

# LETTER

Contents

- 1: Award Recipients
- 2: GraSPP Day 2021 Report
- 3: Student Interview
- 4: "Innovation Governance Expert Program," a Course for Professionals/ TOPICS

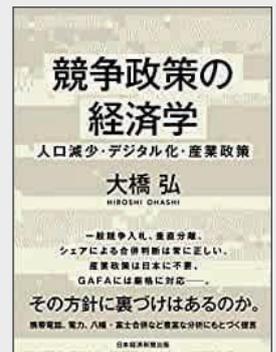
## Award Recipients

The book "Economics of Competition Policy" (Nikkei Business Publications, Inc.) by GraSPP Dean Hiroshi Ohashi was awarded the 64th Nikkei Prize for Excellent Books in Economic Science. The purpose of this prize is to contribute to the enhancement of academics and knowledge in the fields of economy, management, and accounting, and to promote their spread and application in general. Professor Ohashi's book was recognized for providing policy proposals aimed at solving pressing issues in the mobile phone market, the separation of electrical power production from power distribution and transmission in the power generation industry, and systems for purchasing renewable energy.



### Comments from Dean Hiroshi Ohashi

The necessity of competition policy as an engine of innovation is a non-controversial fact. The question is what perspectives are required from the competition policy in Japan, a country that is confronted by the two social upheavals of population decline and ongoing digitalization. I very much hope that my book will be of help when considering the new modalities of competition policy as we enter the age of coexistence with COVID-19.



Associate Professor Taisuke Nakata was awarded the 6th Jiro Enjoji Memorial Prize. The purpose of this prize is to celebrate the achievements of up-and-coming young and mid-level economists. Professor Nakata received the award in recognition of his regular announcement of analyses based on mathematical models that integrate the fields of economy and infectious diseases and his contribution to the formulation of policy proposals.



### Comments from Associate Professor Taisuke Nakata

It is a great honor to receive this prestigious award. I would like to thank the panel of judges for selecting me.

Going forward, I am committed to engaging in research activities whose value and importance can be felt and appreciated not only among the research community but also by everyday people and policy makers. I hope for your continued understanding and guidance.

# GraSPP Day 2021 Report

The GraSPP Alumni & Student Day 2021 was held in online on October 16, 2021 with the participation of approximately 90 alumni, current students, and faculty members.

Talk Session 1 consisted of a panel session conducted under the shared theme of the post-COVID-19 global order. Professor Heng Yee Kuang delivered a lecture on Great Britain's involvement in the Indo-Pacific region, and Professor Kazuto Suzuki delivered a lecture about economic security. The lectures were followed by a Q&A session moderated by Project Professor Jun Arima, in which the participants posed numerous questions and engaged in a lively exchange of views.

Talk Session 2 was a panel discussion held by graduates of GraSPP. The organizers made a first-ever attempt to conduct two sessions simultaneously, one in Japanese and one in English, inviting three alumni per session as panelists. The panelists shared their experiences in their respective workplaces under the COVID-19 pandemic, explained how they dealt with various issues, and made proposals regarding future prospects.

Due to the impact of the pandemic, for a second consecutive year, it was impossible to hold the event in person. That being said, the online format provided some unique merits, with the event being well-attended by numerous participants from Japan and overseas.

**Emi Kimura (GraSPP Alumni Office)**

The GraSPP Alumni & Student Day 2021 connected professors, alumni and current students from all over the world through the virtual format. This day was focused on how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted different parts of the world and explored what the post-COVID world would look like. GraSPP professors kicked off the day by providing an in-depth analysis on the international order and key policy issues, including economic security, AUKUS agreement, and relationship with China.

In the following the session, the English version of the alumni panel had a discussion on "Workplaces in a Post-COVID World". The panel was moderated by Sandeep Rajgopal, President of the Alumni Association (MPP/IP 2015) and included alumni from across the world in different industries, including Sylvia Shuwen Zhou, Oxford University (MPP/IP 2015), Isamu Itosu-Romero, Robert Walters (MPP/IP 2018) and Kat Eunmin Kang, Asialink Business, University of Melbourne (CAMPUS Asia 2018).

