stimulus essential to the cultivation of true creativity. Other professors made proposals for a curriculum centered on the concept of “Asia Pacific Studies.” A total of 140 academic staff members were involved in the development of plans for the new university, either as Committee members, advisors, or respondents to a survey implemented by the Committee. Ultimately the Committee functioned not only as the driving force for the creation of the Ritsumeikan Academy’s 21st century vision, but also as a venue for priming the next generation of leaders for the Academy.

The questionnaire from Oita

There was one other important development that added fuel to the debate heating up within the 21st Century Committee. This was the Oita Prefectural Government’s announcement of its plan to establish a new university. Just as Ritsumeikan was embarking on its own process of formulating a new 21st-century campus concept, a questionnaire arrived from Oita.

The core question asked of Ritsumeikan was: “Does your organization have any plans to move an existing faculty or university to, or to establish a new operation in, a different prefecture?”

The prefecture of Oita is located on the island of Kyushu more than 400 kilometers southwest of Ritsumeikan’s headquarters in Kyoto. At the time, Oita was experiencing a degree of nationwide celebrity, thanks to the “One Village One Product” model of community development advocated by the Prefectural Governor Hiramatsu Morihiko. Governor Hiramatsu, since retired, recalls the circumstances behind the university questionnaire as follows:

In the 21st century, Japan’s rural and regional areas would be faced with depopulation and rapidly ageing communities. Oita prefecture was no exception. The best way to make more young people settle in the prefecture was to get a university campus built here. I decided that Oita’s wonderful natural environment would be the perfect setting for a

university of around 3,000 to 4,000 students. So I got Mr. Mizohata Hiroshi, Planning Development Supervising Director, to draw up a questionnaire and send it out to universities all over Japan.

This Mizohata Hiroshi is now President Mizohata of the Oita Football Club, home of the J League soccer team Oita Trinita. “We started to explore options for attracting universities to Oita around 1990,” Mizohata recalls. “Most people in the prefectural government office at the time thought it would be impossible to persuade any university to set up operations here.” But by 1994, they had got as far as sending out the questionnaire mentioned above.

Several universities responded to the questionnaire, indicating their intention to move, or set up new operations, outside their current prefecture. One of these was Ritsumeikan. A month after submitting its response, Ritsumeikan decided to take the initiative and pay a visit to Oita. Representing Ritsumeikan on that visit were Senior Executive Trustee Kawamoto, and an Executive Trustee of the time, Kōga Mitsuhide. “Our counterparts in Oita must have thought that we were pretty serious, traveling all that way to visit them,” Kawamoto recalls. Governor Hiramatsu ordered Secretary-General Mizohata to show his guests around Beppu City and the Kusu region.

Governor Hiramatsu explained his approach thus:

Since becoming Governor in 1979, I have built on my previous career in the Ministry of International Trade and Industry to attract companies like Canon, Sony and NEC to set up high-tech manufacturing arms in areas adjacent to the airport and major ports. But for inland areas and districts not suited to industrial development, my plan is to get a university to set up operations. This would encourage young people to live there long-term, and revitalize the local community in general. Oita City [the major urban center and capital of the prefecture] is already home to national institutions such as Oita University and Oita Medical College [now merged], private colleges, and major corporate operations in the coastal industrial zone. So my preference is for the university to be located somewhere away from these existing centers of activity – somewhere with a good natural environment.

Senior Executive Trustee Kawamoto was quietly surprised at Hiramatsu’s drive and enthusiasm:

In a way, a university is a rather insular community. People tend not to be conscious of things like the reputation of Prefectural Governors. To be honest, I myself knew hardly anything about Governor Hiramatsu’s famous One Village One Product movement.

Offering his guests a glass of Oita’s famous barley *shōchū* (distilled liquor) with a slice of the local specialty Kabosu lime, Hiramatsu recounted some of his experiences with the One Village One Product (OVOP) movement. He told how he had personally taken samples of his prefecture’s *shōchū* to high-class restaurants in Tokyo, the kind that would never have served such a beverage before. This strategy paid off to such an extent that Oita overtook other prefectures in Kyushu and grabbed the major share of the *shōchū* market. Beyond Japan, the OVOP concept had found resonance in nations troubled by urban-rural income disparity, where leaders were searching desperately for

ways to free rural communities from the shackles of poverty. Dignitaries such as the Mayor of Shanghai, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir from Malaysia, and President Ramos of the Philippines all came to Oita to visit OVOP sites in person. Hiramatsu himself had made many overseas visits in response to invitations from the President of the Republic of Korea, the Shanghai Mayor and other Southeast Asian leaders, preaching his OVOP model to rural governors, women's associations and other local players. To the representatives from Ritsumeikan, Hiramatsu's detailed account of the lively program of inter-regional international exchange in his prefecture was an astonishing revelation.

Impressing Hiramatsu at BKC

Two months later, in April 1994, it was the turn of Governor Hiramatsu and Secretary-General Mizohata to visit the Kinugasa Campus of Ritsumeikan University in Kita-ku, Kyoto. Mizohata recalls that the purpose of this visit was to deliver a presentation on Oita Prefecture. On arrival, Hiramatsu and Mizohata were greeted by not only Kawamoto and Executive Trustee Kōga, but Ritsumeikan's Chancellor Ōminami and Deputy Chancellor Sakamoto Kazuichi (later to become APU's first President). This kind of delegation, however, was nothing new to Ritsumeikan. The Academy was often approached by local government bodies keen to discuss the possibility of Ritsumeikan setting up a campus in their area.

The Oita delegation sought to communicate their prefecture's unusually high degree of international consciousness. Mizohata recalls delivering an impassioned hour-long presentation:

We talked about Oita's record in inter-regional exchange with counterparts in Central and Southeast Asia, and how we believed that close, friendly interaction between individuals and communities would help build genuine world peace. We explained that human resource development was a major policy theme for the Oita Prefectural Government, and that we wanted to create a truly open and cosmopolitan university that could serve Japan and the other nations of Asia. We told them how we hoped that Ritsumeikan would bring its experience in university management to join us in this project.

Governor Hiramatsu then drove the point home, using this outline of Oita's ventures to support his contention that even in a region far removed from Japan's political and economic heart in Tokyo, it was possible to become active on the world stage and make an impact on other nations. Indeed, he suggested, it was possible to achieve things that could never be done in Tokyo. The key to internationalization lay not in ideals and rhetoric, but in the practical capacity to take the initiative and break new ground. Hiramatsu's words seemed calculated to inspire those in charge of Ritsumeikan's centennial project to press forward with the establishment of a new university.

At the conclusion of this presentation, the Ritsumeikan representatives stated their position. They explained that Ritsumeikan had recently opened a new Biwako-Kusatsu Campus (BKC) and just completed the expansion and relocation of its College of

Science and Engineering to that campus. If it was to get involved in the establishment of a new university, it would need to be a very novel university – a type that had never before been tried in Japan. Otherwise, they said, it would be impossible to muster the energy within Ritsumeikan required to carry the project through to completion.

Governor Hiramatsu responded without hesitation: “Well then, what kind of university do you have in mind?”

The Ritsumeikan officials explained their concept as follows. The national education ministry had a plan to attract 100,000 international students to Japan, but to date had only succeeded in attracting half that number. Even in the most internationalized universities, international students only accounted for around 10% of the total student population, at the most. A university where 50% the students were non-Japanese – now that really would be one-of-a-kind in Japan.

“I see, I see . . .” As he often did when particularly impressed, Hiramatsu stiffened his jaw and nodded copiously.

The next day, Hiramatsu and Mizohata were taken on a tour of Ritsumeikan’s new campus, BKC. Hiramatsu had hit the mark with his presentation, but now it was his turn to be inspired.

It was around 9 o’clock at the main entrance to the campus. We watched the line of students riding their bikes in on their way to morning classes. The surrounding district had been transformed into a college town, and there was a tangible energy to it. If we were able to build a university somewhere in Oita and attract young people like this, it would give the local community a new lease on life. This, I decided, was the sort of university we needed.

The other thing that struck me about BKC was the display of cultural artifacts unearthed from an ancient ruin discovered in the course of initial earthworks on the campus site. Preserving historical relics like that surely helps strengthen community and campus identity. I was deeply impressed by how much consideration Ritsumeikan had given to the human element when planning this new campus.

From this point Ritsumeikan and the Oita Prefectural Government began to discuss the actual form that the new university would take. The Prefectural Government pledged its full support to the project. In practice, this meant that it and other local governmental bodies would provide the land and a portion of costs for construction of the campus. Above all, it was Governor Hiramatsu’s passion and drive that impressed the personnel at Ritsumeikan. There was something about him that gave everyone the sense that he was deadly serious about carrying this project through to fruition. This, then, was the birth of what became known as a “large-scale public-private collaboration” between Ritsumeikan and Oita.

Announcing the launch of a new university

The newborn public-private collaboration greatly enhanced Ritsumeikan's prospects of establishing an entirely new university, and made it possible to explore new dimensions to the ideas for internationalization that had already been raised. Discussion within Ritsumeikan reached new levels of intensity. The 21st Century Committee's final report, titled "The Ritsumeikan Academy in the 21st Century," was pulled together with unprecedented swiftness. Presented to the Ritsumeikan's Executive Board of Trustees in October 1994, the report outlined a grand vision for "Ritsumeikan to celebrate its 100th anniversary with the creation of Japan's first truly international university."

The establishment of a new university was a massive undertaking, and Ritsumeikan was well aware of the need to tread cautiously in the initial stages. It is likely that the Oita Prefectural Government also took great care to ensure that they had chosen the right partner in Ritsumeikan. Those charged with pushing the project forward made repeated trips from Oita to Kyoto, as their counterparts did in the opposite direction. Chancellor Ōminami paid a visit to Oita and hit it off with Governor Hiramatsu immediately, lending fresh impetus to the project. The parties gradually began to find themselves on firm ground.

In December 1994, Governor Hiramatsu was invited to give a special lecture to Ritsumeikan staff and students at the Igaku-kan No.1 Hall on the Kinugasa Campus in Kyoto. Hiramatsu remembers delivering a spirited address: "I knew that the establishment of the new university depended on unanimous support from Ritsumeikan's Faculty Councils. So I certainly put my heart into it."

In the days leading up to the lecture, the Igaku-kan building was adorned with a large banner reading "Special Lecture: The Oita Prefectural Governor is Coming to Ritsumeikan!" It wasn't very often that banners were allowed on university buildings, and people all over the campus began to wonder what was going on between Ritsumeikan and Oita. Hiramatsu later wrote: "Ritsumeikan has traditionally been proud of its anti-establishment spirit, so to be greeted with a banner proclaiming gleefully that 'The Oita Prefectural Governor is Coming' – well, that was really something."¹

In April 1995, a document titled "Draft basic plan for establishment of a new university through large-scale public-private cooperation" was officially tabled at a meeting of the Ritsumeikan Board of Trustees, and in June of the same year, Ritsumeikan launched a Committee for Actualization of the New University Plan. The concept was starting to take shape.

Meanwhile, Governor Hiramatsu had received a letter from the Philippines. Its content came as a surprise even to the seasoned eyes of Oita's "local yet global" Governor. Hiramatsu had been chosen to receive the Government Service Prize in the Ramon Magsaysay Award, sometimes described as "the Nobel Prize of Asia." After attending the awards ceremony in Manila on August 31, 1995, Hiramatsu met with his

¹ From *Gurōkaru chiji hiramatsu morihiko: sono hassō to jissen* [Hiramatsu Morihiko, the Glocal Governor: His ideas and practice], Nishinippon Shimbunsha, 2004.

old acquaintance President Ramos at the Malacanang Palace and held a press conference. It was here that Hiramatsu announced his intention to use the money presented to him by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, additional to the Award itself, to help build a new international university for the Asia Pacific region in Oita.

Speaking later, Kawamoto offered the following justifications for Ritsumeikan's decision to choose Oita as the site for its new university.

Build an international university way out in Oita, Kyushu? It was enough to make you think twice. Anybody with common sense would tell you that a campus like that just wouldn't attract students. There certainly weren't many universities or local governments in Japan that were prepared to look beyond this "common sense" approach. Most didn't have enough experience in putting new initiatives into practice. But the Oita Prefectural Government was an exception, as shown by its work to spread the One Village One Product philosophy around the world. Likewise, Ritsumeikan had been doing things which other universities wouldn't attempt, such as setting up affiliated high schools and opening a campus like BKC. Both organizations had a record of embracing reform and positive change. This was not a simple meeting of minds. It was a mutual recognition of the experiences of both anguish and fulfillment that come from working wholeheartedly on a new project. This was what inspired our organizations to come together.

Ritsumeikan and Oita Prefectural Government were alike in that they had both committed their full organizational energies to the tasks of reform and improvement. They were confident that these experiences would serve them well in the new university project.

The Vision Takes Shape

Jūmonjibaru, Castle in the Sky

The APU campus sits on top of Jūmonjibaru, a hill high above the center of Beppu City and overlooking the sea. It was the second batch of APU students that began to refer to this location as "the Castle in the Sky." But this "castle" was not always destined to be home to the new campus. Several other sites were canvassed before Jūmonjibaru was chosen, including some in Yufuin, on the Tsukahara Plateau, and in the town of Hiji. Over time, however, it became clear that the most fitting location would be the city of Beppu, a self-proclaimed "International Tourism and Hot Spring Culture City."

At the end of June 1995, just two months after he had been elected, the Mayor of Beppu City Inoue Nobuyuki was asked to attend a meeting with Governor Hiramatsu. At the meeting Hiramatsu bluntly informed Inoue that he wanted to build an international university in Beppu, and that he needed the city authorities to donate the land for the campus site. Before entering politics, Inoue had worked for many years as a

teacher at Beppu Commercial High School, so he was keenly interested in educational issues and was already thinking about possibilities of attracting a new university to his city. He was aware of several cases in which local governments had invested in tourist developments, only to be left high and dry with massive debts: if Beppu was to embark on a large-scale development project, Inoue figured, it should be something like a museum or an art gallery or a university – something that would serve the local community well in the long term. After some thought, he agreed to Hiramatsu's request. He called in his Deputy Mayor and the head of the Planning Division, instructing them to put the full resources of City Hall behind the project. Inoue went on to visit BKC in person, and his Deputy made numerous trips to Ritsumeikan headquarters.

Just two months had elapsed since Hiramatsu announced his idea for an international university at the press conference after the Ramon Magsaysay Awards.

The most pressing task was to decide exactly where in Beppu the new campus would be situated. Mayor Inoue recalls:

I asked the Ritsumeikan people what their preferred site would be. Senior Executive Trustee Kawamoto's initial response surprised me. He asked whether we could use the local golf club as a site. But many of the club members had membership rights that could not be disturbed. Next, he asked about a park in the center of town. Again we had to answer no – half of the park's land was on lease from the national government. Eventually they asked us to suggest something. We came up with three candidates: one was a 198-hectare site in the hills further inland from the main town, another was the 48-hectare piece of land on Jūmonjibaru, and the third was a privately-owned estate of 148.5 hectares, located behind Mt. Takasaki.

After conducting many inspections, it was time to make a tentative decision. Kawamoto had liked the Jūmonjibaru site from the moment he saw it.

I thought it would be fitting to have an international university somewhere overlooking the sea. Students who come from far away could contemplate the sea and how it connects Japan to their homelands. Of course there are some countries with no sea, like those surrounded by the Himalayan mountains, for example. But the sea is still a universal symbol of connectedness. Looking out over the sea reminds you of home. When you think of home, you think of your mother. And when you're thinking of your mother, you work harder – it's human nature! Everyone turns to their mother in times of trouble. That's how deeply ingrained a mother's love is.

The Jūmonjibaru site, with its fine ocean views, emerged as the preferred candidate. Then, on September 25, 1995, Ritsumeikan, Oita Prefectural Government and Beppu City Government held joint press conferences in Oita and Kyoto to announce their plan to establish Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.

“That was when things began to get rough,” recalls Mayor Inoue. Members of the opposition party in the Beppu City Assembly complained bitterly: to them, it was a “unilateral decision to part with 42 hectares of public land, made by the Mayor without any prior notification”; they pointed out “contempt for process by not even consulting the City Assembly about the commitment of 4.2 billion yen in public funds”; they

claimed that “earthworks on Jūmonjibaru would be detrimental to Beppu’s supply of hot spring water”; they highlighted the fact that “Jūmonjibaru is a treasure trove of indigenous flora.” At the City Assembly’s September session, more than 20 out of the 33 delegates posed questions about the APU project.

Inoue was unyielding, putting his case as follows:

Academic institutions are a little like shrines and temples – their value grows over time. That much is clear from history. And it is especially true of an international university. The young people who come to study at this institution will carry memories of their time in Beppu with them for life. Whether they return to their home countries or go on to work somewhere else, they will be fine ambassadors for our city’s tourist industry. These days, it seems that fewer and fewer people know Beppu. As a tourist destination, we’re in real danger of falling off the map. I am certain that this university will become known as the greatest thing to happen to Beppu this decade, in the next twenty years – maybe in the whole of the 21st century.

The uproar in the City Assembly stirred up a hotbed of rumor and malicious gossip within the Beppu community. Initiatives were put into place to defuse this charged atmosphere and make the community aware of what APU really had to offer. Gatherings such as the 21st Century Beppu Discussion Forum were organized, and an Alliance for the Establishment of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (led by Fuzuki Tomonaga, then head of the Beppu Chamber of Commerce and Industry) was set up with the aim of contributing to the achievement of higher cultural and educational standards in Beppu, as well as to the city’s industrial and economic progress.



Global citizenship fostered here: APU’s Classroom Building

Asia Pacific Studies

Kazuichi Sakamoto, the inaugural President of APU, has the following to say about APU’s core academic concept.

The idea of Asia Pacific Studies was borne out of our need to provide a solid disciplinary context for the educational activity that would take place at the new university. The concept of the “Asia Pacific Era” was uppermost in our minds when developing the idea for APU itself – so it became our responsibility to bring the people of the Asia Pacific region together at the university and work to create this new era. When it came down to integrating research around this theme into a single academic concept, “Asia Pacific Studies” sprang to mind.

There will probably be those who question our approach, pointing to the huge volumes of research already being undertaken into the Asia Pacific region. But the novelty of APU’s concept of Asia Pacific Studies lies in creating a field of academic endeavor led by the residents of this region themselves. Existing research on the Asia Pacific region in Japan tends to involve Japanese researchers only: some would even suggest that these researchers are inclined to rely on sources that reach Japan via North America and Europe, rather than engaging directly with their region of study. In contrast, APU would bring together scholars from within the Asia Pacific in order to develop new academic approaches that would aid the development of the region.

I believe that this new scholarly tradition will contribute to the creation of a better Asia Pacific region in the 21st century. It’s what I call “Asia Pacific Studies by and for the Asia Pacific region.”

Governor Hiramatsu offers his own perspective on Asia Pacific Studies:

Chancellor Ōminami talked about building a “School of Excellence,” a hub for the creation of advanced scholarly knowledge. He also said that the university’s mission would be to develop the field of “Asia Pacific Studies.” I had always been interested in regional studies, and particularly how the EU model of political and economic integration may be applied to Asia. Unlike Europe, which could build on the shared historical tradition of Christianity, there is no single religion common throughout the Asian region. So, what kind of academic approaches could be applied to the issue of bringing the diverse cultures and peoples of Asia together into a single cultural circle? Through my experiences of local diplomacy throughout Asia, I had developed my own ideas about the study of Asia or the Asia Pacific. I even wrote somewhere that after quitting my job as Governor, I planned to get admitted to APU’s graduate school and earn a doctoral degree myself. Anyway, several people who used to work in bodies like the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and the Institute of Developing Economies have now taken up academic posts at APU, and are actually pursuing research on One Village One Product movements in regions outside Japan, looking at how these movements manifest regional and cultural characteristics.



The multicultural classroom

Setting up an Advisory Committee

“A university for the world, for Japan, and for humanity”

In 1995, in the midst of the sensation caused by the public announcement of the new university plans, particularly within the community of Beppu, Ritsumeikan started out on two major tasks: recruiting international students, and soliciting financial support from the corporate sector. The cornerstone for the latter task was to be the establishment of an Advisory Committee (AC) as the primary public face of support for APU. Japan’s first truly international university, with 50:50 ratio of Japanese to international students, could not hope to succeed without Japanese companies providing financial backing, support for the university’s academic activities, and assistance with job placement for graduates.

At the time, it was said that there were around 500,000 international students in the United States, and that most would have a pro-US outlook by the time they went home. In contrast, I was told, Japan had just 50,000, and most of them took anti-Japanese sentiments home with them. This bothered me. Why was nothing being done about it? We had to turn this problem around at our new university. We needed at least 80% of our international students to go home with a positive outlook on Japan.

This comment from Senior Executive Trustee Kawamoto expresses APU’s mission well. The concept was for internationalization on a grand scale, a scale that should really be addressed by the national government. When asking company heads to join the AC, Ritsumeikan representatives would explain how it was patent that the Asia Pacific region, with its vast untapped resources, high population and diverse wealth of cultural traditions, would become the powerhouse of the global economy in the 21st century. The most important task facing the region itself, they would argue, was the cultivation of human resources with globally-recognized attributes. It was Japan’s duty to bring out the latent potential in the Asia Pacific region; doing this would also be for Japan’s own sake, and to the benefit of Japanese companies.

Kawamoto recalls:

Everyone involved in the project was totally convinced that they were doing something for the world, for Japan, and for its companies. This sense of mission meant that they had no reservations about asking for money or other forms of support. Having a strong sense of mission is the key to successful perseverance.

Ritsumeikan explained to company representatives that providing a scholarship for a single student would cost 2.5 million yen per year, or a total of 10 million over four years of undergraduate study. This would not be a long-term commitment: they were only asking for support for two full graduation cycles or eight years in total. Ritsumeikan's fund-raising drive came, however, just as the Asian Financial Crisis was beginning to hit – and starting to send shockwaves through Japan. Kawamoto was sure that under these conditions, conventional corporate approaches would lead only to a series of polite rejections. So he delivered some unique instructions to his charges:

Don't go in the front entrance, whatever you do. We're desperate here, right? If the company offices are on the eighth floor of the building, OK, climb up, break the windowpane and get in that way. If the CEO's up on the top floor, burst in through the roof.

Having ordered his own staff out on these clandestine operations, Kawamoto made his way to Oita to ask Hiramatsu to introduce some acquaintances from his days at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry. Hiramatsu responded by paying a visit to the JETRO head Hatayama Noboru, which led to Kawamoto being introduced to the Presidents of firms such as the Kyushu, Chubu and Okinawa electric power companies.

As the list of contacts grew, there were suggestions that it was time to launch a more formal organization. The AC was to be peopled by the heads of Japan's leading companies, so it was only natural that it should be headed by the Honorary Chairman of Nippon Keidanren, the Japan Business Federation. At the time, this post was held by Hiraiwa Gaishi, who was already in his late seventies. Ritsumeikan's first foray yielded a firm refusal from Hiraiwa, who said "I'm already making preparations to resign from all my public posts by the time I turn 80. Your purpose is most admirable, but please do not ask me to play a part."

What was to be done? Kawamoto was afraid that without Hiraiwa's assent, the AC would not grow into the kind of organization that he had envisaged. Eventually, Kawamoto resolved to get hold of a detailed curriculum vitae on Hiraiwa and start making some investigations of this.

"Born in Tokoname City, Aichi Prefecture, 1914 . . . Graduated from the University of Tokyo . . . Chairman of the Tokyo Electric Power Company, 7th Chairman of Nippon Keidanren . . ." In among these well-known aspects of Hiraiwa's CV was one line that caught Kawamoto's attention. "Former pupil of Yasuoka Masahiro." That was it. A scholar of the neo-Confucianist philosophy of Wang Yangming, Yasuoka Masahiro counted many prominent Japanese politicians and businessmen among his followers. Kawamoto happened to know another of Yasuoka's star pupils, Arai Masaaki, who at the time was the Honorary Chairman of the Sumitomo Life Insurance Company. He paid a visit to Arai and put his case as follows: "This is the kind of role that should really be taken by the Prime Minister of Japan. So what we need here is a 'Prime

Minister’ of Japan’s private sector. Hiraiwa Gaishi is the only person we know of who fits that description.”

Kawamoto’s entreaty won Arai over, and he telephoned Hiraiwa on the spot. Faced with a request from a more senior fellow pupil of the Yasuoka school, Hiraiwa had no choice but to accede. “It looks like the answer is yes,” said Arai as he replaced the telephone receiver with a smile of relief.

Governor Hiramatsu recalls that initially, inquiries were made about the possibility of receiving financial assistance from the national government:

We approached the Education Ministry informally and asked if it might be possible use Japan’s ODA [Official Development Assistance] to fund scholarships for outstanding international students. But we were told that ODA is for the purposes of building roads, ports and other infrastructure in developing regions of Asia, Africa and so on, and for establishing services such as schools and hospitals directly in those regions. Each Ministry is allocated a specific sum, and not one penny can be reallocated for a different purpose. They said that most of the ODA funds allocated to their Ministry were applied to scholarships for international students at national universities: none had ever been used for private institutions in regional areas. We even put in a request to one politician, but the response was that it would be “very difficult” to expand the quota of international student recipients of ODA scholarships. So at that stage, we decided upon the idea of soliciting scholarship funds from private sector businesses sympathetic to the concept behind the new university. Both Kawamoto and I agreed that the Honorary Chairman of Nippon Keidanren, Hiraiwa Gaishi, would be ideally suited to head this operation.



General Assembly for the Establishment of the AC,
held at the Hotel Okura (Tokyo) in May 1996.

The role of Gaishi Hiraiwa

Hiraiwa’s appointment to the AC Honorary Committee fueled further expansion AC membership scale nationwide. (A current AC membership list is included at the end of

this volume.) On May 23, 1996, a General Assembly for the Establishment of the APU Advisory Committee was held at the Hotel Okura in Tokyo. With Governor Hiramatsu's help, several other key individuals had been enlisted to join the AC by this time, such as former Bank of Japan Governor Mieno Yasushi, Canon's CEO Mitarai Fujio, Toshiba's President Satō Fumio and Japan IBM Chairman Shīna Takeo.² Thus the five Honorary Committee members, five Ambassador members and 64 regular Committee members recruited to the AC presented a distinguished lineup at the organization's May 23 launch. In his new-found role as Honorary Committee member, Gaishi Hiraiwa greeted the assembly with the following words:

The Fulbright Program provided scholarships for many young Japanese students to attend university in the United States in the period following World War Two. It is widely known that the individuals who received these scholarships returned to Japan to lead our country's post-war rebuilding effort, assuming prominence in both government and the business world. When seen in the light of this history, the initiative taken by a private institution and local government to establish a university here in Japan where half the students are from overseas – surely the type of project that should be undertaken by our national government – is of truly great significance. If there is no chance of scholarship funds being made available through ODA, I sincerely hope that you as members of the business community will be prepared to provide the necessary assistance.

Several attendees actively expressed their support for Hiraiwa's proposition. One, the former administrative vice-minister for education Mr. Kida Hiroshi, stated that "it will take time for Japan's universities to internationalize, but the decision to establish this university is an excellent one, and I hope that you will take a long-term view to providing support for it." Representatives from both Ritsumeikan and Oita Prefectural Government were genuinely grateful for this response, and privately relieved.

In the current financial climate, donations could simply be diverted to an endowment and expected to earn interest. Scholarships would need to be paid for out of capital funds, year by year. AC members embraced the task of fundraising in many forms, not only procuring donations from their own companies but even approaching the heads of their major banking partners to ask for contributions. At the same time the AC itself continued to grow, adding to its membership several former heads of state, foreign Ambassadors to Japan and other dignitaries from all walks of life. Eventually, a total of 252 members had been recruited, and a total of 4.1 billion yen, made up mainly of contributions from AC member organizations, had been amassed. Chairman of Kyushu Electric Power Co., Ōno Shigeru, was particularly taken by the fact that the university was to be located in Beppu, Kyushu, rather than a major metropolis such as Tokyo or Osaka: he pledged a huge donation to the scholarship fund, commenting that he felt "honored that such a university will be built right here in Kyushu." Even after APU's opening, Kyushu Electric Power continued to provide support for the university in many

² Note: All positions and job titles mentioned in this section are those held by the parties at the time in question (May 1996).

forms, including sponsorship of instructors for classes on campus and provision of student internship opportunities.

In the APU Progress Report published in Spring 2000, the Honorary Chairman of Asahi Beer, Higuchi Hirotarō, wrote:

This is probably the first time that a supporting body of this scale has ever been created for a single university. The extent of the assistance furnished for Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University is an expression of support for the new vision of higher education in the 21st century that this university represents. This fund could truly be called a “modern-day Fulbright Program.”

A global lineup of Academic Advisors

Working alongside the AC members were APU’s Academic Advisors, the “benefactors of academic world” who added their names in endorsement and support of the university’s core concept.

The first APU President Sakamoto Kazuichi explains the makeup of this group as follows.

We have two winners of the Nobel Prize in Economics, Dr. Amartya Sen and the University of Pennsylvania’s Dr. Lawrence Klein. Dr. Nambu Yōichirō also joined soon after receiving the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2008. Asian Nobel laureates have been represented from an early stage by the winner of the prize in Chemistry, Lee Yuan Tseh from Taiwan’s Academia Sinica.

The renowned management expert Peter Drucker, who sadly passed away in 2005, was also extremely interested in APU and one of our most ardent supporters. It was Dr. Drucker’s personal policy not to collect organizational affiliations, and for that reason he was never officially appointed as an Academic Advisor. Unusually, however, he did express a desire to provide a personal message in support of APU, and I was fortunate enough to visit his home to receive this message. Dr. Ezra Vogel, author of *Japan as Number One*, also had a strong interest in APU and even took the trouble of visiting our campus.

