

UCL-Tohoku University Joint Symposium

Reinventing International University Education and the Role of Globally Engaged
Universities
Dialogues between UK and Japan

Wednesday 16. June 2021

10:00-12:20 GMT

18:00-20:20 JST

The symposium is organised in the framework of the Strategic Partnership between UCL and Tohoku University (Japan). It represents the first opportunity to showcase ongoing joint research on higher education. Particularly, the symposium addresses themes related to leadership, crisis management and global engagement during the Covid 19 pandemic. The first part will focus on the experiences of students in UK, Europe and Japan; the second part will elaborate on the long-term implications of Covid 19 for the governance of universities.

Chairs: Claire Callender (UCL), Kazuko Suematsu (Tohoku University)

10:00-10:05

Opening Remarks

Prof Akiyoshi Yonezawa (Tohoku University)

1. How is Covid-19 pandemic changing international student experiences at the universities?

10:05-10:25

Changing International Experience of University Students in the UK and Europe:

Rachel Brooks (University of Surrey)

In this presentation, Rachel Brooks will suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the fore, and helped crystallize, some key themes and issues with respect to international students that have emerged over recent years. These include: the increasing socio-economic diversification in the backgrounds of international students; emerging new geographies of international student mobility; how we assess the 'value' of an international education; and the ethics of policy and practice in this

area. Rachel Brooks will illustrate these points by drawing on the nascent literature on the impact of COVID-19, as well as the much larger body of scholarship on international student mobility more generally.

10:25-10:45

Changing International Experience of University Students in Japan and East Asia

Yukiko Shimmi & Akiyoshi Yonezawa (Tohoku University)

Adding to the traditional motivations for student mobility (migration to and pursuit of cutting-edge studies and professional development in advanced countries), the pursuit of short-term international experiences focused on improving intercultural literacy and communication has also become an important factor driving East Asian university students to study abroad. This presentation explores the international experiences of Japanese undergraduate students in both the pre- and during-coronavirus eras. First, the presentation provides an overview of the policy backgrounds and discusses trends in international student exchange in Japan. This section briefly touches on recent Japanese government initiatives for university internationalization, such as the Top Global University Project and the Inter-University Exchange Project, characteristics of international mobility of Japanese students, and the shift from long-term degree-seeking mobility to short-term credit seeking mobility. Next, by referring to the results of a large-scale survey conducted in the pre-corona era, the perceived impacts of study abroad experiences among Japanese undergraduate students are examined. This section focuses on the impacts on developing the competencies required in the current globalized society. It then explores the responses of universities to continuing international education exchange during the pandemic. Finally, it discusses future directions of international education exchange in Japan and East Asia. The presenters suggest that pursuing the most appropriate mix of online and in-person international exchange will become crucial in the post-pandemic era.

10:45-10:55

(Break)

2. How is the pandemic changing the global engagement among leading universities?

10:55-11:15

The Role of Universities in Promoting Sustainability as a Shared World Challenge

Liu Jing (Tohoku University) & Tristan McCowan (UCL)

The role of universities in promoting sustainable development has been widely recognized and discussed by the international community. The global pandemic brought unprecedented challenges to universities in terms of teaching, learning, and internationalization. Meanwhile, it pushed universities to take more comprehensive initiatives in promoting global sustainability. This presentation includes three parts. First, it explores the ways in which universities have been taking action to respond to sustainability issues at the global level. Then it introduces Tohoku University's initiatives in promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through education, research, campus management, and community outreach. Finally, it discusses challenges and barriers for promoting leading universities' engagement in promoting sustainability in Japan. It concludes by emphasizing a whole institutional approach to engage universities in promoting the SDGs as shared world challenges.

11:15-11:35

World Leading Universities and Global Engagement under/post Pandemic

Tatiana Fumasoli (UCL)

This presentation will discuss ideas and practices of global engagement in higher education. Specifically, it will outline how "global engagement" has changed over time and how it has been affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. Drawing on the case of UCL, it will be argued that global engagement is shaped by institutional capacity. This points to distinctive governance, organisational identities, and available resources. The presentation argues that each university should find its unique global engagement profile and that this needs to be articulated within a systemic perspective.

11:35-12:15

Panel discussion

Discussants: Fujio Ohmori (Tohoku University), Victoria Showunmi (UCL)

Participants: Rachel Brooks, Tatiana Fumasoli, Liu Jing, Tristan McCowan, Yukiko Shimmi, Akiyoshi Yonezawa

12:15-12:20

Closing remarks

Dr Tatiana Fumasoli, UCL Institute of Education

Speakers:



Professor [Claire Callender](#) – chair of the symposium

BIO

Claire Callender (BSc, PhD) is Professor of Higher Education Policy at UCL Institute of Education (IoE) and Professor of Higher Education Studies at Birkbeck, University of London. At UCL, she is Deputy Director of the Centre for Global Higher Education, an international research centre funded by the ESRC.

Claire's research and writing focus on higher education student finances and its consequences. She has contributed to some of the most significant UK inquiries into student funding, and presented evidence to various Parliamentary Select Committees. She was a New Century Fulbright Scholar at the Harvard School of Education from 2007-2008. In 2017, she was awarded an OBE for services to higher education.

Claire is currently conducting research on student loan debt, examining its influences on graduates' post-graduation behaviour and life choices with colleagues from the University of Michigan and the University of Twente.



[Kazuko Suematsu](#) – chair of the symposium

BIO

Kazuko Suematsu is the Special Advisor to the President for International Affairs and the Deputy Director of the Global Learning Center at Tohoku University. She is responsible for developing international strategies for the university, leading various international projects, teaching intercultural education classes at both undergraduate and graduate levels, and overseeing a variety of incoming and outgoing international programs. As a specialist of intercultural collaborative learning, she is committed to internationalization of curriculum and teaching practices as well as research that looks into outcomes of Internationalization at Home, and actively engaged in faculty development at universities both at home and internationally.