The alumni panel shared their thoughts on how COVID has affected their sectors (academia, recruitment, and business), what changes they see coming in future workplaces, what changes they would like to see in the future, and what the job market looks like. Participants had a chance to ask questions to the panellists, with topics such as job prospects in Japan, female participation in the workforce, and flexible working hours.

The GraSPP community also had a chance to connect with other participants in small breakout rooms. This allowed professors, alumni, current students to meet new people and reconnect with familiar faces. I hope opportunities like this continue so that we can continue supporting each other in the GraSPP family.

**Kat Eunmin Kang (CAMPUS Asia, Class of 2018)**



↑ Group photo

↓ Panel discussion in Talk Session 1



↑ Session in the English-language room in Talk Session 2 (Kat Eunmin Kang is in the top right corner)

↓ Session in the Japanese-language room in Talk Session 2





# Student Interview

No.

37

## Jin Igata

(International Public Policy Program 1st Year)

### — What motivated you to enroll in GraSPP?

I wanted to learn about international politics from a more practical standpoint. Moreover, I was also considering studying abroad. As I studied international politics in the undergraduate program, I felt a growing ambition not simply to acquire knowledge from an academic perspective, but also to get acquainted with the way of thinking of people who are actually in charge of Japan's foreign policy. That motivated me to advance to the graduate program. As for studying abroad, I wanted to acquire deeper knowledge about differences in perspective on international politics among the three East Asian countries, so I decided to participate in the CAMPUS Asia Program.

### — You enrolled in GraSPP during the COVID-19 pandemic. How has your student life been so far?

The situation was completely different from my time in the undergraduate program, so I definitely felt anxious in the beginning. More than anything, I worried about whether I would be able to make friends with others in my year group and with senior. Once I enrolled in the program, however, we had frequent opportunities to meet during classes and in the Student lounge, so I managed to make friends relatively easily. For instance, we taught each other's languages using the white board in the lounge, and fought over the temperature setting of the air conditioning during the hot summer days (laughs), so now we are all good friends.

### — You are a member of the GraSPP Student Council, right?

That's right. I was friends with Council President Bagas, and he invited me to join the Council. I am currently Community Life Director. My job is to provide support in relation to student life and organize various (currently online) events together with other members of the Student Council. I think it is amazing that even in the pandemic students are able to lead exciting and fulfilling lives.

### — Are there any challenges you wish to take on during your time at GraSPP?

I have a little over a year left in the GraSPP program, which is not

much time at all, but I would like to participate in as many internships as possible at government agencies and international organizations. In the past year, I have looked for jobs in the private sector, but, at the end of the day, the appeal of GraSPP is its proximity to the public sector, so I would like to utilize that to the fullest. Also, if time allows it, I would like to feed my internship experience back to academia in the form of a research paper.

### — How do you intend to utilize the knowledge you acquire at GraSPP going forward?

As someone who has spent less than a year in the program, I feel somewhat hesitant to offer my opinion on this, but I would say that, at GraSPP, I have had numerous opportunities to learn invaluable lessons from teachers who have gained diverse experiences on the frontlines of the public sector. It goes without saying that their lectures have been a rich source of knowledge, but what left the greatest impression on me has been the opportunity to experience first-hand their passion to make people happy as an extension of their everyday work. I, too, intend to value and preserve this approach in my future field work in the public sector.



Together with classmates

# “Innovation Governance Expert Program,” a Course for Professionals

Professor Naoko Munakata

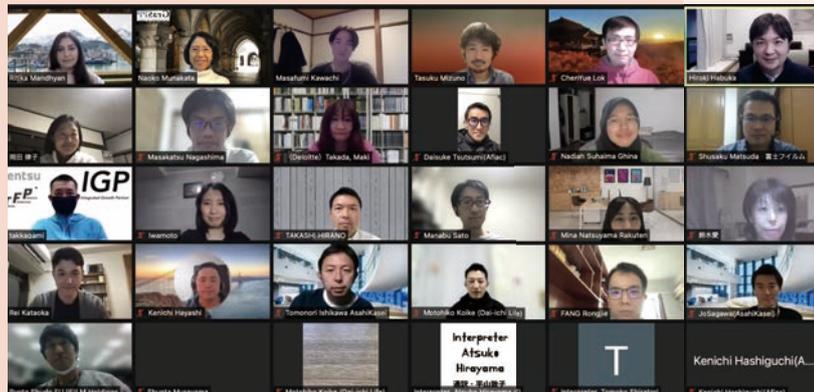
GraSPP launched a special program on innovation governance for professionals from the fall semester of this academic year.

