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[Message from the New President]

# Even as it leads the way in world-class research Hitotsubashi pays personal attention to each student's education and prepares them for an increasingly globalized society

My recent appointment as president of Hitotsubashi University is a weighty responsibility before which I feel a bracing sense of determination.

Here, I would like to reflect on Hitotsubashi's distinctive character and strengths and to set out my concept and aspirations for the university's further development going forward.



**Koichi Tadenuma**  
17th President of Hitotsubashi University

**M**aking the most of Hitotsubashi's distinctive character and its strengths, we will deliver research and education that are increasingly global

Over its long history, Hitotsubashi University has developed into one of Japan's leading universities for both research and education in the social sciences, thanks to the dedicated efforts of our predecessors and the successful careers and support of our alumni. It has shown particularly strong leadership in academic research with practical applications, such as research that contributes to solving issues and redesigning sys-

tems in society, the economy, and the law, both in Japan and worldwide, as well as research that helps improve business management, while at the same time placing similar importance on the fundamental and applied theoretical research that lays the groundwork for solving social problems.

Through its unique teaching system focused on small-group seminars, Hitotsubashi University also provides an education that values each student individually, and has thereby produced many graduates who have shone in their chosen careers. The distinctive character of Hitotsubashi University is twofold: the faculty engage in high-level research while at the same time providing

intensive teaching, as the system of small-group seminars, in particular, allows them to work closely with their students. Our graduates emerge from this favorable environment equipped with in-depth specialized knowledge and a broad-based liberal arts education—ready to contribute to social, economic, and academic advancement in Japan or in the global arena, as many of them have in fact done. Hitotsubashi alumni have earned high regard in every sector, above all in the business world.

The basic mission of a university remains constant: to pursue leading-edge research and return the results to society, and to produce able graduates prepared for active careers. Yet the nature of the research and education that universities are called on to provide will naturally change, in terms of content and level, to keep pace with the times. Today, with every sector of society undergoing globalization, both the contents of the research and the quality of the graduates we produce must meet the needs of this contemporary society. And universities themselves, like society's other components, are exposed to intense international competition. I will endeavor to live up to Hitotsubashi's long tradition by making the most of its distinctive character and its strengths, and to take the evolution that the university's history represents a stage further in today's increasingly globalized society and create a seat of research and learning at the highest possible level.

This concept has three key points: world-class research, synergism between research and education, and preparing graduates for global careers.

### **T**hrough world-class research, we help solve the problems of contemporary society

As a research university, Hitotsubashi's mission consists, firstly, of helping solve social problems through leading-edge research in the social sciences. As competition intensifies among nations, organizations, and individuals, the world must confront serious problems such as wealth disparity, poverty, economic instability, degradation of the environment, conflicts at state and corporate levels, and the greying of populations. It will take the collective wisdom of the social sciences to solve these problems. Hitotsubashi University will pursue leading-edge research oriented toward solving these global issues and improving social, economic, corporate and other systems. With these goals in view, I would like us to become still more active in joint research, drawing on the international research networks that we have formed through our participation in large-scale projects such as the 21st Century COE (Centers of Excellence) and Global COE programs, and also strengthening our industry-academia-government partnerships. At the same time, together with improving the university library as a foundation for scholarship and education, we will also strengthen the role it plays in international scholarly communication. In 2014, the Hitotsubashi Insti-



tute for Advanced Studies was created, and our plans call for enhancing the caliber and international nature of our research still further with the new Institute as its nucleus.

If a university is to produce world-class research, it cannot simply rely on the capacity and motivation of individual faculty members. Having personally been deeply involved in research, I know that it requires time, the right conditions, and sufficient funding. What the university can do to enhance individuals' skills does of course have a part to play in bringing about cutting-edge research, but another prerequisite is providing the conditions that enable researchers to concentrate on their work. I believe researchers have a "peak season"—a time when they produce a veritable outpouring of ideas which can be shaped into ground-breaking papers. This occurs in their early and mid-career years, and I think it is essential to allow researchers in this age group to take sabbaticals so they can seize that time, and to provide them with an environment in which to concentrate on their research. For example, it should be possible to temporarily reduce or eliminate selected faculty members' teaching load and assign them to the Institute for Advanced Studies, where they can devote their time to international joint research with guest researchers from other countries who work at the frontiers of their fields.

In addition to facilitating research by individual faculty members, it is important, going forward, to strategically raise the standard of research in the university as a whole. Together with redoubling our efforts to obtain research funds from external sources, I intend to strengthen our research capacity by prioritizing the allocation of internal resources, on a university-wide basis, to those fields where we can expect world-class progress and creative developments, and where we can make contributions that meet social demand.

