

To all of our new students, congratulations on your admission to Gifu University. We are extremely pleased to have 1,926 new students this year join our campus, and on behalf of the University faculty and staff, I welcome all of you. I am sure you are thrilled and eager to embark on a new journey. We all share and welcome the sense of freshness you will bring into your new place of study. I would also like to take this opportunity to appreciate all the people who have supported you every step of the way.

Due to the spread of COVID-19 both in our community and around the world, I know how very difficult and disappointing it is to cancel the scheduled AY2020 Entrance Ceremony. Instead, I would ask you to share the moment of joy with us by accessing the online video clip to mark one of the most important transitions of your lives.

As an institution committed to pursuing greater excellence, we have launched the National University Corporation called “Tokai National Higher Education and Research System” on April 1, 2020, bringing together two academic institutions of excellence – Gifu University and Nagoya University – into a single framework. This will enable our two universities to engage in a wider range of joint educational and research activities. With this new designation, the two universities jointly operate the Academic Central for general education, and has established four core educational and research directives, namely, Institute for Glyco-core Research (iGCORE), Healthcare Data Integration and Research, Intelligent Production Technology Research and Development for Aerospace, and Agriculture Education Research. The Tokai National Higher Education and Research System strives to enhance its global competitiveness and contribute to the well-being and prosperity of our local communities and citizens, metaphorically speaking like “two wheels of a single cart.” “Creating our future with strong commitment and courage” is of primal importance here at the Tokai National Higher Education and Research System. The Gifu University community also remains deeply committed to being a place for everyone to “learn, explore and contribute.” As a valued member of Gifu University, we call on every one of you to be a part of this challenging task of making a great leap forward from the Tokai region into the global arena.

The beginning of university marks an important transition in your academic life. I invite you to discover what it means to “learn” in a university setting. As president of the university I can say that you will be exposed to a different cycle of student life distinct from what you have experienced in high school. Over the next four years, you will be exposed to an enormous amount of work and come to understand the meaning of

“learning” as you attend lectures in your respective academic disciplines, meet and discuss ideas with different people, and explore more deeply your distinctive fields of natural sciences, human sciences, and social sciences which have been painstakingly established by each respective faculties. As you engage in your academic discipline, you will discover new scientific knowledge and establish ways of thinking about things on your own.

Your first year at university will be extremely important in building your study habits and methods. Your success at graduation will strongly depend on the academic base built in the first year. One of the most important aspects of this transition is to remain focused and disciplined.

The foundations of modern higher learning is built-up on the seven liberal arts which are often represented by figures of seven goddesses flying high above the hall of some old libraries in the West referred to as the “branches of knowledge” that focused on: rhetoric, grammar, astronomy, logic, algebra, geometry, art, and their underlying philosophy. Pursuing a liberal arts education and your own specialized field of study will eventually equip you with the tools necessary to be a responsible and participatory member of the larger society.

All of you have come of age as a “university student”; and therefore, as emerging adults you have your own roles and responsibilities to play as members of society. We hope that you will take this role seriously and will abide by the expectations that you have been charged with.

You have made the right decision to come to Gifu University because of its long, proud history. Gifu University, which was founded in 1949, consists of diverse faculties each with its own rich history and solid reputation. For example, Gifu Prefectural Normal School (the present Faculty of Education) was established in 1873, making it the fourth oldest institution of higher learning in Japan. And this year marks the 147th anniversary. Subsequently, the Faculty of Applied Biological Sciences was established as early as 1923, and both the Faculty of Engineering and the School of Medicine were founded in the 1940s. As you wander through our campus, take your time to explore – the history of Gifu University by viewing the university archives both on and off campus.

On June 1, 2019, Gifu University celebrated its 70th Anniversary which was marked by

celebratory and eventful activities throughout the year. The university's possession of innumerable academic and artistic resources which have been preserved over the decades made the realization of "Campus Museum Concept" (Phase 1) possible to showcase the entire campus as an "open museum" for the public. In addition to the commemorative exhibition at the University Library, the campus has gracious open spaces with rich greenery that provides an ideal setting for an open museum. With interactive campus maps uploaded from the university website onto smartphones and tablets, visitors can enjoy a walk on campus and "learn".

