

# NEWS

vol. 66  
June 7, 2022

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO

東京大学公共政策大学院

# LETTER

**GraSPP**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO

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## Dean's Message

**Keisuke Iida**

**Dean, Graduate School of Public Policy, The University of Tokyo**

On February 24, Russia troops invaded Ukraine on the pretext of protecting pro-Russia forces in the eastern part of that country. The world watched in horror many Ukrainian citizens being killed and injured by incessant bombardment from Russian forces. At the time of this writing, refugees from Ukraine to the neighboring countries number more than three million and are expected to further increase. G-7 and NATO members were firmly united in denouncing Russia and imposing an unprecedented level of economic sanctions. Japan, which is usually not so enthusiastic about imposing economic sanctions on foreign countries, was also firm in walking in lockstep with other G7 nations in sanctioning Russia this time around.

The international community showed both weaknesses and strengths: At the time of the invasion, Russia was the chair of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, and Russia vetoed a draft Security Council resolution, which called for immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukrainian territory. Then, the case of Ukraine moved to the UN General Assembly, and the General Assembly resolution calling for Russian withdrawal passed with 141 members in favor and only five members opposed.

I am sorry to start my inaugural address with such an unhappy story, but this is the harsh reality that we must face. Over the past two years, the world was gripped by the travails of COVID-19, and countries were increasingly inward-looking. Now with this crisis unfolding in front of our eyes, we cannot but face the music and think and act in close cooperation with other like-minded countries. Political and economic ramifications of this war will be very profound and well beyond our imagination to say the least.

The good news is that the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Public Policy (GraSPP) is staffed with many experts versed in intricacies of international security and diplomacy. Also, many of our economists will be able to estimate the economic impact of oil and gas price hikes arising from this war and perhaps the economic costs of post-conflict reconstruction. Together with our faculty, you will be active participants in conducting these analyses and proposing solutions.

GraSPP offers an extremely rich environment if you are eager to take advantage of its resources. We are a relatively young institution on this campus, with its beginning tracing back only to 2004. Over the years, however, GraSPP has managed to grow both in size and diversity. Both the faculty and the student body are very international and diverse. Our international students come from over thirty countries, including developed and developing countries. GraSPP started primarily as a teaching institution with the aim of training students for the practice of public policy, but now with the Ph.D. program being firmly established, we are also an active research organization at the same time. So, whatever your primary interests in public policy may be, you will surely find comfortable space in which to interact with people with similar interests.

GraSPP is also endowed with numerous opportunities if you are interested in going out into the world. GraSPP has dual-degree programs with many of our counterparts in the rest of the world such as Columbia University, the London School of Economics (LSE), and SciencesPo. We are about to start a new dual-degree program with the King's College London as well. To be sure, our international programs were somewhat stymied by the COVID pandemic over the past few years, but 2022 promises to be the year of recovery for us, with many students being finally able to travel abroad more freely. Please try to take advantage of these opportunities as well.

I would like to extend my warmest welcome to those of you who just joined GraSPP, and I hope you will find your experience at GraSPP enriching and invigorating.



# GPPN report 2022



## Roberto Orsi, Project Associate Professor

After the successful first online experience organised by GraSPP in 2021, this year as well the annual GPPN conference has taken place as an online event broadcasted from the Hertie School in Berlin, demonstrating the resilience of our GPPN alliance in the face of the adversities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and a high degree of commitment from everyone. We are grateful to our colleagues at Hertie for their flawless organisational effort, carried out with great professionalism and a warm feeling.

This year we again witnessed a high level of competition between the projects presented by teams from all Schools, covering a large variety of topics, although predominantly with a humanitarian flavour. This fierce competition undoubtedly reflects the high quality of teaching and training students receive in all partner Schools, not to mention their personal commitment and enthusiasm. We as participants from GraSPP were glad to see that our teams were certainly able to compete at the highest level, displaying careful topic choices, an impressive attention to detail, and very strong communication skills. It is also clear that GraSPP teams continue to improve their performance year after year, and as a School we should truly be proud of our overall trajectory.

