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TSUKUBA ALUMNI

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CAMPUS LIFE STORIES



TSUKUBA FRONTIER



Professor, Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences

HIGASHINO Atsuko

Navigating Difficult Neighbors

International Relations From the Perspective of the EU

Conflicts between country may seemingly affect only those directly involved. However, many factors between multiple countries, such as historical events and the actions of other nations, can exert a significant impact. The study intends to explore these complex and delicate international relations by interpreting various information from the perspective of the formation of the European Union (EU) and its relations with neighboring countries while gathering insights.

Challenges in the Expansion of the European Union

The European Community was established after World War II to prevent war and promote economic integration among European countries. It evolved into the EU in 1993. Initially comprising six Western European countries, the EU now includes 27 member countries.

After the Cold War, the EU aimed to bridge the east-west divide by promoting integration with Central and Eastern European countries that were previously under Soviet influence. Membership in the EU was a long-cherished desire of the countries behind the *Iron Curtain*. This *eastward enlargement* led to the transformation of Ukraine into a challenging neighbor of the EU that was struggling with corruption, organized crime, and a tug-of-war between Russia and Europe.

The strategy of the EU is to strengthen economic ties and provide support instead of hastily admitting countries with challenges. In the early 2000s, Ukraine and the EU began to build relations. For Russia, however, this was a violation of its *sphere of influence*. Efforts to build relations with Russia were unsuccessful, which culminated in the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022.

Unpredictable International Relations

Ukraine is also Russia's neighbor. With much in common in terms of ethnicity, language, and culture, Russia is said to regard Ukraine as its *brother country*. Many Russians view the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 as a historical failure. Putin believes that Ukraine should cease its western alignment and *return* to Russia's sphere of influence. Although comprehending this viewpoint is difficult for outsiders, it motivates the current actions of Russia.

However, noting that each sovereign nation holds the right to choose its political and societal structures and regional alliances is crucial. European international relations are built on this principle. Many European



Seminar (International Relations in Europe: Higashino), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Tsukuba

We cover the history and political history; security and defense; European historical awareness and immigration issues of European international relations with a focus on European war and peace issues. In undergraduate and graduate seminars, we spend the first half of the academic year reading, summarizing, and discussing numerous books. The second half focuses on guiding students in writing their graduation and master's theses. Thus, we help students identify and articulate their most pressing thoughts.



nations reject the concept of a *sphere of influence* in the 21st century. However, this view is not relatively correct. Reaching a common understanding of the ideal world order is challenging.

Importance of Information Literacy and Knowledge Sharing

Research in these fields heavily relies on information, particularly Open Source Intelligence, which analyzes publicly available information to derive useful insights. Accurately deciphering information literacy, as well as leveraging knowledge from regional, security, and negotiation studies, among others, is crucial. Experts from various fields must collaborate and share their knowledge.

Ending wars is complex and presents no easy solutions. What ceasefire conditions would be respected, and how can future invasions be prevented? Research cannot immediately halt the bloodshed, but it can help maintain society during wartime and determine the role of the international community. The wide-ranging analysis and recommendations presented in this paper will inform policies across countries.

Coping with the Rapidly Changing International Landscape

My original research focused on European international relations, particularly the EU,

with Russia and Ukraine as the key subjects as important EU neighbors. However, the Russian invasion against Ukraine in 2022 shifted my focus to the examination of the war, which prompted a significant change in my research framework and issues.

The rapidly evolving international landscape renders an extensive study challenging but intriguing. The impact of Russia's aggression on European international relations and its implications for relations with China, India, and other countries are compelling topics.

PROFILE

Professor of Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences and Chair of the Master's Program in International Public Policy at the University of Tsukuba. BA in Law (Keio University), MA in Law (Keio University), and PhD in Politics and International Relations (University of Birmingham, United Kingdom). She has served as an Expert Researcher at the Permanent Mission of Japan to the OECD and Associate Professor at the Faculty of International Studies in Hiroshima City University prior to assuming her current position. Her research interests include international relations and European international politics. Her main areas of interest are EU enlargement, external relations, and international integration theory. She is currently active in disseminating information on Russia's invasion of Ukraine. She is the author of the book *The Ukrainian War and Europe* (co-author, UP Plus, 2023).



TSUKUBA FRONTIER



Professor, Institute of Life and Environmental Sciences

ISODA Hiroko

A Bioassay Approach to Food Resource Functionality

Exploring the Power of Natural Products

Numerous foods and herbs traditionally consumed are recognized for their health benefits and medicinal properties. Bioassays play a crucial role in scientifically substantiating these benefits, offering a method to evaluate the functions of compounds in these foods using biological materials. This methodology is employed to reveal the culinary secrets of the Mediterranean and North African regions.

Food Resource Functionality

Epidemiological studies indicate that individuals adhering to a Mediterranean diet tend to have longer lifespans and are less prone to conditions such as atherosclerosis or Alzheimer's disease. This can be linked to the medicinal properties of herbs and aromatics, like olives and rosemary, integral to the Mediterranean diet. The Mediterranean region boasts a rich tradition of utilizing natural flora and fauna for medicinal purposes. These traditional medicines bear similarities to Chinese herbal medicines in Japan but are more casually incorporated into daily life, rather than being strictly medicinal. This has ignited interest in the power of unique food resources that have been inherited through generations in this region.

To scientifically decipher the empirical wisdom nurtured by local communities, molecular-level analysis is indispensable. Bioassays serve as methods to scrutinize the compounds in foodstuffs and assess their functions, including safety, utilizing various cell types and disease-state mouse models.

Employing Over 40 Different Bioassays

The laboratory utilizes over 40 diverse bioassays. Leveraging these evaluation systems, we probe the functions of natural compounds present in food resources and traditional medicines. For instance, we have unearthed that coffee components exhibit antiaging effects (such as cognitive function enhancement), and olive components possess antidepressant effects. These functions are advantageous for preserving everyday health rather than curing serious diseases like cancer, rendering them broadly applicable. This has attracted attention from medical field researchers and can pave the way for clinical research involving human subjects. The capability to conduct these studies seamlessly is a distinctive advantage of the University of Tsukuba.