The university does not only relish its rich past, but looks forward into the future with its Vision 2025. The aforementioned Tokai National Higher Education and Research System reinforces our deep commitment to offering a general basic education for our students with special emphasis on strengthening the two distinctive curriculums focusing on practical English education and mathematical data science education. We encourage any students of any discipline to delve deep into different courses of studies and anticipate with excitement the development of these evolving curriculums.

Gifu University also embraces its role as a center of community revitalization and nationwide and international education and research hub in its fields of expertise. Gifu University's Center for Collaborative Study with Community plays a pivotal role as a cross-sectional center of community revitalization and its major mission includes implementation of "Center of Community" (COC) and COC+ programs, propelled by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to assemble human resources that can spearhead community revitalization. Gifu University had the honor to receive the highest evaluation from MEXT for its successful execution of COC and COC+ in Japan. In addition, the University enjoys the support and active engagement from the government for its international and national education and research bases, namely: "Life Sciences Area: Center for Highly Advanced Integration of Nano and Life Sciences (G-CHAIN)," "Environmental Sciences Area: Next-Generation Energy Research Center," "Manufacturing Field: Advanced and Smart Die Engineering, Composite Materials," and the Medical Education Development Center (MEDC). Furthermore, the establishment of new research bases in livestock science, food sciences and aerospace production technology has been underway on campus over the past two years. G-GHAIN and aerospace production technology bases are expected to play an integral part in two relevant research bases of the Tokai National Higher Education and Research System. I believe that the reinforcement and extension of academic functions

in these fields will help propel further growth in education and research in years to come.

In the context of our role as a center for community revitalization and global contribution, we envision different collaborations between local/regional communities and communities overseas. In that sense, our outreach and contribution can be defined as “glocal” – that is, *“reflecting both local and global considerations.”* The term “glocal”, is not confined only to our Chubu region, prefecture, or city. Rather, it extends to a much broader platform, one that serves as the launching base for contributions nationwide and globally. Likewise, when we use the term “global,” we do not simply mean the whole world in a vague sense. Instead, we envision collaborations between the individual communities in Gifu and individual communities overseas. Thus, it makes better sense for us to refer to the term “glocal” as it clearly sums up our institutional concept of activities that mutually benefit the needs of both local and global communities. To this end, a “glocal” approach means that faculty members and students must work together to pursue global knowledge and present solutions within a local context. This will require our students, faculty, and staff to broaden our inquiries beyond the university setting and into the broader world. I, therefore, appeal to new students to take up the “glocal challenge” by taking a global issue and making it meaningful to society at the local level.

Gifu University currently has active agreements with 47 universities overseas, and hosts over 600 students and researchers from abroad annually. An average of 300 to 400 international students study on our campus, the majority of whom are fluent in both English and Japanese. The diversity of our student population makes it a great opportunity for Japanese students to interact with international students right here on campus. However, I also urge our students to venture outside Japan and experience for yourself other cultures and ways of living & thinking especially in your undergraduate years. In our midst, we already have undergraduate students who have entered international research contests, some of whom have won awards in the fields of space engineering, gene biology and construction engineering. We are proud to have an effective framework in place to assist students interested in international challenges.

To all of the new students this year my hope is that you become responsible members of society and devote yourselves to the growth and prosperity of Japan and the world. Let me share a quote to all university students from Professor Toshihide Masukawa, the theoretical physicist who was awarded the 2008 Nobel Prize in Physics, and whom I personally had the honor to meet in 2017. *“Young people should have aspirations, dreams*

*and hopes. Your constant, strenuous efforts to attain them will be a driving force for growth."*

Gifu University holds a place for all our students to be the best they can in achieving their ideals as "glocal" citizens.

Finally let me conclude by reminding you again that supporting you in fulfilling your aspirations, dreams, and hopes is central to the mission of our faculty members and staff at Gifu University. We are here to guide you in your growth to achieve full potential as contributing members of society. Join us in making your university years the best ever.

April 7, 2020

Hisataka Moriwaki

President

Gifu University

National University Corporation Tokai National Higher Education and Research System