

EAUI Program News Letter Vol.1 Nov. 2014

For Spring 2014, Waseda University hosted 7 students from the four partner universities. The EAUI semester exchange program consists of varieties of academic opportunities at Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (GSAPS) to deepen students' research theme and social activities that Waseda University can offer. This volume features 3 students who made the best of their time at Waseda.

For more information about the EAUI Program, please visit the website http://web.waseda.jp/gsaps/eaui/index_en.html or send an email to EAUI Program Office (eaui-waseda@list.waseda.jp).

XU, Chengwei (Nanyang Technological University, PhD)

The EAUI semester exchange program was a marvelous experience for me. First, it gave a chance for us the students from five universities to get together and communicate with each other. We often had class and dinner together, and we discussed the different models of education, politics, and cultural issues. This daily discussion helped me to understand another culture. Just to give an example, I discussed dozens of times with one exchange student from Thailand. We discussed why Thailand had so many military coups in history; how the different parties function in Thai politics; and how people protect their rights and evaluate the government; etc. This program gave me an amazing opportunity to understand different societies.

Second, I have a good access to audit different seminars and lectures in Waseda University. GSAPS embraces a diversified community of academia, which has many disciplines, such as politics, international relations, sociology, economics, history, etc. The studies of international relations gave me a much broader outlook to understand individuals, organizations, and nations and the relationship between; sociology lectures helped me to use more perspective of social network to understand my research. I would not have learned these ideas if I just stayed in NTU, in public management field.

Actually the most fascinating experience is that I learned a lot about Japanese people, Japanese society, economy and politics. I have many images about Japan before I arrived, such as clean, strong social norm, conservative, and anti-Chinese. But after I stayed in Japan for several months, some ideas totally changed. I joined many of International Community Center (ICC) activities with the purpose of knowing Japanese young people. I found them very friendly and helpful to foreign students. Wherever you go, you can feel the politeness of Japanese people. This is so amazing and comfortable for me. All in all, this journey gave me a lot of knowledge and experience, not only about Japan, but also Korea and Thailand.

My study benefitted a lot from this exchange program for both knowledge and research methodology. My PhD research topic is about how individual's social identity and public service motivation functions in terms of cooperation. Waseda University, especially GSAPS, is very internationalized community. When I talked about my research and notions to them, different people offered diversified understanding. Then I had to consider the cultural background when carrying out my interview. I had definitely thought about cultural issue before, but it was never as prominent as now.

I regularly attended my seminar (zemi) once a week. It was really interesting that different topics and different methodologies were integrated together. Students could give a very new and innovative thinking about each other's research, which helped presenters to improve their papers, research designs or proposals. Because each of us needed to give a presentation and be challenged by other researchers, we had to think deeply and further. After the audience challenged my research over and over again, it became much better one. In my zemi, students from sociology and international relations, they gave me a lot of suggestions about how to formalize a piece of qualitative research. Due to my business school background, I used more quantitative methods during past several years, such as survey, statistic research and econometrical studies. But here the students used many methods such as interview, field research, and case study, etc. Then I began to read more papers of qualitative studies. Many students know that, qualitative study can give more descriptive information, more detailed story, and well organized causality analysis. But quantitative study can make one's results or theory more acceptable and more general by using hundreds of or thousands of samples or research objectives. I realize it is better to use both methods to carry out research. I believe this exchange program can facilitate participants' research via both seminars and lectures. It provides a much diversified knowledge, research methods and effective communication, which helps students get more robust understanding of their research fields.

It is not easy to conclude the whole story of the EAUI semester exchange program with several sentences. To sum up, I can say it is "an integrated, systematic and colorful experience for participants' life and research".

BAE, Sangmi (Korea University, PhD)

The EAUI semester exchange program gave me an opportunity to broaden my perspective. I usually take courses related to Korean literature or culture in Korea University. This EAUI program let me take various courses provided by GSAPS. I took three courses (except a course for EAUI exchange students) at GSAPS. It was really interesting to understand Japanese academic fields and the character of each academic department. These three courses included different departments, such as anthropology, history, and politics. Their methods and the understandings of society were also very different. For example, the resources of anthropology are usually comprised of interviews or field work results, and the scholars consider their information provider the most important. They avoid aggressive interpretations about the information because they always respect their interviewee or resource provider. This is very important as research ethics. However, history and politics adopt different methodologies. They also study about human society, but they usually use published resources. Even if they approach the same issue, their methodology and the research result would be not the same. These different methodologies stimulated my thinking.