## Mia Yamakawa (MPP/IP)

I was lucky to participate in the GPPN 2022 Conference. Our group proposed the “WSME (Women in SMEs) Program” (pronounced We’s-Me’s), aiming to increase the birth-rate in South Korea and tackle the issue of the declining population, by providing appropriate infrastructure for teleworking and childcare. Building proposals was a huge learning opportunity, with internal discussions and multiple sessions of fruitful feedback from the professors throughout the program. The experience can be reflected upon in three parts: the value in having a hardworking team, adapting to changing circumstances and finally, the availability of a positive, learning environment.

The Conference truly highlighted the beauty of having students who are all passionate to make a change, and willing to contribute equally to a project. Through the development of the project, the meetings, discussion, and creation of the proposal were all self-directed by each member, helping one another out when needed. Such cooperation was particularly important for this project, as many teams felt waves of motivation due to changing circumstances.

We were excited for a trip to Berlin, with hopes of an in-person conference, until ending up to switching online, as COVID outbreaks continued in Europe. Initially hit by a wave of negativity, we lost motivation to put 100% into the project. However, by using chat rooms and having regularly scheduled zoom meetings, we were able to cultivate a friendship nonetheless and poured our best efforts into the final conference.

To our surprise, our project was amongst 10 selected to be in the finals. This result was beyond our expectations, and made the experience and effort we put in, despite the changing circumstances, more than worthwhile.

Overall, the interaction with students from other universities was an overwhelmingly positive experience, being able to listen to many amazing proposals, as well as create friendships and memories. The details are available on their website, which I would eagerly recommend others who are considering taking this module to peruse before the 2023 conference!

## Tan Yong Beng, Timothy Goo, Risa Shimono (MPP/IP)

Although it was held online for the participants' safety, contrary to the original plan scheduled to take place at the Hertie School in Berlin, we enjoyed the GPPN 2022 conference very much. It was an exciting opportunity for us to hone and apply our policymaking knowledge and skills in a policy challenge our team selected. In addition, we heard and appreciated 28 other policy challenges and novel solutions, and networked with our counterparts from the other prestigious policy schools during the conference. The value of participating in the conference was evident from the diversity of the students and their projects, which we benefited from as we participated in the activity organized by Hertie School prior to day 2.

Within our team, each of us brought our unique perspectives and experiences to devise a policy solution to the pressing North Korean escapees issue in South Korean society. All members were in different parts of the globe, but each member worked together across time zones, having meetings and researching to write a 2,000-word and a 7,000-word draft.

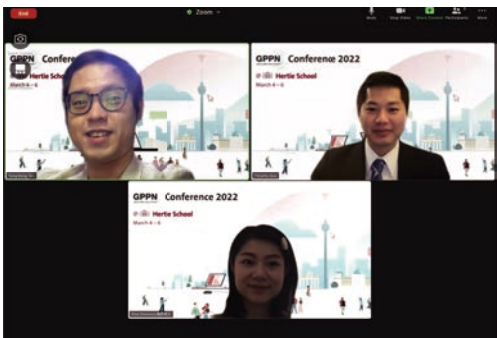
Our team valued the feedback and input from several GraSPP professors as it further strengthened our proposal and thinking. We had a 3-minute presentation in Round 1 and a 5-minute presentation in Round 2, and we were able to calmly get through the presentations and Q&A on the day of the conference, thanks to the good preparation.

We appreciated the well-organized high-quality conference, and the cherry on the cake was the individual UberEats vouchers provided during the conference. Despite the tight schedule of the conference with the time difference, there was time allocated for

networking and enjoying the Berlin culture virtually. We strongly encourage everyone to find a passion project or idea and participate in the next GPPN conference.



A scene from the GPPN conference.