### **C**reating a revitalized university through synergism between research and education

In addition to helping solve social problems, research at Hitotsubashi has another major significance. As I noted earlier, at Hitotsubashi high-caliber research and quality education form an inseparable whole. Faculty members who engage in cutting-edge research on a daily basis also maintain a very close rapport with their students; for example, the student-to-teacher ratio in seminars averages seven or eight. The teacher's own experience of academic research thus provides the students with a foundation on which to identify their own topics, comprehend them in a multifaceted way, and develop the capacity to think logically and solve problems. At the same time, as they teach, faculty members are organizing their knowledge and finding ways to address new issues. It is very important, as a fundamental and distinctive trait of Hitotsubashi University, that we continue to create a climate in which research and

education revitalize each other in this synergistic way.

Another major characteristic is the fact that the barriers between disciplines are traditionally low and students are encouraged to take a wide range of subjects from other departments. They are also able to take subjects in the natural sciences and other fields at universities with which we have alliances, especially those that belong to the Tokyo Consortium of Four Universities, which consists of Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo Medical and Dental University, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, and Tokyo Institute of Technology. Such arrangements are behind one of Hitotsubashi's most attractive features: its ability to produce well-rounded students who have a broad-based knowledge of the liberal arts in addition to in-depth specialized expertise. To further strengthen these fine traditions and features, I foresee offering students model interdisciplinary courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and expanding the minor system.

## **C**reating a “Hitotsubashi model” of global career preparation and student initiative

As I see it, career preparation that is “global” involves acquiring the basic skills that enable one to communicate, to understand and make oneself understood, and to cooperate and form teams with people worldwide. It also means being conscious of one's own identity and that of one's country within the global context as one acts in various international arenas, and being able to enhance the value of that presence. To provide this kind of career preparation, we need to go a step further in developing our programs.

The approach that I envisage begins with the development of language skills, with English as the core. Hitotsubashi has long provided on-campus teaching of English skills by instructors with native or near-native proficiency, and since the 2013 academic year, with the assistance of student monitors, we have been running a trial of a short program of language study abroad.

Based on the trial results, we will consider the program from every point of view, including how to guarantee its funding, motivate students to learn, and ensure the quality of the courses they attend overseas, together with the possibility of providing intensive English courses on our own campus, and we will design a program for developing English communication skills that is optimized in terms of cost-effectiveness.

Of course, acquiring language skills as a tool is just the start. Students must hone their abilities to carry out investigations and thereby solve problems, with in-depth specialized expertise and broad-based knowledge of the liberal arts as a foundation. We will accordingly expand the overseas short-term study visits and internships which we are implementing with the support of the Min-

istry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology under the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development. This will afford our students ample opportunities to meet and talk with researchers, students, businesspeople, international agency staff, and so on in other countries, after thorough preparation on their home campus. I would also like to facilitate overseas study trips in seminar groups, and inter-university seminars with overseas universities. I am confident that programs such as these, which require students to take the initiative with a clear sense of purpose or a problem to solve, represent the most effective approach for Hitotsubashi and its high achievers.

The medium- and long-term overseas study programs made possible largely by the financial support of our alumni association, the Josuikai, are also a very effective career preparation, in that students take regular courses at the foreign universities they attend, setting their sights high and working toward their goal with a sense of purpose. I would like to conclude academic exchange agreements with still more universities and increase the number of students in these longer overseas study programs. We will also provide more courses taught in English on our own campus, both to aid students preparing to study abroad and to keep their skills from rusting after they return. These same measures will lead to an increased intake of international students.

By achieving the optimum combination of this wide array of programs, I aim to put forward a model of global career preparation that befits a leading university—what might be called “the Hitotsubashi model.”

## **M**y own relationship with Hitotsubashi University

As a way of introducing myself, I would like to take this opportunity to say a little about my own relationship with Hitotsubashi University.

My association with Hitotsubashi goes back to my childhood. My father, a specialist in labor law, was a professor in the Law Faculty. He often invited his seminar students to our home for intense discussions and conversations around the dining table. In the course of listening to these students and finding that they had interesting things to say, I sensed the quality of the education they were receiving, and Hitotsubashi soon topped my own list of universities where I would like to study.

On becoming a student there, I felt I had made the right decision. There was a liberal atmosphere on campus, and we were able to decide for ourselves what we wanted to study. I explored my own interests and read widely at the University Library. I joined the Field Hockey Club, too, and became very involved in sports. Even today, I remain in close touch with my fellow club members, with whom I shared many joys and sorrows.

I especially enjoyed the seminars that started in my



third year. I took public finance and public economics with Professor Hiromitsu Ishi, who was a strict teacher. Being late for class was out of the question, and if you went along unprepared you would be grilled until you felt like making a run for it, so we all learned self-discipline. I think he instilled in us not only good study habits, but also social awareness.

He may have been tough, but Professor Ishi also looked after his students. He was an avid outdoorsman, and he took the members of his seminar climbing in summer and skiing in winter. The university had a lodge in Myoko Highlands in those days, and I have fond memories of our party, led by Professor Ishi, climbing to the summit of Mount Myoko. I think the education we received from him was character-building and taught us how to be sociable.

