

EAUI Program Newsletter

From GSAPS, Waseda University (Vol.2 Feb. 2015)

Basic Academic Information

Academic Calendar:

Fall term: Sep. 24 to Feb. 4, 2016
Fall (first half) term: Sep. 24 to Nov. 21
<http://web.waseda.jp/gsaps/en/academics/calendar/>

Faculty information:

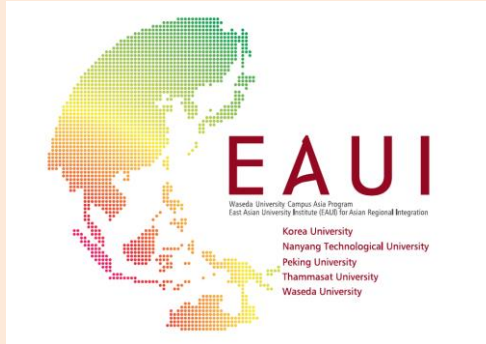
<http://web.waseda.jp/gsaps/en/about/faculty/>

Course List:

<http://web.waseda.jp/gsaps/en/academics/course/>
*The AY 2015 course list will be uploaded in mid-March 2015.

Syllabus Search:

<https://www.wsl.waseda.jp/syllabus/JAA101.php?pLng=en>



Hwang Yu Jeong

(Peking Uni. Master's Degree Program in International Relations)

Even after entering Peking University as a master's student in September of 2013, I didn't expect that I would live in Japan the next year. When I heard about the Campus Asia program during the orientation session, I was fascinated by the possibility of experiencing my neighboring country, Japan. So I immediately applied for the program and I think it is one of the unforgettable fortunes for me to get a chance to come to Waseda. I learned more about Japan and gained many precious things during my stay.

Getting familiar with Japan was the greatest achievement from my days in Tokyo. Korea and Japan are neighbors but they have been quiet uncomfortable and sometimes hostile to each other. By actually living in the heart of Japan I could see how Japanese people think about major issues and got accustomed with Japanese culture and lifestyle. I think this experience would help me shape more balanced and wiser opinion regarding bilateral or regional issues afterwards. Knowing each other would be the first step for understanding and this understanding is another step for reconciliation. I believe that when such good experiences in Japan are accumulated by more and more Korean students it will help facilitate friendlier relationship of the two countries.

Learning from Japan's leading university was also a very constructive opportunity. I graduated from Korean university and went to China for master's degree. By spending a semester in Waseda, I could study in all three major universities in the region. As a student who studies East Asian politics, I think this is a very precious experience and would be one of my strong points when I start working as an East Asian expert. By comparing the three universities and countries I could widen my perspective and deepen my understanding about the region and relations of each other. I appreciated Waseda's well-organized administrative system and enthusiastic faculties.

Interacting with friends with various backgrounds was interesting and helpful. Since Waseda has a very dynamic, unique and diverse international community I could meet a lot of friends who have different perspectives and interests in various fields. We often had discussions about wide variety of issues and this helped me a lot to widen my eyes toward the bigger world.

During the semester, Waseda has provided many field trips to enhance my understandings about Japan. Visiting the National Diet and the Stock Exchange were very impressive for a foreigner like me. When I went to the Life Safety Learning Center I was surprised to see how thoroughly Japanese people are ready to fight with natural disasters. I had known that disaster relief system is well equipped in Japan but by actually experiencing such facility and system I was greatly impressed by them. Through all these moments I could feel more familiar with Japanese society and could build broader knowledge about Japan.

Combining all these new learnings, I am now writing my thesis about the Six-Party Talks, which is a debate table of the major actors in the region to tackle the North Korean nuclear problem. In this table, cooperation between all other five countries beside North Korea is critical but it has shown mismatches and dissonances so far. To make success of the talks and to eventually make the table into the first regional security organization, I believe mutual understanding and goodwill are vital factors. In this regards, when analyzing the previous history of the talks and behaviors of each countries, my time in Waseda greatly helps me write in more balanced and careful manner.

The reason I came to Japan was to know more about my neighboring country. My core academic interest is on the East Asian politics and cooperation and I would like to work for the fields related to them. I only spent a semester in Japan but it was a good opportunity to get accustomed to a country that we have to live beside and to cooperate with each other. There are still a lot of controversies and conflicts going on this region but I wish I can be the one who makes progressive efforts to achieve peaceful coexistence and brisk cooperation in the coming future.

Voices from the past participants

Financial Support/Scholarship Information

Financial Support:

A round-trip air ticket between Tokyo and the airport near the partner school will be provided.