Within Japan, members of the journalistic profession expressed particular interest in APU, and the current Editor-in-Chief of the Asahi Shimbun newspaper, Funabashi Yōichi, has been a supporter of our university since well before its opening. Terashima Jitsurō, the Chairman of the Japan Research Institute and President and CEO of the Mitsui Global Strategic Studies Institute, has long held APU in high regard and is now involved in moves to establish an APU-type institution for the research community, to be called API (Asia Pacific Institute). The respected journalist Chikushi Tetsuya, a Visiting Professor at Ritsumeikan University, also offered us assistance in many forms.

The beach that farewelled the Tenshō Youth Mission to Europe

Former Governor Hiramatsu brings guests from around the world to tour the APU campus. As his guests are enjoying the fine views over the sea, Hiramatsu is sure to tell them: “Look over there, can you see the beach in Oita City? The first ever Japanese students to study abroad set out from that beach.”

Ōtomo Sōrin, a feudal lord in Japan’s medieval period who had long pursued an active program of foreign trade through his domain, was one of the sponsors of a youth mission dispatched from Japan to Rome in 1582 AD. It is said that the two youths sponsored by Ōtomo departed from this beach in Oita. Ōtomo himself is well known in Japan thanks partly to Japanese Catholic author Endō Shūsaku’s novel *Ō no Banka* [The Dirge of the King], a dramatized version of which appeared on NHK television. Hiramatsu explains:

It was the late Endō Shūsaku who made me aware that Japan’s first ever study abroad students had departed from this beach on Beppu Bay. If he knew that an international university now stands overlooking that same bay, welcoming students to Japan from around the world, Endō would probably say that there was some kind of divine guidance at work here.

“Common sense” suggested that it was an impossibility, but the concept for an international university was steadily taking shape. This was especially remarkable considering the timing of the move for the Ritsumeikan Academy. In early 1994, Ritsumeikan personnel were just catching their breath after the flurry of activity surrounding the huge BKC project and the expansion and relocation of the Faculty of Science and Engineering. Yet they were able to take on this new challenge without missing a beat.

Kawamoto compares the situation within Ritsumeikan to the challenges of mountain climbing:

Under the Academy’s third long-term plan we had succeeded in opening a College of International Relations and relocating our affiliated high school to a different campus. These successes gave us the energy to commit to Ritsumeikan’s largest project ever in the fourth long-term plan: the opening of BKC. This was a difficult project, and at many stages along the way we all thought “we’re never doing something like this again.” But it’s like when you’re climbing a high mountain. Somewhere along the way you reach your limit, but it’s too late to go back, so you just have to press on. At times like that you tell yourself you’ll never climb another mountain. But when you’ve finally dragged yourself up to the peak and are gazing down at the sea of clouds below, you suddenly feel refreshed and cheerful again. You realize that you would never have felt this way if you hadn’t made it this far. And after a couple of months, you’re off climbing another mountain.

It’s just the same in any major project. The more effort, privation and hardship involved, the greater your sense of fulfillment will be. And it is that sense of fulfillment that inspires you to take on the next challenge. This wasn’t just my personal sentiment, it was how everyone in

Ritsumeikan felt. At that time our organization was full of energy generated by the sense of achievement and fulfillment that comes from making a difficult project into a success.

Chapter 2 Challenges Abound



APU students gathered from around the globe

An APU lecturer greeted his class one day by saying: “It’s my birthday today – and I’m turning 24!”

If the class had been full of regular Japanese university students, this joke would have been greeted with either indifference or ridicule. The APU classroom, however, erupted in laughter.

The lecturer was joking about turning 24, but it really was his birthday.

His students rushed to congratulate him, shaking hands and patting him on the back.

Then they began to sing “Happy Birthday To You.”

Moved by this 150-strong chorus in his honor, the lecturer clenched his teeth, thinking: “If I cry now, I’ll never live it down.”

All that time spent by the Ritsumeikan staff in recruiting students for the new university finally seems worthwhile.

Now we turn to see how the new university finally took shape.

Preparations fall into place

A New University Establishment Committee was launched in June 1996, and in October of the same year “Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University” was officially chosen as the new institution’s name. The following January the university’s top leadership team was finalized, with Ritsumeikan’s Deputy Chancellor Sakamoto Kazuichi appointed President, to be joined by a Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs (Jidō Yūji) and a Vice President for General and Financial Affairs (Itō Akira). An Office for Establishment was opened in April of 1997, and work began on giving the new university a definite form.

All academic and administrative staff members of the Office for Establishment worked together in the same single-floor premises. President Sakamoto's office was set up in a room separated from the main office area by a single doorway, through which staff members would pass with considerable regularity in response to Sakamoto's signature call of "do you have a moment?"

Sakamoto was always among the first to arrive at work, and was fond of taking an early-morning stroll around the office. Anyone who had made the mistake of leaving with a half-finished document laid out on their desk could expect to be summoned with a "do you have a moment?" as soon as they walked in the door in the morning. Thus the work of the Office for Establishment proceeded, with lines of communication fully open and all staff members able to devote themselves completely to the task at hand without concern for rank or position.

Recruit those students!

The onset of the Asian Financial Crisis

What was behind the extraordinary realization of this new university concept, one that had so widely been labeled "impossible by anyone's standards"? It is clear that one decisive factor was the sheer volume of zeal and passion generated as all those involved gave 120% to the project. Kawamoto puts it thus:

I'm fairly certain that APU would never have succeeded if we had built it somewhere like Osaka or Tokyo. There would have been a stronger feeling of security, a sense that the project could somehow get off the ground without such a prodigious effort. Our staff would never have got so fired up about it. But here we were with a site in Kyushu – we could not afford any slip-ups, so everyone gave their absolute best. It seems to me that this is a fairly typical pattern in new projects. In fact, it's a great illustration of the principle that even if conditions are tough in objective terms, things can still get done if everyone involved is fully committed.

The "fully committed" staff of the Ritsumeikan Academy were embarking on two major initiatives. The first was the procurement of scholarship funds, starting with the recruitment of an Advisory Committee (AC) as described earlier. The second was the recruitment of 400 international students.³ The basic objective of 400 international enrollments each year – from at least 50 different countries and regions – had already been set: now it was time to make sure that this target was reached.

In 1995 and 1996 delegations were formed to make advance inquiries with governments, educational institutions, companies, private international exchange

³ APU calls its overseas students *kokusai gakusei* or "international students" rather than the more commonly-used *ryūgakusei*, often translated as "foreign students" or "overseas students."

foundations and other organizations outside Japan, particularly in the Asian region. Once the basic plans for APU's establishment were in place, Ritsumeikan enlisted the support of the Japan Foundation, JETRO, local Japanese Chambers of Commerce, Ritsumeikan alumni and many others in their efforts to promote APU overseas. However, in the summer of 1997, the devaluation of the Thai currency sparked a grave financial crisis that spread through all the markets of East Asia. This turn of events, while underlining the crucial need for a university such as APU in the coming century, spawned serious concerns over the viability of the project. Could the APU really attract 400 international students each year? What impact would the financial crisis have on the prospects for the university's establishment?

The International Student Recruitment Headquarters, established under the direction of President Sakamoto, pressed ahead with the task of reviewing the reports and data furnished by the advance delegations, canvassing ideas and developing a set of guidelines for action. Sakamoto's stock phrase at the time was "if the goal is too big, break it up in to smaller ones." Recruiting 400 international students was too daunting a task to be tackled in one gulp: "Just concentrate on getting one recruit from one school," he would say, "then apply that approach to another 399 schools in turn."

Target regions were grouped according to the approach to be taken – key priorities such as China and Korea, other focus regions, regions to be tackled with the support of Embassies in Japan, and so on – and specific targets set for each country. Top-priority nations were expected to yield at least 30 enrollees each.

Through its ongoing experience of reform and expansion, the Ritsumeikan organization had developed a unique culture of "academic-administrative collaboration." This culture underpinned the approach whereby academic staff members were partnered with administrative personnel at Office Manager level or higher to form teams to undertake recruiting trips for APU overseas. Some 46 academic and administrative staff members participated in the international recruitment campaign that took place in summer 1997, spending an aggregate of 210 days visiting 402 different institutions in 13 different countries and regions. For some of those involved, preparations began with the task of obtaining a passport for the first time. But each and every one managed to forget their uncertainties as they set off for various destinations across Asia.

The greatest achievement of this campaign was the procurement of agreements to recommend students for admission to APU – a first for Ritsumeikan. By the end of 1997, the combined efforts of the 21 recruitment teams, each composed of both academic and administrative staff members, had yielded statements of intention to cooperate with student recommendation from more than 200 secondary schools. This massive operation was extended to regions beyond Asia in the spring of the following year, and similar campaigns took place several times subsequently.

Governor Hiramatsu played no small part in ensuring the success of these initiatives. He contacted key leaders across Asia, such as Prime Minister Mahathir in Malaysia and President Ramos in the Philippines, as well as the prominent Chinese political identity and former Mayor of Shanghai Wang Daohan and key officials in China's Ministry of Education, introducing them all to President Sakamoto and asking their help in sending students to the new university.

New institutional partnerships

Ritsumeikan's approach to the recruitment of international students was founded on the two pillars of cooperative agreements with other universities and student recommendation agreements with high schools. The former task proceeded first. The aim of developing cooperative agreements before APU's establishment was twofold: to advance the cause of internationalization within Ritsumeikan University, and to heighten awareness of the APU project. Agreements were worded so that APU would be included as a partner after it had opened.

In February 1996, Ritsumeikan University hosted a joint signing ceremony involving eleven partners from six different countries. The hosts were proud to welcome Presidents and Vice-Presidents of many of the Asia-Pacific region's leading universities, including Universitas Indonesia, the University of Malaya, Tsinghua University, Jilin University, and Victoria University of Wellington. They were, however, a little taken aback when attendees from Islamic nations made a request regarding food options. This request was nothing unusual, but among the organizers it generated much discussion over what to serve at the post-ceremony reception. Eventually they decided upon a buffet-style arrangement with a section set aside for non-meat dishes. This cross-cultural experience was probably a first for Ritsumeikan, an organization not accustomed to such cosmopolitan gatherings; it proved, however, to be valuable after APU's opening.

The momentum created by this ceremony led to the signing of agreements with other institutions such as Peking and Seoul Universities, so that by the time APU opened its doors, Ritsumeikan already had agreements with 95 universities and research institutes across 24 different countries and regions. Agreements were also signed with other types of partners. In 1998, for example, Ritsumeikan entered into a cooperative agreement for academic exchange with the Ministry of Education and Training in Vietnam. The signing ceremony for this agreement, held at Ritsumeikan University, was attended by Vietnam's Vice-Minister for Education and Training. Student recruitment activities were conducted in Vietnam under the provisions of this agreement, yielding 33 Vietnamese enrollees in APU's first year of operation. There are now 221 Vietnamese nationals studying at APU (see table on page 123).

The international symposiums held in the lead-up to APU's opening also helped to extend Ritsumeikan's international network. Although not directly connected to student recruitment activities, these events helped to publicize the APU concept and its academic basis in "Asia Pacific Studies," as well as facilitating many new personal connections for APU associates. The first symposium was held in Korea in 1997 on the theme of "Roles for Japan and Korea in the 21st Century"; the second, held in the same year in Beppu, was titled "The Asia Pacific Epoch."

Grilled by the Ministry

Many dramas unfolded in the years leading up to the birth of APU. Not least among these was that involving the Japan's national Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture.⁴ Any new university must receive authorization from this Ministry before it can be opened, but the low birthrates that prevailed in Japan at the time meant that the Ministry was disinclined to authorize the creation of any more university places. Ritsumeikan officials realized that to win the Ministry's approval, they would need to come up with a very convincing proposal. This awareness was one of the reasons that such a novel concept was chosen for APU.

The concept was distilled to "the three 50s": 50% international students, 50% non-Japanese faculty members, and 50 or more countries represented in the student body. Out of a total student enrollment of 800 at each undergraduate year level, 400 were to be recruited from overseas.

When President Sakamoto and several other Ritsumeikan representatives visited Tokyo in September 1998 to canvass this plan with Ministry officials, they were met with harsh words. "We still have written minutes of that meeting," explains Sakamoto, "which record Ministry officials questioning, in no uncertain terms, what on earth Ritsumeikan was playing at." It was Ministry policy at the time only to approve new faculties with an enrollment capacity of 200 or less – and even then, the Ministry preferred this to be effected by a re-allocation of capacity from an existing faculty so that there would be no overall increase in the number of student places at the institution.

The Ministry officials thus demanded to know how Ritsumeikan could possibly justify its proposed net increase of 800 – and why 400 of them needed to be international students. The illustrious University of Tokyo itself, they pointed out, only had 1,600 international students. If the plan was to enroll 400 a year over the four years of the undergraduate degree program, APU would soon have as many international students as the University of Tokyo.

The Ritsumeikan delegation explained that yes, this was the plan. "Prove it," was the Ministry's response. They were requiring Ritsumeikan to "prove" that the new university could really attract 400 new international students a year. They explained that this request for substantiation was not made out of casual interest: it was something that the Ministerial committee would require as an absolute precondition to authorizing Ritsumeikan's proposal. With no Ministerial authorization, the whole project would fall flat on its face. Ritsumeikan had no choice but to recruit those students.

⁴ This ministry is now known as Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Below it is referred to as "the Education Ministry" or simply "the Ministry."

“We’re so glad to see you!” An appreciative welcome for the international students

January 1999. A chilling wind blows across the campus site on Jūmonjibaru. A group of high school teachers and parents have made the trip from Korea to view the site and attend an information session. There is nothing concrete to show them: no buildings, no official authorization from the Education Ministry, and no guarantee that any students will actually enroll. One Korean high school student who joined the tour, Kim Yongchan, recalls listening to the adults talking around him and thinking: “No matter what anyone else says, I’m going to come to this university. This university is being built for me.”

Kim was one of the many first-year enrollees who were convinced that APU had been created specifically for them. Sakamoto explains:

We often received visitors from Korea, but they all became anxious when they saw that the campus buildings weren’t ready and that we hadn’t got official approval from the Education Ministry. Many questioned whether we were going to get approval at all. So right up until the last minute, we ourselves weren’t really sure if the students would turn up or not. Of course even with Japanese students, you can never be sure that they will actually enroll even if they are accepted. But with students from overseas, there is even more uncertainty. Some of these students lived as far away as India, Nepal, Zimbabwe – would they really show up?

In the March just before the university opened, when I started to see students with suitcases making their way down from the bus stop on the expressway above the campus, and students getting off the airport bus and walking into the campus dormitory, I finally began to think: maybe this is going to work after all. But the feeling of uncertainty still didn’t leave me until the very last minute. So when asked to name my most emotional moment in the whole saga surrounding APU’s creation, I say that it was the Opening Ceremony, when I finally saw that all the students had turned up as promised. I am being honest when I say that this was my greatest thrill.

Sakamoto’s words surely speak for all those involved in the APU project.



The first ever APU Entrance Ceremony

“Come up the Myōban way”: Attracting Japanese students . . . and their parents

There are two different roads up to the Jūmonjibaru campus, one running via the Myōban hot springs district, and the other beginning in the township of Kamegawa. Myōban is the Japanese term for alum, traditionally used in dyes and leather tanning. The Myōban hot springs district was Japan’s leading producer of alum in the feudal era. The road through the district was thus well-established, and connected to a broad thoroughfare leading to the Self Defense Forces training ground located several kilometers further into the hills. The route from Kamegawa to Jūmonjibaru, on the other hand, was little more than a narrow, winding mountain track. President Sakamoto always reminded his staff to advise visitors to the campus site to “come up the Myōban way”: “if they come up through Kamegawa, the high school kids will be freaked out by the drive before they even get here.”

There was nothing more substantial than empty grasslands at the top of Jūmonjibaru. No matter how well they understood that this was still a construction site and not an actual campus as yet, the Ritsumeikan-affiliated high school students and parents invited to Jūmonjibaru would surely be disconcerted by a tortuous trip through thick forest on their way to the site. Even without such a trip, the very thought of coming to far-off Kyushu to study was enough to put off many city-bred students from Kyoto and Osaka.

Students who fell in love with the APU concept almost invariably had a hard time convincing their parents and teachers of the need to enroll in such a university, even if their high school was already part of the Ritsumeikan system. Anxious parents would often suggest to their children that rather than going all the way to Kyushu to study at a brand-new institution, it would be easier and better in terms of job prospects just to enroll at Ritsumeikan University, even at BKC if they liked. Sakamoto guesses that:

In the face of such opposition, at least eight out of any ten students would have given up on the idea of going to APU. So even now, whenever I come across first and second year students I remind them that they are the true heroes of our university. It means a lot to us that they came here – both from inside Japan and from overseas. Quite literally, APU wouldn’t be here without them.

The dual-language education system

An educational first in Japan

The novel set of principles behind APU’s education system was the product of a long period of discussion and deliberation.

APU was the centerpiece of Ritsumeikan’s fifth long-term plan, but Academy officials also recognized that three major hurdles would need to be overcome if their plan to establish a university with 50% international students was to succeed: the barrier

of the Japanese language, international economic disparity, and international student accommodation. These three points became focal issues for those responsible for fleshing out the basic APU concept. They would also need to be explained clearly to the Education Ministry when Ritsumeikan filed the formal application for authorization of the new university. Work on this application needed to proceed in close coordination with the task of giving substance to APU's academic concept. Among the many systems developed as part of these processes, perhaps the most well-known is APU's dual-language education system, designed to lower the hurdle of Japanese language proficiency for international students. APU is still the only university in Japan to operate such a system.

At the time the APU concept was first being discussed within Ritsumeikan, around 80% of international students in Japan were from China, Korea, or Taiwan. The Committee for Establishment, aware that this ratio went against the ideal of a truly multi-cultural campus, decided that it would be crucial for the new university to offer classes in an English language medium. Thus the need for English-medium education was acknowledged at a very early stage. The question of exactly how English would be used in APU's curriculum, however, was still undecided even when the tripartite collaboration of Ritsumeikan, Oita Prefecture and Beppu City was announced in September 1995.

Some people within Ritsumeikan argued that all classes must be offered in English if the university was to foster the kind of people needed by Japanese companies: people with a strong grasp of the common language of the Asia Pacific region and high levels of proficiency in management. The Committee for Establishment, however, was of the view that by offering classes in English only, the university would be letting many prospective international students slip through its fingers. Students who wanted to study in an English-only medium would surely prefer to go somewhere like the United States, Australia or the United Kingdom. The APU program had to promise international students the opportunity to gain a good mastery of the Japanese language during their four years in Japan. Japanese could not be left out of the curriculum.

The majority opinion of the Committee was that it would not be enough just to offer Japanese language classes: the curriculum must combine the pure study of Japanese as a language with the teaching of specialist courses in a Japanese-language medium. Only this approach would allow international students to reach the level of proficiency required to function effectively in a Japanese language workplace after graduation. Proficiency in Japanese was thought to be particularly important if the business community and wider society in Japan were to donate scholarships for APU international students. Of course this dual-language concept needed to be reversed for Japanese students: the curriculum must incorporate English in such a way as to make them "bilingual" by graduation too.

The plan to offer classes in both Japanese and English was formally endorsed in the Committee for Establishment's second report issued in May 1997. The Committee then moved on to address the task of planning a curriculum around the dual-language principle.

What made this task particularly difficult was the almost total lack of precedents. No other university in Japan, nor in the United States, operated such a system. The

Committee finally found one possible model in McGill University, a Canadian institution offering English-medium classes in the French-speaking province of Quebec. A McGill Professor on other business in Japan was invited to Ritsumeikan to hold a workshop on the issue. Rather than providing useful ideas, however, this workshop ended up underlining how difficult it really was to operate a university campus in two different languages, leaving Committee members wondering whether they had bitten off more than they could chew. If it was that tough with English and French, they thought, how much more difficult would it be with English and Japanese? The McGill Professor suggested that a translation and interpreting center would be a necessity on such a campus. “When we began to consider the massive personnel costs that such a center would entail,” recalls one Committee member, “we all started to feel faint.”

The institution of English-medium education lowered the language barrier and expanded the range of countries from which APU could recruit students. Traditionally, international students in Japan needed to spend two years at a Japanese language school before enrolling at university level: APU’s dual-language system would reduce the burdens of both time and cost on such students. At the same time, the system would equip students with language skills to enable them to obtain work in Japan after graduation. The door was opened for Ritsumeikan to approach high schools even in English-speaking countries.

APU’s dual-language system: Made in Singapore?

International students needed to account for 50% of APU’s student body. There was no way that such numbers could be recruited if Ritsumeikan focused only on the small pool of students who had already attended Japanese language schools and spoke Japanese well. Students had to be admitted even if they couldn’t speak Japanese – provided they spoke English. Naturally, this meant that half the university’s academic staff would also have to teach in English. That was what the dual-language system came down to.

Sakamoto recalls:

The notion of dual-language education itself emerged at an earlier stage than you might think. We were well aware of the need to provide a strong English language education system, but also conscious that operating the curriculum on two separate channels as it were, English and Japanese, would be a complex task. As President I found it difficult to commit to such a system. My mind was finally made up, I think, when I visited Singapore in spring 1997 to negotiate some international exchange agreements.

One of Sakamoto’s destinations was the National University of Singapore (NUS), one of the foremost institutions of higher education in Asia and known, in Japanese terms, as a fairly exclusive establishment. The NUS President greeted Sakamoto’s mission with the following words of advice.

Young Singaporeans don’t go to Japan to study. That’s because Japanese universities only teach in Japanese, right? Singapore is an English-

speaking nation, so of course our students go to places like the United Kingdom, America and Canada. Maybe there are a few Singaporeans studying in Japan, but I doubt if any of our students would be considering your country as an option.

This man certainly speaks his mind, thought Sakamoto. But the President was not finished.

The NUS students who go to study in the United States and Europe are all outstanding performers, top-class scholars. But the students who come to NUS from Japan, they can't even pass their courses. It's because they are no good at English.

Sakamoto hand was forced. With the idea of Japanese-medium education expressly rejected by his NUS counterpart, the conversation would go nowhere unless he committed to offering English-medium classes. This was the first time that Sakamoto explained the notion of dual-language education to anyone outside Ritsumeikan. "Our university will operate on a dual-language system," he proclaimed, "classes will be offered in both Japanese and English, so I'm sure it will meet the requirements of young Singaporeans."

Inwardly, Sakamoto was realizing that his university really did need to go with the dual-language model if it was to have any chance of success outside Japan. A Japanese-only system may attract some students already studying Japanese in places like China, Korea and Taiwan, but further south in countries like Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia, everyone was learning English. Targeting Japanese-learners alone would give APU a very small pool of students to work with. Thanks to the NUS President's frank words, Sakamoto was able put his doubts behind him, and there was to be no turning back. Dual-language it was.

It still took some time before NUS would agree to signing a cooperative agreement with Ritsumeikan. They explained that their only partner in Japan was the University of Tokyo: they didn't even want to sign an agreement with Kyoto University, let alone anyone else. Finally, however, Ritsumeikan was able to get a foot in the door, thanks to the influential Dr. Tommy Koh, formerly Singapore's Ambassador to the United Nations. Also a Professor at NUS, Dr. Koh is perhaps most well known internationally for serving as Chairman of the Main Committee at the 1992 Earth Summit. Sakamoto was introduced to Dr. Koh by UN Under-Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi and the Singaporean Ambassador to Japan. Dr. Koh put Sakamoto in contact with a range of important people in Singapore, and this eventually led to NUS consenting to sign an exchange agreement with APU, Japan's new English-language university.

Sakamoto reflects on the decision to adopt the dual-language system as follows.

I think the decision opened us up to a new type of international student. APU is now well-known for both the number and diversity of its international students, but this student profile is underpinned by the issue of language. If we hadn't crossed the line into English language education we would never have got so many students to come to Japan, no matter how hard we worked on recruitment. English-medium education placed us alongside universities in the U.S. and Australia as an option for people planning to study abroad. Being an option meant having to compete on the

same level as these universities. No other university in Japan was in the same arena. And no other had the capacity to attract such numbers of undergraduates from overseas.

The dual-language education system has generated another interesting phenomenon at APU: it has attracted students who have already undergone advanced training in English in countries like China, traditionally sources of Japanese-speaking international students. These English-speakers are able to pick up Japanese very quickly through life and study on the APU campus. Japanese employers which hire such students after graduation, aware of their English-language credentials, are often surprised that they can also speak Japanese so well. For both APU and the students themselves, this kind of outcome is vastly preferable to the alternative of spending two years at Japanese school before going to a Japanese-only university.

A multi-cultural campus

The dual-language system made it possible for APU to create a kind of cosmopolitan learning environment never before seen in Japan. APU's multi-cultural campus, now embracing well over 80 nationalities, is nothing short of revolutionary in this country. Sakamoto recalls that the initiative for this multi-cultural concept came from the early discussions with Oita's Governor Hiramatsu. As recounted in Chapter 1, Hiramatsu asked Ritsumeikan officials what kind of university they would like to create. When asked for his opinion, Sakamoto immediately responded that he would like half the university's students to come from outside Japan. This idea had emerged from the debate and discussion on international education already taking place within Ritsumeikan. It was a recognition that "international education" in most Japanese universities had, at that stage, got no further than English language classes, the establishment of an international relations-type department, and the teaching of a few internationally-oriented courses. So what about a completely internationalized campus, Sakamoto suggested. Hiramatsu was quick to take it up:

Now there's a radical idea. Yes, it could be done, provided half the students came from outside Japan. A campus full of international students studying alongside Japanese students: a kind of international training ground. Just being there would be a lesson in itself.

Yes, agreed Sakamoto, that's what international education is all about.

Academic program development: Groping in the dark

Designing the undergraduate colleges

From the early stages of APU's development, many different ideas were canvassed concerning the nature of the proposed undergraduate colleges at APU. The core disciplinary concept of Asia Pacific Studies, built on an area studies tradition, was

already in place: the task was to give this concept practical expression in the university's academic programs. It was envisaged that many international students would want to study science or engineering-related topics in Japan, but the limited financial capacity of Ritsumeikan, a private institution funded mainly by student fees, made the immediate establishment of a science and engineering program unfeasible. Discussion inevitably focused on options in the humanities and social sciences.

In the end, a two-college arrangement was envisaged. One college would take an international sociology-based approach to addressing critical issues in the Asia Pacific region, conducting education and research on the region's social and cultural diversity and the interaction among its various nations and societies. The other would be a management-based college, exploring issues of business management in Asia and surrounding areas.

How would Ritsumeikan recruit academic staff for these colleges? If the university's 800 students were to be prepared for study at third and fourth year levels in a language over which they had no mastery at the point of enrollment, considerable time would need to be devoted to language education. This was true for Japanese students learning English, but even more so for the many international students who would enroll with absolutely no knowledge of the Japanese language. As a start, a total of 40 "lecturers" were appointed on a fixed-term basis – 20 to teach English, 20 to teach Japanese. Usually, Japanese university academics were responsible for five *koma* or teaching units per semester; these language lecturers, however, were assigned ten *koma* each. The foundations were thus laid for APU's language education system, and by the time APU opened its doors, a total of 66 academic staff appointments had been made.

Operating a dual-language education system across two different colleges meant that for foundation education subjects, two versions of the same subject had to be offered in English and Japanese twice. Major subjects needed to be run in each college in both English and Japanese. With a teaching staff of just 66, only a limited range of subjects could be offered. The subject menu had to be drawn up carefully.

It was especially difficult to find people who could teach classes in both languages. The vast majority of instructors recruited from outside Japan could not speak Japanese. There were quite a few Japanese instructors who were well-versed in English, but being good at a language is quite a different thing to actually teaching in it. For example, a Japanese national who had spent ten years working in the U.S. could handle classes in English, but another who had earned his academic degree in the U.S. could not.

Ritsumeikan planners realized that teaching in two different languages required a considerable degree of specialist skill. They had to find more people who possessed this skill in addition to expertise in a particular disciplinary field. And they had to persuade them to agree to work at a university that didn't even exist yet.

The "glasswork" of subject timetabling

Academic planning at APU was made even more difficult by the fact that there were to be two enrollment seasons each year. Subjects had to be scheduled in such a way that

all students could follow the same curriculum, regardless of whether they enrolled in April or September. One person responsible for this scheduling recalls that the task “was a lot like crafting delicate glasswork.”

It was envisaged that most international students would enroll in September, so the English-medium foundation education subjects were scheduled mainly for the fall semester (running from September to January). Japanese-medium versions of the same subjects were scheduled for the spring semester (April to July) to cater for the Japanese students enrolling in April. APU lecturers would have to teach ten *koma* in each of these semesters. Actual course registration patterns would vary with different enrollment cohorts, so lecturers’ workloads would become skewed to one semester or the other. Lecturers from outside Japan found it difficult to understand such a system. The need to maintain balance in staff workloads made the task of scheduling even more like fine glasswork.

In addition, although most international students were to enroll in October, some would come in April, just as some Japanese students would come in September. These students also needed to be catered for. Schedulers thus grappled with three forms of complexity: the dual-language system, twice-yearly enrollments, and instructors’ workload needs.

The tuition fee structure posed other new challenges. Japanese university tuition fees tended to follow a flat-rate system, with all students at the university paying the same fixed annual amount, entitling them to take any number of credits up to a preset maximum. APU, however, chose to adopt a per-credit tuition fee system, pioneered in Japan by Sophia University. This system consisted of a fixed across-the-board fee paid by all students, plus a fee based on the actual number of course credits taken by each student.

The per-credit fee system helped to dictate class sizes at APU. Unlike students in a university with a flat-rate fee structure, APU students would not enroll in extra subjects as “insurance” against failing, because to do so would incur extra fees. They would only take the absolute minimum number of subjects needed to meet graduation requirements, and would thus be keen not to fail a single subject. In order to ensure that instructors could deliver the quality of content that such students would inevitably demand, class sizes needed to be limited. Even the largest lecture-style subject at APU was to have a maximum of 250 students.

The next question was what to do if the number of students seeking to enroll in a subject exceeded the number of places available. Ritsumeikan decided that in such a case, enrollees would be chosen by lottery. By Japanese standards this was considered to be an egalitarian means of selection; from APU’s international student body, however, it brought a flood of protest.

“Why can’t students who want to study, students with good grades, take the subjects they want?”

“Students with superior academic records should be allowed to enroll first!”

