

HSI Report: Exploring the Arguments on Multi-culturalism and Coexistence

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The newly launched [Hokkaido Summer Institute \(HSI\)](#) program has gotten off to a great start. HSI brings Hokkaido University's faculty members and more than 80 world-leading researchers from outside Japan together to provide special learning experiences to undergraduate and graduate students. More than 910 students, including some 190 from overseas, are participating in 71 courses that cover a variety of disciplines, ranging from robotics to art.



From the conclusive session of *Exploring the Arguments on Multi-culturalism and Coexistence*

A course entitled *Exploring the Arguments on Multi-culturalism and Coexistence*, which began on July 21, was attended by 23 graduate students, including many international students, and its conclusive session was held on July 27. In the course, researchers at the forefront of their fields from Hokkaido University's Graduate School of Education were joined by experts in a variety of fields from Australia, New Zealand, Finland and the UK. They offered lectures and

discussions on themes such as cultural politics, multi-lingual language education, and gender and race in education in today's globalized society. On the last day of the course, students engaged in discussions in small groups on topics such as how to find one's own identity in a society with diverse values.

One of the lecturers, Professor Keiko Ikeda of Hokkaido University said: "For all of us who live in today's globalized society, considering multicultural coexistence is essential. The course gave an opportunity for instructors and students to tackle this theme by transcending the boundaries of their specializations." Professor Joseph Lo Bianco of the Melbourne Graduate School of Education underlined in class the utmost importance of creating an environment in which people can discuss issues openly. He commented after the lectures, "The term *multicultural coexistence* has different meanings in different contexts. Discussing the theme in Hokkaido in the context of Japan's relations with neighboring countries such as Russia and South Korea was a valuable experience for me."



From the conclusive session of *Exploring the Arguments on Multi-culturalism and Coexistence*

One of the attendees was Tian-Fang Han, who came to Japan to pursue her graduate research in physical education. "I participated in the course to learn how to build better relations with people with different cultural backgrounds and better understand diverse cultures. I want to assess the significance of my research with a broader worldview and

the different values I will learn.” In the conclusive session, Professor Ikeda quoted historian Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki of the Australian National University, saying that social issues can be solved only when people find their goals through their own efforts rather than waiting for the country or government to act for them.

As HSI will offer courses until mid-September, students will continue to visit Hokkaido University for exciting learning experiences.