

Report on Participating Special Exchange Programme at Kyoto University

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I joined the Two-Month Exchange Programme at the Graduate School of Economics (GSE) in December, 2017. This programme provided me with a lot of useful knowledge and experience. On the first day in Japan we received a warm greeting from Kyoto University, we had a meeting with each professor and enjoyed a small trip around the campus. School life in Kyoto University seems really enjoyable, we can meet many friends from around the world and exchange our culture and opinions. Regarding the academic lessons in Kyoto University, you can attend many economics classes that cover not only their theoretical field but also relate to other fields of study. My favorite class was ASEAN economy and sustainable development with professor Lambino, this subject helped me understand the relationship between each ASEAN country. We got to learn about the concept and history of ASEAN, know the variation and adaptation of both its organization structure and activities, and study the ways in which ASEAN has gained more strength and linkages. We also practiced our critical thinking skills in the Q&A time. Professor Lambino provided some assignments and activated the students' knowledge by challenging them in debate on several interesting issues. We were able to share and learn each person's perspective and their countries' solution for each problem. It was a very interesting and active class and has expanded my understanding of ASEAN and their correlated development relationship. Another interesting class was the comparative development studies with Dr. Raymond Jussaume and Dr. Maria Fonte. We learned about the general concept of sustainable development and covered several detailed case studies. Professor Jussaume made us provide our ideas first and then helped us sharpen our ideas making them clearer and more detailed. So this class was very attractive and enjoyable for everybody. It changed my way of thinking about development that sometimes the country's GDP is not the best indicator of a given situation; we need to see the bigger picture in order to explain about sustainable development. From Dr. Fonte's part of the course, we were able to learn about the modernization process from a western perspective, urban and rural policy, and the process of development in the agricultural sector through a case study of Italy and the EU. This was very interesting topic because I think that I can apply this knowledge to my own country since most of Thailand's exports are still agricultural products, and the idea of organic vegetable and farmer market does pop up in debates in Thailand though not so regularly. The Italian case study provides, I think, a good example of how government intervention is necessary. At the qualitative research method class, Professor Feuer taught us about how to design and interpret a thesis by using the qualitative method, or applying it with the quantitative method. He also gave us suggestions about participant's research topics which helped make them all clearer about their research goals. We can apply the knowledge gained so as to help design our research methodology and interpret our results efficiently. In the development economics class, Professor Kono gave us a lot of examples of the economic development thesis with different kind of statistical tools and methods. He taught me how to apply our economic theories so as to make the project in real life and how to estimate the effects from the research. This class gave me the inspiration to work with the government in field of economics development. This programme was really helpful for me in terms of learning how conduct my research topics and regarding my future career path. We received inspiration from both the topics covered in the classes and from each professor. The friendships made during this programme were also invaluable. It will be an unforgettable memory for everyone.