Naturally, not all natural compounds



Isoda Laboratory, Institute of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Tsukuba

The laboratory is involved in the discovery of new bioactive compounds and the clarification of their mechanisms, employing over 40 bioassays rooted in animal cell engineering for the assessment of food resource functionality and environmental safety. Research themes encompass functional analysis and optimal utilization of food resources, transformation of food components into seeds for functional food and cosmetics, functional distribution of arid land vegetation and database construction, and enhancement of food and environmental safety evaluation methods. Pertaining to arid land vegetation, rigorous field surveys and comprehensive data collection are being executed.



are beneficial. However, in the realm of medicine, it is not rare for new drugs to be developed based on natural compounds, and herbal medicines are occasionally employed to mitigate side effects. Accurately analyzing the function of natural compounds in food resources is not only pivotal for drug discovery but also for unlocking the potential of food ingredients.

Mediterranean Region Research: A Fusion of Humanities and Sciences

These studies also form a pivotal research theme of the University of Tsukuba's Alliance for Research on the Mediterranean and North Africa. The Alliance undertakes research on the resources and culture of the Mediterranean region in partnership with local research institutions, employing an integrated humanities-science approach. Beyond food resources, the Alliance explores other areas such as the utilization of high-purity silica from Sahara Desert sand for solar power generation, water resource management, and the establishment of international relations as a novel economic zone.

In the investigation of traditional medicinal properties of remedies, field research is vital. Mere communication with local people is not adequate; it is essential to amass a broad spectrum of information, encompassing aspects of language and culture. The Alliance comprises researchers specializing in the culture and religion of the Mediterranean region, facilitating a profound understanding of the region through detailed local language interviews about medicinal

herb-burning rituals, as well as scientific information about the medicinal properties of the herbs.

Social Implementation of Past Research Results

In the realm of academic research, we have internationally published over 500 papers on various evaluation systems evidence, signifying an unrivaled strength. To translate these findings into societal applications, we have initiated a venture company that strategizes drug discovery and functional food development. Despite the challenges in management, we are committed to creating a new business model.

Understanding the roles of herbs and spices beyond their taste and aroma makes it crucial to leverage these ingredients and their components more effectively. If we can uphold good health and stave off illness and aging through daily meals, it's precisely what we all need. This approach will significantly enhance the quality of life (QOL) in an aging society.

PROFILE

A professor at the University of Tsukuba's Institute of Life and Environmental Sciences, she also serves as the Director of the Alliance for Research on the Mediterranean and North Africa. She holds director positions at the R&D Center for Tailor-Made QOL and the Food and Medicinal Resource Engineering Open Innovation Laboratory (FoodMed-OIL) at AIST and the University of Tsukuba. Additionally, she is an auditor at the International Agricultural Research Center and has been a member of the International Strategy Committee of the Science and Technology Council, MEXT. Since 2004, her work at the Alliance has involved exploring the functional ingredients of Mediterranean food and medicinal resources, such as olives and aromatic medicinal plants, and analyzing their mechanisms. Her specialization lies in food functionality and natural product drug discovery.



TSUKUBA FRONTIER

Professor, Institute of Health and Sport Sciences

SAITO Mayumi

Welcome to the World of Adapted Sport

Attending to the needs of each individual

Parasports continue to attract increasing attention. However, the Paralympic Games do not include any events for people with hearing impairments. Some athletes with hearing impairments have competed in the Olympics and have won medals. In other words, the support needed for people with disabilities varies from person to person. The term “adapted” refers to the method of responding flexibly to everyone’s needs.

Not Simply “Para” Sports for People with Disabilities

At first glance, people with hearing impairments often do not appear to have a disability. Moreover, compared to people with other types of disabilities, the need for support is less obvious for people with hearing impairments. Meanwhile, people with hearing impairments do not require special equipment in the world of sports, and it is possible for them to compete alongside non-disabled people. However, they are often excluded from competing in the same competitions simply because they are deaf.

In many sports, sounds and calls are used to give signals and measure timing. Moreover, even if the performance of someone with a hearing impairment is identical to that of a hearing person during a competition, this point can become a chasm in competing together. However, if they were able to receive guidance that takes these things into consideration on a regular basis, they could win medals at the Olympics. Bridging this chasm requires approaches from the domains of both education and research.

Inclusive and Adaptive

The concept of the “inclusive society”—which refers to a society where people with and without disabilities participate in society together—is becoming increasingly widespread. However, it is essential to remember that this does not mean everyone is thrown together indiscriminately; rather, this type of society requires that considerations be made according to the purpose. This is the methodology of “adaptivity.” For example, for people with hearing impairments, giving a signal before one starts speaking, such as saying, “I’m going to start talking now,” can make communication and information sharing much more accessible. These types of innovations are beneficial for everyone.

Additionally, even though they are all hearing impaired, the level of their hearing impairment varies. Although some of them use hearing aids, in competitions for people who are hard of hearing, it is ensured that



Adaptive Physical Education and Activity Lab, Institute of Health and Sport Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Japan

Our laboratory has conducted research and implemented practical strategies while following the philosophy that “all of the people with special needs can enjoy sports, even if they have a disability, via the methodology that we have used to adapt physical activities and sports for them.” The program aims to foster talented individuals who can practice adapted sports through learning about the attractiveness and adaptability of sports; gaining basic knowledge about sports, education, and the welfare of people with disabilities; and through actual interaction and experience.



each person has the same level of hearing impairment by purposefully obstructing all hearing ability. This means that athletes who have been relying on sound during their training must make different considerations. This idea of providing support by making changes and adjustments to meet the needs of the individual is called “adapted concept.”

Learning Through Practice

This approach only works when accompanied by practice. To provide a place for this practice, we hold classes where students provide sports instruction to people with hearing impairments. When you actually encounter people with hearing impairments, you may find that many things don’t work, even if you provide support by following the methods you learned in the classroom. For athletes, it is easy to think that it is fine if they are doing something even if they don’t understand the detailed instructions; however, this will not improve their athletic ability. It is essential to provide them with feedback each time. Indeed, by receiving this kind of guidance, even if during a short practice session, they will be able to improve their athletic ability.

