

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACING RITSUMEIKAN UNIVERSITY'S POLICIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

~ Focusing On the Recruitment of and Support for Incoming Students ~

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ABSTRACT

1. Transformation of Ritsumeikan University's Exchange Programs in the Past Two Decades

A) Increase in the Number of Partner Schools and International Students

With the goal of globalizing the whole campus under the slogan of "Ritsumeikan University Open to the World" the number of universities Ritsumeikan University (RU) has formed exchange agreements with and that of international students has grown significantly since the opening of the Faculty of International Relations in 1988. Whereas the number of institutions RU had agreements with was only 4 in 4 countries in 1986, it has grown to 260 in 51 area/countries in January 2007. Likewise, the number of degree-seeking international students and that of non-degree short-term international students (students attending RU for 1 or 2 semesters) increased from 60 to 818 and from 6 (from 4 universities in 3 countries) to 124 (from 59 universities in 16 area/countries) respectively during the period between 1986 and October, 2006.

B) Advantages of Student Exchange

Student exchange has a number of positive effects not only on international students seeking educational opportunities in Japan, but also on Japanese students who are given opportunities to interact with these students from different parts of the world, as well as the university itself. The mere presence of international students heightens the awareness of the world for domestic students. Student exchange also has the effect of revitalizing research as well as of strengthening networks among universities around the world. RU is currently working toward the goal of accepting a total of 2,200 international students, including degree-seeking, short-term non-degree-seeking and study tour students, by 2010, which is part of RU's larger drive to create a "multicultural campus".

2. Recruitment of and Support for International Students: Where We Stand and Where We are Heading

A) Recruitment of International Students

As part of its recruitment efforts, RU has participated in the annual Japan Education Fair hosted by the Japan Student Services Organization, held in Japan and overseas, where Japanese universities promote their schools and recruit students from overseas. RU also recruits international students through general admission tests, held twice a year, and a special examination designed for students nominated by Japanese-language schools in Japan.

B) Assistance for Degree-Seeking International Students

Degree-seeking international students receive a number of financial and living assistances from the university and their Japanese peers through tutoring and entertainment activities throughout the year. As part their financial assistance, these students receive partial tuition reductions as well as a partial refund of health insurance premiums, a scheme supported by the Ritsumeikan University Parents Association for Student Education Assistance.

C) Assistance for Short-Term Non-Degree International Students

RU accepts short-term non-degree international students twice a year, in April and September. For these students, RU offers small group intensive Japanese language courses divided into 5 levels, Japanese traditional arts courses taught by the celebrated leaders of Kyoto's traditional arts and courses taught in English. Moreover, RU is providing short-term international students with various living and study assistances by providing them with affordable housing options as well as consultation in Chinese, Korean and English by native speakers of these languages.

D) Challenges Facing RU's Exchange Programs

International students generally have good academic records. The number of international students who find jobs at first-rate companies after graduation has increased sharply in recent years. RU is confident that the international students who attend RU have a great potential to excel in the societies they are from as well as in the larger world. However, RU still faces a number of challenges that need to be addressed, such as problems related to the shortage of housing and the courses taught in English, transfer of credits between RU and students' home universities, and a lack of

scholarship funds for qualified students. Moreover, employment rates and internship participation rates for international students remain low.

3. Challenges in Recruiting Highly Competent Students

A) Difficulties in Recruiting Competitive Students

Japan has entered an era in which the number of students wishing to attend a university almost equals the number of spots available in the existent universities. Therefore, the competition among universities in securing competent students has become more severe than ever before. In that respect, it would hardly be sufficient to rely on the existing entrance examination system to recruit internationally competitive students.

B) Future Tasks

In order to attract the best students, RU needs to improve the quality of classes offered to students, support cutting-edge research and expand economic assistance to qualified students. Moreover, RU needs to take full advantage of the rich educational and cultural history of the greater Kyoto area (where both Kinugasa Campus and Biwako-Kusatsu Campus are located), the highly effective career planning and internship services and the diverse curriculum offered to both undergraduate and graduate students at RU. Only by offering the most attractive educational and living opportunities to students would RU be able to attract the most competitive students in this era of severe competition among universities.

