

To those being admitted in September of the 2020 academic year:

Congratulations, new students, on your admission to this graduate school.

It is truly unfortunate that I am unable to see you in person, but I would like to offer you my sincerest congratulations on behalf of the Graduate School of Political Science.

I think that you are aware that all courses during the spring term of this academic year ended up being conducted via online streaming to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus. There is still no outlook as to when this pandemic will be brought under control, and, as with the spring term, we have no choice but to provide the majority of instruction during the fall term—excluding certain classes with small numbers of enrollees—via online streaming. As unfortunate as this is, I would greatly appreciate your understanding of our being unable to provide a typical learning environment. The faculty of the Graduate School of Political Science will continue to accommodate your needs to best of its ability under the circumstances. If you have any concerns, do not hesitate to consult with us.

There is no doubt that the pandemic that we are now experiencing will go on to alter society considerably. There has been much talk of the time "after corona" or "post-corona." In addition to emerging infectious diseases, climate change is another grave problem that now threatens the way in which we live our lives. These problems cannot be dealt with absent sustainable—and furthermore, cross-border—cooperation. Value that cannot be created through the private actions of individuals is called a "public good," and public health and a stable global environment are truly such public goods. A public good provides value that serves as the foundation and support for each individual's way of life, regardless of that way of life and who is living it. I believe that the coronavirus crisis and the spate of severe natural disasters that have been occurring have provided us with a chance to seriously reflect on how such public value has been neglected.

The Graduate School of Political Science has assembled a curriculum with a strong focus on teaching methodologies and other aspects of foundational education. I am certain that, by following this curriculum, each of you will not only build a strong foundation for your studies but will also be able to understand problems from a broad perspective and to gain the abilities that will permit you to undergo a sustained pursuit for solutions to those problems. Although we will not be able to offer the face-to-face classes we would prefer to have, I would like you to keep yourselves from becoming discouraged for a bit longer and to keep adding to your intellectual capabilities. I am keenly looking forward to you eventually displaying those capabilities and shouldering the societal cooperation that will produce public value in Japan and throughout the international community.

September 21, 2020

Junichi Saito, Dean of the Graduate School of Political Science