“A lottery? Surely luck should have no place in this!”

These and many other protestations finally swayed APU to abandon the lottery system and accord priority to students with the top academic records. If there were places left over, they would be offered to the next echelon of achievers, then to the remainder of the student body. This change required the online course registration system to be modified, costing the university several million yen.

Grades questioned repeatedly by persistent international students

APU staff were constantly surprised by the intensity with which international students presented their grievances. One administrative staff member recalls that “the early years at APU taught me that there is a difference between ‘understanding’ something and actually being ‘convinced’.” For example, a student asking why he was not awarded a scholarship may “understand” that his grades are not good enough, but that may not “convince” him that he shouldn’t get the scholarship. Sometimes students would even seek out the President and offer a personal explanation of exactly how much they needed a scholarship.

APU instructors were confronted with grievances that went far beyond the standard pass/fail disputes. Students would often want to know why, for example they got a B grade, or why someone else had been given an A. It would sometimes take hours of time and several visits before a student could finally be convinced that the grade was appropriate. In an effort to pre-empt such inquiries, instructors were required to outline assessment procedures in minute detail in their syllabus entries, and explain what percentage of the overall grade would be assigned to class attendance, midterm papers, exams, and so on.

However, the staggering volume of complaints and questions with which the APU staff was confronted in the first year of operation dropped dramatically in the second year. This was because the second batch of enrollees could direct many of their concerns to the students who had enrolled in the first year. There was no longer such a need to rely on university staff members. These kinds of shifts in student behavior continued from year to year for the first four-year round of APU’s existence, posing many unexpected challenges for the university’s staff but also providing many refreshing changes. There was little stability, but plenty of energy.

There are many other examples of Japanese instructors being caught off guard by international students’ behavior. One professor had planned to get his students to write several different papers during semester before the final exam. All students turned in their first papers on time, forming an impressively thick bundle which the professor resolved to read and mark at his leisure over the course of the semester. At the class in the week after submission, however, he was inundated with students requesting that he return the marked papers as soon as possible, to help them prepare for other assessment tasks. At many other universities in Japan, instructors do not have to return papers to students at all. The professor, however, decided that international convention demanded that he mark the papers and return them to students promptly. Having done this the following week, he was then surprised to be approached by students doggedly demanding to know why he hadn’t written detailed comments on their papers or why he

had marked them in the way he did. He decided that perhaps setting midterm papers was not such a good idea after all.

International students, whose scholarships depended on their grades, frequently refused to back down in such cases. One instructor was approached by an Indian student querying a “C” grade she had been given. The instructor offered a detailed explanation, but unlike a typical Japanese student who would tend to concede the point at this stage, this student refused to budge. Eventually she revealed that her father back home had suffered a heart attack and would be unable to support her. When the instructor suggested that this information had nothing to do with the issue of what grade she deserved, the student walked out and slammed the door. The instructor followed her out and reminded her that he had spent thirty minutes of his time justifying the grade he had awarded. The student responded with a begrudging “thank you” and left.

The instructor had never been so angry in his entire teaching career, but the student, the next time he next passed her in the hallway, greeted him with a bright “good morning, sir” as if nothing had happened. The instructor responded with a smile of his own. He and his colleagues gradually became accustomed to the principle of APU’s multi-cultural community that such heated exchanges should not be seen as fights, but rather as healthy straight-talking.

Japanese instructors at APU also became aware of the significance of eye contact. In class, whenever an instructor’s gaze met that of an international student, the student would raise his or her hand. But when invited to speak, the student would often have very little to say. Slowly the instructors realized that in many countries, making eye contact with a student indicates that the student is expected to speak. They learned that sometimes it was best to avoid eye contact if you wanted the class to proceed smoothly.

Inter-cultural exchange in the classroom: “Understanding the Asia Pacific” seminar classes

Under the proposed dual-language system, most first-year international students were to learn Japanese, while their Japanese counterparts learned English. Students would also take foundation education subjects taught in the language in which they were most proficient at the time of enrollment. As a rule, therefore, Japanese students would take the Japanese-medium versions of these subjects, while international students would take the English-medium versions. This would mean that there would be very few opportunities for in-classroom interaction between Japanese and international students in the first year. So where would the inter-cultural exchange, supposedly a core feature of APU, actually take place?

What APU’s planners came up with was a system of “Understanding the Asia Pacific” seminar classes. Each class would have twenty students, a mix of Japanese and international, making presentations and engaging in discussion on matters relating to the region in which they lived. A textbook for these seminars was produced in English and Japanese.

In practice, however, the language barrier loomed large in these seminars. If the instructor was a non-Japanese speaker, for example, communication with the Japanese students in the class was impossible. Considerable thought was given to the makeup of classes, particularly to ensuring that each class contained bilingual students, who could facilitate communication. When drawing up class lists, planners had to pay close attention to the balance of nationalities, genders and levels of language proficiency. Considerable energy was expended on class planning each new semester.

The educational aim of these seminars was also contentious, and remains so today, with two distinct schools of thought within the university. One asserts that content should be the main concern: students should be able to take classes in their language of preference to ensure that their knowledge of the Asia Pacific region is enhanced. The other faction contends that providing an environment conducive to inter-cultural interaction is more important than imparting pure knowledge. This debate over pedagogical purposes still rages today, and periodical reviews of seminar format invariably revolve around the question of which purpose is to be given greatest emphasis. “Understanding the Asia Pacific” is thus an ongoing process of trial-and-error, swinging constantly between the dual agendas of content and inter-cultural experience.

Meanwhile, in class, students gain many valuable opportunities to expand their world-views through contact with different value systems and ideas. One example is the debate in one class over the 2002 decision by the Japanese government to impose safeguards⁵ on agricultural produce from China. A Japanese student who suggested that the safeguards were a necessary measure for Japan was challenged by a Chinese student pointing out that China had originally developed its capacity to produce vegetables in response to demand from Japan, and thus the imposition of safeguards at this late stage was unreasonable. The Japanese student could offer no rejoinder to this. It did, however, provide the student with an important lesson in the value of different perspectives, a lesson that could only be learned in this kind of multi-cultural class setting.

⁵ These “safeguards” were an emergency restriction on food imports imposed by the Japanese government when imported produce was threatening to harm Japan’s local agricultural industries. In practice they involved raising import duties in order to bring import volumes down. The immediate trigger for invoking the safeguards was the massive increase in imports of long onions, raw shiitake mushrooms and mat rush (for tatami mats) in 2001.



Students working hard to realize their ambitions

Within the international student body itself, debates often reached a level of intensity unheard-of in Japan. One class, for example, contained two students from the Kashmir region: one from the Indian-administered portion and another from the zone administered by Pakistan. These students avoided the topic of Kashmir itself, but often clashed on other issues. When the Indian student came out with terms such as “liberalism” and “imperialism,” rarely heard these days in Japan, Japanese students would simply look bewildered; the Pakistani, however, would vehemently challenge the Indian student’s arguments. In the face of this manifestation of the tensions between the two states of India and Pakistan, in which students from other countries such as China and Singapore often became enthusiastically involved, the Japanese students in the class found themselves overwhelmed. They just could not keep up. The instructor at the time, however, recalls that this experience eventually inspired the Japanese students to become involved more actively in classroom debates.

This was also a chance for university administrators to learn the lesson that a heated debate is not necessarily the same as a fight. Once, when the Pakistani student was admitted to hospital with a bad case of dysentery, they were surprised to see that he was accompanied by none other than the Indian student, his traditional adversary.

Different country, different lecturing style

International students each brought their own fixed ideas about how lectures should be delivered. Sometimes these surprised the Japanese instructors. Some suggested, for example, that the best way to run a 90-minute lecture for 200 students was to spend the first 45 minutes lecturing, and then to break into five or six groups to discuss the topic and report back to the whole class. Startled by the suggestion that a 200-strong lecture classroom could be turned into a two-way workshop, the Japanese instructor consulted a non-Japanese colleague, explaining that such a thing was unheard-of at Japanese universities. The foreign instructor replied coolly, “that’s OK, it’s only 200 students.”

The Confucian style of teaching, with the instructor standing at the front and lecturing to his or her students, is well accepted within East Asia, but in other parts of the world this is not the case. Japanese instructors were sometimes astounded to see their

colleagues wandering the classroom as they spoke, rousing sleeping students with an admonition that “I know you may be sleepy, but I’m doing my best here, so please have the courtesy to listen!”

In terms of assessment, the rule was that the final exam could only count for a maximum of 50% of the total grade for any subject. Instructors were thus required to set additional tests and quizzes during the semester. Japanese instructors were taken aback once again, this time by the great attention to detail displayed by non-Japanese instructors when marking assessment tasks. Exhaustive lists were kept of each student’s performance in each area. This kind of conscientious record-keeping was another important part of an instructor’s role they learned. The institution of Faculty Development (FD), organized initiatives to enhance the teaching abilities of academic staff members, is now obligatory in Japan, but at APU, the teaching and learning environment itself appears to have been a very valuable FD tool for the university’s instructors.

APU also offers classes in Japanese tea ceremony. Sen Sōshitsu, Grand Master of the Urasenke school of tea ceremony, first became associated with APU when invited by Chairman Kawamoto to join the AC and deliver a lecture to APU students. Eventually this relationship led to Urasenke’s donation of a genuine Japanese tea room “Washin-an” to the university. Washin-an is where the classes take place, taught by a Thai instructor. Japanese students and international students come together in these very popular classes to practice the procedures and etiquette of the tea ceremony. At the end of each course, the university President, Vice-Presidents and several staff members are invited to Washin-an to attend a ceremony. An international student plays the role of ceremony host, kneeling in the formal style and displaying an impeccable mastery of traditional Japanese etiquette. This incorporation of Japanese cultural traditions into the curriculum is one which only APU students can enjoy. Just a single class was offered to begin with, but capacity has now been increased to two classes by popular demand.



A tea ceremony class, popular among Japanese and international students alike

Japanese audiences overwhelmed by international student performances in “language weeks”

Reflecting APU’s status as a university for the “Asia Pacific” region, in addition to regular English and Japanese language programs, six of the languages most widely used in the Asia Pacific were added to the curriculum: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai, Malay/Indonesian, and Spanish. Students in the College of Asia Pacific Studies were required to earn eight credits in Asia Pacific language subjects. The question was, which language would students choose? It was predicted that most students would gravitate naturally towards Chinese, so initiatives were devised in order to provide informal exposure to the full range of languages available before students had to choose one to study formally. APU chose to follow the system in place at Keio University’s Shōnan Fujisawa Campus (SFC), under which students were given half a year’s lead time after enrollment before they were required to choose their foreign language subjects. Students at APU were to begin Asia Pacific language classes in their second semester of study.

To make best use of the first semester lead time, a program of “Language Weeks” was devised. Occasions such as Korean Week, Thai Week and Spanish Week became opportunities for international students from countries where the theme language was spoken to showcase their cultures through performances of music and dance, and via an ethnic foods corner set up in the university cafeteria. The first series of Language Weeks proved to be a great success, and each of the Asia Pacific language subjects ended up attracting roughly equal numbers of students.

In the next semester, students whose language was not represented among the six in the curriculum began to ask when they would have an opportunity to introduce their cultures to the wider student body. This heralded the launch of Africa Week and similar weeks for many other countries and regions, including a Japanese Week. The organization of each week was the responsibility of the students from the countries in question, aided by friends and acquaintances. The organizers would put up displays in the university’s language lounges, and construct a temporary stage in the cafeteria to put on spirited performances of song and dance.

The vast majority of Japanese students had come to APU straight from high school and were thus aged 18; the international student body, on the other hand, included individuals who had already earned degrees at universities back home. These more mature students often had a stronger sense of cultural identity, and were well prepared to introduce their native culture to others. Initially Japanese students tended to be overwhelmed by the skill with which their international colleagues performed on occasions such as the Language Weeks. Not content to miss out, however, they soon got together to form clubs around Japanese performing arts such as Wadaiko drumming and Kagura sacred music and dance.

Reflections on teaching and learning infrastructure

Students at APU are required to be familiar with assigned readings before coming to class. The Academic Office, in charge of administrating the university's undergraduate programs, thus quickly became a repository for printed class materials and handouts, which students would come to collect before going to classes. The sheer volume of materials handled meant that in the first year, half the Academic Office's total budget was spent on printing and copying. Photocopying machines often broke down with over-use. In an effort to keep costs down, the system was altered so that course packs are now provided in advance on a user-pays basis.

At a time when paper-based administration was still the norm in Japanese universities, APU chose web-based technology for a variety of procedures such as course registration and student-oriented information provision. Students even submit mid-term papers by depositing files in an online folder. This enables automatic correlation, sorting and printing of papers for marking, and has been widely welcomed by instructors.

What APU's planners had not counted on, however, was the level of IT skills displayed by students from other Asian countries. On the assumption that Asian international students would need at least the same sort of guidance as Japanese students, if not more, a session on computer use was included in the orientation program for newly-arrived students. It turned out, however, that Japanese students' skill levels were far behind those of students from other Asian nations. Instructors saw that their initial concerns were unfounded as the Asian students, well trained in IT skills at high school, were the ones that sat down and started using the computers well ahead of their hesitant Japanese counterparts. APU staff members were made acutely aware of the IT skills gap that had opened up between Japan and the rest of Asia in the 1990s.

Different cultures of apology

When caught for cheating in tests, students from some countries would readily apologize; others would not. While students at most Japanese universities can be caught out for cheating if witnessed by one instructor or invigilator, there must be two or more witnesses at APU. Students from countries such as China and Korea generally apologized immediately, but others refused to do so under any circumstances, claiming that they had been framed or refusing to acknowledge the charges at all. APU's had instituted extremely strict penalties for cheating: annulment of all marks obtained by the guilty student in the exam period in question. Being found guilty was thus a big deal for students concerned at maintaining good grades, particularly in APU's credit-based fee system.

Cases of dishonest conduct by students are handled differently from country to country, making it difficult for APU's Student Affairs Division to know the best approach to take. In Japan it was customary to offer "instructive guidance," making the student reflect on his or her actions and apologize for them. In some countries, however, the idea of absolution through apology is totally foreign. Students from such countries

find it very difficult to come to terms with the idea that by encouraging repeated self-examination and reflection on improper conduct it may be possible to reduce the frequency of such conduct, and thus diminish the punishments meted out. In this sense APU is not a Japanese university. It needs to re-invent traditional Japanese university management practices and established systems of student engagement, and adopt a system more attuned to its cosmopolitan student body.

The process of issuing student punishments was also held up for debate. The standard procedure in Japan for punishing misdemeanors such as shoplifting is to present the case to the Faculty Council for deliberation before the university President makes the final ruling. During APU Faculty Council deliberations, however, non-Japanese academics would often express their vehement opposition to the proposed punishments. They would question the procedures for re-hearing of controversial cases, and the avenues available for the students in question to lodge objections.

The Student Affairs Division resolved to establish a committee to review these processes, by reference to sample regulations on student discipline gathered from other countries, particularly the leading universities in Europe, North America and Asia. This resulted in APU becoming the first university in Japan to institute a formal objection process in student disciplinary procedures. A case must be re-heard if an objection is lodged within one week of the decision. More and more Japanese universities are now following the lead of the APU Student Affairs Division and providing their students with opportunities to lodge formal objections to disciplinary decisions.

A year of rumors

In its first year of operation, APU was a small, village-like community. 700 students entered in spring 2000, and another 200 in fall. Even with the addition of the 130 university staff members, this made for a community of little more than one thousand, isolated from the rest of Beppu up on its hilltop campus. When a rumor started going round, it tended to move quickly. This was particularly true among the international students who lived in AP House, where news would spread like wildfire. Any item of gossip – something said by a professor or an member of the administrative staff, a quarrel between students, a fight over a girlfriend – would be known to everyone by the day after it was instigated.

The disadvantage of this environment was that any rumors that began to circulate would generate confusion across the whole student community, making life very difficult for the university administration. The capacity of the administration to explain things intelligibly was just as limited as the students' capacity to comprehend what was being explained, so misunderstandings were common. These misunderstandings would be amplified through rumor and gossip and end up reverberating around the whole campus. One groundless rumor that APU was on the brink of going bust, started by one idle international student, sent shockwaves through the entire community. The student in question ended up leaving APU; the rumors, too, had largely ceased to haunt the campus by the second year.

APU House, the international dormitory

As mentioned earlier, the three major obstacles facing international students wanting to study in Japan are economic disparity, the Japanese language and the difficulty of securing accommodation. Thanks to the generosity of the AC and the decision to institute a dual-language education system, only one of these hurdles remained: accommodation. In Japan at the time, even in major urban centers, it was not uncommon to see rental accommodation advertisements specifying “no foreigners allowed.” Renting costs were also high. In light of these conditions, Ritsumeikan needed to devise a radical plan to secure housing for the 400 international students who were to enroll each year. The task was complicated by the fact that most of the students would not be able to speak Japanese. There were concerns that the students would be unable to communicate with their landlords or neighbors, unable to follow municipal rules such as those for disposal of garbage, and incapable of functioning as regular members of the community.

The conclusion was that student accommodation must be built on campus. But, it was suggested, would it really be in the best interests of the international students themselves to provide all housing in the isolated surrounds of the Jūmonjibaru? The solution that Ritsumeikan came up with was to establish an “international dormitory” – AP House. All international students enrolling in APU would spend their first year living in this dormitory. Here they would develop everyday proficiency in the Japanese language and acquire the knowledge of Japanese society and culture that would enable them to live comfortably in the local community. In their second year, the students would descend from the heights of Jūmonjibaru and live amongst the citizens of Beppu.

It was decided to appoint RAs (Resident Assistants) in AP House to assist this process of adjustment to life in Japan. Today, RA positions are filled by senior students, but in the first year when there were no seniors to call upon, the university enlisted former students of Ritsumeikan-affiliated high schools and other new enrollees who had taken the initiative and offered their assistance. AP House 1 opened its doors along with the university itself in 2000, but its 424-room capacity was quickly reached, prompting the construction of AP House 2, with a further 508 rooms, in 2001.

The contribution made by AP House to the realization of the APU concept has been even greater than anticipated. The multi-cultural community of AP House, led by its RAs, has become the most characteristic feature of the APU campus. In 2007, additions were made to enhance study and learning facilities at this “international dormitory,” transforming it into an “international educational dormitory”; a new building, AP House 3, was also added, providing 378 more rooms. The position of House Master (filled by a member of the university’s academic staff) has now been created, and a range of innovative programs are in operation. A new style of dual-occupancy room, shared by a Japanese student and an international student, has also been introduced.

Employment for graduates: No margin for error

The next problem to emerge was that of finding jobs for the APU's first graduates. No matter how many talented students it was able to attract, the university's reputation would be diminished instantly if its graduates could not secure employment. It would be crucial to achieve a job placement rate of 100%. The first batch of APU graduates truly held the fate of the university in their hands.

What could be done to ensure job placement success the first time around? Chairman Kawamoto had an idea:

Behind our success in getting so many people to join the AC was the work of the secretariat at Nippon Keidanren. We could not have achieved what we did if the secretariat hadn't come out in a show of full support. And the person who made that possible was President Suematsu Ken'ichi from Mitsui Bank [now Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation].

Kawamoto resolved to take extraordinary measures. He went to the Keidanren secretariat and asked them to lend him their international conference hall to hold a convention bringing together APU students and prospective employers. This was the first time in Keidanren's history that such an event had been held.

Governor Hiramatsu put in a personal appearance at the convention and made a passionate plea to the employers. He outlined the background to the decision to host an international university in his prefecture, how the leaders of many Asian nations had visited Oita to learn more about the One Village One Product movement, and the high regard in which this movement was held. He explained that the university's Advisory Committee was peopled with dignitaries such as Prime Minister Mahathir and President Ramos, and pointed out the kind of contribution that the university's graduates could to the attendees' companies. "This was the first and last time," says Hiramatsu, "that I ever had the opportunity to make a personal request to such an gathering of managers from Japan's top companies." Employer liaison activities continued long after this convention, with APU hosting AC members for campus tours, class observation sessions, and discussion meetings with international students. The job placement rate for the first batch of APU graduates in 2003 was 100%, a momentous achievement considering that Japan was in the middle of a recession.

The opening ceremony and centennial celebrations

APU's official opening ceremony was held on May 20, 2000 at B-con Plaza, a convention center in downtown Beppu. This event celebrated not only the opening of APU, but also the 130th anniversary of the founding of the original Ritsumeikan institution and the 100th anniversary of the formal establishment of the Ritsumeikan Academy. The text of the Opening Declaration presented at this ceremony is on p. 122.

The ceremony started with a rendition of the Ritsumeikan song by a baritone vocalist and an "Asia Ensemble" made up of traditional musical instruments from China, Korea and Japan. This was followed by an address from Nagata Toyoomi, Chancellor of the

Ritsumeikan Trust (now Chairman of the Ritsumeikan Board of Trustees). Nagata proposed that the 21st century would be a century of co-existence, founded on tolerance and understanding amongst a diversity of value systems and cultural traditions, and that this would be:

[A]n era in which nations worked together to find ways to transform contradiction, dissimilarity and diversity into the foundations of greater social wellbeing . . . In response to the demands of this new era, we must create arenas in which to explore the values and principles to underpin coexistence, to develop methodologies and engage in intellectual training for that purpose, and to foster new human resources to aid these tasks. The founding principle of this university [APU] is to furnish one such arena to the young people of the world, and particularly the Asia Pacific region.

Congratulatory remarks were also offered by United Nations Assistant Secretary-General John Ruggie, Japanese Education Minister Nakasone Hirofumi, Oita Prefectural Governor Hiramatsu Morihiko, Beppu City Mayor Inoue Nobuyuki, Japan Association of Private Universities and Colleges Vice President Okushima Takayasu, and Nippon Keidanren Honorary Chairman Hiraiwa Gaishi.⁶

Representing the new enrollees, students from Japan and Singapore read out messages of resolve. The ceremony finished with an address of thanks delivered by Chairman Kawamoto.

The ceremony was attended by some 4,500 people, including 34 Ambassadors to Japan, mainly from countries represented in the new international student body, as well as members of the AC, Presidents of Ritsumeikan partner universities overseas, heads of universities within Japan, citizens of Oita Prefecture and Beppu City, Ritsumeikan alumni, and parents of the new enrollees. Chairman Kawamoto states:

Countless individuals contributed to the creation of APU. This is because Oita Prefecture and Beppu City cooperated with us. It's because the Education Ministry was sympathetic to our case. It's because companies offered us such immense assistance. I believe that this university is more of a social institution than any other Japanese university in the post-war period.

⁶ All official titles are those held at the time of the ceremony.

Chapter 3

Promoting APU Locally . . . and Globally



Performers at APU's Opening Ceremony and Festival, held in May 2000

When asked why he had chosen to come to APU, one African student explained: "It's not easy to find a university with students from more than 80 different countries, anywhere in the world – when I found this one, I wasn't going to let it go!" This is a place where different languages and cultures can coexist in a spirit of mutual tolerance.

APU students are quick to develop advanced skills of communication and self-expression.

In the future, these students will work to resolve conflicts in many different parts of the world.

Their ideal: To spread the APU spirit across the globe.

Student recruitment: A global undertaking

Establishing offices outside Japan

By 1999, the thrust of Ritsumeikan's student recruitment efforts had shifted from surveying human resource needs and appraising the prospects for student recruitment, towards the actual task of securing enrollments. The official application for ministerial authorization of APU's establishment, filed in 1998, contained detailed projections regarding the recruitment of students. The Education Ministry had repeatedly highlighted the fact that these projections would play a crucial role in the application screening process, and Ritsumeikan had spent the two years from 1996 to 1997 in identifying channels for student recruitment, informed by research to assess where the

demand for APU's style of education and training was greatest. This process, however, was conducted mainly at the conceptual level, informed by the demands of the ministerial application process.

After the application had been filed in 1998, it became possible for Ritsumeikan to begin actual student recruitment activities on the basis of the new university's "application filed; authorization pending" status. These activities, however, were subject to the caveat that formal admission procedures could not take place until there had been official confirmation that the university would go ahead. This condition proved to be the thorn in the side of Ritsumeikan's student recruitment campaign.

The announcement of ministerial authorization was scheduled for December 23, 1999. Applicants could only be officially notified of their acceptance after that date. In practice, however, the task of securing new enrollees for APU's April 2000 opening could not be delayed until such a date, even if there was some leeway before the main body of international students was scheduled to enter in September. Ritsumeikan's admissions staff needed to maintain a risky balancing act between official constraints and practical demands.

The task of attracting international student applicants began in 1997 and 1998 with a two-pronged approach consisting of visits to foreign Embassies in Japan and in-country recruitment drives. Teams of academic and administrative staff were put in charge of each target country and region. Some those assigned to unfamiliar territories of Africa, South America and Europe promptly went out to buy travel guidebooks to acquaint themselves with their new areas of responsibility, only to learn with some sense of relief that such regions were to be targeted mainly through Embassies in Japan, and that their personal presence in these countries would not actually be required.

A workspace was set up initially on the ground floor of the building now known as Shitoku-kan on Ritsumeikan University's Kinugasa Campus. Then, in December 1997, an office was opened in Beppu City where the new university was to be built. The first offices outside Japan were established in Korea and Indonesia in 1998.

An uphill struggle for the Office of Korea

Conquering disbelief

On May 18, 1998, the Renaissance Seoul Hotel was the venue for the opening ceremony and reception for the Ritsumeikan Office of Korea. This function was attended by many notable figures, including senior government officials, high school principals and representatives of the Japanese business community in Korea. The inaugural head of the Office was to be Kim Jung Hyun, former Under-Secretary in the Korean Environment Ministry, Dean at Kyung Hee University, and a well-known figure among high school principals in Korea. Kim's reputation in educational circles was borne out by his success in attracting a large number of school representatives to the May 18 function.

This function marked the launch of the first overseas office created for APU. It also signaled the start of a prolonged, bitter struggle to gain acceptance in Korea. The Korean nationals who staffed the new office began by paying repeated visits to high schools, outlining the ideals and principles behind the new university, explaining its educational programs, and asking schools to agree to recommend students for admission. The schools targeted in this campaign were at the top echelon of the Korean school system, with many graduates successful in gaining admission to the country's elite institutions of higher education such as Seoul National University, Yonsei University and Korea University. This strategy, adopted across all countries in which Ritsumeikan recruited students for APU, was formulated in reflection of the impossibility of requiring all APU applicants to take a uniform test of scholastic ability. With students to be drawn from at least 50 different countries, and therefore at least 50 different education systems, the most feasible approach was to recruit directly from the leading high schools in each country.

Even if its parent institution was the well-known Ritsumeikan Academy, the university that high schools were being asked to support had not even received the green light from the Japanese government yet. Who would agree to recommend students to such a university? This was the daunting challenge that faced the members of staff at the Office of Korea. Yet they rose to the challenge with enthusiasm, with high hopes for a university that would bring together the young people of the Asia Pacific region, and with pride at being involved in such a momentous project. Their zealous dedication left a major impression on the school principals they visited.

The visits, repeated over several months, were conducted as a combined effort between office personnel and teams of academic and administrative staff members from Ritsumeikan. At first the visits yielded little success. In some other countries around the same time, there had been cases in which admission fees had been extracted from consumers fraudulently on the basis of false claims of new university establishment. Reports of such incidents added to the already considerable difficulty of recruiting students for a foreign university that was yet to receive governmental approval. Some parents of prospective students in Korea even went to the trouble of telephoning Japan's Education Ministry directly to confirm that the whole operation was not a scam.

One memorable incident took place while Office of Korea staff and Ritsumeikan representatives were visiting a school in Yeosu in Korea's Jeollanam-do province. A red-eyed, tearful female student came forward to say to the recruitment team how much she wanted to enroll in APU. The student was accompanied by her mother, who also burst into tears, saying that she wouldn't let her daughter go. Teachers at the school took these two aside to talk directly with the recruiters. The teachers put their doubts forward once more, probing Ritsumeikan's intent with questions such as: "Are you really going to offer scholarships?"; "Are you genuinely trying to produce pro-Japanese graduates?"; and even "How is APU's 'Asia Pacific' ideal any different from the 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere' promoted by imperialist Japan in World War Two?"

The Ritsumeikan representatives responded by telling their hosts about the "special graduation certificates" that Ritsumeikan University had issued to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War Two. During the war, Ritsumeikan University had

responded to a ministerial directive and expelled all of its Korean and Taiwanese students who had refused to join the special volunteer forces in the Japanese army. Fifty years after the war, in 1995, Ritsumeikan University had formally acknowledged that these expulsions were erroneous and invited the former Korean and Taiwanese students in question to attend the university's next graduation ceremony in March 1996. At that ceremony, the Chancellor of Ritsumeikan personally handed these individuals their graduation certificates. This initiative was continued in the following years.

Slowly, the atmosphere in the school's meeting room changed. The teachers sought one final assurance: "This girl's future is at stake. Are you really prepared to take responsibility for her?"

The student in question did end up enrolling in APU, but for the university staff, the burden of responsibility weighed far heavier than any joy they gained from this successful recruitment. The student has now completed her studies at APU and gone on to work at a leading company in Seoul.

Discussing prospects for high school education in the Asia Pacific era

On January 22 in the year after the Office of Korea was opened, 1999, a discussion forum was held in Beppu on the theme of "prospects for high school education in the Asia Pacific era." The forum attracted around 100 participants, including 50 Korean high school principals and 18 principals of high schools in Oita Prefecture. This major gathering, a first for most of the Oita schools, represented a starting point for internationalization of the local education sector ahead of APU's opening.

On the day after the actual forum, a tour to the APU campus site was organized. After a long drive up a narrow mountain road, attendees were greeted with views of a hilltop on which construction work had recently commenced. There was nothing that yet resembled a building. One of those who stood on the construction site that day looking out at the wintry vista of Beppu Bay was Korean high school student Kim Yongchan. Kim's father, a medical doctor and graduate of the prestigious Yonsei University, had spent some time studying at the School of Medicine at Kurume University and was quite an authority on Japan. He was later to become the head of the Korean Parents' Association set up soon after APU's opening, and was even inspired by his son's admission to APU to recommence his own study of the Japanese language. But such heartening developments were still far in the future. For the moment, the prospects of Korean high school principals signing student recommendation agreements for APU remained slim.