Professor [Akiyoshi Yonezawa](#) – opening remarks

BIO

Dr. Akiyoshi Yonezawa is Professor and Vice-Director of *International Strategy Office, and a Special Advisor for the President, at Tohoku University, Japan*. With a background in sociology, he mainly conducts research on comparative higher education policy – especially focusing on world-class universities, internationalization and public-private relationships in higher education. He established his expertise in higher education policy and management through working experience at Nagoya University, OECD, Hiroshima University and the University of Tokyo. He is a board member at Japan Association for Higher Education Research and at Japan Comparative Education Society, and a national delegation of the Group of National Experts on Higher Education for OECD. He is also actively contributing international research publication, e.g. as an editorial advisory board member of *Higher Education* and *International Higher Education*. He is also one of the book series editors of *Higher Education in Asia* (Springer). His recent co-edited book *Researching Higher Education in Asia* (Springer, 2018) was granted the “Best Book Award 2019” from Comparative and International Education Society (SIG Higher Education).



[Rachel Brooks](#)

BIO

Rachel Brooks is Professor of Sociology at the University of Surrey, an executive editor of the *British Journal of Sociology of Education* and co-editor of the Routledge/SRHE book series ‘Research into Higher Education’. She has published widely on the sociology of higher education, and is currently leading the ERC-funded ‘Eurostudents’ project. Her recent books include: *Reimagining the Higher Education Student* (2021, with Sarah O’Shea); *Sharing Care: Early and Primary Carer Fathers and Early Years Parenting* (2020, with Paul Hodgkinson); and *Education and Society: Places, Policies, Process* (2018).



[Yukiko Shimmi](#)

BIO

Yukiko Shimmi is a senior assistant professor at the Global Learning Center, Tohoku University in Japan. Yukiko's research focuses on the international mobility of students, including the motivation and the impact of study abroad experiences on students. Recently, her academic interest lies in the enhancement of the connectivity of international education practices between secondary schools and universities. She also studies international mobility of academics and their experiences. Previously, she worked as an assistant professor and international education advisor at the Graduate School of Law, Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo, Japan. Yukiko received her Ph.D. degree in Higher Education at Boston College while she worked as a research assistant at the Center for International Higher Education (CIHE). She earned her masters' degree in Educational Psychology at the University of Minnesota with a Fulbright scholarship. She also holds a Bachelors' of Arts in Human Relations from Keio University in Japan.



[Jing Liu](#)

BIO

Jing Liu is an associate professor at the Graduate School of Education, Tohoku University, Japan. Prior to the current position, he served as an assistant professor at the Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University, Japan, from 2013 to 2017. Then, he worked as a JSPS research fellow at the Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo between 2017 and 2019. His research areas include sociology of education, international comparative education and development, and education for sustainability. His current research projects include school collaboration for school improvement in China and Japan, small-scale schools and quality education in rural China, and transformation of higher education for sustainability in Asia.



[Tristan McCowan](#)

BIO

Tristan McCowan is Professor of International Education at the Institute of Education, University College London. His work focuses on higher education and international development, particularly in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, including issues of access, quality, innovation and sustainability. His latest book is *Higher Education for and beyond the Sustainable Development Goals* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), and he is editor of *Compare – a Journal of International and Comparative Education*. He is currently leading a multi-country Global Challenges Research Fund project on universities and climate change.



[Tatiana Fumasoli](#)

BIO

Dr Tatiana Fumasoli is Associate Professor in Higher Education Studies and Director of CHES at the UCL Institute of Education. Her expertise includes higher education management, strategy and policy in international perspective. Tatiana has coordinated several international projects focusing on global governance, external engagement and the academic profession. Her research interests lie at the intersection of management studies, organisation theory and sociology of professions and expertise. Tatiana has extensively published in the main journals in the field and is editor of *Higher Education Quarterly* (Wiley).



[Fujio Ohmori](#) – panel discussion

BIO

Fujio Ohmori has been Professor at the Institute for Excellence in Higher Education, Tohoku University since April 2016 after thirteen years of serving as a professor at another two institutions, namely, first Kumamoto University and then Tokyo Metropolitan University. Before joining academia, he worked at Japan's Ministry of Education for approximately twenty years.

He graduated from Kyoto University as a sociologist in 1982, and received PhD from the Institute of Education, University of London in 2008. His research interest lies in sociological analysis of education in general and higher education in particular. His research projects, funded by the Japanese government's research grant scheme (Kakenhi), covered the issues of 'postgraduates' employability', 'PhD holders as temporary staff at universities', 'leadership, management and governance in higher education', and 'international and transnational higher education'. Currently he is engaging in two Kakenhi projects on the themes of "discipline-based education research and professional and organizational development to raise learning outcomes in higher education" and "Comparative analysis of higher education governance from the viewpoints of political economy".



[Victoria Showunmi](#)

BIO

Victoria is a lecturer at the UCL Institute of Education. Her career profile has reflected her interest the areas of leadership, identity, gender, race and equalities research in education. She is the British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society (BELMAS) conference Chair and is AERA Member at Large for the Executive SIG and the Programme Chair for the International Studies SIG for AERA. She is currently engaged with an international research project exploring Black girls'/women's experience in education and the workplace. Her most recent publications include Showunmi, v. et. al The Bloomsbury Handbook in Gender and Educational Leadership and Management (in press) Moorosi, P., & Showunmi, V., (2022) Understanding leadership identity construction: gendered analysis in fourth edition of the International Encyclopedia of Education published by Elsevier.