

A New WAVE of FREEDOM for Kyoto University —— Kaoru Takara ——

Vision (WAVE)

Let's return to the origin of Kyoto University (KU) to regain its historical virtues. Since its establishment in 1897, KU has valued freedom of diversity and engaging dialogue. I would like to start a new WAVE that sustains these values and flows with the strong cooperation of all university members including staff, students, and collaborators.

I will actualize the school tradition of freedom, which is a spiritual symbol of KU that prevails in every corner of the university. Balancing individual ideas with the respect for other opinions, KU will maintain freedom of thought, freedom of speech and action, and academic freedom. Our university should respect the diversity of all members and provide an environment conducive for study, work and living, regardless of gender, nationality, race, religion, and physical disabilities. I attach great importance to dialogue and consensus building among members of the university and the public outside, in order to promote the freedom and diversity of the university.

Advocating the virtues of KU is valuable not only for the university, but also for Japan and the whole world. Recently many regions have suffered from various social divisions and conflicts which have resulted in the loss of freedom, tolerance and harmonization. Recognizing the importance of freedom, diversity and dialogue, KU can revitalize itself as an enterprising university that makes important contributions to the world. This is the path forward for “harmonious coexistence within the human and ecological community on this planet,” which is KU’s principal mission. Returning to the historic values of KU, I would like to motivate a new WAVE with all of you on this occasion of the presidential election.

See also the Web version at <http://www.gsais.kyoto-u.ac.jp/staff/takara/upcoming/>.



World-leading University

Having been recognized for “free academic tradition”, “Kyoto school”, “research university” and “university of exploration”, KU has developed tangible and intangible assets for more than a century as a world-famous university that has attracted talented people in many fields who yearn to be part of KU. Let's make use of these assets to gather people with the expertise of the world to KU where they can thrive within the excellent environment. I can contribute to this effort with my experience of more than 25 years of international involvement with UNESCO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), etc.

Active and innovative University

The university has a long history of education and pursuit of fundamental ideas in many disciplines, using multifaceted viewpoints and problem solving with multi-dimensional aspects. KU will continue in its unique educational approach which emphasizes field studies and dialogue between students and professors, performing waves of innovation in all academic fields.

Valued University

KU has a unique history of autonomy that does not yield to undue pressures from outsiders. We should maintain this independence for the university, faculty, and students. At the same time, it is important to have dialogue between and within groups with differing positions to reach a consensus for important issues of the university. By continuing conscientious efforts that combine traditional values and innovative ideas we can provide the basis for new values in the future.

Environmental Excellence

Currently many university members feel the high pressure for obtaining research funds, are inundated with exhausting paperwork, and pressed for time to meet endless deadlines. We should improve the working and living styles, encouraging our talented members to thrive and grow at KU. Let's realize the motto of “Learn well, work well and enjoy well.” by creating an excellent environment for study, work and living.

Implementation of FREEDOM policies

Through honest dialogue with many people in the university, I will address various issues that have not been solved or touched upon for many years. These difficult issues have long been questioned and people wonder why the problems have not been properly addressed or solved. Of course, I respect various senses of values and different cultural ideas and will try to find innovative solutions without adhering to unnecessary traditions and existing frameworks. I will do my best to carry out the following **FREEDOM** policies.

The numbers at the end of the paragraphs indicate: **【1】** to be completed or initiated during the first wave (the first two years 2020-2022); **【2】** to be considered (some of them are initiated) during the first wave and actualized during the second wave (2022-2024); and **【3】** to be considered during the first two waves and completed during the third wave (2024-2026).

F (Finance)

- I will propose a Kyoto University Financial Bond (KUFB or *Kyodai-Sai*) with a scale of 10,000,000,000 JPY (ten billion Japanese yen) or more, which is independent from MEXT's regular financial support and will provide a dynamic financial base for the university. Because the market continues with very low interest rates, I believe it is the perfect timing to propose KUFB while KU maintains a ranking of AA+; the rate for redeeming the ten billion JPY bond (KUFB) will be equivalent to 13,000,000 JPY per year, based on our provisional estimate. We expect people or organizations outside KU to purchase bonds and profit from it. To plan and maintain a long-term financial situation, I will establish a committee for long-term finance policy. **【1】**
- In 2022, KU will celebrate its 125th anniversary since its establishment in 1897 and is now soliciting contributions from various donors. The total target donation is also ten billion JPY. As president, I will strive to achieve this target by realizing the ideas that I am proposing herewith, and gaining the cooperation of KU alumni, companies, and private donors. Combining these donations and the KUFB above, I will address important matters which has not been possible before because of the budget shortage. **【1】**

R (Research)