The wave of internationalization in Korea's high schools

The high school visit campaign in Korea did, however, start to bear some fruit. One of the schools targeted was the Daewon Foreign Language High School, the institution reputed to offer the best preparation for university entry in all Korea. Daewon Principal

Nam Bong Chul had recently made a round of visits to the leading universities in the United States, in order to develop a summer vacation study program for his students. His intention was to use the summer program to inspire students to go on to study at Ivy League-standard institutions after graduation. This plan was already paying off, with most graduates going on to university careers not only at Seoul National University, but at many prominent institutions outside Korea. For an internationally-minded principal such as Nam, APU represented an attractive new option.

The newly-developed residential areas appearing on the outskirts of Seoul turned out to be home to many high schools keen on the idea of sending their students overseas. One of these was Anyang Foreign Language High School. Principal Lee Eil Sung was soon convinced to place his trust in the APU vision. He saw the potential for APU to help build his school's record in sending students to Japan, and thus to enhance its overall reputation for finding graduates good study options beyond Korea. In 2000, Anyang ended up enrolling more than ten students in APU. Among those students were a set of twins, the mother of whom, Park Hyang Soon, went on to hold an executive position in the Parents' Association.

"I feel invigorated whenever I hear about APU." This is what Principal Nam would always tell APU representatives visiting Daewon Foreign Language High School in later years. For educators committed to the idea of internationalization in their own institutions, APU's efforts offered inspiration. But not everyone in Korea was sympathetic to the APU project. There was one high school principal who was particularly tenacious in his questioning of APU's aims. The more Ritsumeikan staff members highlighted the fact that their new university was receiving extensive backing from all spheres of Japanese society, the more persistently he would ask: "but what is the aim of all this?" Here, Ritsumeikan staff could see the memory of Japanese wartime domination of Asia rearing its head once more. As the delegation made their way out through the school gates after their difficult meeting with the obdurate principal, a Korean staff member of the local office muttered, "Japan has some heavy historical baggage to carry around, doesn't it?"

This burden was a particularly heavy one for employees of Ritsumeikan, an institution that had established the Kyoto Museum for World Peace and actively embraced the idea of Japan coming to terms with its history. It also, however, proved an opportunity for them to feel pride in the Museum that Ritsumeikan had built.

The position was even more complex for the Korean nationals who staffed the Office of Korea. These individuals were charged with the task of recruiting students to a university located in a nation which many of their fellow countrymen still regarded with repugnance. They found that their country was a testing ground for the substance of APU's three founding principles of "Freedom, Peace and Humanism," "International Mutual Understanding," and "Creation of the Future of the Asia Pacific." Ultimately, they lived up superbly to the high expectations placed on them and on Korea as a source of students for APU: no fewer than 86 Koreans were among APU's first intake of students in April 2000.

Today, enrollments from Korea number 674, and APU has partnership agreements with 103 Korean schools.

China: Transcending differences

Recruiting students is the state's responsibility

Ritsumeikan employees visiting the Ministry of Education in Beijing to enlist support for APU were told the following by their hosts: “We fully approve of your new university’s ideals and will support your work to establish it. But in China, recruiting students is the responsibility of the state, not the university.”

China’s reforms and open-door policies had prompted a jump in university admission rates, and more and more young Chinese were heading overseas to study. Admission to graduate schools outside China was being promoted as a national priority. Meanwhile, privately-funded undergraduate study overseas was a matter of individual choice, with interested parties free to obtain information from universities outside China and apply to them directly. Foreign universities, however, were not permitted to carry out student recruitment activities within China on their own.

Ministry of Education officials explained this arrangement as follows. Service Centers for Scholarly Exchange,” established as auxiliary organs to the national and provincial governments, provided support for foreign universities to promote themselves and recruit students in the various regions of China. Some of these Service Centers had already offered to supply students meeting APU’s conditions if Ritsumeikan would give them full responsibility for student recruitment. This proposition seemed attractive, but it was made on the condition that the Centers would be paid a sizeable handling fee for each student.

The Ritsumeikan team in charge of China had hoped to follow a similar course to their colleagues in Korea and approach top high schools to ask for recommendations. This plan seemed to have been nipped in the bud by the Ministry. The fact that systems different from country to country and that different approaches to student recruitment needed to be developed for each of them, while perfectly plausible in theory, had never before been brought home to Ritsumeikan in practice.

Ritsumeikan’s fundamental policy for recruiting international students to APU was to form collaborative ties with key high schools, universities and other educational institutions, then to extend this network of partners at the same as enlisting them to recommend students to the new university. Hearing the report of the delegation to the Chinese Ministry of Education, the Headquarters for the Advancement of International Student Recruitment set up under the direction of President Sakamoto found itself at a crossroads. Discussions over how to proceed took place on several occasions, but the conclusion was always the same: uphold the fundamental policy and enlist the help of schools and other educational institutions. Recruit students through collaborative networks. Sakamoto’s team did not come up with any brilliant scheme regarding how this was to be achieved in China. But they did succeed in attracting many prospective students to APU information sessions organized with the help of Chinese universities. Questions raised at these sessions addressed issues of tuition fees, scholarships, living expenses, accommodation options and many other realistic considerations for students and parents considering study abroad.

Some parents revealed that as long as there was some scholarship support and accommodation available, they would somehow find the money to send their children to APU. There was no lack of demand for overseas study: that much was clear to the Ritsumeikan representatives. They also discovered that many Chinese students who obtained outstanding results in the common exams for domestic university entrance would choose to go overseas if they failed to gain admission to their university of first preference. How could Ritsumeikan connect more effectively with such students? Could they devise ways to ensure that students granted admission would actually go on to enroll in APU? Whatever solutions they came up with, they would have to be ones tailored specifically to the Chinese system.

Evolving partnerships

Still with no clear plan of how to proceed, Ritsumeikan's China recruitment team began to approach schools, universities and other educational institutions to discuss the possibility of entering into agreements for recommending students to APU. Several initial agreements were concluded, with signing ceremonies held in municipalities such as Beijing city and Jilin province with officials from the local Boards of Education in attendance. The recruitment team even traveled as far as Inner Mongolia after hearing that the region was home to many hardworking students with a passion for the Japanese language. They were not disappointed by the talented and highly motivated students they encountered there, but they found their efforts thwarted by the harsh realities of economic disparity. The team even visited the so-called "aristocracy schools" in Shanghai, said to attract students from China's most wealthy families. The students at these schools certainly seemed to be well-heeled and academically talented, but most were only interested in studying in North America or Europe. Some schools seemed prepared to sign recommendation agreements, but would there be any students willing to be recommended? This thought was always at the back of the recruiters' minds as they continued their campaign throughout China. They no longer expected a bumper yield, just a reasonable rate of return. At the same time, however, they were heartened by the progress being made towards student recommendation agreements at schools with strong Japanese language programs, such as the Shanghai Ganquan Middle School. Ganquan was just one of the schools where Japanese language teaching provided an opening to discussions on student recommendation.

Meanwhile, other forms of partnership were developing at university level. The most notable among these was the agreement reached with Dongbei University of Finance and Economics (DUFE) in Dalian, an institution which, like Ritsumeikan, was engaged in a broad-ranging program of reform at the time. The relationship began when DUFE President Xia Deren, now Mayor of Dalian, visited Ritsumeikan University in 1996, and a formal academic partnership agreement was instituted in 1998. The two universities developed a vigorous program of academic exchange, and an agreement was reached regarding the recommendation of students for admission to APU during the term of office of President Yu Yang at DUFE. More than ten Dongbei students entered APU in April 2000.

One of these students was Zhang Lin He. While studying at DUFU, Zhang aspired to learn more about Japanese-style management and eventually work in the international arena. She attended an information session on APU, and was heartened by the accounts of academic exchange between Ritsumeikan and the President and staff of her own university. The prospect of scholarship support made APU an even more attractive proposition. Zhang enrolled in APU's College of Asia Pacific Studies, and now works at JETRO. She looks back at her time at APU with fondness:

APU is a very cosmopolitan university. This is true not only for AP House, but for the campus as a whole. My seminar classes at APU taught me many fundamental skills essential to my current job, such as documentation and data gathering, reasoning and analysis, and effective presentation technique. But students who want to work in Japan should be careful not to immerse themselves too deeply in this cosmopolitan environment. APU's international students in particular seem to enjoy considerable freedom, but also they need to remember that there are certain fixed ways of doing things in Japan. I hope that they seek opportunities to come into contact with Japanese society and learn more about Japan's distinctive culture.

DUFU President Yu Yang was appointed a Visiting Professor in Ritsumeikan University's College of Economics in 2002. Sadly he has since passed away, but the partnership with Dongbei continues, and has even spawned new collaborative links with the city of Dalian itself.

The network expands

Governor Hiramatsu's personal connections played a major part in expanding APU's network in China. It was an introduction from Hiramatsu that led to influential Chinese politician Wang Daohan joining the AC. Hiramatsu also enlisted the support of China's State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA). This organization was formerly responsible solely for arranging exchange of technical experts with the Soviet Union, but the institution of China's open door policies had expanded its sphere of activity to include various projects for technical exchange with partners in the West and elsewhere. SAFEA was also interested in developing partnerships with foreign universities for the purposes of training future executive-level officials, and it even had a subsidiary arm involved in placing Chinese students in foreign educational institutions.

The woman in charge of student recommendation agreements in this subsidiary introduced herself by saying: "I was part of the first cohort of students at Ohira School." This was how she always greeted guests from Japan.

The Ohira School is the common name for the Japanese Training Center established in Beijing in 1980 for the purposes of training university-level Japanese language teachers. The name is taken from the fact that the school was conceived during a visit to China in 1978 by the Japanese Prime Minister of the time, Ohira Masayoshi. The Center later evolved into the Beijing Center for Japanese Studies. Prominent Japanese language scholars had taken up teaching posts at both the Ohira School and its successor, and

many Chinese instructors had been educated there. As one of the first graduates of the Ohira school, the SAFEA official was understandably enthusiastic about recruiting students to study in Japan. Some of the students recommended from this organization were refused admission to APU; some others were not awarded the type of scholarship requested by the organization at the time of recommendation. But the partnership with APU has stood firm.

Ritsumeikan's China team also paid repeated visits to the education division at the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo. Ritsumeikan recognized that it was vital to ensure that foreign governments were sympathetic if cooperative activities were to proceed smoothly after APU's opening. It was not simply a matter of recruiting students.

The head of the Chinese Embassy's education division, Lee Dong Xiang, had been Director of International Cooperation and Exchange at the time of Governor Hiramatsu and President Sakamoto's first visit to prepare for APU's student recruitment activities in China. Now a Visiting Professor at Ritsumeikan University, Lee has made many contributions to the development of Ritsumeikan's partnerships in China since the opening of APU. The official in charge of Japan at the Asia-Africa Bureau who first dealt with APU staff, Sun Jianming, went on to become the Education Consul at the Chinese Consulate-General in Osaka, and then succeeded Lee to become China's attaché for educational affairs at the Embassy in Tokyo.

Thus APU's personal network of contacts grew. Their national systems may have differed, but Ritsumeikan representatives and their Chinese counterparts found many ways to connect. New possibilities opened up as the parties gained an appreciation for each other's principles and objectives and found points of commonality, while always respecting differences in standpoint and motive. The capacity to share this basic approach was the key to building a strong cooperative network in China. 92 Chinese students enrolled in APU in 2000.

Indonesia: Successful networking

Starting from scratch

The task facing Ritsumeikan team in charge of Indonesia was to develop channels for recruitment of 30 students to APU each year. The number of Indonesians coming to study in Japan was small in comparison to major destinations such as Australia, Singapore, the United States and other English-speaking countries. The task of recruiting students for APU would not be an easy one.

Before they could actually start recruiting, however, the team had to work out exactly where and how they were going to do it. Most team members had little idea how to begin. One Japanese faculty member, however, had important personal connections from his time as a Visiting Professor at the Japanese Studies department of Universitas Indonesia. These connections proved to be extremely valuable for the team. The faculty member contacted some of his former Universitas Indonesia students who had since taken up posts at the Japan Foundation. These individuals came willingly to the team's

assistance, producing information such as a ranking table of Indonesian high schools. This information helped the team plan their first campaign, a series of visits to both national and private high schools in Jakarta, Surabaya, Yogyakarta, Bali and other major urban centers to canvass possibilities for student recommendation.

From the schools' perspective, however, this was not a simple proposition. They were being asked to commit to recommending students to a university that would not even open for another two or three years, in a country where few Indonesians went to study at all. Even if the team could furnish information on APU in advance, there was no guarantee that school representatives would be willing to meet with them. So they came up with an audacious plan: to get a letter of endorsement from the head of Indonesia's national educational administration. This was around the same time that the AC was being put together in preparation for APU's opening, and the Indonesian President Suharto had recently added his name to the list of AC International Committee members. Again, this connection proved crucial.

The team moved quickly to visit Indonesia's national Education Ministry, arriving without an appointment and explaining their case to the secretary who greeted them. After a ninety-minute wait, they were ushered in to a meeting with an official of equivalent rank to the head of the Higher Education Bureau in Japan. This official explained that it would not be possible to get his Minister's personal seal of approval, but that he would write a letter of endorsement as head of the country's higher education administration. Armed with this letter, and with the backing of the Indonesian President on the AC, the Ritsumeikan's team no longer had any trouble making appointments.

Scholarships: the ultimate stumbling block

At last, meetings were arranged at schools and universities across the country. At these meetings the Ritsumeikan team would outline the APU concept and educational principles, and their hosts would agree that it was a great idea for a university. But when it came to the question of actually sending students to the new university, there was one major sticking point: scholarships.

As ill luck would have it, the Indonesian currency, the rupiah, was in the midst of a dramatic downward spiral. Just half a year earlier one Japanese yen could be bought with around 25 rupiah; now it took 80. The proposed annual tuition fee for APU represented the equivalent of several years' salary for an average graduate of Universitas Indonesia. It was a staggering sum for any ordinary Indonesian. But the Ritsumeikan team was prepared for this eventuality, and was able to regain some confidence by introducing prospective students to the scholarship system that had been prepared for APU. Somewhere between 40 and 50 students emerged keen to enroll in APU, but even so, the actual number that managed to enroll in the first year was 27 – 14 in April and the rest in the fall semester. It was clear that the economic crisis was responsible for this unusually high cancellation rate.

The team also worked to extend its network of contacts within the Japanese community in Indonesia, developing links with the Embassy of Japan, the Japan

Foundation, Japan Clubs, Japanese media outlets and other Japan-related bodies. Individuals within these organizations responded positively to the opportunity APU represented in terms of strengthening collaborative ties between Indonesia and Japan, and generously introduced the Ritsumeikan team to other potential partners, local mass media, and many other useful connections. Through these activities, the team also came across several members of Ritsumeikan University's alumni community, a community that was brought closer together with the launch of the Ritsumeikan University Alumni Association of Indonesia in 1999.

APU's Office of Indonesia was opened in 1998, and an official opening ceremony was held on December 14 of that year. Ritsumeikan had traversed a complex maze of political and bureaucratic procedures in order to gain official permission for this Office to operate. In May 1998, half a year before the Office opened its doors, the long reign of Indonesia's second President Suharto came to an end. It suddenly became very difficult to make out not only Indonesia's long-term prospects, but even what policies would be in place in the immediate future. There was no way of knowing whether or not the things promised to APU today would be upheld at all tomorrow. The whole country was launched into a massive process of reform. If the fall of the Suharto regime had come even two or three months earlier, the plans for the Office of Indonesia may well have come to nothing.

The Office of Indonesia was staffed initially by two highly capable women, both graduates of Universitas Indonesia, and both skilled in English and Japanese in addition to their native language. They had soon begun to visit to schools in the country's major centers of population such as Bandung and Surabaya. In the first year of operation, Ritsumeikan took care to ensure that these staff members became fully versed in the APU concept and were able to communicate it effectively to school principals and college counselors. Ritsumeikan faculty members joining the Office staff on school visits would help create a positive first impression by greeting their hosts in Indonesian. Responses were promising, but at the end of the day only 27 students came to APU in year one. Today, however, there are 186 Indonesians studying at APU, meaning that one in every ten students coming to study in Japan from Indonesia ends up in Beppu, testimony to the work done by Ritsumeikan's Indonesia team. Major initiatives developed in Indonesia since APU's opening include the launch of an APU preparatory course in the Al-Izhar School.

Thailand: High hopes for APU

Setting up office at home

The entry to the private residence of Professor Hormchong Twee, a leading light in Thai educational circles, is adorned with a sign reading "Office of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University." APU did not ask for this sign to be erected: it was the Professor's own idea.

Professor Twee's first encounter with Ritsumeikan came at the World Conference on High School Education and Human Resource Development for the 21st Century held in Manila in June 1997. It was this chance meeting that marked the start of the Professor's long relationship with APU.

As in other countries, the Ritsumeikan Thailand team, which included the academic staff member who had first made Professor Twee's acquaintance at the 1997, embarked on several trips to Thailand. On the first of these trips, Professor Twee was asked to assist with the recruitment of students for APU in his country. The Professor jumped into action immediately, mobilizing his extensive network of former students now teaching at, or even heading, high schools throughout the country. He told his many protégés of the exciting new international university that was to be built in Japan, and asked for their assistance in organizing information sessions for prospective students. The response was impressive. A total of 75 schools across Thailand hosted information sessions for APU in the period from 1997 to 1999.

Up to this point the approach taken in Thailand was no different from that adopted in other countries. But what followed was something quite different. Professor Twee had his own set of principles regarding the recruitment and selection of students for APU: he wanted to make sure that all the students he sent to Japan were of the highest quality, and that they would earn their country a good reputation at APU. So he told the schools he visited: "I want you to let your top one or two students sit a special test."

The "test" Professor Twee had in mind was a written test of English language proficiency, using practice questions from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), plus an interview in English, and a comprehension exercise using extended passages of English text. Applicants were also to provide information on their extracurricular activities and broader interests. A total of 46 top-grade students from 35 high schools sat this test in the first year, and only 15 of these passed. Just six of the successful candidates were chosen to receive scholarships that enabled them to enroll in APU in April 2000; the remaining six went on to university study within Thailand.

One of the six entrants was Pichaya Vadhanakovint, who enrolled in APU's College of Asia Pacific Management. Pichaya went on to receive the Andō Momofuku Scholarship, donated by the former Chairman of Nissin Food Products Andō Momofuku, and awarded only to the highest-performing students at APU. Each year's recipients are invited to Nissin's headquarters in Osaka to be congratulated personally by both the donor and Nissin's CEO Andō Kōki. They also visit Nissin's museum dedicated to instant ramen noodles, the creation of Andō Momofuku that grew to be a worldwide best-seller. Standing in front of a display recreating the small room in which Andō worked on creating his first version of the noodles, international students feel the spirit of innovation that was behind the success of so many Japanese companies. Pichaya was one of these students. Upon graduating from APU she began work at Japan's Asahi Breweries, and later completed a Master's degree at the University of Oxford. She now works for a consulting firm in London.

The genesis of student recruitment in India

Dr. Verma, a true Japanophile

Dr. Satya Bhushan Verma is the leading figure in the development of Japanese studies in India, responsible for founding the Centre of East Asian Languages at Jawaharlal Nehru University. By the time he became involved with APU he had already retired from his professorial post, but continued to work actively to promote the study of Japanese language and culture in India, through roles such as President of the Japanese Language Teachers' Association of India and head of the Japanese Language Promotion Centre in New Delhi.

It was the Japanese Embassy in India that introduced Dr. Verma to Ritsumeikan. The India team at Ritsumeikan had sought the Embassy's advice because, as was the case in other nations, they had no particular scheme in mind for India. When they explained the ideas behind APU, Dr. Verma willingly offered his assistance and proceeded to accompany Ritsumeikan staff on visits to high schools and universities, primarily in the New Delhi area close to his own home. Initially, the Ritsumeikan team had found it impossible even to arrange meetings with high school representatives, let alone discuss the possibility of having students recommended to APU. This situation changed entirely, however, as soon as Dr. Verma was appointed a Visiting Professor of Ritsumeikan University and took charge of the APU project in India. Visits to the leading high schools in the Delhi area were arranged, and negotiations towards the signing of student recommendation agreements proceeded swiftly.

Slowly the sphere of activity expanded beyond New Delhi to encompass high schools and Japanese language institutes in Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Kolkata, Lucknow, Chandigarh and other cities across India. Several former students of Dr. Verma came forward to offer their personal assistance. After one particular round of visits in New Delhi had been completed, Ritsumeikan team members were even invited to accompany Dr. Verma back to his home. Tired after their strenuous efforts in an unfamiliar city, the members looked forward to this opportunity to relax. As soon as they arrived, however, Dr. Verma sat down in front of his computer and began to type up a summary of the day's activities. This was not the only time that APU staff members were struck by the energy and vigor that Dr. Verma, already well over the age of 60, brought to his work.

The efforts of Dr. Verma and the India team gradually began to produce results. 17 Indian students enrolled in APU in the first year. This number grew steadily in the following years, and by 2003 annual enrollments had exceeded 40. The total number of Indians studying at undergraduate level in Japan is by no means high, but APU has a strikingly large share of this total.

Dr. Verma made countless visits to APU, his genial personality cultivating particularly warm sentiments within the university's Indian student community. He also earned a reputation for his strict vegetarianism, which even extended to strict standards regarding the preparation of Dashi stock used in Japanese-style dishes.

Beyond APU, Dr. Verma is widely known in Japan for initiatives such as publication of the first-ever Japanese-Hindi dictionary, and for his contributions to the promotion of haiku poetry culture, his personal field of expertise. In 2002 he was awarded the prestigious Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Award. Sadly, Dr. Verma passed away in 2005.

The students arrive

New arrivals from around the globe

One day Mr. Kaitu'u Funaki, then an employee of the National Reserve Bank of Tonga, came across a newspaper article at work titled "fostering leaders for the future." It was a publicity piece for APU. This was the start of Funaki's long journey to Japan, and APU.

Funaki was a graduate of Tonga High School. Many of the country's leaders were trained at this school, where all classes were taught in English rather than Tongan, and its students often found that their school's reputation preceded them. Funaki developed an interest in Japan after graduating from this high school and enrolling in Macquarie University, Australia, where he befriended some Japanese students who taught him much about their home country. To Funaki, Japan seemed a beautiful place. He was particularly fascinated by the story of Japan's rapid economic growth in the postwar period, and thought that if he learned more about Japanese corporate management, he may be able to contribute something to the development of his own country. APU presented a great opportunity to pursue this interest; furthermore, its multi-cultural campus environment promised opportunities to develop skills applicable at an international level.

Funaki submitted his application and attended an interview held at the University of the South Pacific. He was soon notified of his success, and at the same time reminded that he was going to be representing the entire South Pacific region at APU.

For Funaki, the unaccompanied journey to Beppu via Fiji and Tokyo was perhaps even more difficult than the task of gaining admission to APU. He had thought that after arriving at Tokyo's Narita Airport it would only be a short trip to the APU campus. After all, his university in Australia had not been far from Sydney Airport. Telephoning APU from Narita to get more information, Funaki became aware for the first time of exactly how far away he still was from the campus. He learned that his first task would be to transfer to Haneda, Tokyo's other airport. He approached a friendly-looking elderly Japanese man to ask for directions, only to be met with a gesture that clearly expressed refusal. The man did not understand English.

A Japanese young couple that had observed this scene approached Funaki. It turned out that this couple had been on the same plane from Fiji as Funaki. They proceeded to take Funaki all the way to Haneda themselves, helped him get his oversized luggage loaded safely, and even stayed to wave him off as he made his way through the

departure gate. In his first few hours in Japan, Funaki had already been touched by the kindness of the Japanese people.

There are many unique routes by which international students gain admission to APU. Romanian student Mihai Scumpieru provides one example. Romania was one of the countries for which Ritsumeikan, unable to arrange on-ground recruitment activities, had sought the assistance of the Embassy in Japan. Many important leads were furnished by Embassies; in the Romanian case one of these was an introduction to the Nipponica Foundation, an organization for the promotion of friendly relations between Japan and Romania. Ritsumeikan promptly asked this Foundation to recommend Romanian students for admission to APU. One of the students they recommended was Mihai, who already residing in Japan and attending the Tokyo Metropolitan Kokusai High School while his father worked at the Embassy. As a Romanian who already spoke fluent Japanese, he proved to be a valuable addition to APU's student body.

APU also welcomed students from Lithuania. APU's connections with this country were formed via the Ritsumeikan-affiliated Keishō High School in Hokkaido, which had sent several students on study tours to Lithuania. Contacts made through these tours enabled the recruitment of three students from Lithuania in APU's first year of operation.

The Beppu Office

The first task: Finding an office location

It was in December 1997 that Ritsumeikan opened an office in Beppu City, Oita Prefecture. December is a month of cold, dry winds even in the relatively temperate Kyushu region. The Manager of the new Beppu Office, who had been appointed on October 1 of the same year, found that his first task was to find somewhere to set up his office. After consulting with contacts at local financial institutions and others familiar with the local area, he chose a building in the quiet residential area of Sōen. The office was to be housed on the second level of the building, above a pharmacy. The office staff moved in looking forward to a warm welcome from locals, only to find that the mood of the local community was, if anything, against them.

Is this any way to spend prefectural and city taxes? Is it right to donate city-owned real estate, and commit such a large amount of public funds, to a single private university organization? Will the city's hot springs be affected by the construction work? Will there be an influx of infectious diseases? Rather than communicating the significance of the new university project, office staff members found themselves struggling to deal with a campaign of opposition that mobilized a variety of community concerns.

Several concerted movements had been launched to oppose APU in the wake of the September 1995 joint press conference held by Ritsumeikan, Oita Prefectural Government and Beppu City Government to announce the university's founding. Among the most prominent of these were the Citizens for the Preservation of

Jūmonjibaru, the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Problem Research Group, and the Citizens First Association. Several experts added their own criticisms of the plan, and legal action was even initiated against the Prefectural Governor and Beppu City Mayor. Staff members of Ritsumeikan's Beppu Office were in the position of having to take all this activity on board at the same time as trying to prepare for the opening of the new university.

In April 1997, the Office organized information sessions at six locations around Beppu City. These sessions needed to be held as part of the urban planning process, in order to gain community endorsement regarding the projected environmental impacts of the project. But with court cases challenging the prefectural and city authorities proceeding in parallel, Ritsumeikan representatives at these sessions found themselves in the eye of a raging storm. At the same time, they were heartened by several public statements of support for the APU project from sections of the business community as well as citizens' groups. Particularly notable was the work of members of the Junior Chamber International Beppu, whose voluntary contributions went well beyond any commercial motive. The Manger of the Beppu Office recalls becoming involved in a wide assortment of community engagement tasks, and often feeling like the "Ritsumeikan Ambassador to Beppu."

Ritsumeikan University students lend their support

The Beppu Office staff members busied themselves in developing personal connections throughout the local community, and within three months had met with more than 700 individuals. They held seminars and other initiatives aimed at encouraging locals to offer rental accommodation to APU students, and the Prefectural and City Governments cooperated in organizing study sessions to prepare the community for interaction with and support for its new international student residents. The Office also dealt with media outlets, but the APU message had not yet been taken up in earnest, and media-related activities were not particularly extensive in the first two years of the Office's existence.

As work on the campus neared completion and the university's official opening date drew closer, the protest movements began to drop out of view. Ritsumeikan officials realized, however, that this could not be taken to as a definitive sign that APU was now welcome in Beppu, and so the Beppu Office continued its work to get closer to the local community. Key projects included the production of a television commercial featuring international students from Oita University, filmed in front of the famous Takegawara Hot Spring Baths in downtown Beppu. Support was also furnished by Ritsumeikan University. It sent several sporting clubs to hold training camps and friendly matches in Beppu; its Cheerleading Squad, Wind Ensemble and other groups made appearances at Beppu's annual winter attraction, the Beppu Christmas Hanabi Fantasia; and the Light Music Ensemble performed at the Kijima Jazz Inn festival. This mobilization of Ritsumeikan University students was part of a conscious effort by the Beppu Office to cultivate more affection for Ritsumeikan in the local community and to heighten awareness of the extensive cultural and sporting contributions that could be made by university students.

As well as maintaining this active presence at local events, the Office organized the Ritsumeikan Oita Lectures, a series of monthly gatherings beginning in June 1998. Through this initiative the Office sought to create a buzz surrounding Ritsumeikan and to cultivate more followers in the Oita region. The lecturers featured in this series were also invited to engage in dialogues with prominent local figures, with transcriptions appearing in the popular local magazine CONKA.

The Presentation from APU

With APU's official opening near at hand, the Beppu Office launched a campaign titled "Presentation from APU." This entailed Ritsumeikan furnishing proposals and initiating discussion on community development initiatives in Oita Prefecture and Beppu City, and exploring ways to apply the ideas thereby generated to municipal government and administration. A proposal document was released, focusing on the three pillars of "human resource development," "community development" and "collaborative network development." This proposal was reduced to a leaflet format, printed and distributed to every household in Beppu. It was also delivered to meetings of district welfare commissioners, where Beppu Office personnel made presentations on community and lifestyle issues. One year before APU's opening, Ritsumeikan's staff in Beppu was joined by those who had been working at the New University Establishment Office in Kyoto. The activities of the Beppu Office were expanded across two departments, with all staff members taking their turn to venture out in the evenings to residents' meetings and other gatherings.

Office personnel were especially appreciative of the initiative taken by local International Exchange Association members, such as Mr. Kawashima Akihiko, to launch a Housing Committee to help organize apartment accommodation for APU students. Many members of the Association, and particularly the Housing Committee, joined Beppu Office staff to explain housing arrangements to locals and assuage anxiety regarding the imminent arrival of international student residents in the community. Ritsumeikan owes a great debt of gratitude to these individuals for their work in residents' associations and many other forums to argue the APU case not as representatives of Ritsumeikan, but from a third-party perspective, and from their own viewpoints as long-standing residents of the local community in question.