Japan has been in a prolonged state of economic stagnation, since the collapse of the bubble, and its global standing has declined. One widely recognized issue is the need to accelerate regeneration and innovation. A major obstacle in their way is the fact that various rules and regulations that impact corporate activities have fallen behind changes in technologies and markets. Solving this problem is not straightforward. Simply revising obsolete legislation won't do. Digitalization is accelerating social changes, expanding the range and number of stakeholders beyond traditional boundaries, and complicating the impact of social changes. There is a need to formulate policies and rules that are sustainable from the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, and then to keep revising them in an agile manner. Thus, it has become necessary to rebuild the very mechanisms for policy formulation. Under such new mechanisms, public policies will not be solely the responsibility of the government. Companies, local communities, and individuals, which confront various problems and perceive their nature clearly and accurately, will be required to have the capacity to independently engage in the setting the agenda of public policy issues and in formulations solutions.

The aim of this program is to foster such ability regardless of whether participants are affiliated with the private or public sector, and irrespective of their position.

Classes are run in cooperation with Mr. Hiroki Habuka, an attorney at law who was seconded to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry as a leader of the governance innovation project. Experts active on the global frontlines in a variety of fields, such as law, management, philosophy, system engineering, and risk management, will deliver lectures on various aspects of governance based on the latest trends. The participants in the program will also explore real-life cases and engage in governance design. In February, Ms. Audrey Tang, Digital Minister of Taiwan, will share the insights she gained from building mechanisms that encourage citizens to communicate their needs by utilizing digital technologies and that provide public services tailored to those needs.

This academic year, a total of 24 professionals from companies such as Asahi Kasei, Aflac, Amazon Japan, Salesforce.com, Dai-Ichi Life Insurance, DeNA, TMI Associates, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Dentsu, PwC, Fujifilm, Mori Hamada & Matsumoto, and Rakuten, enrolled in the program, managing their busy schedules to prepare and attend classes on Saturday afternoons. The program also provides them with the opportunity to attend lectures for graduate students of GraSPP. The participants who



Participants attending an online lecture



Professor Naoko Munakata

come from a wide range of backgrounds, including exchange students and engineering graduate students, enjoyed deep exchanges through discussions and extracurricular activities.

This program is scheduled to be held in the fall semester next academic year as well.

## TOPICS

The BESETO CAMPUS Asia, a consortium comprising Peking University's School of International Studies, Seoul National University's Graduate School of International Studies and UTokyo's GraSPP since 2011, has welcomed National University of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and restarted as the BESETO+NUS CAMPUS Asia Plus. The new consortium will deepen their ties with each other through student exchanges as well as faculty and staff exchanges. Its activities will include double degree/student exchange programs and the CAMPUS Asia Joint Course, where the faculty members of the four schools will jointly teach one course. The field trips will resume as soon as the COVID-19 situation has calmed down.

<http://www.pp.u-tokyo.ac.jp/events/2022-01-12-33326/>

## Editor's Postscript

One of the technologies in the spotlight today is the metaverse. The term “metaverse” refers to a collection of technologies that provide users with various experiences in an Internet-based virtual space, such as the ability to create their own avatars and communicate with other users. In recent years, the advancement of IT technologies has improved the level of freedom in the metaverse and the number of events held in this virtual space are on the rise. Such developments inspire us to wonder if maybe it might be possible to hold GraSPP Day in the metaverse someday soon. **(Editor)**

## vol. 65 NEWS LETTER

(Editor & Publisher) Graduate School of Public Policy, The University of Tokyo  
(Date of Publication) March 11, 2022

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