JASSO Scholarship:

There is an opportunity for you to apply for the JASSO scholarship (JPY80,000/month).

Rent Subsidy:

*For those who did not pass the JASSO scholarship screening, a rent subsidy of JPY30,000/month will be paid to the housing agency directly, only if they stay at the accommodation offered by the housing agency designated by the EAUI Program Office.

Action Research Seminar is a course specifically designed for EAUI Program semester exchange students. This course offers you a series of research advice, lectures and discussions every week. In this course, you can also get to visit some of the nationally significant institutions and facilities such as the National Diet Library and the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

Action Research Seminar

Ridronachai Warungkarasami

(Thammasat Uni. Master of Political Science Program in International Relations)

For being an exchange student under the EAUI semester program at Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University, I have gained many experiences in Japan, for both of my academic and life journeys at the same time. It is such an amazing chapter of my life. I do really cannot leave and forget this important time ever.

For this program, Thammasat University, Thailand sent 2 master's degree students, me and Miss Kansinee Somjai. Me and Ms. Somjai flew on the same flight and arrived in Japan on September 20, 2014. I promised to myself that I would spend my time in Japan well as much as I could.

My friend and I arrived at the airport around 4 p.m. and got a bit confused with which way we had to go because most of the signs were written in Japanese. However, we solved this problem and got to the train to the dormitory. In the JR Line train, we could not figure it out which way and station we had to go. Suddenly, one elderly guy came to us and started to speak in Japanese. He pointed to the map and started counting one by one until Takadanobaba Station. We really did not know how lucky we were but all we could say at that time was "Arigatou gozaimasu". Once again, we almost got lost during the way from Takadanobaba Station to the dormitory. But one guy looked at us, came and explained on how to go. We said thank you in Japanese to him many times and realized that Japanese people were really gentle and kind.

I got to my room and noticed that someone already here because I saw the luggage, bag, and stuff. Nevertheless, I was really hungry then I went out for dinner with my Thammasat friend. Then when I came back, I met with a Singaporean guy who was my roommate. His name was Vinay Kumar, from Nanyang Technological University. We started to introduce ourselves, which brought such a long conversation about our life afterwards. I found out that we had some similarities with which we could easily understand each other very fast.

When the first time I came to GSAPS office, I felt like this building was very modern and convenient. Then I met with 2 other exchange students from Peking University. A total of five of us started to have a little of conversation for getting to know each other. But it was just a few minutes because we got to go for the orientation for the EAUI semester exchange program. It was the first time that we met with professors and staff from GSAPS. We had a warm welcome from the Dean of GSAPS and the explanation for the documents from the staff. It was an important moment because that time was the formal starting point for being as an exchange student of Waseda University.

During the EAUI semester program, I took 4 courses, zemi class, and 1 sit-in class. They are 1) Action Research for Asian Regional Integration B (CA-EAUI), a compulsory course for EAUI exchange students, 2) International Relations in Asia-Pacific Region, 3) Appropriate expressions for various situations 1-2 (Japanese course for International Student), 4) Japanese Politics and Diplomacy, and Comparative Regionalism for my sit-in class respectively. However, the most difficult course for the exchange program was the Appropriate expressions for various situations 1-2. At first, I really wanted to have at least one Japanese course to learn about how to have a basic conversation. However, this course required students to read and write Japanese well but I really did not have any background in Japanese. So this course gave me a very hard time studying Japanese because my teacher spoke 90% in Japanese which I truly could not understand. Nevertheless, she was a very kind and generous person. She helped me all the time in the class and gave a lot of advice for improving my Japanese skill.

Since I lived in Japan for about 5 months, I have received many experiences through everyday life. These fantastic practices came from both inside and outside the classrooms. From inside the classrooms, I have learned many lessons consisting of very useful knowledge which I would not gain at Thammasat University. These useful contents could be included in my master's thesis. A lot of books in both GSAPS library and the main library helped me to find out what I could add and edit, by offering many sources. Even I am still thinking about my thesis topic, but all the knowledge which I received here will give me some hints to set my way of working on my paper. Moreover, this comprehension will guide me to which way I could be in the future. Moreover, lessons from outside classrooms gave me a new perspective of Japanese people, tradition, culture, or even the way of living.

These all important sessions gave me the most valuable moments that I really cannot forget because it was one of the biggest opportunities to live in this country which I just dreamed of visiting once in my life. Also as an exchange student, I learned a new perspective from excellent professors and received kind help from the GSAPS staff. This great opportunity will lead me to the bright future for both of my academic and career part definitely.

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).