When discussing the pending influx of APU students, Housing Committee members explained how good it would be for Beppu to gain so many new young residents. "It will be just like getting new grandchildren," they would say to elderly members of the community. Senior citizens were among the most apprehensive initially, and some were even heard to made discriminatory remarks about the new arrivals. But curiosity soon proved stronger than fear, and it was often the elderly who were the first to accept the international students in their neighborhood, offering words of praise such as "they're much more well-mannered than Japanese kids," and "I would be happy to have them as my grandchildren!" More and more local families registered under APU's home stay system, and events such as host family discussion forums were held. Office staff made appearances at meetings of many of the 150 local residents' associations, and came into contact with more than 1,000 people in total.

One Ritsumeikan administrative officer recalls visiting an electrical goods store to subscribe to Beppu's cable television system soon after arriving in December 1999. In the "Occupation" column on the subscription form, the officer wrote "Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University." Seeing this, the wife of the store's owner suddenly announced: "I'm thinking of getting a dog – a Doberman." When asked why, she replied: "I heard that when APU opens and all those international students start arriving, a whole lot of migrant workers will turn up in town too. Things will be a lot less safe around here." It was obvious that the very idea of non-Japanese nationals in town was enough to generate major misconceptions in the minds of some locals. The officer was in a hurry and had been told that the cable TV subscription would only take ten minutes to process, but this comment could not be ignored. The officer explained that half APU's students would be Japanese, and the other half international; that they would live in an on-campus dormitory for a year and be well accustomed to life in Japan by the time they came to live downtown; and that the university staff would make every effort to ensure that the transition went smoothly. The cable TV contract was ready in ten minutes as promised, but this passionate defense of APU's position took a whole hour to complete.

The above episode was typical of the local level of consciousness prior to APU's opening. One resident stated: "I'm sure that a lot of tourists will come to Beppu from places like China, Korea and Taiwan, and there's nothing wrong with that, but we haven't had permanent residents here since GHQ was in town." GHQ refers to the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, the occupation forces that controlled Japan immediately after its defeat in World War Two – more than 50 years ago. This kind of preference for the short-term economic benefits of tourism over the long-term presence of non-Japanese citizens in the community was widespread, and Beppu Office staff members could not afford to leave it unaddressed. Their patient approach, pursued with the assistance of sympathetic locals, slowly began to show results, and the APU support network spread gradually throughout the local community. About half a year after APU was opened, the woman from the electrical store phoned up. She had not bought a Doberman dog, but had decided to host an APU student from Korea. This really was good news for APU.

Finding accommodation

The development of housing options for APU students and staff was the responsibility Creotech, a private company fully financed by the Ritsumeikan Trust. Creotech opened an APU Office in the Ishigaki-Higashi district of Beppu in April 1999.

International students were to spend their first year in the AP House dormitory, but would then descend from Jūmonjibaru to live in the main Beppu township. Creotech's job thus entailed securing accommodation not only for the Japanese students who would need places to live immediately, but also for university employees and, in the long term, for more than 400 international students. It was crucial that this work begin immediately. If, for example, Creotech were to engage a local operator to construct an apartment building, a lead time of at least two years would be needed, including time to secure finance and allowing around eight months for actual construction.

Creotech employees did the rounds of local construction firms and real estate agents, hoping to locate partners in construction projects and people willing to offer their existing rental properties to APU students and staff. Eventually they decided to organize a mass gathering of interested parties. Thus in April 2000 at the B-con Plaza convention center in downtown Beppu, Creotech and Ritsumeikan held an information forum on international student housing. This event was attended by some 400 representatives from construction firms and real estate agents in Beppu City and the neighboring city of Oita. It was explained to these attendees that information sent to prospective APU students would contain a message to the effect that all students' housing needs would be dealt with by Creotech, a company established by Ritsumeikan itself. This declaration of Creotech and Ritsumeikan's commitment to the housing project served to assuage the concerns of many local financiers, and Creotech began to be approached by local firms interested in housing developments.

Creotech's target was to get 1,000 apartments constructed in the Kamegawa, Ishigaki and Kannawa districts, all within 20 minutes' commuting distance of APU. They were looking for places offering good standards of livability, with convenience stores and other amenities close at hand. Work on finding international student housing proved difficult, thanks to a rumor spreading through town that in the past, some international students had run amok in their rental accommodation. But there were also many success stories, such as the conversion of old employee dormitories owned by NTT and Oita Bank into student housing, and the elderly woman who came forward voluntarily to offer rooms in her own house to international students. With the opening of Oita International House in 2001, the housing target was within reach.

Campus construction work: A triumph of engineering

No soil wasted

The grassy hills of Jūmonjibaru had such a large elevation difference that they were often frequented by hang-gliding enthusiasts. The highest point on the site was some 120 meters farther above sea level than the lowest point. An environmentally responsible approach was taken to the earthworks in preparation for construction of campus buildings, with earth cleared from the higher reaches of the site used to bring the lower portions up to the same level. The ground on which the Student Union and Gymnasium buildings stand today was originally split by a ravine some 40 meters deep. The topsoil was of the type known as Andosol, a soft volcanic ash soil. It went down to a depth of at least one meter – four to five meters in some places. Before it could be used as a filling material, this topsoil needed to be mixed with lime and cement, making for a costly start to the campus construction work.

The site was serviced with neither electricity nor gas, nor water. It was possible to get electricity to the site by extending the lines already running to the nearby expressway service area, but water, needed in massive quantities for the construction work, had to be drawn from a local irrigation channel. This water would quickly become muddy

when it rained, meaning that it needed to be pumped through a purification system before it was potable.

Jūmonjibaru has a well-deserved reputation for strong winds, but typhoons are something really special. Conscientiously following the long-standing Ritsumeikan directive that “responsible persons must be on site in times of emergency,” staff members chose to stay overnight in a prefabricated shed on Jūmonjibaru when a typhoon hit during the construction period. Listening to the sound of the wind ripping at the galvanized iron sheeting that covered their makeshift shelter, they realized that sleep was not a viable proposition. When they stepped outside the next morning after the typhoon had passed, they found that the large cargo containers positioned near their accommodation had been overturned by the wind and now lay strewn around the site.

People familiar with the harsh topographic and climatic conditions of Jūmonjibaru often look at the finished APU campus and mutter, “It’s amazing that this place ever got built.”

Jūmonjibaru had been officially designated a Class Three Scenic Zone, meaning that any new developments needed to be integrated with the character of the surrounding district and preserve its scenic attributes. The maximum height allowed for any building was 12 meters. All roofs were to be pitched. The size of the proposed buildings meant, however, that roofs would need to have a vertical interval of 5 meters in some cases if they were to be pitched as required. Buildings could thus only be two stories at most without exceeding the height limit. But filling the campus with a horde of low-rise constructions would be too costly.

Ritsumeikan officials figured that since APU was to be an international university without parallel in Japan, they would need some kind of symbolic structure to lend the campus an imposing character when viewed from either its main entrance or from downtown Beppu. They approached Beppu’s Urban Planning Council to explain their desire to construct two tall towers to achieve this effect. Once this Council had granted its permission, the proposal was put to the Oita Prefectural Urban Planning Council, which also gave its assent. The towers were to be 22.5 meters tall, and other buildings on the campus a maximum of 15 meters. These specifications dictated the form of the campus that stands on Jūmonjibaru today.

Exhaustive environmental measures

Many objections and concerns were raised regarding the planned construction work. Some suggested that Beppu’s supply of hot spring water, essential to the livelihood of many in the city, would be adversely affected; others pointed out the possibility of the earthworks triggering landslides that would threaten homes further downhill; some were even concerned that the work would have some effect on active fault lines and lead to more earthquakes.

The only issue that those in charge of the construction work could not address categorically was the question of seismic activity. They enlisted the help of experts from Oita University to conduct a survey of active faults in the area. This survey revealed that

the site was subject to earthquakes occurring on a 2000-year cycle, and that the next occurrence was not due for well over a millennium. These findings came as a considerable relief to all those involved.

There was also the problem of how best to preserve the rare plant species found on the site. This was addressed by moving all specimens of botanical value, which included varieties of *Rhododendron kiusianum*, *Viola orientalis*, *Echinops setifer*, *Iris rossii*, and *Aeginetia sinensis*, to a rare flora zone near the main campus gate.

The area that is now home to AP House was densely forested. The Beppu City Government still owned this forest, and thus sold off the trees for timber. Huge quantities of branches and leaves were left behind, presenting those in charge of the construction work with a challenge if they were to uphold their promise not to allow any waste products to leave the construction site. They decided to use the “Nekko Chip Technique” developed by the construction firm Kumagai Gumi. Under this method, the wood refuse was reduced to small fragments, mixed with local soil, grass seeds and fertilizer, and spread over the sloping ground around the site, thereby ensuring that not a branch was wasted.

Chapter 4

The World to APU, APU to the World



The APU House student dormitory, a vibrant hub of intercultural exchange

Snow has fallen at the APU campus.

Southeast Asian and African students who have never seen snow before are in high spirits as they explore the transformed grounds of AP House.

Tazawa Naoya, an AP House Resident Assistant (RA) from Hokkaido in northern Japan, has been studying in his warm room wearing short pants. Answering a knock on the door, he suddenly finds himself being carried outside and flung into the snow.

“Hey Naoya, look, it’s snow!”

Keen to prolong their enjoyment, some of the students take handfuls of snow back inside and put them in the refrigerator. They soon melt, covering the kitchen floor with water.

Dōke Maiko, a fellow RA, kneels down and begins wiping up the mess without a word.

Just another intercultural moment at AP House.

AP House, a cultural melting pot

The midnight welcoming party

Despite its immense size, AP House does not have a live-in dormitory manager. Instead, the dormitory is run by student Resident Assistants (RAs) with the support of the university’s Student Affairs Division and a third party facilities management firm. The RAs play a crucial role in guiding international students towards full participation in community and campus life, and in making AP House a more meaningful experience for all residents.

The opening of APU in 2000 is also the beginning of the touching story of how the first group of 35 RAs, new to university life themselves, worked to take care of APU's newly-arrived international students. 20 out of the group of 35 came from either Ritsumeikan Senior High School, Ritsumeikan Keishō Senior High School, or Ritsumeikan Uji Senior High School. This meant that almost all the Ritsumeikan-affiliated school graduates enrolling in APU were appointed to RA posts.

Tazawa Naoya was one of these. In his penultimate year at Ritsumeikan Keishō High School, Tazawa had chosen to go to Vietnam on a class study tour. Less than one month after he returned from the tour with a newly-whetted appetite for intercultural exchange, Tazawa attended an APU information session at his school. He promptly renounced his earlier preference for a university degree in science or engineering, and chose to apply for APU instead. One of Tazawa's RA colleagues, Kuroki Mayumi from Osaka, had been planning to apply for admission to Ritsumeikan University when she came across an APU brochure attached to an information pack sent to her from Ritsumeikan. This brochure, adorned with the characteristic dolphin motif, was filled with dreams and aspirations. Kuroki soon became convinced that something special would be waiting for her at APU. She submitted her application, at the same time expressing her interest in becoming an RA. Another like her was Murakami Mai. A native of Fukuoka, Murakami's interest in international issues, and Asia in particular, had been aroused by her participation in a high school study tour to Korea. She read about the APU project in a newspaper, cast aside all plans to apply for other universities, and submitted her application to APU. Murakami also added her name to the list of RA candidates.

The students chosen as RAs gathered at AP House to undergo training in mid-March, two weeks before regular enrollees began to arrive at the campus. Kuroki Mayumi recalls:

The 35 of us took up residence in the single building that was AP House in those days – no other buildings had yet been constructed. Most students start their university lives by finding a place to live and buying items to furnish their new accommodation. But each of us arrived at AP House with the bare minimum of belongings packed in a suitcase. We had to sit down right away and began the training. It was cold outside, a strong wind blew, and at night the whole place was pitch-dark and silent. It was hard to get a grip on what we were supposed to be doing there. Most new university enrollees can expect to find senior students and an established school spirit. Those first days in AP House really reminded me that this was a brand new university. It was a good feeling, but a little daunting as well.

It was around March 20 that the international students began to arrive. One of the first major assignments for the RAs was meet these students at airport arrival gates. They divided into two teams, one for Fukuoka Airport and one for Oita Airport. They needed to draw up a daily airport duty roster, ensure that messages could be passed on, and work out which floor of AP House each new international student needed to be taken to. According to Tazawa Naoya,

Two or three RAs would get taken to Fukuoka Airport at a time, in a car provided by Mr. Miyake Sadamune, the head of a volunteer association called the Beppu International Students Support Group. I remember

holding up name signs as we stood at the arrivals gate waiting for students coming in on a 1 a.m. flight. Then we broke up into two teams: one taking the students back to Beppu in Mr. Miyake's car, and the other, usually one or two RAs, staying on at the airport to meet students off the daytime flights. Once we had met the daytime arrivals we would all get on an express bus bound for Beppu, then change to a local bus and make our way to AP House.

The RAs had a difficult job, but it was not easy on the international students, either. A group of students from Vietnam, more used to getting around by bicycle and motorbike, found the two-hour express bus trip from the airport very testing. Many became ill during the voyage and two were sick as soon as they stepped off at the Kannawa stop in Beppu. But they had no choice but to get straight on a local bus bound for the APU campus, a journey that took them up a winding mountain road much rougher than the expressway from the airport. Upon arrival at AP House the pale students rushed straight for the toilets and did not emerge for some time.

There was always something happening during those first days. A staff member of Ritsumeikan's Tokyo Office gave up his day off to deliver some money to a Filipino student who had lost a wallet at Narita Airport; an Indonesian student arrived at AP House speaking fluent Kansai dialect, startling the Japanese students awaiting him. Kuroki Mayumi reports that:

Recently I caught up with an Indian student who was part of that first batch of enrollees. That student still remembers how we met her at the airport: she never expected us to be there in the middle of the night. At last I felt our efforts had been worthwhile.

Most international students were setting foot in Japan for the first time, and for those arriving at night, the intense darkness of Jūmonjibaru was not exactly heartening. Murakami Mai recalls that the next challenge for the RAs was to cheer up those homesick international students.

New cultures, new surprises

With each new country that came to be represented in the resident population at AP House, a new addition was made to the dormitory's diverse mix of living habits. For RAs, responsible for instructing residents on a common set of rules, this diversity was often a source of confusion and distress. University staff members, most of whom had never before experienced this kind of situation, also found themselves groping in the dark. Even something as customary in Japan as taking out one's own trash was not straightforward for students from some countries. One Indian student announced that back home, garbage disposal had been the job of house servants. Having explained the Japanese practice, the RAs watched as the student gingerly lugged her own trash out to the disposal area, crying as she went. Others were unaccustomed to the idea of separating garbage into different types before disposal. The AP House disposal area was soon filled with rejected garbage bags, each adorned a sticker from Beppu City's waste disposal department reading "not fit for collection."



An RA giving international student residents a hand
(Image supplied by Oita Gōdō Shimbunsha)

The first structure on the AP House site was a lone five-storey building composed entirely of private single rooms, each furnished with a bed, desk, wardrobe, basin and lavatory. Shower rooms and kitchens were shared. The 11 kitchens, one on each level of each wing, were equipped with two gas cookers, a multifunction oven and one electric hotplate. It was the grilling units attached to the gas cookers that caused problems. For Japanese people the only explanation required was that these units were designed for grilling fish. Many international students, however, were unfamiliar with such cooking practices, and often ended up setting fire to the inside mesh of the grills as they used the devices for purposes other than grilling fish, or left them on for long periods with no water in the catchment tray. This would generate excessive volumes of smoke, triggering the smoke alarms and bringing facilities management personnel rushing to the scene. By August in the first year, the mesh had been burned out on around 80% of the grilling units, and a decision was taken to remove all of them from the AP House kitchens.

Once an RA watched fascinated as an international student poured cold water rather than boiling water over a container of instant noodles. The RA then had to intervene when the student proceeded to put the container in the microwave to heat it. Another student was caught trying to toast a slice of bread directly on an electric hotplate. It was hard to know what would happen next.

The shower rooms also proved to be a constant source of accidents. Each private shower unit consisted of an external door opening onto a changing area, which in turn opened onto an inner shower cubicle. Some students would leave the inner door wide open while showering, soaking the floor of the changing area and adding another unit to the growing number of showers adorned with “Out of Order” signs. But this was not the worst of it. On repeated occasions the shower cubicles were used as toilets. It was suggested that perhaps doing one’s business in the shower was perfectly natural for students from countries where it was the custom to wash with water rather than use toilet paper.

The lesson that showers were not interchangeable with lavatories was quickly learned by the first intake of AP House residents, but Matsumoto Ikue, part of the second cohort of RAs, recalls being shocked by an experience at an RA meeting in the second year. Several international students were added to the RA team that year. One of them, an Indonesian student, was observed by Matsumoto coming out of a shower room during a break in the meeting. “What were you doing in there?” Matsumoto asked. “Taking a leak,” was the casual reply. Matsumoto turned to another RA, from Singapore, for support in her condemnation of this action, but that RA simply responded, “Really? I do it too, sometimes.” Matsumoto was shaken to learn that such a stark difference in perceptions could exist even within the RA group entrusted with the task of helping new students to acclimatize.

The “flower festival” incident

It was in May 2000, little more than a month after the university opened, that the now-legendary “flower festival” incident took place. It started with a group of female students from Sri Lanka who were keen to mark the anniversary of the birth of Buddha in the traditional manner of their home country. These students worked for several days to produce a floral decoration for the festival, which they proceeded to place at the entrance to AP House. This act, however, drew protestations from some of APU’s Muslim students. APU officials had been particularly concerned by the complex differences in religious orientation among the student body, and had thus decided that in principle, no religious activities would be permitted in AP House’s communal spaces. The Sri Lankan students, vehement in their demands for permission, were supported by those who pointed out that all that was at stake was some flowers – no different to the decorations used for regular cultural festivals in Japan. University officials, on the other hand, were sure that permitting this exception would open the floodgates for all kinds of requests regarding religious observances. The Sri Lankan students became tearful, threatening to go home if this kind of thing wasn’t allowed at a supposedly international university. Soon the campus was like an overturned anthill, with everybody competing to express an opinion on the matter. Sri Lankan custom dictated that the “flower festival” decoration be put up by midnight on the night before the main festival. Intense negotiation between the students and university staff continued until just before midnight, when it was finally decided that the decoration would be allowed on the basis that it was part of a cultural event rather than a strictly religious occasion. It could not, however, be placed at the AP House entrance where other students would be required to pass by it; instead, a meeting room within the AP House building was used, with the decoration labeled “an introduction to Sri Lankan culture.”

Muslim students were also required to avoid communal spaces when conducting their five daily prayers in the direction of Mecca. On occasions, however, there was no time to find a private room, and the students had no choice but to get together and pray in a classroom. Inquisitive Japanese students would sometimes peek in and watch the students at prayer, remarking, “Ah, so Mecca’s over that way!”

The ban on religious observances means that the AP House lobby areas retain a stiff, formal atmosphere unlike any similar spaces in other parts of Japan. There are no New Year's pine decorations, no jack-o'-lanterns at Halloween, and no Christmas trees.

Singaporean student Mazhar Hamid offers the following international student perspective on AP House.

Some people don't even like the smell of curry, you know. But in AP House, we have no choice but to share the kitchens with other residents. It's important that everyone makes an effort to adjust, and to be tolerant.

Dōke Maiko, one of the first Japanese RAs, has this to say about the lessons learned in AP House's multi-cultural environment.

When you look at what's going on around the world, you can find many things that are too shocking to even think about. But any one of them might be happening in the country where your neighbor in AP House has come from, or might be perpetrated by that country. Living in AP House suddenly makes world events feel a lot closer to home. If everyone who lives together at AP House and studies at APU goes back to their home countries enriched with a more generous spirit, we will be well on the way to achieving world peace.

APU-style intensive learning

Studying for their lives

“Those students you see doing homework during their break times at part-time work – they're sure to be from APU.” This is how locals came to describe the intensity with which APU students studied. The sheer volume of assignments, tests and exams left virtually no time for leisure. Japanese students worked assiduously on their English, while their international counterparts diligently studied Japanese.

Some Japanese students were not in a position to devote their full attention to study: they had to spend considerable time and energy providing assistance to international students. The reality of APU's cosmopolitan environment was the presence of many students unfamiliar with Japanese customs and living habits: the successful adjustment of these students was a precondition to the achievement of a multi-cultural community. Japanese students were constantly being reminded by instructors that it was their duty to offer support to international students.

International students had a different kind of challenge: they needed to maintain good academic grades in order to keep their scholarships. Lose your scholarship, and you would have no choice but to go home. Some of these students could have lived in their home countries for ten years on what it cost to live for one year in Japan. Many refused invitations to join in extracurricular activities. They weren't simply acting superior: their livelihoods were at stake. But the Japanese students also benefited from this high-pressure atmosphere, realizing that they couldn't afford to slack off, either.

One seminar class taught by Dr. Seike became known as the “jackpot seminar” because so many of its students earned cash scholarships under the system for rewarding outstanding academic achievement. The class officially ran from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., but most students would stay on and continue their discussion until around 10:00. Then, instead of making their way home, about half these students would jump into the instructor’s car to go on to a pub or 24-hour restaurant to start the discussion all over again, with each student keenly putting forward his or her opinion, only to have it dissected and derided by the others. This intense battle of ideas would often continue until daybreak.

An earlier chapter described how international students continually questioned the university’s systems in areas such as grades and course registration. This preference for asserting one’s opinions rubbed off on the Japanese students as well. “Nobody at APU liked to keep quiet,” says APU graduate Saitō Maiko, recalling the fact that many Japanese students were unusually forthright in expressing themselves.

Morning classes at APU started at 8:45. Initially, instructors would arrive a few minutes after the start time, as was customary at most Japanese universities at the time. This produced many words of complaint from students, such as “Why does the teacher have to be late?” and “Please start the class on time from now on!” From then on, the custom for APU instructors was to be in the classroom in time to hear the starting bell. But that was not all. Thanks to the per-credit tuition fee system, instructors were presented with many exacting demands regarding class content. “We’ve paid 34,000 yen for this class, and all you do is show us a video?” was a common protest.

In her third year, Saitō Maiko went on “internal exchange” to Ritsumeikan University. Bewildered by the docile students and lenient classes, and inevitably comparing the lack of interest in study with the fervent efforts of the international students at her home university, Saitō curtailed her one-year exchange and returned to APU in less than six months.

Pioneers of the Accelerated Program

A trailblazer’s ordeal

APU offers an Accelerated Program that allows undergraduates to register to complete their degrees in three or three and a half years instead of the usual four years. Among APU’s first cohort, nine students registered for this program and graduated early.

Lee Eng Ngor from Malaysia had planned to study in the U.K. or Australia after completing high school. But her plans changed when she attended an APU information seminar in Kuala Lumpur. Attracted by the idea of being part of Japan’s first international university and studying in both English and Japanese, she decided that APU was the university for her.

The brochure that Lee was given at the seminar in KL had on its cover a computer-generated image of the APU campus area viewed from above. In this image, the sea

appeared to be on the same level as the campus itself, so Lee assumed that the beach would be close by. On the day that she arrived at Fukuoka airport and made her way to the campus, the area was shrouded in thick fog. It was the following morning, when the fog finally cleared, that Lee first learned that her new university was actually on a mountain.

Lee decided to register for the Accelerated Program, realizing that it offered a way to save one year's living expenses, and figuring that it would be seen as an advantage whether she wanted to go on to graduate study or get a job after graduation. But graduating a year earlier meant that the workload of assignments and class preparation was even greater than for regular students. Lee states:

Colleagues say that their memories of me at that time were of a student who could always be found studying in the language lounge or a classroom, even early in the morning. Seeing the lights on in my room at all hours, they assumed that I was studying all night too. She probably eats nothing but instant noodles, they figured.

Lee's commitment to her studies led ultimately to success in completing the Accelerated Program and receiving an offer of employment from Toshiba. When she went to the immigration office to apply to change her student visa to a working visa, however, she struck trouble. Usually this procedure is a mere formality, but immigration officials became suspicious that Lee's speedy graduation reflected some ulterior motive for seeking a working visa. A university staff member called the immigration office to argue Lee's case, but to no avail. Lee contacted Toshiba and had them send a copy of her employment documents to the office, but even these did not convince the immigration officials, who pointed out that the documents did not specify the actual department to which Lee was assigned.

Even today, Lee finds it difficult to forget this painful experience. All that hard work had come to nothing, she thought. Eventually the visa was granted, and Lee went to Tokyo to start work, only to find that being prematurely parted from her classmates at APU was an unbearably lonely experience. She confesses to doubting whether it had been a good idea to register for the Accelerated Program at all.

Her interview at Toshiba was also a trial, thanks to the fact that it was held in fall rather than in the standard spring recruitment season. In contrast to the usual process entailing separate rounds of interviews over several weeks, Lee's screening was done all on one day in an intensive format prepared for her alone. But Lee was an APU student: she was not easily daunted. She confronted her interviewers head on, negotiating fiercely and arguing back on many occasions. Her Japanese was not perfect at the time, and she sensed that the interviewers were taken aback by her impudence. The chances of getting selected were slim, she realized. When she got back to APU, however, she found a letter from Toshiba telling her that she had been accepted. Her immediate feeling was more one of shock than of happiness.

Of her time at APU, Lee now says:

I think I grew more at APU than at any other time in my student career. Those years are the source of my strongest memories. Even now, when things are tough, I find myself wishing I could go back to APU. I flick through my old photo albums, or look at brochures or articles about APU.

It reminds me that I have many friends, and many people prepared to lend me support. If I could make it through those three years at APU, I figure, I can make it through anything. Those memories still offer great encouragement to me.

Making his own history

One Japanese student who chose the Accelerated Program was Takemoto Shinya. “I have a really strong craving to see, hear and experience things that are new, things that I have never before come across,” Takemoto explains to people meeting him for the first time. It was this strong sense of curiosity that attracted him to the idea of being the first product of a system that had never before been tried in Japan. Takemoto was not content with graduating in the usual way: he figured that he could get more enjoyment out of APU if he set himself a more challenging goal. Today, he speaks proudly of his experiences.

The Accelerated Program sets very high hurdles. You can’t graduate unless you maintain a consistently high standard in your grades. The Program required me to develop my own study regime, set my own goals and force myself to stick to them. I created my own little bit of history by graduating earlier than anyone else. And I left my mark on APU.

After graduating, Takemoto was employed by the leading advertising firm Hakuhōdō. He has also been President of the APU Student & Alumni Association ever since it was launched in 2003. The Association is still in its formative stages, but it holds gatherings in the Kantō, Kansai and Kyushu regions and is gradually developing into a forum for connecting people and facilitating interaction. The Association’s structure was altered in 2008 to allow current APU students to join as associate members. Formerly limited to alumni alone, the Association now aims to “be an interface with the student body, and foster connections among everyone associated with APU.” It organizes employment information sessions and many other opportunities for current students to hear directly from alumni. Takemoto says:

People say that the character of APU changes from year to year, but I think it’s important to provide students with opportunities to come into contact with alumni from APU’s first and second batches of enrollees. I want to provide more opportunities for students to have a broad range of experiences.

First steps to global citizenship

Preparing for a global society

Indian student Shradha Chowdhury first learned of APU through the principal of her high school. She was immediately taken with the idea of a university which guaranteed a world-class education taught in a multi-cultural, dual-language environment, all in a

country of which she knew almost nothing. This was the kind of experience that could open up all sorts of opportunities for the future, she thought. All those who knew her were surprised by her decision to go to APU, both because she was the first woman in her family to venture outside India, and because the country she had selected was one which few other Indian students chose to go to.

APU's first students were faced with a blank page when they arrived, but the university supported their efforts to leave their mark on the university in many ways. Chowdhury worked as a member of the student staff for APU's Opening Festival, chaired the World Students' Summit, and even participated in the Wadaiko drumming club "Raku." Each of these experiences is now a treasured memory. Another unique experience for Chowdhury was coming into contact with people from so many different backgrounds. As a member of a student body in which over 80 countries and regions were represented, and in which countless different cultures and customs came together, she found it necessary constantly to re-assess things that she had previously taken for granted. This expanded her horizons and taught her to understand and value people with different ideas and ways of thinking. Collaborating with students from around the globe both in class and through extracurricular activities proved to be the ideal preparation for engagement with a rapidly globalizing world.

Chowdhury's participation in an internship program at Sanyo Electric Co. in her third year strengthened her resolve to work in Japan after graduation. She ended up applying to Sanyo and being accepted. She was posted first to the personnel and planning strategy division at Osaka headquarters, and subsequently took up a post in global communications at the Tokyo branch. These roles allowed her to make full use of the linguistic and communicative skills she had acquired at APU: she was well suited to the work, and found it constantly fulfilling. Including her time at APU, Chowdhury ended up spending a total of six years living and working in Japan and succeeded in broadening and deepening her understanding of the country considerably. Eventually, however, she began to feel too comfortable in a workplace that suited her so well, and realized that the time had come to move somewhere more stimulating.

She decided to join Peace Boat, a non-governmental organization that operates three-month tours of more than 20 different countries by chartered ship. Her work onboard the Peace Boat involved collaborating with the many different instructors who joined the tour, and dealing with situations in destination countries that went beyond anything she had previously experienced. On many occasions she found her adaptability and flexibility tested to the limit.

Chowdhury subsequently traveled to the United States seeking a new challenge. She now works at the Institute of International Education, one of the world's largest international education and training organizations, where she coordinates a program to train women to work in technology. She says that in this post she is doing what she wanted to do most, and really feels like she is bringing dreams to reality: there is no bigger thrill than that.



The APU Women's Athletics Team competes in the All-Japan Collegiate Women's Ekiden (Road Relay) Championships each year. A team member from Kenya has also claimed the all-Japan collegiate women's crown in the 5000 meter event.