For non-disabled people, this kind of feedback might be as simple as saying, “Nice!” However, these small efforts make up adaptive sports, and accumulating these experiences is essential for both the student providing guidance and the athlete.

Uncovering Difficulties Specific to Hearing Impairment

The term “para-sports” is often understood as a generic term for sports for people with disabilities. However, the Paralympics do

not have a sport for the hearing impaired (deaf sports). There is a separate international event called the Deaflympics, which actually has a longer history than the Paralympics. It can be said that the Deaflympics has established its own culture as an event *by* the hearing impaired and *for* the hearing impaired; however, this is also a weak point as a sport for the impaired.

In this context, I feel that sports for the hearing impaired have been left behind. I became interested in research in this area when I realized that there are many issues that should be addressed but have not been. Sports without sound may make it difficult for viewers to feel a sense of speed and realism. However, just like for other para-sports, if you know how to enjoy them, they will look completely different.

In 2025, the Deaflympics will be held in Tokyo. As the first Deaflympics to be held in Japan and the 100th anniversary of the first Deaflympics, we are excited to seize this opportunity to create a new legacy in the world of deaf and adapted sports.

PROFILE

Dr. SAITO is a professor at the Institute of Health and Sport Sciences and associate dean of the School of Physical Education, Health and Sport Sciences at University of Tsukuba. She graduated from the School of Physical Education, Health and Sport Sciences at University of Tsukuba and completed a master’s degree in physical education research at University of Tsukuba. She also worked as an assistant professor at the Tsukuba College of Technology and served as an associate professor at University of Tsukuba before assuming her current position. She specializes in adapted physical education and sports science and is involved in education and research on improving the competitive performance of deaf athletes and para-athletes. She also researches the adapted perspectives necessary for instructors in charge of courses in physical education. Finally, she specializes in swimming (water polo) and organizes swimming instruction for people with disabilities, as well as *taiso kyoshitsu* (gymnastics class) and *tsukurinpic*.



TSUKUBA FRONTIER



Professor, Institute of Medicine
Director, Research and Development Center for Health Services

TAMIYA Nanako

Exploring the Quality of Health Services Using Data Analysis

Health Services Research Bridging Medical Care and Daily Life

When considering the concept of *medical care*, we typically envision treatments received in hospitals. However, health-related services cover a much broader spectrum, including disease prevention, post-treatment support, and nursing care. These services are interconnected in daily life; as a social system, however, they are frequently fragmented and lack a seamless continuum of care. Health services research aims to identify and address these issues by analyzing various data to ultimately improve the quality of these services.

Connecting Medical Care to Daily Life

After returning home from hospital treatment, ensuring that patients continue to receive proper care can be challenging for doctors. Similarly, individuals diagnosed with health issues during checkups may not always receive the necessary follow-up treatment at home. Facilities and professionals responsible for checkup, treatment, rehabilitation, and nursing care typically operate independently, which leads to insufficient information sharing. Advanced treatments and checkups cannot be truly effective if they are expensive and do not lead to sustained health and support.

While the importance of coordination among healthcare services is widely recognized, concrete solutions require objective and quantitative identification of actual issues. Health services research intends to analyze healthcare-related data to enhance the quality of services based on findings.

Identifying Areas for Institutional Improvement Through Data Analysis

With the growing prominence of data science, expertise in statistics and data analysis is increasingly becoming crucial in medical fields. This knowledge aids in understanding treatment outcomes and tracking the spread of infectious diseases. In addition, hospitals and university medical schools need specialists who are capable of conducting diverse data analyses ranging from individual patient conditions to population-wide epidemiological studies.

Among the various types of medical data, receipts (medical fee statements) and government statistics, such as the National Survey of Basic Living Standards, are particularly valuable. Although processing these data for analyses can be challenging, access has significantly improved. The results are not only published in academic papers but also inform proposals for enhancing national medical services, which leads to tangible changes, including reimbursement for particular medical services. We also



Department of Health Services Research, Institute of Medicine, University of Tsukuba

The abovementioned department was established in 2017 at University of Tsukuba as the first laboratory in Japan related to the field of health services research. It aims to comprehensively and scientifically evaluate and analyze the quality of various services in healthcare (e.g., long-term care, healthcare, and welfare). It also intends to improve the quality of services and help realize healthcare in harmony with people's lives using interdisciplinary research results based on empirical data. It also conducts research that addresses big data at the national scale and aims to support research using various data and focus on the promotion of health services research.



analyze data on regional healthcare plans commissioned by local governments.

Bringing Health Services Research to Japan

My journey with health services research began at the Harvard School of Public Health in the United States. As a clinician, I became concerned about the lack of follow-up information on my patients, which prompted me to pursue this field of study. At the time, health services research was not established in Japan, thus I went to the United States, where it was a recognized academic discipline. Courses included statistics and data analysis, and results were applied to real-world policies, which highlights the importance of this research.

Upon returning to Japan, I initially faced challenges in conducting research, which was expected. However, recent advancements in public data utilization and big data analysis have provided a favorable environment for this field of research.

Better Medical Services

In this evolving landscape, health services research has increasingly attracted attention in Japan. Our laboratory attracts diverse groups of healthcare professionals and students, including doctors, nurses, and physical therapists, who are driven by their research interests. Our research themes are varied and cover topics such as post-operative patient outcomes, medication use among the elderly, ambulance-transported patient care, collaboration between university hospitals and local healthcare providers, and needs for home medical care. Graduates from our laboratory are currently contributing to



Making a difference through high-quality HSR is the motto of our research.

hospitals and universities nationwide, and we are receiving positive feedback regarding our efforts toward human resource development.

