

# A Gathering Place for Students, Corporate Professionals, and Teachers to Discuss Global Human Resources

The “Shibusawa Scholar Expanded Seminar,” a part of Hitotsubashi University Faculty of Commerce and Management’s Shibusawa Scholar Program (SSP), was held on Monday, March 16, 2015. In addition to announcing results of 2014 SSP activities, various panels and group discussions were held based on the objective of this seminar, which was to gain a better understanding from outside professionals regarding the expansion of the SSP in the future, and to introduce the SSP to a wider community.

## Program

- \* **Opening Remarks** Professor Takashi Misumi, Assistant Vice President for Education
- \* **Outline of SSP** Professor Christina Ahmadjian, Graduate School of Commerce and Management (SSP Director)
- \* **Panel Discussion by corporate professionals** Moderator: Professor Yaichi Aoshima, Institute of Innovation Research
- \* **Panel Discussion by students**
- \* **Open Discussion** Moderator: Ken Shibusawa, Chairman of Commons Asset Management Co., Ltd.
- \* **Closing Remarks** Professor Toyohiko Hachiya, Dean of the Graduate School of Commerce and Management



Professor Takashi Misumi



Professor Christina Ahmadjian



## An Opportunity to Better Understand the Corporate Ideal of a Global Resource and to Confirm SSP Effectiveness

The Shibusawa Scholar Program (hereinafter, “SSP”) is an undergraduate educational program conducted by the Faculty of Commerce and Management as part of Hitotsubashi University’s Global Leaders Program. Eiichi Shibusawa, after whom the program is named, was a business leader in modern Japan and was involved in the founding of the Commercial Training School, which was the predecessor of Hitotsubashi University.

In the SSP, as students finish their first year, they are comprehensively evaluated through interviews to discern their aspirations and qualities, in addition to their GPA and English-language ability. Outstanding students are then selected. In 2014, 13 second year students from the Faculty of Commerce and Management were selected as the first SSP graduating class. These high achievers have made tremendous progress as they have taken further specialized classes and seminars in English.

One of those courses is the “Shibusawa Scholar Seminar.” SSP Director Professor Christina Ahmadjian is responsible for the seminar and conducts it to raise student awareness of many issues and expand their sense of curiosity. As part of it, the “Shibusawa Scholar Expanded Seminar” was held to confirm the effectiveness of the program through reporting its results, and to make new discoveries looking forward to the following year.

In this seminar, there were a total of 59 participants: 18 students from the SSP’s first and second graduating classes, 20 corporate professionals, advisory board members, and teachers from the Faculty of Commerce and Management. Corporate professionals were invited not only to round out the seminar as a faculty program but to interact with people that embody the idea of global human resources and share global corporate views.

## “Out of Your Comfort Zone”: Daring to Take on Difficult Challenges in the Outside World

Professor Takashi Misumi explained the human resource development concepts of SSP.

Integral to success is acquiring a foundation of business and environment-related knowledge, with a core of integrity and passion. The three capabilities, or core concepts, of SSP are crossing boundaries (accepting diversity), solving problems, and building communities.

Next, Professor Ahmadjian gave an overview of SSP.

- SSP students get one-third of their credits required for graduation from classes held in English.
- Improving English-language ability is an increasingly important means to communicate with the world, as is the ability to accept others from different cultures, practices, values, gender, and ages. Encouraging such tolerance is another important aspect of this program.
- Studying abroad for one year at a highly rated university is a requirement. From the first

SSP graduating class, 13 students have been accepted to such schools as the University of Pennsylvania, the University of California, the London School of Economics, the Singapore Management University, and others, where the world’s top academic resources are gathered.

- “One Bridge Seminars” are held six times a year and feature leaders on the frontlines of business and research. Rich discussions are held in small groups.

In addition, there were explanations of various efforts to create connections between society and corporations (networking practices), such as fieldwork with students visiting corporations to conduct interviews and developing relationships with overseas sister universities for scholarly exchange.

Professor Ahmadjian repeatedly emphasized the message of working “out of your comfort zone,” meaning students must not be satisfied

with comfortable circumstances but instead take on difficult challenges in the outside world. She used an illustration included in the materi-

als that day of a goldfish in one fishbowl attempting to jump into another fishbowl, noting that “this is the image of SSP.”