Launching a new apparel brand in Vietnam

Vietnamese student Hoang Viet Nga spent two years in Japan as a young child. This experience inspired her to look to Japan when it came to preparing for university study. She came across APU, and decided that the opportunities to master English and the program in management – the field in which she was planning to specialize – made this university the right choice for her. Her time at APU, filled with interaction with people from other countries and experiences of other cultures, equipped her not only with knowledge in her specialist field, but also a sound grasp of both the Japanese and English languages. She found that APU offered many special lectures delivered by individuals who had themselves succeeded in business. She came to attend such lectures whenever they were held, and over time, began to form an idea that she too would one day become an entrepreneur. In January 2003 she entered the inaugural Venture Business Plan Contest at APU, and came first. Hoang says that each and every experience she gained at APU connects in some way to the person she is today. After graduating, she went to Tokyo to study fashion at the same time as working at the “109” fashion store complex. She then returned home to Vietnam and started her own business. Today, she owns her own apparel brand and also works as a Japanese-speaking television hostess.

A future in academic research

Finnish student Tuukka Toivonen's enrollment in APU was the product of a series of coincidences. He had just finished a touring the world as a performer sponsored by the American non-governmental organization Up with People, but Toivonen's natural curiosity meant that he felt entirely comfortable with the idea of going straight on to Japan to study. He was keen on the idea of studying sociology, but what attracted him to APU the most was its image as a vibrant cosmopolitan institution. This image did not

fade in the least when he started studying at APU. Hoping to pursue a career in research, Toivonen found that APU's stimulating seminar classes, rewarding language education programs and wide range of cultural exchange opportunities furnished many positive experiences.

He was also fortunate to make many new friends. He values his memories of time spent with friends at APU above anything else. Going to hot springs together, cooking, chatting for hours, performing in concerts at APU's Millennium Hall . . . all of these are recalled with fondness. Neither will Toivonen forget carrying the portable shrine in Beppu's "Sento Taisai" festival and ending up with sore muscles from head to toe. He cites this festival as one of the most enjoyable, and the most painful, experiences of his life.

He also remembers his encounters with university administration at APU, and being perturbed by the cultural gap between rule-oriented European approaches and custom-oriented Japanese approaches.

Toivonen is now studying for a doctoral degree in social policy at the University of Oxford. His research topic concerns young people in Japan. In the summer of 2008 he conducted research in Japan while based at Kyoto University, and used the opportunity to catch up with former APU colleagues and instructors. In the future he plans to work in a variety of academic posts and extend his knowledge of social policy issues. Eventually, he hopes to take up an advisory position in government and help to develop more equitable, sustainable, and enlivening social systems.

Graduation ceremonies for the President and Vice-President

A certificate from the students

Members of the student club "project EXPO" had prepared a surprise at the 2004 APU Graduation Ceremony.

Held on March 19, 2004, that Ceremony marked the graduation of the majority of the first group of APU students that enrolled in April 2000. Upon conclusion of the ceremony's formal proceedings, Japanese student Komori Yūsuke took to the podium dressed in traditional formal Japanese clothing. "Now we would like to hold a Graduation Ceremony for President Sakamoto and Vice President Jidō," he announced. The attendees, already on their way out, quickly made their way back to their seats, murmuring with anticipation. It had already been decided that this would be President Sakamoto and Vice President Jidō's final year at APU.

The members of the project EXPO club had decided that instead of just handing out graduation certificates to the students, the President and Vice President deserved to receive one each themselves. Club leader Kamiya Hiroyuki had decided on the wording of the certificates in Japanese, translated into English below.

“Graduates, please come to the podium.” The incongruous sight of Komori, complete with shaven head, making this announcement in such solemn style sparked a chorus of laughter throughout the auditorium.

Graduation Certificate

Sakamoto Kazuichi, President, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

As our university’s founder and first President, undaunted by the tribulations of wind, fog and snow, you have showed affection for everyone and everything and continued to press forward in your earnest aspiration for progress.

Your contribution to our university has been immeasurable.

In particular, your warm and approachable persona has been like an oasis, offering us great comfort and inner solace.

We hereby express our gratitude and earnest desire for many future meetings, and confirm that you have successfully completed our university’s prescribed course of study.

March 19, 2004

Komori Yūsuke, Student Representative

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

Graduation Certificate

Jidō Yūji, Vice President, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

As inaugural Vice President of our university, undaunted by the tribulations of wind, fog and snow, you have worked to discharge your official responsibilities and made an immeasurable contribution to our university.

In particular, your not overstated, not understated, light-and-shade approach to supporting the President has provided a valuable lesson in how we all should live our lives.

We hereby express our gratitude and earnest hope for even greater accomplishments in the future, and confirm that you have successfully completed our university’s prescribed course of study.

March 19, 2004

Komori Yūsuke, Student Representative

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University



A “Graduation Ceremony” for President Sakamoto

Chapter 5

True Stories: APU Campus Life



Membership of the Wadaiko (Japanese drumming) club includes many international students

“When we first enrolled in APU,” Satō Maiko recalls, “Our professors talked eagerly about all sorts of global ideals. At 18 years of age, we easily got inspired by that kind of talk.”

Shimoda Ayumi was one of those who sought to give practical form to those ideals, launching the World History Textbook Exhibition at APU. She explains the inspiration behind the exhibition as follows: “There was a genial sort of mood on campus to begin with, as we tried to avoid treading on each others’ toes. But APU is one of the few places in the world where you can really talk meaningfully about what things are like in your own country. If we couldn’t have the exhibition here, where could we have it?”

Whenever disaster strikes anywhere around the globe, there is sure to be an APU student concerned about the wellbeing of a friend or colleague.

The student who is no longer able to understand things simply in terms of his or her own country’s interests, the student who genuinely hopes for peace across the world: that’s an APU student.

Pioneering club activities

The pitch-black tuba

Shortly after APU’s opening, students began to set up clubs.

Matsumoto Ikue decided to launch a music club, motivated by her own experiences when studying in the U.S. on a high school exchange. Finding it difficult to comprehend the English spoken by her African-American host family, Matsumoto had been very lonely in the U.S. until she decided to join the school marching band and make use of

skills honed in a wind ensemble back at her home school in Japan. She made many friends through the band, and enjoyed her time in the U.S. much more as a result. She thought that at APU, too, it would be possible for students to interact through music even if they couldn't communicate through language.

Matsumoto moved quickly to launch the music club "Texas." But what about instruments? And who would conduct the ensemble? Matsumoto began to negotiate with the university to purchase instruments for student use. At the same time, a fellow member of her new club and native of Oita prefecture had the idea of approaching Ando Gakki, a company in Oita City specializing in the sale musical instruments. Company head Andō Hiroshi said that he had a storeroom full of instruments formerly used in school music programs, and kindly suggested that the club make use of these. According to Matsumoto:

Among the instruments that we got from Ando Gakki, there was a tuba, originally a metallic golden color, which had turned a deep black over time. Not long ago, I heard that the club had entered the Oita regional wind ensemble championships and qualified to compete against ensembles from around Kyushu. I went to see them perform, and there was the old black tuba again! That really took me back. It seems that they are still using it because it has such a good tone.

News of the music club slowly spread through the student body and more students joined up, including a Singaporean who formerly had a part-time job playing piano at a major hotel, an accomplished vocalist from China, and Mr. Funaki from Tonga, also a talented singer. "At last we could play real music," says Matsumoto. All the clubs launched by APU's first batch of students displayed the same kind of pioneering spirit – or more accurately, they had no choice but to make their own luck.

International students and "Wadaiko"

Like many of the other Japanese student members of the organizing body for APU's Opening Festival, Yokoyama Meiko was mesmerized by the powers of expression demonstrated by her university's international students. In 2001, the year after that experience, Yokoyama came across a notice on campus inviting students to join a new Wadaiko (traditional Japanese drumming) club. The notice had been written by Numata Reina, part of APU's newly-enrolled second cohort of students. Numata already had experience in a local community Wadaiko ensemble.

Attracting prospective members for the new group was not difficult, but there was a more fundamental problem: no drums. At an estimated cost of several million yen, purchase was out of the question, so Yokoyama joined Numata in a search for other options. Eventually they learned that there was a set of drums lying unused in Beppu City Hall, so they negotiated with the authorities to borrow them. The local ensemble Hattō Daiko agreed to instruct the students, and for costumes, they borrowed kendō (Japanese fencing) outfits from friends. The group started rehearsing in May 2001, and made their debut performance in October of the same year at the Beppu DreamVal festival, where they won a prize of 50,000 yen in the Asian Festa division. This money

was promptly put towards the purchase of costumes. A local resident was also kind enough to lend the group some more drums.

The group had an initial membership of 10 students drawn from Japan, Indonesia, India and Bulgaria. The rhythm of the drums transcended most linguistic barriers within the group, but the international student members were still perplexed by some things. “What does ‘tonko-dondon’ mean?” some would inquire, unable to grasp the Japanese onomatopoeia for rhythmic patterns. “Why do you say ‘tsuku’?” others would ask, referring to the distinctive way of expressing pauses in the rhythm.

This Wadaiko ensemble, operating under the name “Raku,” continues to popular among APU students to this day, and performs at many community events. It held a special fifth anniversary concert in 2007.

The trials and tribulations of the Campus Festival

Letters of acceptance sent out to successful APU applicants were accompanied by a notice regarding a Welcome Party to be held at the time of enrollment, and a call for volunteers to join the staff for organizing this event. The 50 students who applied, including Ushimi Isao and Komori Yūsuke, gathered at APU in March to prepare for the Welcome Party. After APU’s opening, this group of 50 divided into groups to organize other campus events such as the Opening Festival and the Language Weeks.

Ushimi was one of those who took charge of organizing the Language Weeks, a task that involved communicating with and coordinating the activities of international students from different linguistic backgrounds each week. This demanded considerable stamina, with staff members working in collaboration with performers almost continuously over a period of seven weeks. By the end of it, most were too exhausted to join the team of students to organize the Campus Festival scheduled for later in the year, but Ushimi and Komori themselves did sign up. The former was chosen as the leader of the Campus Festival staff, and the latter as his deputy. They figured that the first step towards organizing the festival’s program would be to decide on a theme. This turned out to be the most contentious issue. The organizing team, composed of over ten students in total – including several international students – would meet every afternoon at five or six and continue their discussions until around ten p.m., but still they could not agree on a theme.

Language proved to be a major impediment. One of the staff members was the Indian student Shradha Chowdhury. She is now fluent in the dialect of Japan’s Kansai region, but at the time, Kansai-bred Ushimi remembers, “She couldn’t make out what I was saying, and became tearful any time I opened my mouth. Meetings got held up by the need to interpret every single utterance.” There were other obstacles, too. Japanese people tend to accord a certain aesthetic value to the process of extended discussion, and often things cannot move forward until total consensus has been reached. International students, however, were keen to keep the meetings moving, suggesting a five-minute time limit for consideration of each issue before a conclusion was reached. There was a fundamental discrepancy in ideas regarding how meetings should be run.

Feeling that too much time was being wasted, international student members gradually stopped coming to meetings, until there were only two or three left.

Soon the summer vacation had come around. A Leaders' Camp was held during the vacation session, bringing together the leaders of all the student clubs that were to be showcased at the festival. All came to the camp equipped with ideas about how their clubs could contribute to the festival program. Ushimi realized that it was only the festival organizing committee itself, the key organ in the process, that had failed to decide anything yet. He became so preoccupied with this problem that he didn't eat a thing for the whole three days of the camp. He decided to bring everyone together to share ideas for the festival. But when they had assembled, the dejected Ushimi turned to his colleague Nakamura Ryūta and confided, "If I get up there in front of everyone now, I'm liable to say that there won't be any festival at all," and promptly ran out of the room.

Nakamura soon caught up with Ushimi, who said that he needed a sharp wake-up call. What he had in mind was those scenes in television drama shows where the demoralized hero is suddenly brought back to reality by a slap in the face from his best friend. Hoping that he could be reinvigorated in the same way, Ushimi asked Nakamura to give him his best shot. Weakened by three days' fasting, however, Ushimi took Nakamura's hit less well than expected: he crumpled to the floor, murmuring, "I've had enough."

A university staff member who had witnessed these events came over to console Ushimi, saying, "Sometimes it's best to bail out. Everyone has their limits – there's no use going on if you've reached yours."

Komori Yūsuke had spent the summer in Europe, unaware of the drama unfolding at the Leaders' Camp. When he returned, he sensed that there was no longer a place for him in the organizing group and decided to concentrate on his other role, student representative for the university Co-op, instead. After the successive resignation of leader Ushimi and sub-leader Komori, organizing duties were taken over by other students, and the event was held in the first year under the title of "APU Festival." The exhausted organizing committee was dissolved immediately after this event, and no festival was held at all in APU's second year. In the third year, however, a group including Kawanabe Yūji and Kubo Motohiro came forward with a plan to ensure that APU wasn't the only university in Japan without a campus festival. They enlisted several lower-year students to help them organize an event titled Tenkūsai (literally, "sky festival"). This festival was the forerunner of the annual campus festival still held under the same name today.

Held back by the foreign players' quota: From soccer practice in a park to an overseas tour

For Korean student Kim Yongchan, life had revolved around soccer ever since high school. He started a soccer club immediately after enrolling in APU, aided by another devoted soccer enthusiast, Mori Wakana. A native of Kyoto, Mori had a deep interest in international exchange, and had even spent time with an NGO in Bangladesh. In her final year of senior high school she came across a small article on APU in the back

pages of a university information magazine, and immediately decided that this university, with its cosmopolitan student body, was made for her. She didn't even bother applying to other institutions. Immediately after enrollment she joined the organizing staff for the Opening Festival, and then linked in with Kim at the soccer club.

Soccer proved to be popular among APU's students, and soon the club had around 60 members. But it had little else: no ground, no changing rooms, no money. The members got together one evening and decided that they should practice at Beppu Park or Ishigaki Park downtown, and use one of APU's equipment storerooms as their changing room. They agreed to hold their first practice session the next morning, making their way down from the campus by bus or motor scooter. "Having nothing to begin with proved to be a good motivator – we figured out our own ways of doing things," recalls Kim. He hadn't yet told the other club members of his long-term goal: an overseas tour.

As the club began to practice in earnest, the original membership of 60 dropped off to 40, then down to 30. "People like me joined because we liked soccer and wanted to try lots of different things," explains Mazhar Hamid from Singapore, "but when they started practicing twice a week, and eventually every day, we had to give up." But a competitive team could now be formed from those who remained. The club was named APU Intoras FC.

The club soon came up against a major problem. Their team was populated by many international students, but Japan's college soccer regulations stipulated that a maximum of just three non-Japanese players could be included in any one team. Unable to join the college soccer league, the club started out competing as an associate member of an open nonprofessional league. They had no option but to use this league to establish the club's reputation.

In August 2001, the club ventured beyond Japan for the first time, playing a friendly match against Kyung Hee University, one of the top four college teams in Korea. It seems, however, that Kyung Hee had expected a team from Ritsumeikan University, with which they had a partnership agreement. "In the first half we were beaten badly," says Kim, "and the Kyung Hee people started to wonder what was going on. Finally they worked out that we weren't from Ritsumeikan University at all, and switched to their second-tier team after half time." But the APU team ended the day with its pride intact: it had scored one goal against the Kyung Hee firsts and actually beaten the seconds one-nil.

Among the soccer club's members were African students Sumala Bamidele ("Deli") and Emmanuel Ansah ("Nana"). One day, while she was sorting the team's uniforms after training, Mori Wakana was called over by these two students and told, "You know, this grass is really sweet. Why don't you try some?" The grass in question was from a lush patch just outside the lavatory building. Mori was a little hesitant, but she figured that this is what they do in Africa. She tried a little, not sure what type it was – some kind of sorrel, maybe. But it certainly wasn't sweet.

Deli was the team's goalkeeper. Once, the club organized a friendly match against a team from the Self Defense Forces (SDF) base near the APU campus. They had assumed that the SDF team would be tough opponents, but the sight of the 190-centimeter, 150-kilogram Deli in front of the goals was enough to put them off. They didn't score a single goal in the whole match.

The broadcasting club

Takahashi Seiko was an ordinary Japanese high school student who had never even been outside Japan before entering APU. Despite opposition from both parents and teachers, Takahashi chose APU because she liked the idea of an international university and was attracted to APU's courses in environmental studies. She recalls, however, being taken aback in her first "Understanding the Asia Pacific" seminar class when confronted with a classroom full of students from China, Korea, Malaysia and even Europe. "What have I got myself in for?" she wondered.

Gradually Takahashi became accustomed to both the other students and the language they used, and began to enjoy the class discussions on themes such as environmental problems and poverty. She was struck by the diversity and strength of opinions expressed by her fellow 18-year-olds. When she met up with friends back home during the summer vacation and was told that their universities were "pretty ordinary," she was able to tell them that her university was anything but "ordinary."

"Intercultural communication is tough – but fun!" was Takahashi's motto. She acted energetically in starting up an independent student-run study group, and helping to organize a student clubs federation from the second year. But perhaps her most difficult task was the establishment of a broadcasting club.

After being approached by a university administrator who knew that she had broadcasting experience from high school, Takahashi set up the broadcasting club together with Saruwatari Takato and some other students. The new club had many issues to attend to: for a start, the university didn't have all the necessary broadcasting equipment, and they needed to appoint a senior advisor to assist them. Initially, they could not recruit any non-Japanese members, either. Some international students were interested, but claimed to be too busy with Japanese language study. The club began to expand its activities, making a video program to introduce new students to extracurricular activities at APU. From this point, they started to attract international student members. The 300 yen monthly membership fee proved to be a sticking point, however. Some international students would demand to know why the fee was necessary, and how it was being used: they couldn't understand why they had to pay to join a voluntary leisure organization. This helped Takahashi and the other Japanese members, who hadn't thought twice about the fee system, see many things in a new light.

Takahashi's strongest memory of cross-cultural difference comes from the kitchens at AP House. She had borrowed a frypan from a Muslim student, and used it to cook some pork. When she returned the frypan, she assured the student that it had been washed thoroughly and was therefore safe to use. But the student refused to take it, saying, "It's yours now, I don't need it anymore." These and other incidents made Takahashi think more about religion. Japanese people tended to avoid religious topics in conversation, she realized, but APU's international students each had their own well-developed outlook on religious issues, and many considered religion an intrinsic part of their countries' culture and lifestyle.

“I never thought I’d end up staying on at APU after graduation,” says Takahashi, but she is now employed in APU’s administration and student services.

Ko-Ko-Korea

As a graduate of one of Ritsumeikan’s affiliated high schools, An Michimasa was one of those students virtually compelled to become an RA at AP House. He vividly remembers the day when the first group of students arrived from Korea to take up residence. He and the other RAs stood nervously regarding the long line of 70 Korean students before them. Laughing, An recalls:

Of course we didn’t speak each other’s languages, so we knew that communication would be a problem. We understood that they weren’t trying to be unfriendly, but there they were, gazing intently across at us. Maybe that’s a cultural difference between Korea and Japan – in Japan we don’t tend to stare so hard. All us RAs felt the strength of those stares.

An couldn’t speak Korean well at the time, but he himself was from an ethnic Korean family residing permanently in Japan. This background inspired him to start a new club at APU, Ko-Ko-Korea. “As part of one long-term foreign resident community in Japan myself,” he explains, “I thought it would be good to get together with Korean and Chinese students and talk about the problems facing these communities.”

Ko-Ko-Korea members met three times each week to discuss issues of ethnicity and discrimination. After a while, however, they had run out of things to talk about among themselves, and decided that it would be more interesting to disseminate information to others. They produced a leaflet introducing the issues they had been discussing, and started to connect with permanent foreign resident communities in Beppu, organizing study sessions and games for children from these communities.

An explains his motivations as follows.

Many different countries were represented in the APU student body, and it encompassed many different religious issues and cross-border tensions. I wanted to create opportunities for more substantive debate on these sorts of issues. After all, APU was one place where there were always clashes of intellectual energy – nobody would have been surprised if fights broke out here and there.

After graduation, An decided that he wanted to explore the things he had experienced and discovered through Ko-Ko-Korea in a more systematic, scholarly manner. He is now enrolled in a graduate program at Hitotsubashi University.

“We can do it!”

Long before U.S. President Obama coined “Yes, we can!” as the catch cry for his election campaign, APU students had adopted “We can do it!” as their unofficial slogan.

It was one of APU's first batch of enrollees, Takebayashi Seigo, who first popularized this phrase, at the Fall Entrance Ceremony in 2000. Takebayashi had been asked to deliver a speech preceding the showcase of extracurricular club activities scheduled after the conclusion of the formal proceedings. The day before the speech, Takebayashi had racked his brains for something that would draw all constituents of the APU community together and enhance their sense of community. He himself had felt part of this community ever since first hearing about APU as a high school student and deciding that this was where he wanted to study. He hoped to make others just as excited about being at APU as he was. He now admits that he's not quite sure how it happened, but at the end of the day what he had come up with was: "We can do it!"

Takebayashi, a member of APU's swimming club, appeared at the ceremony in his swimsuit and cap. At the end of his speech, he began to chant: "We can do it! We can do it!" The audience was stunned into silence initially, but slowly Takebayashi's enthusiasm won them over. More and more people began to join him in the catch cry of "We can do it!"

From then on, the "We can do it" chant came to be used to elevate spirits at any student gathering. President Sakamoto lent his personal support to this development, joining in with the students at every opportunity. As Takebayashi had originally planned, "We can do it!" became a key tool for bringing the APU community closer together.



The classic APU catchphrase: "We can do it!"

Establishing the APU Clubs Association

Inoue Daisuke underwent his entire high school education in an English language medium at an international school in Osaka. In APU, Inoue saw an opportunity to hone his English skills further as well as to think more deeply about Japan's place in the world. After moving to Beppu, Inoue quickly became infatuated with the town's hot spring baths, and had soon launched a hot spring club at APU. Many student clubs were formed in the first year, but they often found it difficult to negotiate with the university authorities over protocols and fees for use of university facilities. Inoue and some other club representatives decided that rather than each club dealing with the Student Office on its own, shared problems could be more effectively identified and communicated to

the university through a common mouthpiece. This constructive proposal grew into the APU Clubs Association, founded in December 2000 with a membership of around 30 clubs.

The Association needed to cultivate leaders with vision and drive to bring APU's clubs together. It was for this purpose that a Leader's Camp was held over three days in February 2002 in the town of Yufuin. Inoue and his colleagues prepared an agenda for the camp based on information provided in advance by each club, identifying issues that had arisen in the first two months of the Association's operation. The camp generated much enthusiastic discussion, with club leaders presenting a wide assortment of ideas and points of concern. "Rather than a gathering of people with the title of 'leader,' it was more like an extended circle of friends," recalls Inoue. "It was really important because it was the first time that we brought together students with clearly-defined interests of their own."

The Association's first official activity was a welcoming performance for new students, held immediately after the Entrance Ceremony. Current students would be welcoming junior colleagues to the university for the first time, so they were keen to make an impact. Each club contributed a performance of its own, in line with the basic theme of helping new arrivals to loosen up after the stiff formalities of the Entrance Ceremony. One APU alumnus looks back on this event fondly:

The curtain opened, and a figure wearing nothing but swimming gear came out and started chanting 'We can do it!' all of a sudden. Many parents were attending the Entrance Ceremony along with their newly-enrolling children. Confronted with this scene, they must have wondered if this was really the sort of university their children should be attending.

Inoue explains:

We didn't have anything going for us except a strong motivation to express ourselves, and to carry ideas through to action rather than giving up along the way. I thought it would be important to entrust our new colleagues with this spirit and show them how it had got us this far.

Tadachi Keiichi was in his fifth year of elementary school when he first learned about the United Nations. He was deeply impressed by the idea of an organization where people from across the world came together to seek solutions to global problems. This interest in the UN became one of the main reasons behind Tadachi's eventual decision to study at an international university: APU.

Enrolling in APU in its second year of operation, Tadachi immediately saw potential in the university's lack of established traditions. He liked the idea of students creating things for themselves. This led him to join the newly-formed preparatory committee for a student representative council. The idea was for the council to be an autonomous body bringing together all the university's students, both domestic and international. Tadachi recalls that:

There may have been differences of perception between domestic and international students, but there was virtually nobody who was fundamentally opposed to the concept of setting up an organization that could communicate students' needs to the university authorities. But when

it came to questions such as how the organization would be set up, and who would lead it, well, that's where we got bogged down.

Many different ideas were canvassed, such as having two leaders – one domestic and one international, dividing the organization into regional groups, and operating a UN-style system with a delegate from each country represented on campus. It proved impossible to reach agreement. The preparation committee got as far as holding a ballot in which a majority of students voted in favor of the idea of establishing a student council; but still the actual council could not get off the ground. “Maybe everyone got tired out after so much debate,” suggests Tadachi, “or maybe getting agreement on the idea of establishing the council had become the goal in itself.” In any case, the matter progressed no further then, and there is still no official student representative body at APU today.

Events galore

The World Students' Summit

The World Students' Summit was held at APU from October 29 to 31, 2002. First proposed by President Sakamoto, the Summit was backed by President Maurice Strong and Rector Martin Lees of the University for Peace in Costa Rica as well as Sakamoto and Ritsumeikan Chancellor Nagata Toyoomi. Students and university authorities worked in close coordination to enlist students from universities around the world to attend the Summit and discuss the general theme of “The role of students and youth: How can we establish ‘Human Security’ and ‘Sustainable Development’ on the earth.” Delegates came from 58 universities across 25 countries and regions outside Japan, and 22 universities within Japan, each personally recommended by the presidents of their institutions. Maurice Strong, who had been Secretary-General of the “Earth Summit” held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, contributed greatly to the Summit at APU from the preparatory steps right through to the actual implementation stage.

Delegates were divided across ten subcommittees to debate major issues surrounding the achievement of peaceful and sustainable development, including the environment, terrorism, innovation and AIDS. On the final day of the Summit the subcommittees came together to discuss their findings at a General Assembly, chaired by Indian APU student Shradha Chowdhury. After much vigorous debate, the Assembly adopted a joint communiqué which received considerable attention, including news coverage on NHK, Japan's national broadcaster.



APU takes the lead in organizing the World Students' Summit 2002

Countless students were involved in organizing the Summit, including Steering Committee Chair Saruwatari Takato, head of the Planning Committee Dōke Maiko, and of course General Assembly Chair Shradha Chowdhury. This organizing body was a microcosm of the international community, a complex mix of personal idiosyncrasies and national traits, including some students taking command of the preparations and others working hard behind the scenes on logistical issues.

Both UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and High Commissioner Ogata Sadako provided personal messages for the Summit. Secretary-General Annan concluded his message with the following statement:

It is very encouraging that you are already involved in shaping the world that you will inherit and lead. I hope you will continue that engagement, and help the United Nations in its ongoing global mission to build a more peaceful, equitable and sustainable life for all the world's people. In that spirit of partnership, please accept my best wishes for success.

The World History Textbook Exhibition

A congenial mood prevailed on campus in the months immediately after APU's opening, a mood which Saitō Maiko described as "superficially pleasant, with people simply agreeing on how beautiful, wonderful and great everything was." Students seemed to be deliberately avoiding potentially touchy topics such as religion, politics and national borders. Another student, Shimoda Ayumi, wondered whether the students were really satisfied with this arrangement. Unlike politicians, APU students were surely in the ideal position to air their views openly. "If we can't sit down together at APU and talk about our own countries and about history," she figured, "where can we do it?"

2002 was the year that Japan hosted the FIFA World Cup jointly with Korea. There are some issues on which Japan and Korea simply cannot see eye to eye. Discussions over the issue of wartime "comfort women," for example, often end up going nowhere. This distance between the two nations is often attributed to differences in historical outlook instilled in each country's younger citizens by their parents and teachers.

Things might be different if each side understood the background that the other country's citizens bring to their perception of historical issues. But to achieve this kind of understanding, Shimoda figured, there would need to be some basis for bringing the two sides together in the first place.

This is how the World History Textbook Exhibition came about. The idea was to make young people more aware of how history was taught in high schools in countries other than their own, so that historical issues could be discussed on the basis of this awareness. History textbooks, provided by students from the 80 countries represented on the APU campus at the time, would be translated into English and Japanese and exhibited to the public. This would be the first step towards achieving true mutual understanding.

Shimoda began to accumulate school textbooks donated by fellow students. She realized that each country took a different approach to understanding history. The sole APU student from Palau provided a textbook in which history was not presented in chronological order, but rather through a mixture of folk tales, legends, biographies and factual accounts. The concept of the "world" in this textbook was very narrow, consisting only of the islands directly associated with school students' own lives. Stories of family heads, ordinary couples, and people from all different sections of the social hierarchy were presented together in parallel. This approach was a marked contrast to history textbooks in Japan, in which events are presented chronologically and written from the perspective of the victorious individual or group. The Palauan textbook even contained a story from World War Two of how a man called Suzuki, an ordinary private in the Japanese army, had secretly left food outside houses in a village that had run out of supplies.



Read and compare: History textbooks from around the world

Shimoda's original aim had simply been to compare how history is studied in different countries, but she soon awoke to the fact that "history" itself can mean many different things. She was joined in her work by many other APU students, each bringing their own textbooks and collaborating to translate them all. This kind of project was surely something that could only happen at APU.

After two or three years the exhibition had grown considerably in scale and content. It was put on show at the Aichi International Expo, and received a special award in a social business enterprise plan contest. Shimoda herself was awarded the Andō Momofuku Prize upon graduation, and used the one million yen prize money to go on to study at one of APU's Graduate Schools. She is now enrolled in a graduate program at Ritsumeikan University.

One's 1 and the World Students' Summit

Takahara (Suzuki) Hiroumi was studying at Ritsumeikan University when his respected teacher, Professor Hotta Makitarō, announced that he would be transferring to APU. Takahara decided to quit his studies at Ritsumeikan and follow his teacher to Beppu. "You can achieve anything if you study ten hours a day," Professor Hotta had told him, "And one day you'll be in position of responsibility in an international organization where you can save tens thousands of lives with a single signature." Tragically the Professor passed away suddenly soon after, but Takahara continued to hold this ideal close to him, devoting all his energies to the study of APU's basic theme of sustainable development.

