

# Internationally Cooperative Education in Post Epidemic Era Toward Further Promotion of “Diversity & Inclusion”

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As you all know, the progress of globalization over the last few decades is astounding. As globalization progresses, at Josai International University (JIU), we were considering possibilities for further promoting exchanges with universities in China and Asia more than ever. However, just before starting out, the current pandemic broke out. Many exchange plans and international events were canceled. Now, in October 2021, the post epidemic era is a time to



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rebuild and restart international cooperative education between global universities. However, this restart here does not mean the same thing as before. We must start internationally cooperative education in the new normal era with various ideas and considerations.

As the first step of my presentation, I would like to look back on the last 30 years in Japan. Until now, the Japanese thought of working for one company until retirement age and prioritize work over private life. However, in recent years, young people have become less loyal to the company, less reluctant to change jobs, and more people leave their jobs early.

In addition, work-life balance is more important for them than working. Since the burst of the so-called bubble economy in Japan in the early 1990s, many Japanese companies have promoted globalization by expanding overseas in search of new markets and low-cost labor and forming alliances with foreign capital. In parallel with these movements in the way of thinking of consumers and changes of Japanese companies, the declining birthrate, and an aging population have progressed in Japan, and the working population has decreased.

As a result, companies are now trying to secure human resources, such as changing from the membership-type employment policy based on lifetime employment and retirement age, mainly for men, to a job-type personnel system to widen the door to human resources. The new movements are exemplified as the active employment of women and the expansion of opportunities for them to play active roles, the utilization of the experience and abilities of the elderly by extending the retirement age and rehiring, and the active recruitment of foreigners. In fact, international students have more opportunities to work in Japan also after graduating from JIU. It is also time to change for university education.

The "Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs" advocated by the United Nations in 2015, is as you know, a universal measure that developed and developing countries will work together and universally by 2030, and they cover a wide range of areas such as poverty eradication and climate change. It is an important guideline for solving problems and realizing a sustainable society. "No one will be left behind" is one of the basic concepts of the SDGs. The importance of "Diversity & Inclusion" has come to the fore in the idea of such SDGs.

Various attributes are assumed for diversity. When we talk about "accepting diversity," we tend to focus on "giving women the same responsibilities and treatment as men" and "accepting foreigners." However, diversity is to accept without distinction or discrimination, considering more individualities and differences.

On the other hand, "Inclusion" which originally came from the term "inclusive education" where children with disabilities could participate in school and society. "Inclusive education" was the idea of not attending a support class because of a disability but aiming for an education that belongs to a regular class and developing each one's ability regardless of the presence or absence of a disability.

In this way, "Diversity" and "Inclusion" are very similar and difficult to distinguish, but "Diversity & Inclusion" are to recognize, accept, and utilize the diversity of people. In our world, there are many attributes such as gender differences like LGBTQ, ages or generation, nationalities, races, ethnicities, people with and without disabilities, religions, languages, and so on. With the idea of "Diversity & Inclusion", it is necessary to recognize people with various attributes equally and to provide a place where they can play an active role according to their individualities and abilities. It is especially important for people in the majority to understand the minorities. For example, it is necessary to balance work with childcare and long-term care and to emphasize work-life balance such as telework at home. It is also significant to accept everyone as human resources in an organization.

Now, even in the field of university education, major waves of changes are underway. One of the reasons is that college students have become the so-called "Generation Z". This Generation Z generally refers to young people born between the mid-1990s and 2000. From the time of birth, digital devices and the internet have existed as a matter of course, and the Web is felt like a part of everyday scenery, where cellphones are used more on a daily basis than personal computers, thus, making them a part of our daily lives. They can easily find out knowledge by internet search using their cellphones whenever they wish.

Therefore, it is important to utilize "discussion" and "thinking" sessions rather than just teaching and imparting "knowledge" in college education.

Another reason for the change is that universities need to establish a good governance system that can be managed strategically under the leadership of the president, not through the traditional faculty or graduate school deans. Most people may think that the leadership of the president is top-down, but the university cannot be developed unless the students, faculty, and staff, are satisfied. Of course, as in the past, the deans of the faculties and graduate schools also have certain responsibilities. In such changes of environment, it would be better for the president to implement the "Servant Leadership" that was born from the idea that leaders should first serve the other persons before guiding them.