In addition, the courses I took were very helpful to understand my research field material and the background of the specific era. For example, I usually read resources about the Japanese colonial period. Before studying in Japan, I did not take into account Southeast Asian issues that may have influenced Korea. However, the course focusing on Southeast Asia, taught by Prof. Hayase, helped me to research about the region, albeit my limited prior knowledge. Now I understand it is important that, when we talk about the war during 15 years in Japan, Southeast Asian region should be considered as well. When I studied in Korea, it is difficult to know about the region because there are very few people who research about the region. The course gave me a good insight into how I can approach the study of Southeast Asia and how I can bring the knowledge of the region into my research field.

Prof. Lee's course was also very helpful for me to gain a broader perspective for my research field. I learned about international relationship history after World War II in his course. This era is a little different from my research focus. However, it is also important to understand the pre-war era in the relationship with the post-war era. Most of research presented after war have influenced the atmosphere of international relationship, because of the cold war. It is necessary to understand the relationship between advanced research and the change of the era, which can be usually a decisive factor for the way of understanding the background of their research topic and method. For example, most of the research during the cold war criticized the socialist literature movement of the colonial period, and it was not even allowed to mention the names of socialist authors. It is just a small part that shows the relationship between international politics and advanced researches in my field.

All of the courses I took at GSAPS gave a good opportunity for me to enhance my perspective and to understand my research field further. I have confidence in taking this experience into my own research. This experience would make mine more effective and broader.



The East Asian University Institute (EAUI) for Asian Regional Integration program (EAUI Program), supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan as part of the Re-Inventing Japan Project, has been launched based on this spirit of multiculturalism. The program promotes collaborative graduate education among Waseda University, Korea University, Nanyang Technological University, Peking University, and Thammasat University in Japan, South Korea, Singapore, China, and Thailand, respectively. These five countries are major players in the politics and economy of East Asia, and these universities represent the top educational institutions in their respective countries.

LI, Sijia (Peking University, MA)

During the semester exchange program, I registered three courses (except a course for the EAUI semester exchange students) after I listened to professor's suggestion. Two of them are provided by Prof. Roberts. One is about migration. I learnt about not only foreign people who settled down at Japan, but also the flow of migrations in China, Australia, America and Mexico. After taking this course, I got a whole picture of the constitution of foreign people in Japan, and knew deeper about Japanese society than before. My final paper of this class is about Japan's refugee policy, and I figured out that Japan has a very restrictive refugee policy, which is significantly different from other developed countries. Japanese people tend to regard refugees as lacking of work capacity and always ask for government's help, but actually, most refugees in Japan are highly educated and work hard. The policy is a kind of reflection of Japan's public awareness and historical perspective.

The other class is about Japanese society and life course. Our reading materials and discussions focused on marriage, education, aging society and other phenomena that occurred in Japanese people's daily life. We had a field trip to *Hoikuen* (a day-care center) in the middle of the course period. It left a deep impression on me because they were celebrating the birthdays of children who were born in that month. Some elder children made gifts by themselves and expressed their wishes to younger ones. I got to know why Japan is known as group-oriented society. The topic of my final paper for this course is elementary school education in Japan. Elementary students are facing with a heavier study pressure, comparing with decades before, which is quite similar to what is happening in China recently. To complete my research, I interviewed three students from Waseda and asked them some questions about their experience in elementary school. This helped me enhance my interviewing skills and strengthen our friendships.

I also took a course of "Asia-Pacific economy", which is taught by Prof. Urata. The professor used *The East Asian Miracle* as a text book, and I acquired a lot of knowledge of economic models and statistics of East Asian countries. It helped me recall some basic economic principles which will benefit my deeper reading and research in this field. Other than these, I audited Prof. Boyd's qualitative research method course, which is very useful for writing academic papers. The knowledge that I learnt from these courses, for instance, knowledge about migration, domestic policy and economic model would be conducive to my future research.

I have participated in nearly every activity for foreign students that held by ICC, such as bamboo shoot digging, trip for Asakusa temple and boating, baseball game cheerleading, a historical walk to Kamakura and so on. I met many students not only from GSAPS, but also from other institutions, and spent a wonderful time with them. I went to picnics with my zemi and experienced this kind of picnic culture. Joining those activities created unexpected opportunities for me to communicate with Japanese and foreign students. We found both similarities and diversities between us, which, I believe, will finally contribute to mutual understanding and inclusiveness. That is the treasure of cultural communication. Friendship is the wealth that lasts forever.

It is no exaggeration to say that I grew up a lot after I came to Tokyo and studied in Waseda. Language barrier has brought some troubles. For example, we could not communicate with government officers when we went for the procedures, but my friends and I found the solutions finally. After the semester exchange program, I am now able to live in any other places no matter if I am familiar with it or not. All in all, it is quite a memorable experience. I'm grateful for this program and everyone I met.