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~OUTLINE~

Recruitment of and Support for Incoming Students

- Transformation in the Past Two Decades
- Where We Stand and Where We Are Heading
- Challenges in Recruiting Highly Competent Students

Past Two
Decades

Transformation in 20 years

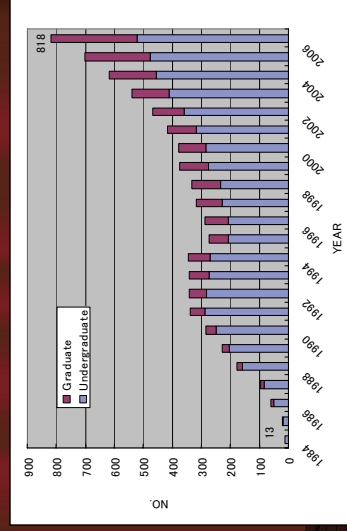
~Advantages of Student Exchange~

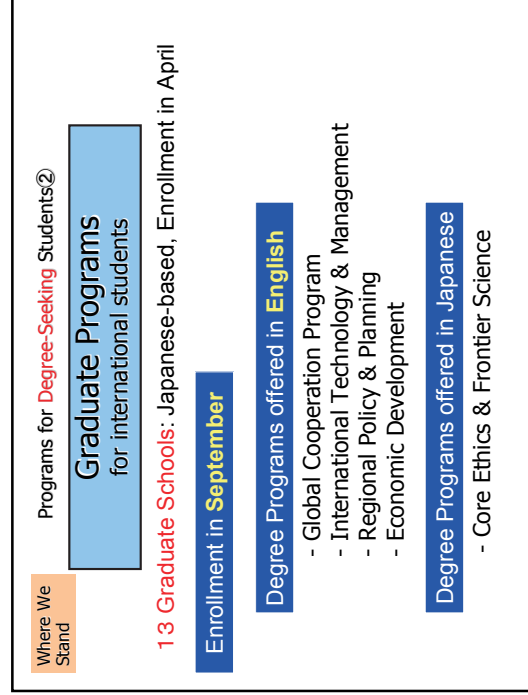
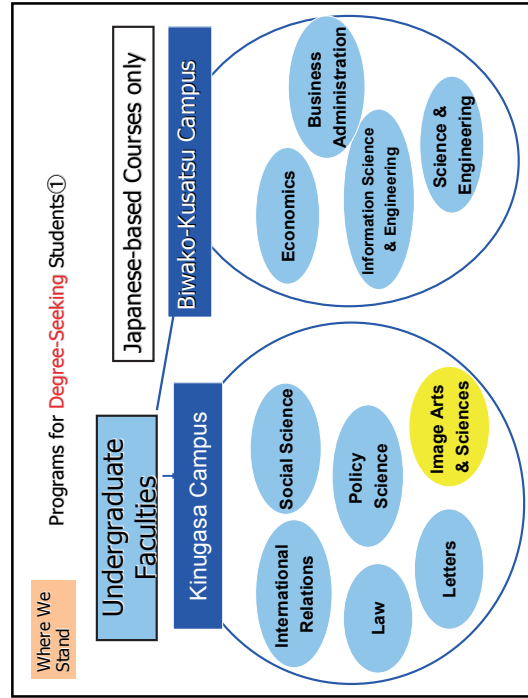
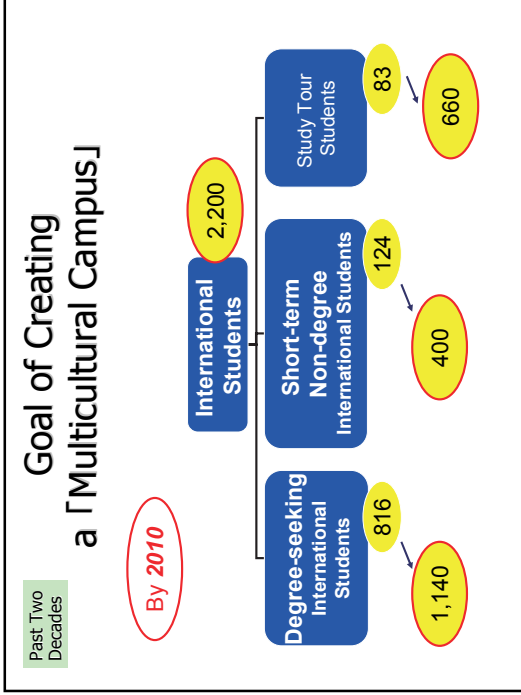
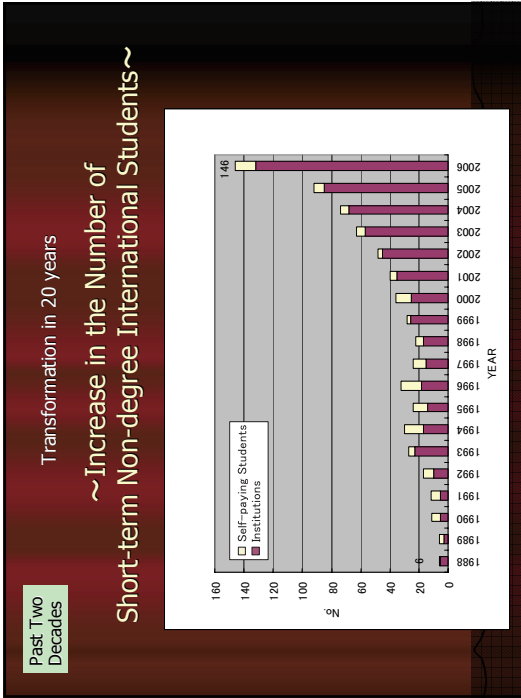
- Contribution to international human resource development
- Benefits for Domestic Students
- Revitalization of Research
- Strengthening of Networks