Takahara also served as the inaugural leader of the now-legendary student club One's 1. The 50 members each brought their own strong opinions and ideas to the club's discussions, which culminated in the hosting of a symposium in 2001.

Held under the theme of "sustainable development," the symposium served as a pilot event for the World Students' Summit held at APU in October of the following year. Hearing of the aims of this symposium during a visit to APU, University for Peace President and World Students' Summit advocate Maurice Strong went out of his way to comment on what a superb idea it was. For Takahara, architect of the whole project, President Strong's words were the ultimate encouragement.

Takahara says that he learned much from the process of organizing the symposium together with the other 50-odd founding members of One's 1. "Perhaps the bottom-up style, with everyone working together cheerfully and boisterously, works well among Japanese people," he suggests. But the alternative, a top-down approach under a clear vision articulated by a strong leader, sometimes seemed more feasible. "The multi-cultural makeup of APU meant that objections were common," recalls Takahara. "International students would raise matters of process and claim that their opinions were being excluded. It was difficult to work from the bottom up." This experience taught Takahara why leadership is considered so crucial in multi-cultural societies such as the United States.

The culmination of Takahara's work was the communiqué produced at the symposium. Several of the original One's 1 members carried on his work into the World Students' Summit held in October of the following year (2002), forming the core of the Summit's steering committee and ensuring that the event was a success.

Takahara was employed by Sony after graduation and now works in the division responsible for developing corporate strategy, as well as holding a post in the

company's business reform project office, established in fall 2008. He took the Accelerated Program at APU, which helped him develop a headlong all-or-nothing approach to achieving results in a limited time. Takahara says that APU also taught him to adopt a creative, productive stance and to stand up against the tide where necessary, lessons that have proved very useful in his working life. "I don't hold back very much even with senior colleagues in my company," he confides, "If I think something's right I'll keep advocating it, even if some might say I'm being impudent."

Saruwatari Takato attended a renowned high school in Kumamoto Prefecture. While all his classmates were making plans to study at Japan's most prestigious universities, Saruwatari was looking for an experience out of the ordinary. If he simply followed his classmates' lead, he figured, he might grow up without any strong convictions of his own. It was this awareness that inspired him to apply for APU. As soon as he enrolled, however, he struck trouble. "In school it was easy to be appreciated," he explains, "simply by cultivating a smart appearance and studying as conscientiously as everyone else." But APU made him realize that such a strategy only worked in Japanese-centered community.

"My assumptions just didn't hold water in APU's 'world-wide' community," Saruwatari admits. "I was forced to re-appraise myself and think about what I, as an individual, was capable of." With limited English proficiency and no special abilities to speak of, he became despondent – but was not prepared to give in. He threw himself into student life, sitting up the front in class and developing a reputation for zealous enthusiasm. Other students started to approach him for assistance with their extracurricular activities, and even his instructors began to acknowledge him more. When it came time to organize the World Students' Summit, Saruwatari was encouraged by many of those around him to chair the steering committee. He decided to give it a shot.

The committee was composed of 50 students each from APU's domestic and international student bodies. There were many initial obstacles to effective operation, such as the need for two-way interpretation at meetings, but eventually things began to run smoothly, and the actual Summit turned out to be a great success. Saruwatari, who went on to work for the Oita Prefectural Government after graduation, now admits:

I'm glad that I found APU such a struggle to begin with. I still find some things a struggle, of course, but APU gave me a passion to seek out the things that I want to do most, and made me aware of my true potential. I now realize what an incredible place APU was.

The International Exchange Sports Event

"The things I thought about at junior high school, the things that I tried to do at APU – they're all coming together now in my work," says Ōyama Takashi, who is currently employed at the sports business college operated by the soccer team Vissel Kobe.

Ōyama's father's job took his family to live in New Zealand when Ōyama was in junior high school. He found it a struggle to come to terms with English when he first started school in New Zealand, but he was able to make friends through his passionate

interest in baseball. It turned out that his school had a partnership agreement with Ritsumeikan Uji Senior High School. This, and the need to live closer to his elderly grandparents in Kitakyūshū, brought Ōyama back to Japan to enroll in APU.

On May 20, 2000, in response to what he describes as “an out-of-the-blue request from the university,” Ōyama delivered the student representative’s address at the official APU opening ceremony and celebration of Ritsumeikan’s 130th anniversary, held at B-con Plaza in downtown Beppu. He subsequently began to make new friends on campus, and started to formulate a project of his own. “I wanted to promote interaction between Japanese and international students through sports,” he explains. “But I realized that we would need an organized approach.” He came up with the idea of running tours for students to go and watch baseball matches and road relay races.

Ōyama also worked as an interpreter at the FIFA World Cup. There is a story behind his decision to take on this role. In line with his dream of becoming an English language teacher in the future, Ōyama had been working part-time at a private English tutoring academy in Beppu, only to have his appointment terminated in March 2001. He moved along with all his junior high school-level students to a different academy and remained there until all the students had completed their senior high school entrance exams, but then he resolved to abandon his idea of becoming an English teacher. It was just around this time that Oita was chosen as a venue for the FIFA World Cup, and Ōyama decided that he could pursue his interest in English by volunteering as an interpreter. “I just happened to be in the right place at the right time,” he says.



A student makes a point during a subcommittee meeting at the 2002 World Students’ Summit

Around the same time, students at APU were preparing their end-of-semester presentations for their seminar (“zemi”) classes. Ōyama himself had not planned to take a seminar subject at all, but was persuaded to do so by his friend Shimura Satoshi, who even went so far as to write Ōyama’s seminar enrollment application. The class Shimura had chosen was run by Professor Itō in the College of Asia Pacific Management (now the College of International Management). This seminar was said to be the most difficult to get into in the whole College, with 60 students applying for the 16 places

available. “Two of the 16 successful applications were written by Shimura,” laughs Ōyama.

Professor Itō’s seminar focused on marketing and sports business, and it was here that Ōyama learned the techniques that would develop his schoolboy interest in sports into a viable career. Shimura, meanwhile, started a student-run seminar group on marketing, which in 2003 became known as Iyūkai.

Ōyama went to learn more about sports management at the Daiei Hawks professional baseball team (now the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks). While there, he was asked about the possibility of using Beppu as the venue for the annual training camp for the Hawks’ second team. Ōyama, along with his junior colleagues in Professor Itō’s seminar, rose to the challenge. Their very first task was to find a suitable ballpark. They went to Beppu City Hall for advice, to be told that the city authorities were actually hoping to build a new ground at Jissōji, but needed to gain agreement from the local residents before they could do so. If that was the case, thought Ōyama, a good first step might be to hold a friendly sports-themed exchange gathering for residents, APU international students and Japanese students, using the Beppu Arena sports complex. Hopefully this would lead to acceptance of the idea of hosting the Daiei Hawks’ camp in Beppu and recognition of the camp’s potential to inject new life into the city’s tourism industry.

Ōyama discussed his idea with APU President Sakamoto one day in the Cafeteria, suggesting that one way of initiating talks on the camp issue would be to get some Hawks players to come to Beppu for the community event. “Oh, is that so?” responded Sakamoto, “Well let’s give Mr. Nakauchi a call then.” Nakauchi was the team’s owner: Ōyama couldn’t hide his surprise when Sakamoto simply picked up the telephone and called him on the spot. Unfortunately Nakauchi was unavailable, but Sakamoto, undeterred, put in another call to one of the team’s scouts. In the end the Hawks did send some players to the event, “not because of my association with the club,” says Ōyama, “but thanks to President Sakamoto’s phone calls.”

Funded by his seminar Professor, Ōyama subsequently travelled to Kyoto to secure funding for the event from the Ritsumeikan Academy, where he was also advised to seek support from companies operated by Ritsumeikan University graduates. He acted on this advice immediately and approached Sanyo Electric. Sanyo committed one million yen towards advertising for the event, as well as promising to send all members of their badminton team, which had just secured back-to-back titles in Japan’s national league. The Oita Cosmo Ladies, a world champion tug-of-war team, also agreed to participate.

On the day of the event, the Beppu Arena was divided into several themed sections, including a Baseball Zone, a Badminton Zone and a Tug-of-War Zone. Beppu citizens of all ages joined with APU and Ritsumeikan University students, alumni and corporate representatives to interact with top sportspeople and join in the sporting contests themselves. Ōyama still hopes that this event, his final achievement as one of APU’s inaugural students, will one day lead to further international exchange and a revival of tourism in Beppu.

The Cafeteria: Nourishing a cosmopolitan food culture

International exchange begins for Co-op staff

The former manager of the APU Co-op Cafeteria recalls feeling a sense of excitement each day he worked at APU. To him and other Co-op staff members, being the core provider of food on a multi-cultural campus and employing large numbers of international students, posed many unexpected challenges.

With little idea of what students would want to eat, but determined to prepare as best they could, staff members invited an Indonesian woman living in Beppu's Kannawa district to come and teach them about herbs and other unfamiliar ingredients she used in her cooking, and to tell them where such ingredients could be sourced. They developed their own repertoire of Korean, Vietnamese and Thai dishes by visiting restaurants in Beppu and enlisting the help of newly-arrived international students. To their surprise, they discovered that Beppu was home to stores stocking good supplies of ingredients from countries such as Indonesia, China and Korea.

The staff realized that with a bit of effort, it was going to be possible to come up with dishes that students would eat. But they also had to deal with the issue of what students could not eat. For Muslim students from countries such as Indonesia, this included meat products such as pork, as well as alcohol. Even chicken needed to be prepared at certified facilities according to Halal rules. The people working at such facilities were qualified in the appropriate preparation techniques and offered the prescribed prayers as they worked. Co-op staff looked in vain for a facility that met these requirements locally. They did, however, discover some qualified manufacturers in nearby countries such as China and Thailand, including, to their surprise, a section of the plant operated in China by the Japanese company Nichirei, which was already contracted to supply chickens to Ritsumeikan's Co-op. It turned out that they had been using Halal chicken all along.

The Islamic ban on alcohol extends not only to drinks, but also to all ingredients used in food products. This includes, of course, the common Japanese condiment Mirin, as well as the alcohol often used in the production of soy sauce. One day the Cafeteria manager was approached by a group of Indonesian students who said that they had heard that a certain tofu dish on the Cafeteria's menu was delicious, but they were unable to try it because it contained soy sauce made with alcohol. They explained that soy sauce made using the traditional natural brewing method was acceptable: although alcohol was generated during the fermentation process, it wasn't technically an ingredient. Ever since, the APU Cafeteria has used traditionally-brewed soy sauce.

The bread debacle

Initially, the Co-op shop found that it sold huge quantities of sliced bread and milk. Bread was particularly popular among international students, who found it sweet and delicious. But one day, a great commotion was stirred up by a Muslim student who had been reading the ingredients label on the bread. The label said that the bread contained

‘shortening,’ which is commonly made from lard – pig’s fat. The student was shocked that he and his Muslim colleagues had eaten the bread without any suspicion that it contained a forbidden ingredient.

Lard shortening is used as a raising agent in many commercially-produced foods, including potato chips, rice crackers, cakes and pastries. All were now off-limits for Muslim students. So the Co-op started stocking uncooked cheesecakes and other sweets that did not require shortening, as well as using margarine instead of butter in their own baking. Students with dietary restrictions took to consulting with the Co-op staff before making purchases. Staff members always felt rewarded when they saw the look of grateful relief on students’ faces upon being told that items were not off-limits.

Two days before the Cafeteria’s official opening in 2000, the staff worked all night to prepare the menu labels. Each item containing meat was accompanied with a small illustration of a chicken, pig or cow to indicate what ingredients were used. “There would have been chaos if we hadn’t included those illustrations,” says the manager.

During each Language Week on campus, the Cafeteria would serve foods from the country or countries being introduced that week. Staff members and students would often stay back until late at night working to prepare the feature dishes. Some of the tasks conducted in these midnight sessions included finding and ordering rare spices online, grinding these spices, and making serving platters out of banana leaves and other unusual items. Students often brought along their own ingredients to help add to the diversity of the Cafeteria’s menu, which eventually expanded to include around 200 different dishes.



Diversity is always on the menu

The Cafeteria was staffed by local Beppu residents during the day, and students in the evenings. Half the evening staff was made up of international students, each with their own ways of doing things, often different from standard Japanese practices. Before teaching them cooking techniques, the manager had to teach the students Japanese expectations, such as strict punctuality, using the welcoming call of “irasshaimase,” and remembering to thank customers when receiving payments.

Some students would stand arrogantly with their arms folded in front of customers; others would go home without helping to clean up. But the manager would always be sure to take transgressors aside and remind them of the need to observe Japanese workplace customs.

The first cohort of students was subjected to this kind of coaching in concentrated doses. When it came to the second year, however, the manager simply instructed the students he had already trained to “tell those new students that if they don’t take manners seriously here, they’ll find it hard to get by anywhere in Japan.” The students must have conveyed this message faithfully: the manager certainly had no more trouble with manners.

Teaching Japanese manners

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Chapter 6

Engaging the Community on all Fronts



APU actively pursues interaction with the corporate sector

The Usuki Research Project, undertaken by a group of APU students, made the following proposal regarding the planned transformation of the central townscape in Usuki, a city in the south of Oita Prefecture:

“Usuki is often called a castle town, but the castle has absolutely no presence. There is no castle tower left standing, and residents themselves refer to the ruins not as a ‘the castle’ but as ‘the park.’ Have you thought about reviving consciousness of Usuki’s castle?”

Mr. Himawari, an official from Usuki’s municipal government, says that the eventual townscape design was inspired directly by this proposal.

All over Oita Prefecture, there are visible signs of APU’s passion to give something back to the community.

Reaching out beyond the campus

Overnight in a samurai residence

The catalyst for the exchange project that developed between APU and the city of Usuki was a lecture given at APU by the then-Mayor of Usuki, Gotō Kunitoshi. Usuki is where the 16th-century “Christian Daimyo” Ōtomo Sōrin built his last castle. The city authorities are working hard to preserve the feudal-era castle precinct, and are also engaging in friendly exchange with Portugal and the Netherlands, both of which have historical connections with the city dating back to medieval times. “The main concern of our community development work is how best to preserve our heritage at the same time as applying it to new endeavors,” explains Himawari Bunmei, the city government official in charge of the Usuki Research Project.

Himawari recalls welcoming APU students for an overnight seminar at a former samurai residence.

Samurai residences are listed as cultural properties, and are usually off limits. Visitors can look, but never touch. But the person in charge of these properties in Usuki at the time suggested that students could get a better idea of what a samurai house was like if they actually used one – and maybe the house itself would be happy to have people staying in it. So we ended up getting special permission to use the Marumo-ke house, one of the buildings designated by the city government as an important cultural asset.

Under an Urban Renewal Model Project funded by the national government, city officials arranged to build a traditional bathtub in the house and repair its kitchen range so that cooking could be done over a wood fire. APU students who came for the seminar were able to enjoy these old-style Japanese living habits to the full, as well as practicing Zen meditation at a nearby temple, eating rice gruel for breakfast, and going out into the town to interact with locals. One of the participants, Dōke Maiko, recalls:

The people of Usuki seemed to love their city and be determined to preserve it and show it off to more people. The city's elderly citizens were really dynamic in a different sense to students. We had to work hard to keep up with them.

The APU students conducted a survey while in Usuki, and presented the findings of this survey in a series of essays:

“The Usuki Urban Center Plan: Proposals on townscape development in Usuki City” by Seko Satoshi

“Constructing an urban disaster mitigation network in Usuki City” by Takano Tetsuya and Dōke Maiko

“Green urban development through a community garden scheme” by Miyada Shinji

Mr. Himawari from the Usuki City Government has this to say about the students' work:

We are currently redeveloping the buildings around Usuki Castle. This project was inspired by the presentation given by APU students, in which they argued that the castle has very little presence despite Usuki being known as a ‘castle town.’ They pointed out that the castle area, without a tower, is seen by residents themselves as nothing more than an ordinary park, and suggested that we try to use the castle as a focal point in our planning. I thought that was a wonderful idea.

The idea of centering Usuki's urban development on its castle had been around since the time of Ōtomo Sōrin, but we had failed to look the town in that way until the students pointed it out to us. Of course we were already planning to do some kind of redevelopment, but the students' ideas were what determined the direction we eventually took.

In March 2004, the students' work was published in an 83-page booklet titled *APU Student Usuki Research Project: Report of Findings*.

A top-class infectious disease response program

A committee grown out of residents' information sessions

Community information sessions were held in Beppu on a nightly basis over the period of a week in the lead-up to APU's opening. What surprised Ritsumeikan representatives most at these meetings was the extent of opposition to the idea of locating APU in Beppu. In truth, of course, it was those opposed to APU who attended the information sessions most actively, expressing some outrageous statements such as, "if our town gets overrun by foreigners, not even my own daughter will be safe." Ritsumeikan realized that the only way to get through to these people would be to develop a good track record in community engagement after APU opened.

Some residents were concerned over how infectious disease risks would be handled. In response, the director of Beppu's Tsurumi Hospital (and now APU's university physician) Dr. Akaishi Mitsunobu and Oita Medical College Professor Mifune Kumato were enlisted to help set up a committee within the university to furnish advice on infectious diseases and other health issues.

After the university's opening, several students were identified as having tuberculosis and were admitted to Beppu National Hospital (now Beppu Medical Center). Both university officials and the students were surprised at the special treatment they received. They learned that the hospital had been a center for tuberculosis treatment since prewar times, and that as stipulated under the Tuberculosis Prevention Act, the students were entitled to extensive, free-of-charge medical treatment for as long as required – up to six months in some cases. "Beppu is in a class of its own when it comes to treating tuberculosis," explains one APU staff member. As regards new infectious disease threats, too, among cities with populations of between 100,000 and 200,000, Beppu is one of the most well-prepared in the whole of Japan.

The JC Members who bluffed their way through Cambodia

Introducing APU to Cambodians

Japan JC, the Junior Chamber International Japan, is an organization of young business people between the ages of 20 and 40. In 1997, President Matsuda Kiyoshi and other members of the Beppu JC chapter paid a visit to Ritsumeikan while in Kyoto for a conference, and announced that their organization would lend its support to the APU project. "Chancellor Ōminami took us out to some fancy restaurant," recalls Matsuda, "and told us that the local JC chapter had helped greatly when Ritsumeikan was opening the Biwako Kusatsu Campus [BKCC], and that he hoped we would do the same in Beppu." When the APU preparation office was opened in Beppu, the relationship between APU and the JC quickly grew stronger, with office staff members attending JC gatherings, and President Sakamoto making an appearance at the Beppu chapter's 25th anniversary event.

In 2000, with the help of National Diet member Den Hideo's Japan-Cambodia Friendship Association, the Japan JC organized a tour of Cambodia for its members. 30 members from around Japan signed up for this tour, but news of the shooting of a Japanese volunteer working with an NGO in Cambodia prompted almost all participants to cancel. Just three individuals from the Beppu chapter were left.

The major aim of the tour was to capture images of the land mines eradication program. With the help of the Japanese Embassy, the group managed to gain access to an actual site where army officers were clearing mines, and took photographs that few others had been able to take at the time. Abe Ichirō from the Beppu JC chapter recalls:

Because the group went under the name of the Japan Junior Chamber, the Cambodians got the mistaken impression that we were some of Japan's most talented young businesspeople. They got together a greeting party of three of their elite youngsters, all of whom had studied in the U.S. They started speaking to us volubly in fluent English. If it has come to this, I thought, we have no choice but to bluff our way through.

The "bluff" that Abe had in mind was an account of the grand project unfolding in their own city. The group approached the President of the University of Cambodia and told him how a rare new type of international university was opening in Beppu that very year, and that Japanese companies were providing scholarships for international students to go there. The President certainly seemed impressed, but the group received another response from an unexpected quarter. Tep Veasna, the young Cambodian who had been interpreting for the group, suddenly announced, "I want to go to that university."

"As I always do in such situations," says Abe, "I jumped at this idea and promised Tep that I would arrange everything. It was only after I got back to Japan that I realized what I had done." When Abe went to consult with APU, he was surprised to be greeted by a young staff member who had previously worked part-time at his store, Chikkōen. This staff member revealed that the conflict taking place in Cambodia had made it impossible for APU to conduct promotional activities there, and that they would appreciate help in recruiting Cambodian students. Abe then went to the Japan-Cambodia Friendship Association and persuaded them to help host the student. Thus Tep Veasna enrolled in fall 2000 as APU's first ever Cambodian student.

"We haven't got any students from Bhutan yet either. Do you think you could arrange a trip there as well?" joked the APU staff member to Abe. "No way," Abe responded.

But Abe did return to Cambodia, in 2005, to find that Tep Veasna was now working as a bureaucrat in the country's National Assembly.

Kamegawa, an unlikely multi-cultural community

"Enjoy English Conversation"

The township of Kamegawa, part of Beppu City, is located directly down the mountain from APU. One year before APU's opening, several residents of Kamegawa

got together to organize a new lighthearted community gathering. Most residents were unsure what to make of the new university's focus on "Asia." With little pre-existing knowledge, they decided that a good way to start preparing for the influx of students would be to learn some English. The group they founded was called Enjoy English Conversation. Hori Takashi, managing director of the stationery firm Horibun, explains that "the group was drawn together thanks to the energy of Abe Junko from City Hall." At some meetings, 15 people would show up; at others, there would be 40. To begin with there were only adults, but soon parents began to bring their children along, and the atmosphere became more lively. Finally, the group held a Christmas party that went off with a bang.

Cross-Culture Seminars

Taking a slightly more serious approach, the Sanmoku-kai, an association of residents involved in community development in the Kamegawa district, organized a Cross-Culture Seminar series. Like APU's Language Weeks, each seminar focused on a different region: there was a Taiwan Seminar, a Korea Seminar, a China Seminar, and so on, each held in the building that once housed the Kamegawa Post Office. The organizers would invite people associated with the country to attend, such as foreign residents in Japan, Japanese citizens based in the country, and people who had formerly lived there. These guests would relate their own surprising experiences of encounters with foreign cultures. The seminars provided some fascinating insights into cross-cultural experience.

For the Korea Seminar, the group invited the manager of the Oita Trinita J-League soccer team at the time, Hwang Bokwan. One of the organizers, Hori Takashi, recalls:

During that seminar we learned for the first time that this man had scored Korea's first-ever goal in the FIFA World Cup. He was a national hero, and here he was talking to us in a run-down little post office building. We even kept him waiting for ten minutes before the seminar. But he was very pleasant about the whole thing, which really impressed us. We've all been big fans of Oita Trinita ever since.

Nobody had expected a cross-culture seminar to generate new fans for a soccer team.

A sign was erected at Kawegawa station to count down the days until APU's opening. The stationmaster himself offered to change the numbers on the sign each day. With the stationmaster's help, the celebratory mood spread throughout the community.

Hori Takashi volunteered to help out with the task of meeting newly-arrived international students at Fukuoka Airport. One time he drove to the airport to meet three female Chinese students off a night flight. All three spoke Japanese, and they chatted happily throughout the journey to Beppu on the expressway. After exiting the expressway at Beppu, Hori turned on to the steep, winding road leading up to APU. It was pitch black all around. The students, sitting together in the back seat of the car, suddenly fell silent, and then began whispering to one another in Chinese. Hori remembers this well:

I was sure that they were saying to each other things like: “What’s going on? Is this going to be OK?” and “Come to think of it, this man driving the car looks a bit suspicious.” But finally the APU clock tower came into view. The students must have seen it before in a brochure, because suddenly they relaxed. The feeling of relief was palpable.

In the first year, APU students were invited to Kamegawa’s Summer Festival. They were impressed by the effort made by local residents to prepare lunch boxes and summer kimonos for them, to show them around the festival site, and even to clean up after them. The next time around, the students themselves took the initiative, asking how they could help out in running the festival. Ever since, students have become involved in a wide assortment of community events. Mention the names of some of the first cohort of APU enrollees to a local like Hori, and he is sure to know all about them.

FIFA World Cup 2002: Nakatsue Village in the limelight

The tragic death of Ketchecmen

The tiny village of Nakatsue became known throughout Japan during the 2002 FIFA World Cup. Chosen to host the preparation camp for the team from Cameroon, the village waited for five days after the scheduled arrival date as the team lingered in Paris, reportedly trying to negotiate higher appearance fees. The people of Nakatsue listened patiently day after day for news of the team, never showing any signs of anger or frustration. Eventually, on the fifth day, the team arrived, to be greeted by some 70% of the village’s population – at 3:00 in the morning. This saga touched the hearts of people all over Japan.

Sakamoto Yasumu, now Chairman of the Nakatsue Village Earth Foundation, was Mayor of Nakatsue at the time. “We knew that it would only go smoothly if we were prepared to fit in with the team’s way of doing things,” he explains in his quiet and unassuming manner. “It’s not good to force your own ideas and practices on to others, especially when you have little idea of their national characteristics or customs.”

A total of six APU students, from countries such as China, Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines and Taiwan had been employed part-time at the village’s Sports Center since the summer of 2001, cleaning rooms and helping out in the kitchens. In the year of the Cameroon team’s visit, 2002, APU’s student body included one Cameroonian, a second-year student named Ketchecmem, Ketcha Leonel D. Naturally, Mayor Sakamoto sought him out:

Ketchecmem had a really warm personality, and genuinely loved our village. Even after the World Cup was over, he would come back here to work during vacations. I remember watching him work tirelessly planting trees in February of the following year, when there was still snow on the ground, and thinking, he must be dedicated if he can work in this kind of weather.

Sakamoto himself is a hard worker. These days he rises at 3:00 each morning, and by 5:00 he is cleaning the lavatory block in the carpark at Nakatsuke's Taio Gold Mine complex. Ketchecmem's commitment won the industrious Sakamoto over. So when Ketchecmem wrote him a letter, in perfect Japanese, to ask about the possibility of being employed at the village's Sports Center after graduation, he moved quickly to arrange the appointment. Tragically, however, Ketchecmem's life was taken shortly afterwards in a traffic accident. "It's such a waste, a terrible shame," says Sakamoto whenever the topic is raised, his eyes filled with sadness. Ketchecmem's funeral service ran for three hours, and was attended by many residents of Nakatsue Village.

Ketchecmem's younger brother also enrolled at APU. Sakamoto says that after accident, whenever he went to watch Oita Trinita play in a soccer match, he would always stop by Kamegawa station to pick up Ketchecmem's brother and two of his friends and take them along to the match with him.

“Coming home” to Oita

Soaking up the hot springs

Around 400 students enrolled in APU in the fall semester 2000. Twenty of these students were Japanese. The international students were accommodated in AP House, but the Japanese students, finding that all Beppu's apartment accommodation was full, had to live at inns in the Kannawa district. Hamaguchi Kenichi, who had come to APU from Yokohama, took up residence in the Kami-Fujiya Ryokan. The Kannawa district has long been known as a center for hot spring therapy, and has developed a system of cheaply-priced rooms with communal cooking facilities, rented out to long-term guests making use of the hot springs. In the old days, farmers would come to these rooms in the off-season carrying sacks of rice, enough food to last them through a long stay as they rested their tired bodies in Kannawa's waters. This is the kind of accommodation that Hamaguchi was placed in. It seemed to him like a scene out of the Japanese movie "Always: Sunset on Third Street."

I could take a hot spring bath every day, at any time I liked. At weekends, I would invite friends over and we'd have fun cooking together. Sometimes we made a little too much noise, though, and got ticked off by the other guests.

Hamaguchi stayed in Kannawa for half a year before moving to other accommodation. In his third year at APU, he went to China on a university exchange, which qualified him to apply for residence in AP House. He subsequently became an RA.

Communication skills

When asked to name the distinguishing attribute of APU alumni, Japanese graduate Konuma Tomofumi says: "If I had to choose one, it would probably be that we're good

communicators.” At APU, Konuma set up a club called LEX. He had noticed that although students would interact with a diverse range of colleagues in the period immediately after enrollment, many would end up forming long-term friendships only within their own national circle. LEX’s first project was to arrange a system by which students could post notices in the university’s language lounges advertising their skills in teaching their native languages, or offering to teach in return for lessons in another language. It was from this starting point that the club developed a menu of activities involving international students, local residents, disabled persons and many others.

One of these activities entailed club members, accompanied by international students, being taken by local residents to assist in planting out rice paddies. In summer the students returned to cut grass around the paddies, were invited to the local summer festival, and then came back in fall to help with the harvest. They even took part in the post-harvest rice-pounding event. “It was great fun.” says Konuma, “I still think that LEX was the club most true to the APU spirit.”

Through these community experiences Konuma fell in love with Oita, and ended up visiting each one of the municipalities in the prefecture. He became particularly familiar with the local spring water, and can still name springs such as the one at Kirishima Shrine in Tsukahara, Oike at Mt. Kurodake, the carbonated spring of Hakusui, and the one in Yamaga. He recalls the “absolute luxury” of drawing water from one of these wells, using it to cook rice procured from local acquaintances, and eating the rice with fresh locally-produced eggs. Even now, on his days off, Konuma is more likely to “go home” to Beppu than to return to his family home in Saitama. As soon as he smells the sulfur from the Myōban hot springs just below the APU campus, he knows he’s home. Konuma is not the only one to feel this way. Singaporean graduate Mazhar Hamid, now working for the educational provider Kumon, also tells how he “went home to Beppu” recently.

A community engagement networking university

In June 1999, Ritsumeikan released the document titled “Proposal from APU.” Embracing the three ideals of “human resource development,” “community development” and “collaborative network development,” Ritsumeikan declared that “one of APU’s missions is to play a part in the development of Oita Prefecture and Beppu City,” and promised to make “contribution to the community a principle to be followed by all students.”

Since then, APU has entered into partnerships with the governments of Oita Prefecture, Beppu City, Mie Town (now part of Bungo-ōno City), Saiki City, Usuki City, Nakatsu City, Hiji Town, Kunisaki City, Hita City, Yufu City and Ōda City in Nagano Prefecture. Many different kinds of exchange activities are under way.