Additionally, the University of Tsukuba established the Health Service Development Research Center in 2017, which aims to foster collaboration with local governments and companies to expand regional medical care and long-term care services. We also have an on-site facility on campus that provides authorized researchers with microdata (questionnaire information) extracted from official statistics. As pioneers in health services research, we are committed to advancing better health services.

PROFILE

Professor TAMIYA is a Professor at the Institute of Medicine, University of Tsukuba. Graduated from the University of Tsukuba Medical School (1986). Doctor of Medicine Graduate School of Medicine, University of Tokyo (1990). Master of Science, Harvard University School of Public Health (1994). Director, Minami Yamato Geriatric Health Care (1999). Lecturer, Department of Public Health, Teikyo University School of Medicine (2000). Professor, Department of Health Services Research, University of Tsukuba (2003). Director, Health Services Development Research Center, University of Tsukuba (2017). She also served as board member of the Japan Society of Public Health (2017-present) and President of the 82nd Annual Meeting of the Japan Society of Public Health in 2023 at Tsukuba.

TSUKUBA ALUMNI

CEO, Earth Science Visualization
Technology Laboratory
SHIBAHARA Akihiko

Advantages of Studying at the University of Tsukuba in My Career and Life

During my student years, I engaged in fossil research, a pursuit that continued at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST). I am currently developing and marketing a system that vividly presents fossils and excavation site data by projecting this information onto a detailed 3D map. Considering that the technology was obtained during a research at the University of Tsukuba, it was approved as a venture by the University, in addition to AIST.

Moreover, I am spearheading a groundbreaking program that enables users to virtually experience fossil excavations in the metaverse. The closure of museums and similar facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the unique value of this program, offering an experience that surpasses traditional museum offerings. With appropriate data, we can even visualize extraterrestrial landscapes.

The University of Tsukuba's flexible curriculum allowed me to take classes across various disciplines, not limited to my major. This enabled me to attend mechanical engineering classes, a field I have always been passionate about, alongside my earth science studies. Similarly, students from information processing would often attend practical fossil science courses. This diverse academic background now empowers me to seamlessly integrate fossils with technology.

My Fondest Memories as a Student

One of the highlights of my student life was



Revolutionizing Visualization: A Novel Fusion of Fossils and Technology

participating in a fieldwork class known as the “Grand Tour.” This journey took us from Shimane Prefecture to Fukui Prefecture, traversing aquatic and terrestrial routes. We observed renowned geological formations, gaining a profound appreciation for the vast scales of time and space that earth science explores, far exceeding those encountered in daily life. My adventurous spirit flourished during my graduate studies when I conducted research in the Arctic Ocean, using the University as my base camp.

I also fondly recall participating in a Science Fiction Association. This group engaged in more than just reading together; we partook in unique activities, such as an impromptu visit to the Great Buddha of Ushiku, *Ushiku Daibutsu*. There, we compared the Daibutsu's size with that of giant robots in sci-fi, providing a novel perspective on scale.

Another cherished memory is the creation of special effects films in my apartment. Initially using simple finger puppets, I gradually progressed to crafting various miniature figures using machine tools. These

creative endeavors laid the foundation for my current professional pursuits.

Message to Students of the University of Tsukuba

One of the most appealing aspects of the University of Tsukuba is its provision for students to explore a wide range of information across various faculties. Such opportunities are rare and invaluable. We warmly invite those considering applying to the University to join us and immerse yourselves in this enriching experience.

PROFILE SHIBAHARA Akihiko

Born in Ehime Prefecture, Japan
Completed Doctoral Program in Biological Sciences in 2007
from the Graduate School of Life and Environmental Sciences
CEO, Earth Science Visualization Technology Laboratory



TSUKUBA ALUMNI

CEO and President, Krispy Kreme
Doughnut Japan
WAKATSUKI Takako

Advantages of Studying at the University of Tsukuba in My Career and Life

As the president of Krispy Kreme Doughnut Japan, I am involved in various decision-making processes, from management reform to organizational and personnel issues, product development, and business planning. When I was a university student, I majored in education and lifelong learning. I somehow ended up getting a teaching license after doing a teaching practicum at my alma mater. However, to be honest, I never intended to become a school teacher. The knowledge I have about management, which is my current area of expertise, is something I acquired after I began work.

Applying what I had learned at university to the real world was a challenge. However, the classes I took were interesting and they expanded my knowledge so that I could broaden my perspectives and make connections. For example, classes on cuneiform and world history, which were unrelated to my major, sparked my interest in researching various topics. This led me to choose world history as the subject area of my teaching practice, even though world history was not my major.

Reflecting on my time at the University of Tsukuba, I can say it was a great experience. The University excels at nurturing individuals who then have diverse paths to choose from.

My Fondest Memories as a Student

I was a member of the executive committee for the dormitory festival “YADOKARI-SAI”. In my second year, I was responsible



Experience to Expand Your Knowledge

for a booth, and I worked on streamlining the purchasing and completely efficiently the tasks that had been passed to me from my seniors. Even then, I was self-motivated and liked working on my own.

At that time, the Tsukuba Express (TX) train line had not yet been built, so most students, including myself, owned cars. We often went on long trips. I remember one time attempting to park my car in the faculty lot just before a deadline for an assignment, and then being scolded by the faculty to whom the lot was assigned for about half an hour.

Looking back, I think it would have been beneficial to have had more opportunities to interact with students from other regions, such as Tokyo. At present, connecting with people online is easy, but during my time at the University, everything was limited to Tsukuba. That kind of simple lifestyle was interesting in its own way.

Message to Students of the University of Tsukuba

The reason I chose the University of Tsukuba was because it felt different from other universities. In its unique environment, you will have the opportunity to learn and experience things that cannot be found elsewhere. These experiences will be invaluable when you enter the workforce. I hope when you look back on your time at University of Tsukuba, you will have fond memories of the many experiences you had here.

