

The 2010 “Talk with Students”

To students

This past August, one of the Osaka University vice presidents and several faculty members of the Student Life Committee held “town hall” style meetings with students in order to listen to the opinions and hopes of students for campus life. These talks (on August 4th, Toyonaka campus, and on August 6th, Minoh campus) were held in an amicable atmosphere with a good exchange of opinions and hopes.

Osaka University conducts these talks in order to gain insight into campus life as seen from the students’ viewpoints, and, in particular, to deal with potential problems in a timely manner. When viewing the university’s responses below to the various requests, please understand that there are situations that the university cannot deal with at this time. The university looks forward to further “Talks with Students” in the coming years and to the healthy participation of many Osaka University students in these talks.

1. Extracurricular activities

Students: We would like Osaka University to authorize groups that were authorized by [the former] Osaka University of Foreign Studies.

University: Regarding groups authorized by the Osaka University of Foreign Studies, integration of such groups with the same sport or activity of an Osaka University group has been proceeding smoothly. Many groups have already integrated. We encourage groups of Osaka University of Foreign Studies to integrate with the Osaka University counterparts. If there is no similar group, your group will be authorized after it has been examined. Actually some groups of the former Osaka University of Foreign Studies are active as authorized groups. If you’d like to apply for authorization, please contact Student Centers.

Students: We would like to have an air conditioner in our group room.

University: A budget needs to be secured for that. We will examine the installation of air conditioners considering the building structure and usage frequency.

Students: It would be nice if each group had their own warehouse.

University: Warehouse space is limited and it’s difficult to allow only one group to have a warehouse in such a limited space. Also, it would be difficult in terms of campus design.

2. Talk with students

Students: We appreciate being able to talk with people from various divisions. It would be better if someone from facilities had been present.

Students: I think this kind of event should be given more publicity. This is a very important opportunity.

University: We have heard many opinions about facilities. So we will consider having the Facilities Department be present in these talks. We did post the information about this talk on the Handai website, KOAN, and O+PUS and put up posters on bulletin boards in school. However, we’d like to give it more publicity by redesigning the posters so that more students will join these

talks.

3. Extracurricular activities

Students: We understood that the university could not deal with costly requests from students because of budgeting. It would be nice if we could have the chance to get involved in university management and express our opinions regarding budgeting.

University: Osaka University's mid-term plans aim to support and promote students-initiated activities. The Student Life Committee examines matters related to student life. Students are not allowed to participate in such meetings, but we have students from the Sports Leadership and Culture Leadership participated in meetings as observers to make remarks. For budgets, we can deal with some matters immediately, but not others. That's why you may feel inconvenienced. But first, we'd like to hear your request. Please come to Student Centers for consultation. We hope you will make use of opportunities like this talk.

4. Financial aid

Students: Some classes are held only on the Toyonaka Campus. It would be nice if classes related to teacher licensing could be held on the Minoh campus, too.

University: There's a wide variety of subjects necessary for obtaining a teacher certification so it's difficult to hold classes for teacher certificates on each campus.

5. Facilities

Students: We have to obtain permission from many divisions when applying for use of a space for a study meeting in the Learning Commons. It would be nice if the procedures could be simplified.

University: We hope you understand that you need to obtain permission from divisions managing these rooms for security and administrative reasons. For example, many of the schoolrooms are in the Letters, Law, and Economics Lecture buildings. Users need to make allowance for events and regular exams in other schools, and if quiet environment classes are required or not. Therefore, users must obtain permission seals from these three schools.

Students: I'm impressed that various facilities are built one after another on the Toyonaka Campus. Some improvements such as O+PUS are seen on the Minoh campus, but I feel there's quite a difference compared with the Toyonaka Campus.

University: We think a Learning Commons and Student Commons are also needed on the Suita and Minoh campuses, but such facilities are set up in the order of usage frequency. We don't favor Toyonaka. The beautification of Minoh campus is proceeding in accordance with the Minoh Campus Plan that was drafted in 2008. In 2009, the slope for persons to improve the accessibility to the Saito Gate was constructed and beautification of the landscape conservation area was achieved. Concerning making the area surrounding the Welfare Building barrier free, we have strived to secure budget as an urgent issue. We will make every effort to realize the master plan. Your understanding is appreciated.

Students: It would be nice if we can use lecture rooms in the general education building for self-learning and eating during test periods.

Students: It would be nice if we have places where we could eat on Sundays.

University: Restaurants under the library, restaurants on the 3rd and 4th floors of the Welfare Center, and Don Don are open on weekdays. Osaka University Coop understands that there is a request to open restaurants on weekends. However, if we open restaurants on weekends, we need to examine whether opening of restaurants will be economically feasible. So it's under consideration. If Coop provides meals on weekends, coordination with other restaurants is also necessary. In order to open a restaurant hall on Sundays, administration staff must work, so the cost will increase. Given the present circumstances, it's difficult to open these restaurants on weekends. Your understanding is appreciated.

6. Financial aid

Students: I know that there is financial aid for general education. It would be nice if there were financial aid for professional education.

University: There is no financial aid for professional education except in a school such as the School of Medicine, a school with its own plan. Please contact one of the Student Centers.

7. KOAN

Students: It would be nice if KOAN on mobile phones were easier to view.

Students: It would be nice if information were classified according to the content.

Students: It's hard to check the schedules for intensive courses.

University: We intend to renew KOAN in October 2011. We will try to enhance the convenience by unifying the operation of the bulletin board and registration method for makeup classes and make it easier to check class schedule and syllabuses.