APU has produced a new model for universities around the theme of “community engagement networking.” It is seeking to establish a university-wide scheme for contribution to the community, and finding ways to integrate out-of-classroom activities with regular curricular education in a way that transcends the conventional framework of extra-curricular activity.

Dōke Maiko recalls university staff members “telling us over and over again how Beppu City had contributed funds and land for APU, how buildings and roads had been built with grants from Oita Prefecture, and how grateful we should be to the local community.” Many students took this on board, and started to look for ways to repay the favors owed by APU to Beppu and Oita. Almost all of APU’s first cohort of Japanese students were spurred on by this need to give something back to the community.

One of the clubs Dōke joined was “W-Touch,” led by Tanaka Natsuko and deputy Shimomasuda Waka. Through this club, one of several formed for the purposes of community exchange, Dōke sought to use her position as an RA to build bridges between international students and the local community.

The largest project that emerged out of these many strands of community engagement at APU was the aforementioned Usuki Research Project, conducted in partnership with the city of Usuki.

Beppu’s “APU-ist” citizens have their say

By Tanaka Shun’ichi (host family)

Altogether, we have welcomed more than 20 students into our household, from a wide variety of nationalities including Mongolia, Uganda, Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia and Syria. We have even been to some of their countries ourselves, such as India, Indonesia, Canada, Sri Lanka, China, Thailand and Vietnam. The students mainly come to stay in our own home or in a separate apartment we own, but sometimes we get them to stay in a holiday home in the Kokonoe area, and organize musical gatherings.

We really enjoy interacting with the students. Some will cook food from their own countries, and some, like those from India, Mongolia and Indonesia, will perform traditional dances for us. Our friends and neighbors love it when we invite them around.

One special memory for me is that of a Thai student who came to us in her second year at APU. She was very homesick, and told us that she planned to quit APU. We talked with her at length and did our best to persuade her to stay. Eventually she agreed to give it another shot, and she ended up staying at APU until graduation. Some time later the student’s father and brother came to Beppu, and we were all able to agree that it was fortunate that she had decided to stay.

I also remember a Sri Lankan couple who ended up marrying and living in our neighborhood. One New Year I took a phone call to say that one of them had a high fever. I rushed them to Tsurumi Hospital that night, and was called out again on several occasions over the next few days. It made me realize that for students coming from far-off lands, a host family is one of the few things you can count on, and something that you want to make the most of.

By Chikuhama Nao and Ōkubo Satoru (Former employees of Beppu City Hall Waste Disposal Department)

APU approached us to see if we could provide some casual work for APU international students who were unable to return home during the vacation for financial reasons. Our department is understaffed in summer, and sometimes our vehicles can't make their usual rounds. So we said that we could employ some students, if they were prepared to do this kind of work.

The drivers really enjoyed it, and often told us how fun it was to work with people from so many different countries. We would take photos of newly-appointed students, write their nicknames underneath, and post them up in our staff room a few weeks before they arrived, to let the drivers know who was coming and what to call them.

The people who work in on-ground operations in our department tend to have a rough manner, but they're really gentle underneath. They would often pick students up in the morning and take them home at night, and sometimes even treat them to meals.

Each garbage truck is manned by a team of one driver and two garbage collectors. The same people tended to work on the same teams each day, so they really got to know each other well. Even the local bus drivers would wait a little longer than usual at the bus stop in front of our office, just to make sure they hadn't missed any students. Sometimes they would even pull over even if there was no scheduled stop (although that's not really allowed, of course).

I'm sure that everyone felt the same way as we did when APU opened, wanting to do something to help out. I think that the whole of Beppu was behind the idea of lending a helping hand to international students when they were in trouble.

By Satake Ken'ichi (former Food and Beverage Manager, Kijima Kōrakuen Hotel)

I went to APU's Student Office to talk about my workplace's needs, and we started to employ students from around one year after the university opened. Our first group of students worked really hard, so we continued to employ students in the subsequent years.

In the first year, after they had been with us for four or five months, we asked some of the students to come and live in our on-site employees' dormitory. The reason we decided to do this was that it was becoming too hard for me to drive the students around myself. After work on Saturdays, I would have to deliver each one back to their homes, and it was often past midnight before I could get home myself. Then I had to get up at 5:30 a.m., pick the students up and get them here to start work at 6. On peak days there would be a total of 20 students working across the morning shift, the wedding shift and the evening reception and dinner shift. I just couldn't take all those trips shuttling students back and forth. I decided that there was no option but to get students to live on-site at the company dormitory.

I would take the students living in the dormitory to campus in the mornings, and go and pick them up at 6 p.m. When they got back, they would do jobs for us such as washing dishes in the hotel kitchens. We employed students from many different countries, including Ghana, China, Lithuania, Nepal, Vietnam, Sri Lanka.

Some of the students could only speak a few words of Japanese, and it was really hard to communicate. We'd try to speak to them in our own limited English, but when that didn't work, we called in other students to translate. Students who can speak Japanese can get work anywhere, but for back-of-house jobs (like dishwashing and table setting) there is no need for good Japanese skills. If we work together with the students and show them what is required, they have no problem understanding.

Other hotel employees, myself included, had very few opportunities to mix with people of other nationalities before the APU students came to work for us. Initially it was a real novelty, but gradually we came to regard them no differently to students who came from other parts of Japan.

They certainly did a lot of different types of work for us. Some would specifically ask to do grass-cutting, saying that it was their favorite job. Others would be assigned special duties at wedding receptions, such as shining the spotlight and serving food to the tables. In the hotel's restaurants, they took on regular duties such as helping out with food preparation and taking customers' orders. One of the students was so strong that he could do the same volume of lifting work as was usually shared among three or four staff members.

My strongest memories are of those students who were not so proficient at their work, but still tried their best. They may not have been quick workers, but they were certainly dedicated. There was one male student from Ghana who found it hard to pick up Japanese and never actually made it beyond dishwashing; but whatever we asked of him, he would do diligently. The older women who also worked in the dishwashing area became very fond of him.

Then there was the Indonesian student who had the air of being from a town just down the road rather than a far-off country, and the Korean who made little fuss and liked to stay out of the limelight, but always did a perfect job. In the first year I must have met more than 100 students, but I still remember those kinds of students vividly.

Some students ran out of money, and were forced to return to their home countries. They were so good-natured and hard-working, and I felt really sorry that they had to give up their studies just because of money. But I'm sure that being employed by us did make a difference to many other students.

By Ajimu Hisanori (Yamaguchi Corpo, Kamenoi Driving School)

As an adjunct to our primary business, the Kamegawa Driving School manages 89 "Yamaguchi Corpo" apartment buildings. We leased out three of those buildings in Beppu's Kankaiji district as accommodation for students. The buildings were originally designed as regular apartment blocks, but in 2000, when APU was opened, many apartments were vacant and we were searching for new ways to raise the occupancy rate.

That was when we were approached about the possibility of making the apartments available to APU international students. We thought that we should provide some sort of special benefits to the students, so we decided to offer the apartments at relatively low rent, and to operate a shuttle bus service between the university and the apartments, and our driving school.

The university welcomed these initiatives heartily, but we were very grateful too for this chance to increase occupancy rates. We didn't need to venture into a new type of business, just make better use of an existing one. It was a real help to our company. The company's needs matched perfectly with those of the university, and continue to do so today.

We don't operate any special selection procedures for prospective residents: we simply take people introduced to us by the university and acquaintances of current residents. We use a joint guarantor system rather than requiring residents to find their own guarantors. After all, these are international students. We can't be too strict on regulations, and anyway, it's much better to maintain a strong relationship of mutual trust. Students have already learned much about Japanese culture and customs in AP House, and they seem to have very few problems or disputes with neighbors.

The only real difficulty is garbage disposal. This is a matter of common sense in Japan, but not for students who do not have similar practices and rules in their own countries. We sometimes have students dumping food scraps directly in the garbage collection point, for example. But they do pay attention when we tell them the correct procedures, of course, and some are more diligent than your average Japanese person. Language is something of a barrier in a few cases, but all our students are straightforward and earnest – there isn't a bad one among them.

Kondō Kenichi and Kondō Yoshiwa (“Ponytail” Hairdressing Salon)

The Kamegawa district is home to many international students. For Mr. and Mrs. Kondō, who run a hairdressing salon in Kamegawa, international exchange grew naturally to become part of everyday life. They report:

We did things like setting up a computer in a corner of the salon that students could use freely, offering specially discounted haircuts, and even having dinner with students, and their families when they visited Japan. Soon students from Sri Lanka, India and other parts of South Asia started to refer to us as their “Mom and Dad in Japan.”

They even purchased an old boarding house next door to the salon that had not been used for more than twenty years, and offered it as cheap accommodation for students with little money. Known as K-House, this building's rooms are all fully furnished as equipped with internet access.

“We treat international students simply as ‘students’ – we don't give them any special treatment,” say Mr. and Mrs. Kondo, believers in the natural, low-exertion style of international exchange.

Bharti Ahuja (APU graduate; now owner of an Indian restaurant in Beppu)

Among APU's first batch of students, the first to achieve notoriety was Bharti Ahuja. Her earned her initial fame by paying a direct visit to Governor Hiramatsu's official residence on a Sunday. Like many other international students Bharti was planning to apply for a scholarship offered by the Oita Prefectural Government, but was unhappy with the requirement that that application form be written in Japanese. So she went directly to the Governor to argue her case. From then on, applications were accepted in English as well as Japanese.

Since graduating from APU, Bharti has operated an Indian restaurant in downtown Beppu. Speaking in Japanese using a blend of Kansai and Oita dialects, Bharti has this to say about her experiences:

My field of specialization was tourism, so I was attracted to the idea of studying in Japan, and particularly in Beppu. But when I first arrived at APU, I felt like I had been duped. After all, the artist's impression on the cover of the publicity brochure showed the campus as being just next to the sea. The campus certainly offers views of the sea, but from the top of a mountain! But once I started getting involved in student life, I discovered the many positive aspects of this environment. There are no distractions around the campus, so it's a great place to study and develop friendships.

During her time at APU, Ahuja participated actively in festivals and all kinds of events around the prefecture. She gave traditional Indian dance performances on some 300 different occasions, as well as operating festival stalls selling Indian food. She recalls that these experiences were fun, but also worthwhile. Talking and interacting with local citizens became a valuable part of her study of tourism, she recalls.

Upon graduating, she launched the limited liability company Bharti Ahuja Inc., and now runs the Ahuja Restaurant in one of Beppu's shopping arcades. She explains her decision to stay in Beppu as follows:

From the outset, I had no intention of returning to my home country or of moving to a bigger city in Japan. My plan was to live right here in Beppu. For me, it wasn't enough just to graduate from APU, a university that happened to be located in the Japanese city of Beppu. I wanted to settle down and do my best right here in the place where I studied, the place that I was initially attracted to.

The joy of hosting students

Wanted: Host families

Home-stays have always been a key part of APU's community engagement agenda. Seeing the potential for initiating dialogue with local residents, Ritsumeikan began recruiting host families for APU students well before the university was opened.

At the time, the key organizing force in the home-stay community in Oita Prefecture was former Prefectural Government employee Hirano Akimitsu. Many other residents also came forward to join Hirano after hearing about APU's planned home-stay program from city and prefectural authorities. District welfare officers were called together and allocated responsibility for spreading the word to different parts of the community. Some residents responded positively to this initiative, but others were less accommodating, citing concerns about crime and taking a discriminatory stance.

In May 2000, the APU Opening Festival was held in Beppu in conjunction with an event to mark the centennial of the Ritsumeikan Academy,. This was the first opportunity for local residents to mix with APU students, and it triggered a major increase in the number of families registering to host students in the home-stay program.



APU students with a host family (Image courtesy of Oita Gōdō Shimbunsha)

Around the same time, the community was shocked by the news that a Chinese student studying at another local university had murdered an elderly couple living in the nearby town of Yamaga (now part of Kitsuki city). In the neighboring prefecture of Fukuoka, a separate murder charge had also been brought against another international student. Reporters from a media outlet in Fukuoka came to report on the situation at APU. In the aftermath of the incident in Fukuoka, they explained, community feeling had turned strongly against international students. They were intrigued by the fact that in Oita, despite the terrible incident in Yamaga, attitudes towards APU international students did not seem to have changed fundamentally. APU personnel suggested that this difference could be put down to the extensive groundwork that had been done prior to the university's opening, the efforts made subsequently, and the support offered by so many local residents. An enduring relationship of trust had already been established.

Members of APU's Student Affairs Division often tell one particular story regarding the effect of these incidents. They say that when they saw the shockwaves that the news of the murders had sent through the community, they braced themselves for a decline in host family registrations. Everyone was surprised, therefore, when the number of registrations actually increased. It turned out that two local households had held family meetings and decided that the recent events made it even more important that they

volunteer to become host families. APU faculty and staff members were heartened enormously by this news.

Chapter 7 Onward, APU



A graduation ceremony tradition at APU:
The new graduates throw their caps into the air

From the APU President's office, you can watch students from AP House walking to classes each morning.

No doubt they have been up late studying. They look a little sleepy, but their stride is certain as they make their way towards the classrooms.

Some 5,400 international students from 106 different countries and regions have passed through APU's gates since the university was opened. APU's mission of "contributing to human resource development in the Asia Pacific region" stands firm.

APU is also attracting much interest from government and business sectors.

Professor Monte Cassim, who as President of APU has advanced the university's second-phase "New Challenge" plan, observes that "Today, APU is much more than a single private university: it is a public asset."

The task of building the foundations for APU's next generation awaits.

President Monte Cassim speaks

The establishment of APU was a defining moment not only for the Ritsumeikan Academy, but for Japan's higher education sector as a whole. Many people from both within and beyond Japan come to visit our campus. In the 2007 academic year alone, for example, we welcomed representatives of international organizations including the former UN Under-Secretary-General Akashi Yasushi and the head of the Japan Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Takizawa Saburō, as well as current and former government officials and diplomats from countries including the People's Republic of China, the United States of America, the Republic of Indonesia, Malaysia, India, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of Singapore, the Republic of

Botswana, the Republic of Malawi, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. We also host innumerable delegations from universities both within Japan and overseas.

There are several things that all visitors to APU tend to comment on.

AP House: A multicultural and educational community

The first of these things is AP House, the international student dormitory complex. As of fall 2008, this dormitory was home to approximately 400 domestic students and 900 international students. With the tireless help of its Resident Assistants (RAs), AP House has transcended the status of a mere living space, and now functions as a venue for international exchange and enhancement of cross-cultural understanding and language proficiency. Symbolic of this development are the dinners held in AP House's communal kitchens featuring food from different countries, and the wide assortment of events organized by residents.

The dormitory's educational functions are taken even further in the AP House 3 building, completed in the 2007 academic year. This building is fitted with dual-occupancy units: pairs of adjacent rooms joined directly by a doorway. Each pair of rooms is occupied by one domestic student and one international student. By sharing their living space in this manner, students can help each other develop, interact freely, and enjoy enriching experiences day after day.

APU: A university where students are serious about their studies

The second thing that grabs the interest of visitors to APU is the fact that our students study really hard. The notion that "Japanese university students don't study," often put forward by the government's Central Council for Education as well as secondary school personnel, the mass media and people from the corporate world, is just not applicable to APU. The paradigm of the "truly international university" held up by APU does not simply denote an institution that enrolls many international students and employs many foreign academics, or one that offers classes in an English-language medium. Rather, it expresses the idea that education at APU must have international currency. This idea informs the many systems we have in place to ensure that students follow a daily study routine if they wish to earn course credits. These include the emphasis on regular homework and class presentations as means of assessment, the "quarter system" of short class terms in which students take a small number of subjects in depth, and the provision of detailed syllabus information for each subject.

Surveys now show that the average daily self-study time for APU students is just under two hours. This is a marked contrast to the norm in Japan, a country where half of all university students confess to doing hardly any independent study at all. APU's students may struggle to handle their workload of assignments and presentations, but we are sure that their efforts today will prove worthwhile in the future.

Another feature of our university is the range of opportunities for study abroad and other forms of international educational experience. We anticipate that almost half of the Japanese students admitted to APU in the 2006 academic year will have had some form of study experience abroad by the time they graduate. The campus environment and educational programs at APU help these students develop the English language proficiency, motivation and skills required for successful study beyond Japan. I also think that APU's Japanese students are influenced positively by the sight of so many international students applying themselves earnestly to their studies.

Solid scholastic abilities developed through continuous study will surely prove to be an advantage when it comes to pursuing a career after graduation. Representatives of close to 400 companies visit our campus each year to recruit APU students. We are conscious of the need to continue our work to respond to the needs of both these companies and other sectors of society.

The next leap forward for APU

Following on from the achievement of its "100,000 international students plan" earlier this decade, the national government is now formulating a plan to attract 300,000 international students to Japan. APU itself has already claimed success in becoming a "truly international university," but our mission does not permit us to rest on our laurels.

In the academic years 2006 through 2009, APU has been working in line with its second-phase "New Challenge" plan. Under New Challenge, based on analysis of the educational needs of the international community, we have established five new academic programs: Tourism & Hospitality, International Strategic Studies, Languages & Cultures, Information & Communications Technology (ICT), and Health, Environment & Life Sciences. The academic program formed around these five areas is known as the Crossover Advanced Program. We have sought to render improvements in the fields that have been APU's traditional academic strengths, as well as pursuing a new integrated arts and sciences approach in areas such as ICT and environmental studies for which there is particularly high demand from the international community and among international students. The construction of AP House 3, the international educational dormitory mentioned earlier, was also part of the New Challenge plan. Furthermore, in order to expand APU's contribution to the international community in quantitative terms, we have effected a 50% increase in student enrollment capacity.

We are now beginning discussions on a post-New Challenge plan, for APU's third phase of development. The expectations of the international community, and the belief in our university's potential to contribute to the internationalization of Japanese higher education, are keenly felt by all of us here at APU. We are looking at ways to respond to these expectations through new initiatives that make use of our multi-cultural, multi-lingual environment in the three areas of "specialist skills," "international understanding," and "language proficiency." In addition to these educational initiatives, we are advancing academic research oriented to the further development of the Asia Pacific, a region that is becoming more and more significant in political, economic and cultural terms. Our aim is to construct the academic field of "Asia Pacific Studies." We

welcome the involvement of alumni, current students and the wider community in the task of formulating these plans.

Inheriting the APU “DNA”

This book has looked back on the motives and ideas behind the APU project, the efforts made in the lead-up to the university’s establishment, and the incredible assistance furnished to the university by the wider community. It has provided an opportunity for us to renew our sense of gratitude to the members of the AC with former Nippon Keidanren Chairman Hiraiwa Gaishi at the helm, and the local community in Oita, led by former Prefectural Governor Hiramatsu Morihiko and former Beppu City Mayor Inoue Nobuyuki. We have been touched once more by the accounts of the university’s first students and the passionate idealism that brought them here. The decision to publish this book was informed by an awareness of the need to reaffirm this history as we prepare to embark on our third stage of development. Now approaching its tenth anniversary, APU will face many difficult challenges on its way to achieving greater things. We believe, however, that solutions to these challenges can be found by returning to first principles. It is our responsibility to look back once more at the history of APU’s founding, extract the “DNA” embedded in that history, and carry it forward into the future.

Since APU’s opening, around 5,400 international students have come here to study from 106 different countries and regions. During one of my many overseas trips recently, I visited a television station in the UAE (United Arab Emirates). While there, I was surprised to hear somebody behind me call my name. I turned around to see an APU graduate, now working as a journalist at the station. On another occasion, while visiting a foreign embassy, I came across an APU graduate working on the embassy’s staff. These kind of experiences bring home to me the fact that the APU alumni network has now expanded worldwide. This expansion demonstrates the global reach of APU’s human resource development, and gives us the courage to go forward.

I have a dream that one day, when two countries engaged in a conflict in some corner the world come together for negotiations, the representatives from both sides will be APU alumni. They will reminisce fondly about the sea and hot spring steam billowing out below the APU campus, and they will talk of peace. Avoiding conflicts altogether may be impossible, but APU can be part of their resolution. Surely I am not the only one who suspects that someday, this dream may actually come true.

Postscript

On April 1, 2010, it will be exactly ten years since APU opened. Huge waves of change have swept across the world, and through Japan's higher education sector, in the last ten years. We are now beginning to explore ways to ensure that APU continues to move ahead as an international university amidst these changing conditions. The ostensible aim of producing this book was to furnish a record of the events and processes through which APU was created, but the real intention behind it is to inspire all people associated with APU, both past and present, to contribute to the discussion over APU's future. The book is a contribution to the APU of tomorrow.

It was with this purpose in mind that we conducted interviews with many individuals who made key contributions to APU's creation. We take this opportunity to express our thanks to all those who agreed so willingly to be part of this book. We only wish that it had been possible to talk with every person involved in formulating, developing and supporting the university.

Through interviews and other forms of engagement with the individuals featured in this book, we discovered a remarkable strength and depth of feeling for APU. We sincerely hope that readers can share in this discovery. In particular, we hope that the book proves useful for academic and administrative staff members of the Ritsumeikan Academy as they engage in their teaching and research, re-assess their own work and formulate improvements. We also trust the APU alumni and current students who read this book will renew their appreciation for the ideas and individuals that supported and shaped their experiences at APU. These insights will surely help give more concrete form to the stirrings of change currently being felt as APU prepares for its next decade.

The editorial committee hereby expresses its sincere thanks to Nakata Tetsushi, editor in chief, Division of the Chūōkōron Shinsha, and Hoshika Yutaka, in charge of editing at the same company, for their work in producing the book and providing constant encouragement despite our slow progress. Thanks are also extended to the following individuals for sensing the wishes of university representatives and agreeing to assist with interviews and writing for the book: Miura Yōko, director of Hanuman; writer Higuchi Kazumi; and Irabe Kimihiro, Project Manager in the Sales Development Division of AFB Co., Ltd.

March, 2009

“APU Story” Editorial Committee

Declaration on the Occasion of the Opening of APU

Since the beginning of human history, human beings have attempted to create their own distinctive cultures and develop civilizations in the various regions of the world. They have also had to overcome many constraints and obstacles in order to achieve their goal of living in conditions of freedom, peace and humanity.

The twentieth century was an era of rapid progress and unprecedented advance in the political, economical and cultural fields, as human activity increasingly took place on a global scale. Through the experience of the two World Wars, the United Nations and other international organizations were formed to enhance cooperation in order to maintain peace and to promote international understanding.

Given that the 21st century will see the emergence of a global society, we firmly believe that coexistence between mankind and nature, as well as between diverse cultures, will be indispensable for the peaceful and sustainable development of the Asia Pacific region. This is why we are now establishing a university here, to nurture the young talent and to create a new academic discipline which will help shape the region's future.

April 1, 2000 therefore marked the birth of the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, based on a vision of freedom, peace and humanity, international mutual understanding, and the future shape of the Asia Pacific region. The establishment of the University at Jumonjibaru, in Beppu City, has been made possible through the cooperation of the people of Beppu and Oita Prefecture, together with many others both within and outside Japan.

Our hope is that it will be a place where the young future leaders from countries and regions throughout the world will come to study together, live together, and understand each other's cultures and ways of life, in pursuit of goals which are common to all mankind.

The Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University is hereby declared open.

From the World to APU
(International student numbers and countries/regions of origin)

	Country & Region	2008.11.1				2000.10.31		
		Number of Undergraduate Students	Number of Postgraduate Students	Number of Exchange/Study Abroad Students	Subtotal	Number of APS Students	Number of APM Students	Subtotal
1	China	634	42	1	677	23	69	92
2	Korea	658	4	12	674	45	41	86
3	Thailand	242	10	0	252	4	8	12
4	Vietnam	194	26	1	221	11	21	32
5	Indonesia	151	35	0	186	12	15	27
6	Taiwan	93	7	4	104	16	17	33
7	Mongolia	97	6	0	103	1	2	3
8	Myanmar	70	4	0	74	2	4	6
9	Bangladesh	54	12	0	66	3	1	4
10	India	29	12	0	41	6	11	17
11	Sri Lanka	30	7	0	37	3	10	13
12	Nepal	33	3	0	36	2	2	4
13	Malaysia	10	9	1	20	5	8	13
14	Philippines	6	8	2	16	1	1	2

	Country & Region	2008.11.1				2000.10.31		
		Number of Undergraduate Students	Number of Postgraduate Students	Number of Exchange/Study Abroad Students	Subtotal	Number of APS Students	Number of APM Students	Subtotal
15	Pakistan	8	2	0	10		2	2
16	Cambodia	1	8	0	9		1	1
17	Singapore	3	3	3	9	3	3	6
18	Laos	0	6	0	6	3	4	7
19	Saudi Arabia	6	1	0	7			
20	Turkey	0	2	0	2			
21	Bahrain	1	0	0	1			
22	Oman	1	0	0	1			
23	Syria	1	0	0	1			
24	UAE	0	1	0	1			
	Iran					1		1
25	Kenya	11	1	0	12			
26	Ghana	4	5	0	9		3	3
27	Nigeria	7	1	0	8	1	1	2
28	Mali	4	0	0	4		1	1
29	Uganda	3	1	0	4		1	1

	Country & Region	2008.11.1				2000.10.31		
		Number of Undergraduate Students	Number of Postgraduate Students	Number of Exchange/Study Abroad Students	Subtotal	Number of APS Students	Number of APM Students	Subtotal
30	Benin	2	1	0	3			
31	Malawi	2	1	0	3			
32	Tanzania	3	0	0	3			
33	Cameroon	1	1	0	2			
34	Angola	0	1	0	1			
35	Botswana	1	0	0	1			
36	Cote d'Ivoire	0	1	0	1			
37	Ethiopia	0	1	0	1	1	1	2
38	Gabon	1	0	0	1			
39	Guinea	1	0	0	1			
40	Liberia	1	0	0	1			
41	Madagascar	0	1	0	1	1		1
42	Mozambique	1	0	0	1			
43	South Africa	0	1	0	1			
44	Zimbabwe	0	1	0	1	1	1	2
	Djibouti						1	1

	Country & Region	2008.11.1				2000.10.31		
		Number of Undergraduate Students	Number of Postgraduate Students	Number of Exchange/Study Abroad Students	Subtotal	Number of APS Students	Number of APM Students	Subtotal
45	USA	26	11	7	44	3	5	8
46	Canada	4	1	5	10	2	4	6
47	Mexico	2	5	2	9			
48	Cuba	0	2	0	2			
49	Ecuador	0	2	0	2		1	1
50	Guyana	0	2	0	2			
51	Honduras	0	2	0	2			
52	Peru	0	2	0	2	1		1
53	Bolivia	1	0	0	1			
54	Costa Rica	0	1	0	1			
55	Guatemala	0	1	0	1			
56	Trinidad and Tobago	0	1	0	1			
57	Uruguay	0	1	0	1			
58	Venezuela	0	1	0	1			
59	Australia	5	1	5	11	3	1	4
60	Tonga	1	2	0	3		1	1

	Country & Region	2008.11.1				2000.10.31		
		Number of Undergraduate Students	Number of Postgraduate Students	Number of Exchange/Study Abroad Students	Subtotal	Number of APS Students	Number of APM Students	Subtotal
61	New Zealand	1	0	0	1		1	1
62	Papua New Guinea	0	1	0	1	1		1
63	Samoa	0	1	0	1			
	Palau						1	1
64	Uzbekistan	15	5	0	20			
65	Bulgaria	7	5	0	12	2	1	3
66	Germany	5	6	1	12			
67	Finland	2	0	5	7	2		2
68	France	2	0	5	7			
69	Norway	4	0	2	6			
70	Sweden	3	0	3	6			
71	Kyrgyz	1	4	0	5			
72	Estonia	3	1	0	4		1	1
73	Netherlands	0	0	4	4			
74	Austria	0	0	3	3			
75	Lithuania	2	1	0	3		3	3

	Country & Region	2008.11.1				2000.10.31		
		Number of Undergraduate Students	Number of Postgraduate Students	Number of Exchange/Study Abroad Students	Subtotal	Number of APS Students	Number of APM Students	Subtotal
76	Hungary	0	2	0	2	1	1	2
77	Kazakhstan	1	1	0	2			
78	Belgium	2	0	0	2			
79	Swiss	2	0	0	2			
80	United Kingdom	2	0	0	2	3	2	5
81	Croatia	0	1	0	1		1	1
82	Czech	1	0	0	1			
83	Denmark	0	0	1	1			
84	Latvijas	1	0	0	1			
85	Romania	1	0	0	1	1		1
86	Russia	0	1	0	1		3	3
87	Turkmenistan	0	1	0	1			
	Poland					1	1	2
International Students		2458	290	67	2815	165	256	421
Domestic Students		3125	16	12	3153	270	214	484
The Grand Total		5583	306	79	5968	435	470	905

Note1: “International students” are non-Japanese nationals residing in Japan with the official status of residence of “College Student”. Non-Japanese nationals without College Student status are classed as domestic students. “APS” is the College of Asia Pacific Studies; “APM” is the College of International Management (formerly College of Asia Pacific Management).

Note2: The numbers in the far left hand column count each of the countries and regions represented in the APU international student body as of November 1, 2008. There are 87 countries and regions in total.

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Counselor
Saibugas Co., Ltd.

(All data including job titles are current as of April 1, 2000, and reproduced from *APU Kaigaku no Ayumi*[Toward the Opening of APU]. Please note that Hiraiwa Gaishi served as an AC Honorary Committee Member from the inaugural meeting to the end of February 1998.)

Notes on Japanese-English transliteration style

In principle, the “Hepburn system” of transliteration has been followed in this volume, with long Japanese vowel sounds indicated by a macron over the vowel (ā, ī, ū, ē, ō). The only exception is the case of common Japanese place names and other proper nouns that regularly appear in English-language texts. Thus, for example, the prefecture in which APU is located is written “Oita” rather than the more technically correct “Ōita”; Japan’s capital is written “Tokyo” rather than “Tōkyō”. This practice reflects aesthetic considerations rather than the application of objective criteria. All personal names have been rendered in the order customary in the person’s native language. Names of companies and other organizations follow the conventions used by the organizations themselves, with the exception that some capitalizations have been modified for aesthetic reasons.

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