PROFILE WAKATSUKI Takako

Born in Niigata Prefecture, Japan
Graduated in 1992 from the College of Human Sciences,
Second Cluster of Colleges, CEO and President, Krispy
Kreme Doughnut Japan



TSUKUBA ALUMNI

Manga artist

SHINANOGAWA Hideo

Advantages of Studying at the University of Tsukuba in My Career and Life

I joined the University of Tsukuba to study graphic design. As I learned more, I realized that design is a powerful communication tool. I also realized the joy of communicating with readers through cartoon media. I have been drawing manga since I was a child. However, I started drawing manga earnestly in my third year of the university, with the intention of finding a job. In 2015, I published “Yama to Shokuyoku to Watashi” (Mountains, Appetite, and Me), which is still being serialized.

In this work, the main character, a young woman, climbs mountains alone and cooks and eats by herself. This work is based on my own experiences. I started mountain climbing as a hobby when I was a student, and I also learned how to cook during the same time. I have created many other characters based on my friends from that time. I am confident that the experiences I had back then have been utilized in my current work.

My Fondest Memories as a Student

In my first year, I was given a simple assignment: make a collage from magazine cuttings. As a determined 19 year old, I knew I could make my work stand out. Although the assignment required submissions to be in B4 size, I made the bold decision to submit my work in B1 size. In fact, I was the only one who did this. At first, the teacher seemed dissatisfied, but eventually he graded me an A. He evaluated it from an artistic perspective, regarding the requirement for



My Love of Mountain Climbing, Food, and Manga, All Started at the University of Tsukuba

a larger size. Hence, I realized this was the kind of university that recognized talent. I was proud that I had created something with impact, and I would have been fairly depressed if I had received a low evaluation.

The same concept holds true in the world of manga too. Even if there are too many pages or the manga does not exactly fit the standard, an interesting concept will always win out. In retrospect, I still consider the abovementioned experience of having my creativity evaluated as one of my best memories.

Message to the Students of the University of Tsukuba

I really enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of University of Tsukuba. I did get into some troubles, but I was forgiven, which I'm grateful for. The university's unique environment can make you feel lonely but also envelop you. This university is the

perfect place for those seeking respite from the urban bustle and an opportunity to fully immerse themselves in a world of their own creation, where they can deepen their understanding of a subject. I'm certain that everyone will make the most of what the University of Tsukuba has to offer.

PROFILE SHINANOGAWA Hideo

Born in Niigata Prefecture, Japan
Graduated in 2003 from the School of Art and Design
Manga artist



TSUKUBA ALUMNI

Japan women's national
goalball team /
Corporate Planning Department,
SEKISHO CORPORATION

TAKAHASHI Rieko

Advantages of Studying at the University of Tsukuba in My Career and Life

I joined my current company to work while prioritizing my sports. As a person with a disability, I promote diversity and inclusion within and outside the company. I also present lectures and workshops on spreading awareness of goalball and understanding disabilities.

I went to the University of Tsukuba because I wanted to learn about disabilities from different perspectives and become a teacher at a special needs school. I took classes in other faculties, which expanded my perspective. The university provided the necessary support for my classes, and the campus was fully accessible. Thus, I spent my time in this institution without issues.

I also learned how to manage my schedule and change my mindset while balancing my studies and athletic career. This experience helped me realize that I want to create an environment in which I can balance work and athletic career after entering the workforce. I want to continue to spread the message that many opportunities await people with and without disabilities.

My Fondest Memories as a Student

I remember circumstances such as when I overslept, was late for class, and was embarrassed about being late or when I rode a train, dozed off, dreamed about goalball, and suddenly hit the person next to me with my arm. I should not have made the excuse that training was tough, but I have many memories similar to those I mentioned.

During my six years as a student, I



More Goalball for Everyone!

became familiar with puddles on campus and places where plants overhang walkways. I was able to avoid them properly, which is a strange skill. Moreover, the library and facilities department staff helped me enormously through the digitization of books and improvement of facilities in dormitories.

I also wanted to enhance the promotion of goalball at the university. Even if I was not able to establish a club, I intended to secure its inclusion as an event in Sports Day (an event on campus where students and faculty enjoy sports together). I have even suggested its inclusion in physical education classes. However, people continue to hold the impression that goalball is dangerous. Nevertheless, getting even a few students engaged in goalball would have been an achievement for me.

Message to Students of the University of Tsukuba

In my 6 years at the University of Tsukuba, I have encountered several new experiences. In addition to goalball, the academic environment fostered learning in various

fields, and I was able to establish connections with other students through interaction with students from other faculties.

The University of Tsukuba is a place where many endeavors can be pursued, so I hope you will take on many challenges.

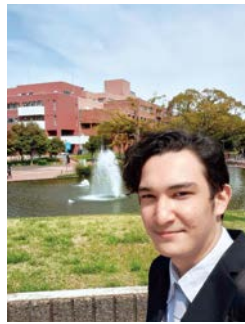
PROFILE TAKAHASHI Rieko

Born in Hiroshima Prefecture
Completed Master's Program in Disability Sciences in 2022
Japan women's national goalball team/Corporate Planning
Department, SEKISHO CORPORATION



Caue Singo Aramaki

College of Mathematics, School of Science and Engineering
From Brazil



1 Tsukuba is a place that emanates the nature and the scientific life. Not only is it a wonderful city to live in and study, but also a deeply internationalized city, with many foreigners from a wide variety of countries.

2 As a student at the University of Tsukuba, my goal is to learn from a variety of subjects and cultures in hopes of growing as a person to be the kind of individual that strives in making a difference.

Insyirah binti Mohd Shukri

College of Japanese Language and Culture, School of Humanities and Culture
From Malaysia



Travelling Japan to experience the nature.

known for encouraging their students to go for fieldworks, be it inside or outside of Japan.

2 Within the four years I am studying here, I want to participate in the activities held to deepen my understanding and quench my thirst for knowledge regarding Japan's culture. I hope to make good connections and gain experience in activities I rarely get to do before coming here, such as interpreting, volunteering and going on field works. The classes here are really unique, especially with enthusiastic professors who are experts in their field. I would like to make a thesis that I'm proud of by then end of the four years of studying. Overall, I strive to be a bridge between my country and Japan, especially since a new campus is going to open during this year's fall semester.