From top left, Tan Yong Beng, Timothy Goo, Risa Shimono

# Featuring our Master's Programs

## Yusuke Kato

## Public Management Program

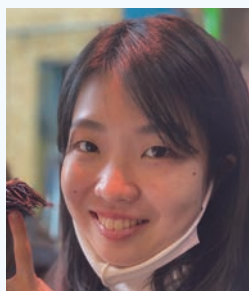


While you will of course have the chance to learn many different things on this course, more than that, my feeling is that its chief characteristic is the tremendous color and appeal provided by the assembled students. The Public Management Program brings together both students who advanced to graduate school seeking to further explore political science and public administration, and also many working professionals, including current public officials and employees of companies working with government ministries and agencies, who are continuing their research while feeding what they have learned back into their jobs and workplaces. If you decide to embark on a career in some form of public service after graduating, I have every confidence that the program will be of direct benefit to you.

I am studying while simultaneously serving as a regional assembly member (Yokosuka City Assembly), and my reason for choosing the program was to "create a bridge between theory and practice." As I hoped, through discussions and report writing, while also getting the very best input, I feel that I am acquiring skills and knowledge that I can put into practice in concrete terms. The course offers opportunities to find solutions to social issues that can be implemented through public sector work and could not be realized through theory or practice alone.

## Sakina Fukuya

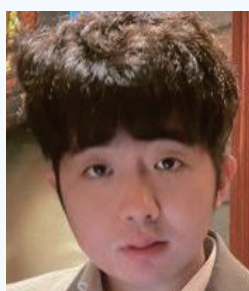
## Economic Policy Program



In the Economic Policy Program, students study economic theory in required courses such as microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics. According to students' individual interests, they then go on to conduct practical studies, including economic analysis of real-world policy issues, which are incorporated into policy proposals. Since my interest lies in international development, one of the attractions of the course for me is that at the same time as acquiring economic knowledge, I can also benefit from the practical know-how of the instructors, who are practitioners in their respective fields. Last year, I engaged in research on gender disparities arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and was able to discuss my work with specialists from the World Bank. Another major attraction is the opportunity to experience evidence-based policymaking (EBPM) through multiple classes. For example, we had the chance to conduct causal inference using administrative and private sector data, develop policies based on the results, and present them to local government officials. The program environment is one where, if you are motivated, you can gain many opportunities, so I hope that you will think carefully about what kind of expertise you want to cultivate and take full advantage of this environment after entering the program.

## Yutaro Yokose

## Legal Policy Program



From my second year, I have been studying overseas as a CAMPUS Asia student. I have therefore been a student as a Legal Policy Program for effectively just one year, but it has been such a fruitful year that I would like to introduce some of my experiences here. Firstly, the program is characterized by the multifaceted perspectives from which we study law. In addition to general legal hermeneutics, we learn about the law from various aspects, such as what is law, what is legislation, and what is its position in society? No matter how you want to be involved in law in the future, whether you want to make laws, provide legal advice, or make money within the scope of the law, the ability to see law from multiple perspectives is a tremendous asset. What is more, the program has many joint classes with the Graduate Schools for Law and Politics and it is also attractive for the fact that you get a real feel for how the legal experts of the future view the law. You might be of the opinion that the program seems rather domestically focused and bland compared to other programs at GraSPP. However, just as criminal law is connected to the rest of the world through extradition treaties, even laws that at first glance seem to be very domestically-oriented are also becoming internationalized. It would be a tremendous waste to be mesmerized by the word "global" and, as a result, to simply discard an opportunity to study law. What is the law for? Why not spend two years grappling with such questions at GraSPP, an institution where theory and practice come together?

## Yuki Kameyama

## International Public Policy Program



The International Public Policy Program examines various regional and global public policy issues of interest and is therefore, with the exception of MPP/IP, different to other master's programs at GraSPP in that research is not focused on any specific academic fields. This creates a diversity of interests among the students on the program, which is what forms a part of its appeal. In my case, for example, my interests lie in political systems of developing countries and policy evaluation. While I have been taking courses centered around comparative politics and positive economics, some of my fellow students are specializing in other areas, such as international human rights law, competition law, or China's foreign policy.

