



Welcome to Kyutech



国立大学法人
九州工業大学



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President's Address

AY 2020

Yuji Oie, President, Kyushu Institute of Technology

In view of the expanding impact of the novel coronavirus infection (COVID-19), it has been decided that the Academic Year 2020 Entrance Ceremony for Kyushu Institute of Technology (Kyutech) will be cancelled in order to minimize the risk of further spread of infection, out of consideration for the health and safety of our students, their families and everyone concerned.

For new Kyutech students, as well as their families and guardians, the Entrance Ceremony is something that you will all have been waiting for with great anticipation. It is therefore extremely regrettable that we had to make this decision out of a desire to prioritize the safety of all concerned and prevent the spread of further infection and I very much hope for your understanding.

Although we are being faced with such circumstances, today I would first like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to you all on your entrance to our university, and also express my great respect for all of the efforts you made to arrive at this point. It is the ultimate pleasure for us to welcome you to the Kyushu Institute of Technology. On behalf of all the faculty members, I would like to deliver this celebratory address.

As you begin your academic life at Kyutech, I would have you know that the school was originally founded in 1909 as a private institution called the Meiji College of Technology. The founder, Mr. Keiichiro Yasukawa, was a prominent figure in the business world. He established a number of businesses in the Kitakyushu and Chikuhō region, such as the YASKAWA Electric Corporation, which would go on to become the foundation of our nation's industrial growth.

In the Meiji Period, Japan lagged far behind the great nations of the world both industrially and economically, so it was vital to develop human resources to support the country. Based on his belief that "profits earned thanks to the country should be used for the country," Mr. Yasukawa donated a large part of his private fortune to found the Meiji College of Technology, with the aim of training engineers who could support the industrial advancement of Japan.

He entrusted education and research at the Meiji College of Technology to Dr. Kenjiro Yamakawa, then president of Tokyo Imperial University. At the opening ceremony of the college, Dr. Yamakawa declared that the Meiji College of Technology was a school that produced "gentlemen well-versed in technological skills," aiming to develop human resources with dignity and creativity. Dr. Yamakawa's aims have been adhered to through the generations, and still guide us today after more than 100 years as our university's founding principle of "instilling a deep knowledge of science and engineering in high caliber students." I would like the new students here to learn by heart the phrase "high caliber students with a deep knowledge of science and

engineering.”

As you embark on your studies here at Kyutech, I would like to take this opportunity today to give a little thought to why we learn and in which ways we learn.

At the end of her book *History: why it matters*, renowned history scholar Lynn Hunt quotes the following words of Marcus Tullius Cicero, the pre-Christian era Roman statesman: “To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child.” It is precisely through learning about various things, including but not limited to history, that we can discover our unique range of possibilities and work to build and develop ourselves. Learning many things, contemplating many matters, and experiencing a great deal will lead to the creation of individuality. The importance of individuality was also remarked on by the Chinese scholar Confucius, approximately 2,500 years ago. He said, “Friendship with the honest, friendship with the sincere, and friendship with the learned are all beneficial.” (From *Analects Chapter 16, Ki shi*). In his book *Rongo Vol. 2 (Analects, Vol. 2; Asahi Shimbun Publishing)*, Japanese scholar of Chinese literature Kōjirō Yoshikawa explains the first type of friend as being upright and having integrity, the second type of friend as being sincere, and the third type of friend as being erudite, and that a person would be well-served to have all three types of friends. In other words, someone who is honest, sincere and well-learned is an ideal person. I hope that here at Kyutech you experience the tremendous importance of learning alongside your fellow students.

Next, I would like to think about the ways in which we learn. You have all entered Kyutech to acquire a variety of specialist knowledge in the field of engineering and gain skills that you can put to use. Engineering is often said to be a field of learning that solves problems and builds the future. Accordingly, in the predictions described in *Megatech: Technology in 2050* (The Economist, 2017) it is noted that it is not possible for technology to be completely relied on to solve a problem without action on the part of society and that even when there have been examples of outstanding solutions that have been completed with technology alone these have been exceedingly rare. It is also noted that it is virtually impossible for any kind of problem to be finally settled using technology. There will always be some new kind of challenge to face or some new headache inducing problem to solve. For people who study engineering, therefore, it is essential to not simply acquire engineering skills, but also to understand the people and the societies that use the technologies and devices created by engineers. Collaborative skills are also important, as in any project it is essential for engineers to engage in work with people from different areas of expertise. Firstly, then I expect you to thoroughly understand and acquire specialist knowledge and skills. Secondly, you should also take an interest in other areas of engineering beyond your own field of expertise and embrace a thirst for knowledge and study in other areas too, including societal, economic, cultural and artistic areas. At Kyutech we provide various learning opportunities that will enable students to continue to perform well and give their best in the global era and I hope that you will utilize our various international exchange programs. During the last academic year approximately 700 students experienced student life overseas.

Last year marked the 110th anniversary of our school's founding. Traditions are built, and through your studies, new Kyutech traditions will be formed. In conclusion, I encourage you, our new students, to be mindful of your health but also to take advantage of our many learning opportunities and environments to explore a wide range of matters. Our university is a place that brings people with a love of knowledge together, and I would like to express my heartfelt hope it will be a place for you to pursue a meaningful undergraduate or graduate student life. Once again, my sincere congratulations.