1 Tsukuba has just the right amount of nature and city and being just an hour away from Tokyo is very convenient! There are many places to eat, and I'm glad that there are halal options on campus and nearby the university as well. It is generally safe to ride your bicycle anywhere too. As for Tsukuba University, there's a big campus to explore, you can meet many friendly people, join various different clubs and participate in activities that revolve around culture exchange as well. Other than studying your major, I love how the university encourages you to broaden your horizon and so we are given the chance to study subjects from many other schools of thought freely. Tsukuba University is also

Guangqi An

Doctoral Program in Bioindustrial Sciences, Degree Programs in Life and Earth Sciences,
Graduate School of Science and Technology
From China



and studying here a delightful experience, as I can explore and enjoy different cultures through their cuisine.

2 As a doctoral student at the University of Tsukuba, my primary goal is to conduct meaningful research in my field of study. In addition to academic achievements, I hope to enrich my life by immersing myself in Japanese culture. I aim to learn more about Japan's traditions, customs, and everyday practices. Moreover, I would like to communicate with a diverse group of people, fostering meaningful connections and expanding my knowledge through these interactions. By balancing my academic life with cultural exploration and social engagement, I hope to have a well-rounded and fulfilling experience during my time at the University of Tsukuba.

1 One of the things I enjoy most about Tsukuba is the incredible variety of food available here. The city offers authentic culinary experiences from countries around the world. Whether I'm craving traditional Japanese sushi, Chinese food, spicy Korean cuisine, or flavorful Southeast Asian meals, I can find it all in Tsukuba. The diverse food options make living

Nghi Nguyen Bao

Degree Programs in Comprehensive Human Sciences
From Vietnam



cultures and perspectives. One of the highlights of living in Tsukuba is the delicious food. I particularly love eating udon and ramen here; the flavors are exceptional and truly satisfying. Overall, Tsukuba provides an ideal environment for both academic and personal growth, combining the best of peaceful living and dynamic city life.

2 As a student at the University of Tsukuba, I aim to significantly enhance my research abilities, critical thinking in research, and problem-solving skills. With clear guidance from professors and support from everyone in the lab, I have improved my research capabilities, enabling me to work independently and achieve academic success. Strengthening my skills in publishing and presenting research is a priority, as it will be crucial for my future career as a researcher. Beyond academics, I am excited to connect with new friends and immerse myself in the rich culture, delicious food, and stunning landscapes of Japan. By balancing rigorous academic pursuits with vibrant cultural experiences, I hope to grow both professionally and personally and gain a memorable and enriching experience in Japan.

1 What I enjoy about Tsukuba, especially the University of Tsukuba, is its peaceful and friendly atmosphere. As a renowned science city, it offers a perfect blend of intellectual stimulation and serene living. Its close proximity to Tokyo allows easy access to the vibrant capital, making it convenient for both study and leisure. The University of Tsukuba fosters a diverse and inclusive community, which makes it easy to make international friends. This multicultural environment enriches the overall experience, providing opportunities to learn from different

Tao Leng

Doctoral Program in Art, Degree Programs in Comprehensive Human Sciences
From China



fields. One thing I particularly enjoy about university life is visiting the university library. Tsukuba University boasts numerous libraries such as the Central Library, the Art and Physical Education Library, and the Library on Library and Information Science. Each of these libraries offers extensive collections and well-equipped study spaces, perfect for academic pursuits.

2 As a student at the University of Tsukuba, I am diligently working towards obtaining a doctoral degree. Additionally, being an international student, I encounter many differences in language, etiquette, and thought processes. However, the professors provide clear guidance on what is correct and what is not, and also earnestly listen to my concerns. I have been able to grow not only in my research progress but also in various aspects of life. While a student's main duty is to study, I believe that the knowledge and connections gained from human relationships are also essential in life. I intend to cherish the knowledge and connections nurtured at the University of Tsukuba as I strive toward my dream of becoming a university educator.

1 Tsukuba City is a delightful place for taking walks due to its abundant natural beauty and serene environment. In addition to its natural attractions, I also appreciate its convenient accessibility. With its diverse student community, Tsukuba University offers a fascinating opportunity to interact with scholars and students from various

Helio Nonose

Degree Programs in Systems and Information Engineering, Graduate School of Science and Technology, Doctoral Program in Empowerment Informatics
From Brazil



1 The city of Tsukuba is very calm and safe to live in. Due to its geographical location, it is not difficult to access government offices (immigration, embassy, etc.) and it is easy to connect to leisure travel.

2 Besides the rich technical knowledge and cultural exchange, the University of Tsukuba also stands for me as the front door for Japanese society. This first-hand experience is something I want to take part of with my fullest.

2 What do you want to accomplish as a student of the University of Tsukuba during your study period? (Academics, extracurricular activities, social contribution, etc.)

CAMPUS LIFE STORIES

Ping Huan Wang

College of Information Science
From Taiwan



for everyone. Very peaceful and peaceful. Not only can you stay away from the hustle and bustle of the city and focus on your own life, but you can also simply go to Tokyo when you want to have fun in the city. In addition, I like the people in Tsukuba very much. Everyone is very comfortable to get along with. You just have to be yourself and don't feel any pressure.

2 I am currently studying information science, which is quite challenging for me. My primary ambition during my college years is to specialize deeply in intelligence knowledge. I aim to learn each programming language well and hope to write my own programs and achieve some accomplishments in the future. Moreover, my early immersion into part-time work from my second year onwards has provided me with invaluable lessons in workplace dynamics, including the nuances of using honorifics and how to get along with colleagues. I firmly believe the knowledge I have gained will be beneficial in finding a job and succeeding in the workplace in the future.

