

At the beginning of 2016, I was again invited to support the students of The University of Tokyo Education department with the second Joint International Seminar "Education in the Era of Globalization: Towards the Realization of a Sustainable Future" at Stockholm University. This was the second year that I have provided support, and I was happy to see that the relationship between the two universities had continued to grow. The previous year was a positive and stimulating experience, so I was eager to offer my support once again.

As with the year prior, the quality of the presentations by the students bound for Stockholm University was high. During the preparation sessions held in Japan, I supported the outgoing students during both the individual preparation meetings and the official practice session with the professors and staff. All of the students invested a significant amount of time and energy into their presentations, resulting in a wide variety of approaches to the various presentation topics. The growing variety of presentation styles during the practice sessions this year allowed for an even more lively and engaging discussion than the previous year. In addition to their research topics, it was clear that the students were also eager to express themselves and their diverse backgrounds to the students abroad.

Expressing oneself and one's research is not only a matter of practice, but also requires significant effort be put into self-reflection. During many of the individual student sessions, the student and I walked through the process of how the material they presented might be viewed in different cultures and how others may interpret the information in vastly different ways—from pictures with contextual meaning in Japan that could be lost in translation, to English language usage that might be misinterpreted in a different culture. As with any type of professional expression of one's work, it is important to put yourself in the shoes of your audience and imagine what they may be hearing, seeing, and even feeling. Such practice and consideration is especially important for multicultural communication. Through these international opportunities, students learn to how to prepare a professional presentation and also how to address and overcome the cultural barriers that they will inevitable face in this globalizing world. In this sense, the globalization of education involves overcoming the external cultural barriers while making an effort to recognize the internal cultural barriers that exists within oneself.

I wish to commend the students from both universities for their hard work during their presentation preparation and their successful completion of the Joint International Seminar. It takes a high level of professionalism to actively seek out criticism of work into which one has invested so much time and self-expression. Going through that process with the support and advice of faculty in conjunction with opportunities abroad can make a critical difference in how well students are prepared to face a global marketplace; whether it be academic or business. The students at the Education department at The University of Tokyo made full use of the opportunities to both present and network with those abroad in Sweden, and I look forward to seeing what the future has to bring both universities, especially in regards to the cooperation and opportunities provided to the students.

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