8. O+PUS

Students: We view O+PUS in restaurants and libraries. We can understand that the sound volume of O+PUS in libraries is set low, but the volume in the restaurant in the School of Engineering is too low to hear. Also, if there are many students there, subtitles at the bottom of the screen cannot be seen at all. It would be nice if subtitles were at the top.

University: O+PUS cannot automatically adjust sound volume in accordance with the situation. For that reason, the sound is set low not to cause troubles to others in restaurants. The sound is set so low, but viewers should be able understand movie by reading the subtitles. We'll take your opinions into account for future movies.

Students: I think fields of interest vary by school. Why don't you change content by campus or school?

University: Currently, the same O+PUS contents are shared on the three campuses. This is because O+PUS' mission is to broadcast *all* useful information that we'd like *all* members of Osaka University to know. That's why we don't broadcast contents that are intended for only specific schools or graduate schools. Changing contents by campus is a subject of the future investigation. We'll see if we can flexibly arrange the contents.

9. WebCT

Students: It takes time to start WebCt and operate it. I wonder if it's because of heavy software, because of technological problem, or heavy usage. I hope the problem can be addressed.

University: There are some possible causes, including the performance of the PC you are using, the size of contents uploaded for classes, or your browser. When you have such problems, please contact the IT support center at the Institute for Higher Education Research and Practice. They will help you find a solution.

10. Information availability

Students: It's inconvenient that the rooms with [Windows] Vista-based computers are not always available.

University: Information-processing education rooms #1 to #5 in the Education and Research Building on the Toyonaka campus are equipped with Vista-based computers. From 8:50 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., if there are no classes, one of the rooms is always available. The rooms are closed on Saturdays, Sundays, national holidays, and days university events are held and maintenance is conducted. For announcements about the days they're closed or open hours, please look at bulletin boards in the rooms or the university web pages. In the Main Library, Science and Engineering Library, and Life Sciences Library, Vista-based computers are in the information processing rooms. Please make good use of them.

Students: In relation to the comprehensive contract with Microsoft, it is inconvenient that we cannot download outside the university. It would be nice if we can view outside the university at least web pages about how to download.

University: The comprehensive contract with Microsoft stipulates that software is provided only university members. To comply with this, downloading is limited to within the university. You can view instructions to download and install from outside the university by logging in the software distribution server after inputting user authentication. For questions about the comprehensive contract, contact information including telephone number and email address are posted on the software service page.

Students: It would be nice if a wireless LAN were available.

University: For maintenance and management reasons, whether a wireless LAN will be installed in a room or not will be determined by the division administrating the room. For this request, we'd like to discuss at meetings with schools in question.

11. Inter-campus shuttle bus

Students: There are few buses from the Toyonaka campus to the Minoh campus and the buses are crowded so I feel scared when going up a slope.

University: Buses shuttle between campuses on a fixed interval. So, in order to increase bus services for Minoh, we must contract more buses. However, that requires a huge amount of money and a long term budgets must be secured. So we won't be able to realize this soon. Increasing buses only during busy times and reducing buses during not busy time is not possible. However, we've received similar requests, so we're considering increasing buses from 2011.

Students: I think there was a request for a roof for bus stop in the talk with students that was held last year. What happened in the end?

University: We plan to set up roofs on the bus stops on the Minoh campus this year.

12. Libraries

Students: It would be nice if a reservation system will be introduced to the self-learning space in the Main Library. Many persons put their bag to save their seats and leave the room. We have trouble in getting a seat. We'd like to be able to reserve seats in the Learning Space.

University: In the Main Library, you can make a reservation for a seat in the group study room at the door. Reservation of individual research rooms for students in the 3rd or 4th year can be made at the door. Reservation of individual research rooms for research students and graduate students is possible a week before the day of use. Please make use of the reservation system.

For seats for reading, a reservation system has not been introduced; however, for individual booths on the 4th floor of Building B, which is the most popular space, we have asked users not to save seats by posting a sign. We ask for everyone's cooperation on this. For the Learning Commons, we have no reservation system so that they can be used flexibly without restriction on utility time and the number of users.

Users who study there for a long time may leave their seats in order to collect materials or take a rest. As you pointed out, if personal belongings are placed on seats, they may be stolen. So staff members distribute leaflets cautioning against such. We'll continue to warn users and strive to make the use of rooms more efficient by improving seating plans.

13. Welfare facilities

Students: I heard that the university Coop has "Bread Days" on the Toyonaka and Suita campuses, but there are no such days on the Minoh Campus. Also, the slot to return plates and utensils at the restaurant on the Minoh campus is so small and inconvenient.

University: In the Minoh Campus, Coop bakes breads at a restaurant everyday so it has no plan to set up Bread Days as in other campuses. The bakery on the Minoh Campus can bake bread for about 50 persons a day. The sales in the Toyonaka and Suita campuses are so small and pay little. To make the return slot bigger, renovation is needed. Thinking of the current situation, we don't think renovation is needed.

14. Health Center

Students: Medical treatment available at the center varies by day. Under such situation, persons who fall sick suddenly hesitate to go to the center. It would be nice if it gives us a sense of security that treatment is always available.

University: Medical treatment available at the center is limited because of a dearth of personnel and equipment. Therefore, they refer patients to neighboring medical facilities or special medical facilities depending on the symptoms. However, a nurse can provide first aid treatment to injuries and refers patients to a treatment department in accordance with their symptom. Please don't hesitate to visit when needed.

15. Miscellaneous

Students: If we want to voice our opinions at other times, where should we go?

University: If you want to voice your opinions, contact the Educational Affairs division at your school, one of the Student Centers, or Student Support Center. They can tell you which

department will deal with your problem. For various procedures, please visit the page noted below.

<http://www.osaka-u.ac.jp/ja/guide/student/general/contact>