At JIU, we would like to promote faculty-staff cooperation more than ever. Of course, as a further reason, there is a need for "Diversity & Inclusion" as described earlier. This is because the world has diversified, and people cannot live within just one attribute. The Tokyo Paralympics 2020 may have been that epoch. #WeThe15 brings a global human rights movement.

In this revolution of the universities, it would be better not to conclude that the university education methods at only one site and way, but to educate using various places and means as follows:

- (1) We will not educate only at JIU but collaborate with cooperative institutions to create global education that seeks new knowledge and wisdom. We will further strengthen cooperation with many sister schools. In the post epidemic era, the promotion of study abroad and acceptance of international students will be more active than before. Further progress in globalization is essential.
- (2) As mentioned above, I hold the impression that the universities until now had a high wall between the faculties, probably because the dean of each faculty had great responsibility. As a university, JIU will increase inter-faculty exchanges for faculty and staff members, as well as students, taking into consideration the problems that have occurred so far. I believe that education outside the campus will also progress further.
- (3) We are in the VUCA era (namely, Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity), which is difficult to predict near future. In such an era, students need to study by integrating humanities and sciences without being particular to humanities and sciences alone. Liberal arts should be thoroughly studied by students of any faculty or department. From 2022, JIU will launch liberal arts courses called "Common Basic Courses" to all faculties". With digitalization and many things being replaced by Artificial Intelligence, AI, "Imagination" and "Creativity" are needed more than ever to derive solutions to unknown problems.
- (4) At JIU, we will provide education on two campuses, The Kioicho Campus in Tokyo, and the Togane Campus in Chiba. Kioicho is like Beijing's Zhongnanhai and is at the very center of Japan's political economy. Students can study where they can feel the changes in Japan. On the other hand, Togane is located on the eastern edge of the Tokyo metropolitan area, and students can feel close to many problems that have begun in Japan, such as the aging population and the decline of local festivals. When

regional re-vitalization can be promoted in collaboration with the local people, it may be possible to find a methodology that responds to the aging problem not only to Japan as a whole, but to China, and eventually the world. Furthermore, when Kioicho and Togane students have occasional discussions, the educational effect will be even higher. We trust that this is an advantage that cannot be experienced at other universities in Japan.

- (5) Due to COVID-19's disaster, JIU gained precious methodologies of online education as is the same in many universities here. For future education, both online and face-to-face should be utilized. Especially when simply imparting knowledge, synchronous is more effective because it allows students to review classes many times. However, discussions with faculty members and students are very useful for reaching a deeper level of knowledge. This is because universities are essential "places for discussion." Of course, a dialogue-centered education should be in small classrooms, so many of the traditional large classrooms in universities may be unnecessary. In the post epidemic era, we would like to use the online educational methods that we have acquired as needed. I would also like to take advantage of JIU's Faculty of Media Studies, which excels in online video creation technology. Of course, we would like to use both online study abroad and real study abroad in collaboration with overseas universities. I would like to actively discuss with the partner universities who are participating here.
- (6) It is necessary to devise lesson formats such as lectures, exercises, tours, and practical training. Depending on the discipline, it is also very important to study out of the classrooms or campuses. We would also like to enhance off-campus training and internships. Collaboration with training facilities and the community should have a great impact on the future of universities.

"Diversity & Inclusion" needs to be discussed across genders, people with and without disabilities, and generations. Of course, before that, we need to overcome the intolerance of other countries, ethnicities, races, religions, the distribution of energy, and poverty, which often causes wars and conflicts on the Earth. At JIU, we accept many international students from various countries. Together with the participants of this Asian University Presidents Forum, JIU would like to further promote "Diversity & Inclusion". We must also borrow the power of rapidly developing science and technology. Nonetheless, it is equally important for us to also coexist in a world of "Diversity" and "Inclusion" together while considering the people around us.

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