Past Two
Decades

Transformation in 20 years

~Increase in the Number of
Degree-seeking International Students~





Where We Stand

Recruitment of Degree-seeking International Students

~Recruitment Efforts~

- Participation in Japan Education Fair hosted by JASSO (In Tokyo, Osaka, Pusan, Seoul, Taipei)
- Visit to Japanese language schools
- General admission tests (twice a year)
- Special exam designed for students nominated by Japanese-language schools

Where We Stand

Assistance for Degree-Seeking International Students①

~Financial Assistance by RU~

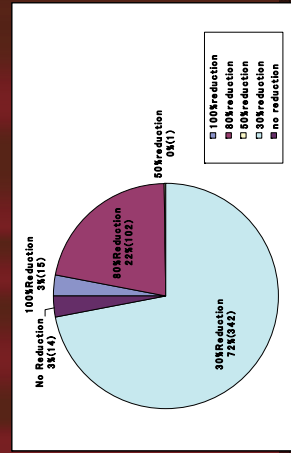
- Partial tuition reduction
- Partial refund of health insurance premiums
- Various scholarships
- Student loans for university expenses

Where We Stand

Assistance for Degree-Seeking International Students②

Partial Tuition Reduction

For self-paying students (474 students in 2005)



Where We Stand

Assistance for Degree-Seeking International Students③

~Percentage of Scholarship Recipients~ Self-paying International Students



Where We Stand

Assistance for Degree-Seeking International Students④

~Living Assistance~

- Pre-entrance Orientation Camp
- Tutoring
- Entertainment Activities
- Consultation

Where We Stand

Assistance for Short-Term Non-Degree International Students①

Study in Kyoto Program (SKP)

Intensive Japanese Language Track

Japan and World Perspectives Track

- Small group Intensive Japanese Language Courses
-
- Courses taught in English
- Japanese Traditional Arts Courses
- Introductory Japanese Language Courses

Enrollment in April & September, 1-2 semesters

Where We Stand

Assistance for Short-Term Non-Degree International Students②

~Living & Financial Assistance~

- 4-day orientation
- International House I & II
- Consultation in Chinese, Korean and English
- Scholarships
- Full access to the university facilities: library, internet, gym, medical center, etc.

Where We Stand

ISSUES

Facing RU's Exchange Programs

Degree-seeking

- Lack of Scholarship Fund
- Lack of Networking Opportunities
- Low Employment Rate
- Low Internship Participation Rate

Short-term Non-degree

- Shortage of Housing
- Lack of Courses Taught in English
- Transfer of Credits

Challenges

Challenges in Recruiting Highly Competent Students①

RU's Advantages

- Rich educational & cultural history of the greater Kyoto area
- Highly effective career planning & internship services
- Diverse curriculum
- Active extracurricular activities
- More than 100 year's history

Challenges

Challenges in recruiting highly competent students②

Future Tasks

Education

- **Improving the quality of classes**
e.g., Teaching, Bridging the gap between research & education, Diversity of courses in English, Class evaluation
- **Starting new courses**
e.g., Additional Japanese language courses, Internship program for short-term international students
- **Creating an internationally compatible system**
- **Support for cutting-edge research**

Challenges

Challenges in recruiting highly competent students③

Future Tasks

Student Support

- **Support for Job Placement**
e.g., Support for Career Seeking Activities, Encouraging Internship participation
- **Alumni Networking**
e.g., Organizing Alumni, Strengthening the overseas offices
- **Expanding Financial Assistance**
e.g., Securing Scholarship Funds
- **Securing New Housing**

Thank you for your attention!



Ritsumeikan

Our Educational Philosophy
Peace & Democracy

University