1 I have been here for almost a year and a half. Tsukuba seamlessly combines cutting-edge scientific innovation with the tranquility and beauty of nature. Whether you're hiking the picturesque trails of Mount Tsukuba, exploring the diverse ecosystems at the Tsukuba Botanical Garden, or enjoying a serene day at Doho Park, the city's natural attractions offer a perfect counterbalance to its technological advancements. This unique blend makes Tsukuba an exceptional place to live, study, and visit, providing a rich, multifaceted experience

Sachi Jochi

Bachelor's Program in Global Issues
From Japan/India



fortunate to participate in several experiences, including a marine sports camp at Shimoda, an overseas training program to Malaysia and Thailand under the Student Council and a half-year exchange in Australia. The support from professors and staff members has been instrumental. They are approachable and provide invaluable guidance on academic matters and future prospects. Moreover, the university's expansive campus offers a comprehensive university experience, complemented by delicious and affordable bakery treats! The countryside lifestyle in Tsukuba has grown on me, I prefer this kind of a living to the bustling city. With relaxed days filled with outdoor activities such as bike rides to Kasumigaura, hiking Mt. Tsukuba and walking through beautiful parks, Tsukuba is my second home.

2 Utilizing my background as half-Japanese and half-Indian, I hope to promote international understanding and act as a bridge between Japan and other countries. I believe in giving back to society and plan to maximize the university's domestic and international opportunities to broaden my global perspective and improve my skills that for societal contribution. Overall, I want to use my academic knowledge and diverse experiences to prepare for a successful future, make meaningful contributions locally and globally and support the university's internationalization efforts. With students and professionals from numerous countries studying at the University of Tsukuba, it's fantastic to see such diversity on campus! I hope to meet people from all walks of life, build a strong professional network and gain valuable insights from them.

1 One of the best traits of the University of Tsukuba is the wide number of opportunities they offer students from academic to cultural experiences. Coming from a high school in my home country where such opportunities were limited, I actively sought out every chance to participate in events and apply for programs. I have been

Srinithi Ashok Krishnaswamy

Doctoral Program in Materials Science and Engineering
From India



1 Tsukuba is a peaceful city, and the university campus is beautiful and refreshing, with an international environment. I was able to learn a lot about different cultures in addition to Japanese. The courses offered at the university are comprehensive and with interactive classes. Tsukuba is a nice place and if you get yourself a bicycle you can explore it to the fullest. Coming from the tropical region, I found Japan exciting. I enjoyed the different seasons, and spring (Sakura) is my

favorite, as it is for many. Winter in Tsukuba is mild, with snow appearing only once or twice a year. The city also hosts many food and beer festivals at the Tsukuba Center, which are great opportunities to enjoy with friends and make new ones.

As someone who just loves good food, I was delighted by the variety of delicious ramen in Tsukuba. I've noticed that some people refer to Tsukuba as 'Tsukuba Ramen City' in addition to its well-known title, 'Tsukuba Science City'. All in all, Tsukuba is a pleasant place to live, and I highly recommend students to pursue a degree here.

2 I am currently in the final year of my PhD in Materials Science and Engineering. When I joined the School, my aim was to make the most out of my courses and upskill myself for independent materials research, which I believe I have achieved. Engaging with the lecturers and researchers allowed me to understand several topics within materials science and gain a broader perspective. Additionally, I wanted to expand my professional network, which I was able to do by attending and contributing to technical conferences. My network, including the members of my research group, has been invaluable in shaping my career path.

This period of my life was also significant for making multicultural friends and learning about different countries and cultures—an experience that I will always cherish. My time in Tsukuba will remain a beautiful memory.

Felix Coomber

TISS (The International Social Studies)
From UK



1 I feel that of Tsukuba and City is very welcoming of foreign people/students. University of Tsukuba has many events and activities that all students can attend, making myself as a foreign student feel welcomed and I enjoy having so many opportunities. I am a gymnast and have been practicing for about 15 years (13 before coming to Japan), and I was allowed to join the gymnastics team so I'm glad I'm able to continue my sporting career. I really like the easy access to Tokyo using the Tsukuba Express. I really enjoy being able to easily visit Tokyo and get access to other

places from there.

2 During my time here at University of Tsukuba I want to be able to broaden my knowledge in the subject of social studies and cherish the opportunity to be able to study from other courses that are not in my field of studies as a social science student. Because I'm from the UK it's difficult to come to Japan for a short trip as its expensive, so I want to be able to fully enjoy the experience of living in Japan and the opportunity to be able to study too. I'm also thankful to be able to continue my sporting career and I look forward to continuing experiencing being in a sports team here at University of Tsukuba.

Wai Phyo Thu

College of International Medical Sciences, School of Medicine and Health Sciences
From Myanmar



1 I have been living in Tsukuba City for a year and enjoy the unique balance of nature and urban life here. The peaceful environment such as parks, rice fields and green spaces, provides a refreshing air. The local farmers' markets offer fresh produce at affordable prices, adding to the city's charm. Moreover, like the Tsukuba Express and Bus, allows easy access to Tokyo in under two hours, making it convenient to connect with friends visiting Japan. At the University of Tsukuba, I appreciate the availability of English-taught courses that offers an international learning experience.

Additionally, the campus offers excellent libraries and study spaces, enhancing my academic journey and ease especially in summer season. Overall, living and studying in Tsukuba has been both rewarding and enriching.

2 During my time at the University of Tsukuba, I aim to gain my knowledge in international medical sciences while studying other fields like statistics and economics. I respect the unique opportunities the university provides for international students to enroll all interested courses, and I plan to fully engage in both academic and extracurricular activities. Last year, I participated in a two-month internship in Tokyo and attended cultural events like the NHK Symphony Orchestra and a Rotary Club welcome party. Moving forward, I plan to continue my part time jobs and taking part in cultural experiences, such as homestays with Japanese families, to further enrich my understanding of Japan. Additionally, I hope to contribute to the community, particularly in healthcare businesses, which aligns with my future career goals.