- We should establish a system for ensuring research ethics. Although already established in the area of life sciences in KU, this is surely important for studies about human-beings at present and for the future. The system will maintain an appropriate and fair environment in research and education, and retain and protect human dignity and rights. Consilience approach is very important when considering emergency and risk management. **【1】**
- Based on many agreements, not only with overseas universities/institutions but also with UN agencies and international organizations, I will establish and strengthen a strategic KU-centered international network, making use of the overseas field study sites, on-site laboratories, off-campus research and education facilities, large-scale research facilities, and overseas KU offices in Heidelberg, Bangkok and Washington, D.C. I will revisit systems and committees for internationalization and establish a unified system that can promote international activities for all departments of KU. **【1】**

- I will encourage all types of research and educational activity, not only super-advanced studies (cutting-edge research) but also basic and applied studies which can be implemented only in KU because of its scientific freedom, with wider perspectives. I will promote advanced and practical research that can immediately contribute to the society (such as iPS), long-term basic science and interdisciplinary studies, as well as considering support any research theme propositions. I will establish a system for evaluating the significance of the research. 【1】
- I will accelerate the interdisciplinary challenge approach (for example, “AI and philosophy”), especially consilience studies combining natural sciences with social sciences and humanities, which can be achieved only by a comprehensive university like KU. I will strengthen the humanities research that is expected to lead Japan as a Special National University Corporation. 【1】
- Since KU is well-known as a “university of exploration,” I respect the principle of on-site investigation (or hands-on approach) and will maintain and further develop field-based studies, encouraging challenging research that deals with unknown and unexplored fields or places. 【2】
- I will strive to maintain and upgrade many facilities, which characterize KU, such as domestic and overseas field sites, on-site laboratories, off-campus research and education facilities, large-scale research facilities, the KU Hospital, libraries, the KU Museum, cultural facilities, and sports facilities. I believe these sites and facilities can be exposed and evaluated to compete or cooperate with other top-level institutions around the world. 【2】

E (Education)

- I will consider a new system promoting overseas on-site education and research to encourage students to enjoy their stay and study abroad for short or long terms. There are various international and interdisciplinary educational programs in KU, which have shown excellent achievements. I will reactivate and develop them further with adequate financial support. I will try to dispatch a group of students from different disciplines as a “KU Student Mission” in hopes of stimulating their experiences in overseas countries, making use of KU’s overseas facilities. 【1】
- The current pandemic situation brought the wider spread of on-line lectures or on-line learning. I would like to make use of this new system as a KU model for on-line lectures so that students can participate in lectures through on-line systems between campuses or from outside of the campus, or even from abroad. 【1】
- I understand that much emphasis has been placed on intellectual education after the restructuring of the two-year liberal arts school system in 1993. However, I believe that ethical education, as well as health, and physical education are equally important during our youth. I will reinforce the facilities for cultural and sport or recreational activities to provide students more opportunities for engaging in various activities and self development. For example, I would like to renovate old sports facilities such as the gymnasium, swimming pool and sports grounds by modernization with state-of-the-art and easy-to-use equipment. I hope such facilities can also be used by eligible citizens and encourage donations. 【1】
- Since KU is well-known as a “research university,” students will deepen their knowledge in their chosen fields, and discover a world that can be seen only after advanced study. Even after specializing, students need a broader education, including liberal arts, so they will discover other aspects of the world in development of their wisdom.

I will keep and enhance such KU traditions so that everybody can learn anything at any time depending on their stage of study. 【2】

- Let's revisit the undergraduate school education. I hope the school can better enable eager young students to advance in knowledge and develop themselves, considering their career paths for the future and their whole life in this "100-year life time" era. 【3】

E (Emergency)

- I will make every effort to cope with and settle the situations impacted by the unprecedented COVID-19 outbreak. I will also take quick strategic actions for proper measures in the world "After COVID-19" by discussing with many people in KU and others. 【1】
- We cannot be completely free from other natural disasters. KU may face earthquakes on the Hanaori Fault that is very close to the main campus and may cause very serious damage to KU; and earthquakes in the Nankai Trough may trigger tsunamis, with severe impact on KU facilities in coastal zones. I will consider emergency management issues making use of knowledge and experience obtained during my 24-year tenure at DPRI. I will also improve old facilities (more than 50 years old) in terms of renovation and strengthening resistance against serious earthquake damage making use of the KUFB. 【2】

D (Diversity)

- I will encourage women to participate more actively in various important topics within a more supportive and conducive environment. Women's voices are always important to improve gender balance and equal opportunities. 【1】
- I will create learning and working environments that are easier for handicapped persons, persons raising children and nursing-care workers (earlier realization of barrier-free environments). Establishing on-campus child-care facilities is one of my priorities. 【2】
- I expect and encourage more active participation of international staff and students in various activities to stimulate and globalize KU. I will improve the working and learning environment while providing a safe and secure environment for such international colleagues and visitors. 【2】
- Young researchers are very important because they will contribute to the future of research and education in KU. Many of them, however, have jobs with a limited term, which may make them pessimistic about the future. I would like to establish better working environments, for example, by incorporating more tenure-track systems into KU to encourage them to continue their work. 【2】

O (Opportunities)