For students considering enrolling at GraSPP or on similar courses, I would recommend that you start by familiarizing yourself with the various features and attractions of each course. At first glance, all courses and graduate schools may seem similar, but if you look carefully you will find that each has its own hidden charms. Taking the time to select the school and course that best fits your own personal interests will certainly enable you to get the most out of your graduate school life.

## Ridhi Soni

## International Program (MPP/IP)



For students like me who are passionate about making a tangible contribution to societal development, MPP/IP provides training and prepares one for the same. It also offers a wide array of intellectually stimulating courses coupled with experiences that supplement and further deepen understanding.

The programme is designed to give sufficient hands-on learning in order to encourage students to develop creative thinking and is adaptable enough to fit the specific interests of students from various backgrounds. It provides exposure to a plethora of new and innovative topics in the field of policy that are relevant to people at all levels of society (individual, community and government). Furthermore, the diverse and stellar faculty at the school makes this a wholesome experience. GraSPP provides a great opportunity to build a lucrative career in the field of policy. For those who are looking at a future in the development sector, the school awaits with new opportunities.

# Spring 2022, Departure Day



The GraSPP Spring Diploma Presentation Ceremony AY2021 took place on Thursday, March 24 2022, at SMBC Academia Hall of the International Academic Research Building.

The ceremony was conducted on a smaller scale while taking measures to prevent COVID-19 infection. Diplomas were presented by the Dean and Vice Dean of GraSPP and congratulated for their completion of the program. The ceremony was delivered online to graduates and their families who could not enter the venue as well. The commendation ceremony for high-achieving graduates was also held, awarding the Best Performance Award to one student and the Outstanding Performance Award to four students.

<http://www.pp.u-tokyo.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2e15be457adf5a544c6a8085f8ce5df4.pdf>  
(in Japanese)

With the change of academic year, former Dean Hiroshi Ohashi resigned as of March 31, 2022.

## Former Dean's message

The Graduate School of Public Policy (GraSPP) is a new department that was established in 2004. Since then, GraSPP has undergone a major transformation, and despite its desire to contribute to the formation of public goods not only in Japan but also abroad, its educational, research, and administrative structure was not sufficient, and the time had come when "GraSPP ver 2.0" was needed.

However, from the very beginning of my appointment, I was faced to deal with the COVID-19 disaster, and since then two years have passed. During the first year, campus was closed, and it made me rethink about the value GraSPP is providing to its students. During the series of dialogues with students I was surprised by some of the ideas but remained glad to hear everyone out.

I think it was almost two challenging years of effort to launch GraSPP ver 2.0, in order to firmly adapt to the needs of students and reflect them in the field, while at the same time trying to establish a new academic affairs committee, and changing the administrative system.

I understand that I was not able to excel in some respects, and I cannot thank the faculty and staff enough for their support over the past two years.

I look forward to watching GraSPP make further progress.



**Hiroshi Ohashi**  
Professor, Graduate School of Public Policy

## TOPICS

Application guidelines for the 2022 professional degree program are now available at the following URL.  
Application Period : July 1 - July 7, 2022 (Professional), July 20 - July 26, 2022 (General)

<http://www.pp.u-tokyo.ac.jp/admissions/application-information/>

## Editor's Postscript

On April 6, Touma Aisaka's Doushi shoujo yo, teki wo ute [Young woman comrade! Shoot the Enemy] won the grand prize in the 2022 Honya Taisho (2022 Book Shop Award). Below is an excerpt from what was an inspirational acceptance speech.

"...Those who seek peace should participate to the greatest degree possible in the peace-building process and work to win mutual trust at the level of individual citizens. ... That is why I too will stop despairing. I oppose war and will strive to build peace. That applies both to my work writing novels and to other aspects of my life." (Editor)

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NEWS  
LETTER

(Editor & Publisher) Graduate School of Public Policy, The University of Tokyo  
(Date of Publication) June 7, 2022

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