## A Panel Discussion Conveying a Global Corporate Perspective Based on Experiences of HR Professionals

The next part of the program had messages from various corporate professionals. Professor Yaichi Aoshima, of the Institute of Innovation Research, acted as a moderator in this panel discussion with four human resource professionals from different companies.

Professor Aoshima asked questions, and the human resource professionals responded with the global views of their companies, based on their actual work experiences.

### Q1: What is a global human resource?

“This is a person who can operate at the same high level of performance, even in countries outside of Japan.” “A person who knows him- or herself and can communicate overseas.” “One who, as a Japanese, can accept diversity and explain Japan in English.”

### Q2: What should a university student be doing now?

“Study so that one can talk about history or other topics outside of business.” “Think about how studying abroad or other experiences can be useful for work, and train to impart these experiences to others.” “Get to know many others with different backgrounds.”

### Q3: What message would you like to impart to SSP students?

“I want them to meet many people during study abroad and to be working hard in the business world in twenty years.” “I would like them to have ambition and curiosity.” “Don’t focus on what you will be doing after you find work; instead, broaden your perspectives.”

## An SSP Student Panel Discussion Primarily in English Shows Major Progress

Next was a panel discussion of six students from the first SSP graduating class. The first half was conducted entirely in English. In the second half, questions were taken from the audience, with some Japanese being used depending on the nature of the question. The discussion caused slight nervousness for the students.

Acting as moderator, Professor Ahmadjian

asked about “the dreams of each person.” Students responded with such answers as, “I’d like to connect communities.” “I want to become a successful consultant in the Asia market.” In the back of the hall, some teachers nodded happily as they listened. According to Professor Ahmadjian, these students have made much progress in the past year.

## An Open Discussion for Generating Ideas for Accepting Diversity between Generations

The program finished with an open discussion, moderated by Ken Shibusawa, Chairman of Commons Asset Management Co., Ltd. and himself a descendant of Eiichi Shibusawa.

Two rounds of discussions were held in a world café style, based on two passages written by Eiichi Shibusawa handed out in advance by Mr. Shibusawa. In the first round, those participants arriving first at tables, mostly students from the first SSP graduating class who acted as hosts, spoke amongst themselves. Themes included “What Wealth can Japan Provide to the World?” At Mr. Shibusawa’s signal, discussions began, and the atmosphere of the hall changed at once to one of fervor, with discussions around the meaning of “wealth” and why it should be distributed. In the second round, everyone but the hosts were free to move around, and a completely new set of members began discussions at new tables. The theme in

this case was “How can New Values be Created from Success Stories and Values from Different Generations?” The section concluded with overviews and summaries from the hosts about the two rounds.

Through this one hour discussion, in round one there were the following comments: “it is important to understand there is wealth visible to the eyes and wealth not visible to the eyes”; “wealth in goods leads to mental wealth, and willingness to understand others is created”; and “corporations provide employment and training as they move into new markets.” In round two, participants shared ideas for linking the three key SSP concepts of crossing boundaries, solving problems, and building communities. Examples include such comments as, “we can understand other generations by being accepting of differences”; and “we will take an interest in others when we find differences.”

## Reporting SSP Results for Development of Future Global Leaders while Maintaining an Awareness of Global Human Resources needed by Corporations

The seminar concluded with parting words from Toyohiko Hachiya, Dean of the Graduate School of Commerce and Management. Hachiya touched on his larger expectations of SSP students and the deep significance of having students, corporate professionals, and educators share the same space. In addition, he empha-

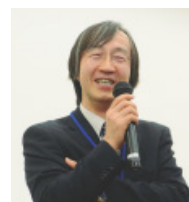
sized that SSP is not a complacent program, rather, it has the objective of developing global human resources needed by society. To achieve this, the cooperation of corporate professionals as was seen in this seminar is critical. He then brought the Shibusawa Scholar Expanded Seminar to a close.



Professor Yaichi Aoshima



Mr. Ken Shibusawa



Toyohiko Hachiya, Dean of the Graduate School of Commerce and Management