The things that made Hitotsubashi University so good in those days are very much with us today. We have a very fine system, with its low barriers between the four departments and its high degree of freedom, that enables students both to explore a specialty in depth and to study fields taught in other departments that interest them. Our teaching focusing on small-group seminars continues to be a major distinguishing feature, and, as in my day, many students are very internationally minded. I intend to make efforts to pass on these qualities for the sake of future generations.

## **T**he president is like the conductor of an orchestra

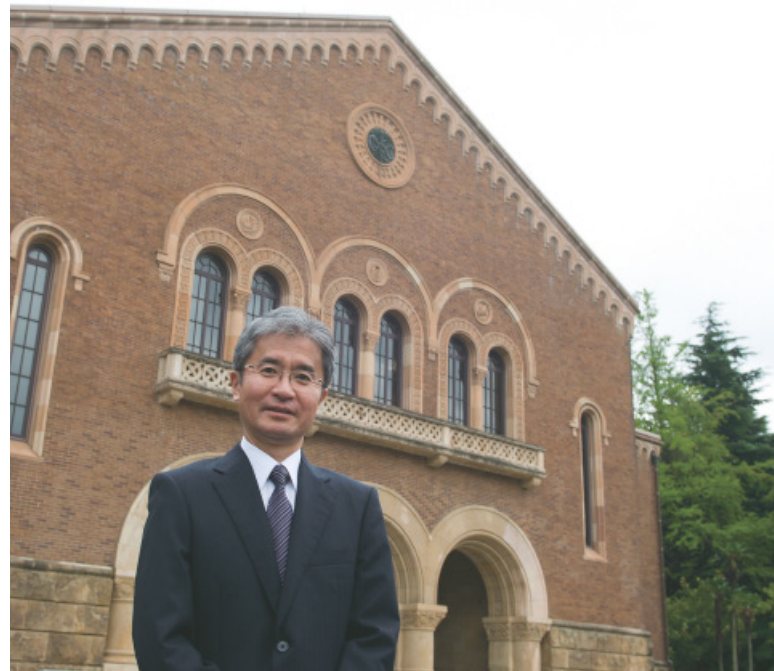
I see the president of a university as resembling the conductor of an orchestra: he or she has to lead by both giving direction to the whole endeavor and paying attention to each part of the ensemble to ensure that their abilities are brought into full play. Further, in choosing and implementing a practical course of action, it is important that the president have an objective grasp of Hitotsubashi's position, both internationally and domestically. Although we have always been rated highly in terms of both research and education within Japan, when measured by objective global standards such as those of the World University Rankings, it must be said that, in common with Japan's other universities when it comes to the social sciences, the current evaluation of Hitotsubashi is far from high.

In my own field of economic theory, I have done work of international standing while both competing and collaborating with preeminent researchers around the world. I have also been involved for many years in peer review and editorial roles with international journals that are leaders in their special fields. I thus understand from personal experience just what goes into producing world-class research. Drawing on this experience, I will pursue globalization of research and education in a way that befits Hitotsubashi, that is, with a long-term perspective that takes into account the resources the university has developed and the reforms in both these areas that have borne fruit over the course of its history.

Hitotsubashi University celebrates its 140th anniversary in 2015, since Arinori Mori founded its precursor,

the Commercial Training School, in 1875, and this long history has been one of steady development in both the scope of its research and education and their depth. Going forward, by further strengthening Hitotsubashi's distinctive character as a university that pays personal attention to each student's education even as it leads the way in research, we will continue to live up to this history as we fulfill our role as a center of leading-edge research and education in an increasingly globalized world.

I am very aware that the social and fiscal environment in which we must operate is growing more stringent by the day. I will address the university's management with the vision of the future that I have outlined here as my focus, and will do everything in my power to make Hitotsubashi University worthy of worldwide recognition as a center of solid research and education in the social sciences. I look forward to your continued guidance and support.



### Koichi Tadenuma

Koichi Tadenuma graduated with a B.A. in economics in 1982 from Hitotsubashi University. He earned a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Rochester in 1989 and was appointed lecturer in the Faculty of Economics at Hitotsubashi University in 1990. After assuming the positions of assistant professor in the Faculty of Economics in 1992, professor in the Graduate School of Economics in 2000, and dean of the latter from 2011 to 2013, he was appointed President of Hitotsubashi University in December 2014. Dr. Tadenuma specializes in the theory of social choice, welfare economics, game theory, and public economics. His recent publications include *Shiawase no tame no keizaigaku: kōritsu to kouhei no kangaekata* (Economics for people's happiness: The criteria of efficiency and equity. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011).

Iwanami Junior Shinsho Chi no Kōkai (Voyages of Knowledge) Series  
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