

## Greetings from the President's Office

2015.4.24 NO.6

Dear AIU New Students,

Congratulations on your matriculation to Akita International University!

As the President, I am very pleased to see that 279 new and energetic students came to Akita from throughout Japan and 20 countries and regions to start their college life here.

Making close friends and studying alongside them in your campus life will definitely become a lifelong treasure. In addition, the relationship with faculty members, especially in such a small community like AIU, will be a personal and friendly one. All faculty and staff members, including myself, are prepared to support you, and have been looking forward to your coming here. Please actively engage with the faculty at Akita International University!

Students, you have recently started your new campus life, and you might be wondering what the faculty are like. They are actually ordinary people just like you, so there is no need to be afraid of them. I would like to mention here the faculty's two main duties at AIU. Firstly, it is to deeply explore or seek the truth regarding their research interests. This comes from their own interests, responsibilities and necessities and each faculty member is responsible for their activities. Some of them immerse themselves in their study and stay up all night if needed. Such faculty members with intriguing subjects can be described as happy individuals. Obviously, research cannot be done in a short space of time. Rather it takes a long time, sometimes with hardships and obstacles along the way. Nevertheless, it is the faculty that could eventually change troublesome issues into positive outcomes. You will probably encounter truly fascinating people among our faculty members. They will surely enthusiastically tell you about their research or interests. I hope you will take the opportunity to talk with them.

Secondly, and just as important as the first duty, the faculty are responsible for instilling you with a wide range of knowledge and skills in various fields and ways of thinking and theoretical systems. In the case of liberal arts colleges, particularly AIU with its distinct international liberal arts education, we focus on cultivating students into 'thoughtful individuals.' This education is called "whole person education," which aims to nurture students with intelligence, morality and sensibility. Thus, AIU students are expected to become individuals who can play important roles in a globalizing

society. This is our educational mission. Although AIU is still young with a short history and our total number of graduates just reached 1,100 this March, many graduates are already active in the international community. In fact, their success in society confirms just how accomplished our education is. In this sense, and figuratively speaking, AIU is responsible for an “educational experiment” which proved to be a success.

In my student days, I received an enormous amount of influence from many teachers, for example, Dr. Yoichi Itagaki whom I studied under, who said: “Studying is as fun as swimming in the ocean. You can see clouds as an island, and see an island as the clouds. Take things as you find them with a mind impervious to anything.” In other words, find fun in learning. Dr. Kiyoshi Kojima, whom I also studied under mentioned that, when learning, you need to penetrate with zeal and passion, and the mettle to beat your opponent. Dr. Richard Farmer, who I studied under during my time in the U.S., said that there are an infinite number of research subjects, and the truth is that you have not realized them yet. During his lecture, he showed how to set research themes one after another and how to explore them academically with his incredible creativity.

Thus, a timely word from faculty can deeply influence a student’s mind, and can have an effect for decades. This can only happen when the student is ready to accept the words of wisdom. Otherwise, a wise word or the moment may never come back. From that perspective, the relationship between students and faculty can be meaningful every single minute, and if and only if at that moment, a good and reliable relationship can be established between them.

Students, I strongly hope that you will find good friends and faculty members in your campus life.



鈴木 典比古