

Waseda University Graduate School of Political Science

A Word to Those Who Have Completed Their Master's Programs or Doctoral Studies in Academic Year 2021

I would like to truly congratulate all who have completed their master's programs or have obtained their doctoral degrees. I would also like to offer my heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to the parents, family members, and friends who have supported everyone in their academic pursuits.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to forgo a graduation ceremony again this year. It is truly unfortunate that we will not have the opportunity for everyone to gather in one space to share in our celebrations, but we decided that, under the current circumstances, avoiding the risk of spreading the infection was the responsible course of action to take.

Nevertheless, regardless of whether there is the pomp and circumstance of a graduation ceremony or a degree conferral ceremony, it should go without saying that nothing has changed in terms of the value of everyone's academic accomplishments. Indeed, I think that there is much to be proud of, with all of you impressively managing to obtain your master's or doctoral degrees after overcoming various challenges during the past year of the COVID-19 pandemic serving as proof of your sincere efforts. However, I think that receiving a degree was none of your ultimate goals. Now that you have specialist capabilities and academic knowledge that you gained at the Graduate School of Political Science, a new chapter in your lives has begun in which the new challenge of facing various problems awaits. You have all now truly reached the beginning of this new chapter.

The COVID-19 pandemic itself is a significant challenge for us all, but through it our eyes have been opened anew to the various problems that beset society. I believe that these problems include many that will be even more challenging than responding to the novel coronavirus in the medical field. All of you are about to set foot into these harsh realities of society. However, I would like to boldly suggest that a promising future awaits you. This might sound like an overly optimistic platitude. Certainly, these words seem as though will be taken as stodgy and old-fashioned. However, I am convinced that the abilities that you have all gained from completing your studies will allow you to overcome difficult challenges and create an amazing future.

Filled with great expectations, I wish to cheer on all of you who are spreading your wings and setting forth out from this campus.

True congratulations to you all on this auspicious day.

September 15, 2021

Ikuo Kume

Dean of the Graduate School of Political Science