- I propose to invite applications for Executive Vice Presidents (including Provost). I will select excellent applicants who have strong intention and ability. This is to constantly introduce new and fresh ideas into the executive system of the university to avoid the risk of inflexibility and rigidity. I will introduce the first, second and third waves every biennium during the six years of my service. Of course, some may stay longer at his/her position. 【1】
- Recognizing that administrative officers contribute to practical university management and implementation, I encourage such professional workers to be more strategically active in supporting the top-level university

management. I will develop a system for cooperation of professors and staff in the executive office and evaluate its effectiveness. 【1】

- I will periodically introduce opportunities for dialogue with younger staff including students of KU, who will support the next generations. Using this dialogue as a compass, I would like to review and explore future directions for KU. As a process of establishing accountability, I will regularly hold press conferences about every two months, taking questions or requests from everybody. 【1】
- I will also try to characterize KU's facilities as public squares (plazas), making these facilities for learning of students and people, exchanging activities of KU alumni, contributing to local activities in Kyoto and surroundings, and open cooperative research, education, and exchange. 【3】

M (Motivation)

- I will reform the current working systems for supporting staff such as technicians, URA (university research administrators) and part-time workers, so they will become more active and have higher hopes for their future as partners of research, education, and medical services in the university. 【1】
- Taking advantage of the location of KU in Kyoto, I will promote cooperative studies based on the characteristics of the location and with enterprises in surrounding areas. We will be growing with its citizens and thereby further contribute to Kyoto. I would like to encourage more involvement of KU colleagues including students in local, social, and community-based activities to experience the actual world, which has issues to be solved by the participation of academia, in order to strengthen the society-KU interaction. 【2】
- I will establish a responsible system to enhance and encourage extracurricular activities that are officially approved by the university and improve the situations of advisory professors who are voluntarily contributing to such activities. For example, one idea is to establish the KU Sports Union as a non-profit-making organization (NPO). 【2】
- Avoid war and seek peace - I will adhere to the KU mission to 'pursue harmonious coexistence within the human and ecological community on this planet'. KU should endeavor to foster international persons who understand cultures of different countries and races, remove hatred and misunderstandings, and contribute to the harmonious coexistence. 【3】

Self-introduction:

Over the years, I have held the following roles:

- Head of Research Institution and School: Two years (2015.4-2017.3) as Director of Disaster Prevention Research Institute (DPRI) and four years (2017.4-present) as Dean of Graduate School of Advanced Integrated Studies in Human Survivability (GSAIS = Shishu-Kan)
- Deputy Executive Director (in charge of Uji and remote campuses) for six months (2016.10-2017.3)
- Assistant to Executive Vice-President (in charge of facilities) for four years (2010.10-2014.9)
- Program Leader (2009-2015) of a Global COE Program “Sustainability/Survivability Science for a Resilient Society Adaptable to Extreme Weather Conditions (GCOE-ARS): Head of the educational unit (2010.4-2012.3)
- Program Coordinator (2011-2018) of a Leading Graduate School Program “Inter-Graduate School Program for Sustainable Development and Survival Societies” (GSS = Global Survivability Studies): Head of the educational unit (2012.4-2015.3)
- Chairholder, Kyoto University UNESCO Chair on Water, Energy and Disaster Management (WENDI) (2018.4-present)

in KU and have experience in:

- Emergency management for the current pandemic situation based on a 24-year experience at DPRI, Kyoto University.
- Promotion of interdisciplinary research and education programs such as GCOE-ARS, GSS and Shishu-Kan.
- Participation in international research projects such as a Research Supervisor of SATREPS, a Research Leader of JASTIP-disaster prevention.
- Cooperation with international institutions such as UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNDRR, UNU and ICL.
- Strong commitments in UNESCO activities as a member of the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, establishment of KU UNESCO Chair WENDI. Attended UNESCO-IHP Intergovernmental Council (IGC) as a member of Japanese delegation consecutive 11 times (1996-2016, four times 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014 are delegation head of Japan), IGC Vice Chairperson (2008-2010) and a member of Finance Committee (2012-2016). Contributed to IHP Regional Steering Committee for Southeast Asia and the Pacific as Secretary (1999-2012) and Chairperson (2015-2017).
- Graduated 48 Doctors of Engineering, Kyoto University (13 Japanese, 35 international students from 13 countries) as the main supervisor.
- Established two Industry-University Collaborative Chair in GSAIS (Shishu-Kan) (Toppan Printing Co., Ltd. and JX Nippon Mining & Metals Corporation)
- Experiences in Sports (Kyoto University Baseball Team; player during undergraduate school, Advisor for 14 years, Manager (Head Coach) twice for four years (1981-1982, 2015-2016), and
- Kyoto University alumnus.

Above are the strengths of the candidate.

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School Home Page in English: https://www.gsais.kyoto-u.ac.jp/staff/takara/en_index.htmlKU Database for Education

and research <http://kyouindb.iimc.kyoto-u.ac.jp/j/iD2dP>

Wikipedia in Japanese: <http://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/寶馨>

