

2015 Autumn Entrance Ceremony

President's Address

Good morning.

It is my utmost pleasure to congratulate all of you as the newest members of the undergraduate and graduate programs at Osaka University. As the president of the University, it is my distinct honor to extend a warm welcome to you as well as your friends and family who could join this celebration today.

Osaka University is my cherished home ground, an institution where I have spent close to 30 years of my life, dedicating myself in advancing education and research on its campuses. On August 26 of this year, I became the 18th president of the University. As such, this Entrance Ceremony is one of my first official duties as president, so I share with you a fresh sense of new beginnings.

I see the rich talent and ability in each and every one of you. It is the “true value” of yours, or the intrinsic worth which is distinctively yours, and the one that only you can develop and nurture. It is for this reason that I affirmed my strong commitment to creating the best available educational environment which would enable you to fully manifest your intrinsic potentials.

The fresh and novel knowledge that you carry is an important facet of your “true value”. Our faculty members are true scholars and experts who are equipped with deep knowledge in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. We are also fortunate to be aided by strong teams of administrative staff, whose know-how supports our students and faculty.

I consider that it is my important mission to lead this orchestra of our diverse knowledge, like a conductor, and collaborate with you all even to compose brand new knowledge. If we jointly share our pioneering minds and collaborate, I am confident that we can maximize our true value to its fullest extent. I firmly believe that, by sharing our diverse expertise and collaborating in breaking new ground of academia, we will nurture wisdom; wisdom which will guide us to the core essence of our academic work through education and research. In turn, it will further advance Osaka University’s high international standing as a world-acclaimed comprehensive university.

To that end, I encourage each of you to strive hard to reach the heart of your scholarly inquiry and deepen your understanding throughout your pursuit of knowledge. As a member of Osaka University, an institution rich in tradition, I expect

you to be mindful of your responsibility to make the best use of your abilities for the benefit of humankind and our global society.

Incidentally, the modern but traditional principles of Osaka University can be traced to two schools that have served as our spiritual predecessors; places of learning in Osaka in the mid- to late-Edo period of Japan from whom we have inherited our values. The first was *Kaitokudo*, founded in Osaka in 1724 by five successful merchants. The second was *Tekijuku*, a private academy of Dutch studies founded also in Osaka in 1838 by Ogata Koan, the renowned physician and scholar.

These two places of learning commonly shared the two important principles which we treasure today. First, their students were expected to refine their ethical high ground, richness in sensibility, and rich knowledge of liberal arts while earnestly pursuing rational and scientific knowledge. Second, they cultivated their public minds and willingly dedicated their expertise for the betterment of the society they live in while pursuing independent scholastic work in a free academic environment.

Established in the vibrant merchant city of Osaka, modern Osaka University proudly carries on the traditions of its predecessors, institutions that produced the leaders who laid the foundations for modern Japan. I trust that you, those who will become our newest students at Osaka University, will carry on our unique academic tradition

and philosophy.

So far I have talked mainly about rather formal matters. But before I conclude, I would like to remind you that you are going to spend your lives here at Osaka University as students. Student days are often the most magnificent period of your life. As students, you are afforded this unique privilege to devote ample time and energy to something you are enthusiastic about wholeheartedly, even though others may not understand its significance. Of course, I expect you to study hard, but I also would like you to completely explore possibilities which may be unrelated to your chosen field of study.

Indeed, as I look back on my own time as a student, it is a treasured time when I met teachers, friends and partners who would influence me for the rest of my life. At Osaka University, I ask that you expand your experience beyond the classroom and the laboratory. Do overcome borders of academic discipline, generation, and nationality, and come to know as many people as possible, communicating to spread friendship.

In closing, I would like to express my belief in the importance of earnestness, or *Hon-Ki* in Japanese, at all levels of endeavor.

If you act earnestly, almost anything is possible.

If you act earnestly, everything is interesting.

If you act earnestly, someone will lend a hand.

My hope is that you will take these words to heart when you challenge things. Osaka University will be side by side with you and earnestly support you.

Today I am truly happy to welcome you into the Osaka University family. Again I wish to express to you all my heartfelt welcome.

Omedeto-gozaïmasu. And thank you.

October 1, 2015
President of Osaka University
Shojiro NISHIO