Sothearith Eng

Doctoral Program in Public Health, Degree Programs in Comprehensive Human Sciences, Graduate School of Comprehensive Human Sciences
From Cambodia



1 What I enjoy most about the University of Tsukuba is its large and complex campus, which perfectly blends nature and human development. I find the environment refreshing, and I love how it provides space for me to engage in recreational activities like gathering with friends, exercising, or just relaxing, which is ideal for students'

lifestyles. I also appreciate that the university offers affordable student accommodations, which not only help ease students' financial burdens but also provide convenient access to the campus. As for Tsukuba City, I find living here is affordable while it is still easily accessible to Tokyo. Furthermore, there are various shopping centers and restaurants around Tsukuba city, along with occasional traditional Japanese events, allowing me to immerse myself in Japan's culture. Overall, both the university and the city make my living in Japan enjoyable and fulfilling.

2 As a Ph.D. student at the University of Tsukuba, my primary goal is to gain the expertise I need to become a true professional in the field of Public Health. I am eager to meet people from diverse backgrounds and exchange knowledge and experiences that can broaden my understanding of the subject. I believe the University of Tsukuba is the ideal place to achieve this. The wide range of study courses, seminars, and job opportunities available here provide a strong foundation for both academic and personal growth. I feel incredibly fortunate to have a kind and supportive supervisor who also provides a well-equipped lab that helps me tremendously with my research. The lab members are also extremely encouraging, which makes this academic journey even more rewarding. I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and look forward to making the most of my time at the University of Tsukuba.

Israt Jahan

Engineering Mechanics and Energy
From Bangladesh



1 I enjoy Tsukuba's blend of innovation and nature, its role as Japan's leading science city, the diverse academic environment, and the city's vibrant, and green spaces.

2 As a student at the University of Tsukuba, I aim to excel academically, engage in research, participate in cultural exchange, contribute to inclusive, smart societies, and secure admission to a top university for my PhD, making my alma mater proud.

Qi Shi

College of Policy and Planning Sciences, School of Science and Engineering
From China



1 As a comprehensive university, the University of Tsukuba offers a wide range of disciplines. Its emphasis on academic freedom allows students to explore and deepen their interests regardless of their major, creating the ideal university experience for many. Moreover, in today's world of rapidly evolving technologies, the university strives to keep pace

not only with the academic world but also with real-world advancements, providing an environment where students can understand and utilize these new technologies—a hallmark of a top-tier university. As for Tsukuba City, trust me, if you have a car (laughs), you'll grow to love it more and more over time! With facilities and stores comparable to those in Tokyo, this city offers international students from any country the chance to quickly adapt to their new environment. I must admit, when I first moved here from Tokyo, I thought it was a rural area, but now, I never want to leave!

2 In academics, as a student in the field of social engineering, I aim to utilize data analysis and optimization techniques to tackle various problems. Through this hands-on learning, I aspire to make optimization one of my strengths. This field allows me to engage with real-world issues from industries such as manufacturing and consulting, giving me early exposure to challenges businesses face today. I believe that in the modern world, optimization skills are highly sought after, and knowledge in social engineering provides a broader perspective when entering the workforce. Regarding extracurricular activities and social contributions, it's inspiring to play soccer on the same fields where legends like Kaoru Mitoma once played. Additionally, I've engaged in internships, volunteer work, and other activities that truly embody the essence of student life. Whatever you envision for your university experience, trust me, at the University of Tsukuba, it's all possible!

Myles

College of Agro-Biological Resource Sciences, School of Life and Environmental Sciences
From USA



1 Tsukuba is a quiet city that offers so much in terms of research and educational opportunities, all while being within a short distance of Tokyo. I enjoy how the campus and surrounding area change throughout the year, from the lush green rice fields of summer to the red and orange trees in the fall. The city retains many of the aspects and conveniences of

other large Japanese cities while being small enough to allow me to be able to explore everything it has to offer. I'm also able to keep up with some of my hobbies—piano and horseback riding—while studying at the University, which is another plus. With each new semester, I have made many friends, most of which are from around the world. Alongside the Japanese friends I have made, I am still able to immerse myself in Japanese language and culture while being part of an international community.

2 I intend to learn more about agricultural science by interning at different farms around Japan. I've worked at several different farms around the world including Japan and hope to one day to raise livestock. Tsukuba provides many different courses about agricultural practices including one I will take next semester in Japanese. The university even has its own farmland where a lot of different research is performed; I plan on partaking in some of these research opportunities the University has during my final year, particularly those that deal with different types of animals. Right now, I am studying to pass the N2 Japanese Language Proficiency Exam, which would allow for even more opportunities in the Japanese workforce. Finally, I want to continue exploring the country and experience the rich culture of Japan.

Shafiqullah Yousafzai

Doctoral Program in International Public Policy, Degree Programs in Humanities and Social Sciences, Graduate School of Business Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences
From Afghanistan



1 The University of Tsukuba is well-known for its diverse academic disciplines, fostering an environment where international students can pursue education and research across various fields. To enhance learning, the university encourages students by valuing intellectual curiosity, creating a truly enriching academic experience for many. In an era

of rapid technological advancement, Tsukuba remains at the forefront by integrating cutting-edge developments into both research and education. This ensures that students are not only proficient in theory but also equipped with practical skills to investigate and solve the problems of the evolving world. I really enjoy the seminars, workshops, and lab meetings in our department, where new ideas are explored through comprehensive discussions, which enhance my learning and provide opportunities to meet researchers and fellows. I also like and participate in events such as tea parties, welcoming new cohorts, and social gatherings with colleagues. Regarding Tsukuba City—trust me, you will love it. Although it is not like Tokyo and is farther from major urban centers, it remains convenient with public transportation, 24-hour stores, and parks that improve the quality of life.

2 As a student of economics, I am interested in exploring and investigating the economic aspects of socioeconomic problems associated with trade. One of my research goals is to understand how exchange rate volatility affects the growth of industrial exports in countries where the labor market is highly rigid. [...] I aim to explore how exports influence economic growth and inequality at the subnational level and, ultimately, how they impact the welfare of people.

2 What do you want to accomplish as a student of the University of Tsukuba during your study period? (Academics, extracurricular activities, social contribution, etc.)

1 What do you enjoy about Tsukuba (University of Tsukuba and Tsukuba City)?

CAMPUS LIFE STORIES