

The 38th START Program (Australia)

For around two weeks from February 24th to March 13th 2017, thirty first-year students along with Professor Hideki Kuwajima (Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences) and two other supervising faculty members participated in the 38th START program, visiting Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia.

Under the guidance of three supervisors from Intensive English Language Institute (IELI) in Flinders University, the students studied at the university in three groups of ten. Sometimes joined by students of Flinders University, students were able to participate in lively discussions. Outside of the classroom, the Japanese and Australian students enjoyed playing sports such as cricket together, thus deepening cross-cultural understandings. They also had the chance to attend the lecture of Professor Catherine Kevin who visits HU on an annual basis at an INU student seminar (*). Presented entirely in English, it was a difficult lecture; however, it provided huge stimulation for the students in terms of motivation for furthering their English learning.

Another important feature of this study program was the students' visits to a local elementary school and Kangaroo Island.

Preparation for the visit to the elementary school took place over the course of two weeks. In order to introduce the elementary students to Japanese culture, the students created *Kamishibai* (traditional picture show), and diligently practiced their English in order to teach Origami and sing songs. Thanks to their preparations, the visit was a huge success, and the students were able to interact deeply with one another. Through this experience, the Japanese students discovered the difficulty of expressing oneself clearly in another language, and learnt what was important in order to do that.

During the weekend in the middle of their two weeks of study the students visited Kangaroo Island, experiencing the rich natural environment and coming into contact with indigenous Australian species – occasional whoops of delight were heard whenever a kangaroo or wallaby was spotted on the roadside. The students also held a barbeque, and as the night fell, sat outside with their teachers singing and playing the guitar together. Through spending these

moments with each other, the students deepened their bonds of friendship over the course of the two days.

On the final day, each group gave a presentation based around different themes. Compared to the presentations given before their period of study, the content was rich and the speakers demonstrated polished English expressions they had picked up from lectures. All in all, it was a fitting conclusion to their study program.

During the short period of their stay, the students experienced a homestay situation. Although for most students it was their first time going overseas, each student was able to form a deep friendship with their host families. Each morning when they arrived at school students talked animatedly about their respective host families, and many expressed the desire to return to Adelaide in the future and meet with their host families again. It is hoped that students will make use of the invaluable experiences gained through this program, and we wish them all the best in life.

Lastly, we would like to express our deep gratitude to the people who donated to the Hiroshima University Fund for aiding in sending our students to Australia.



Discussion with students from Flinders University



Study tour in Adelaide city



Observing wild seals at Kangaroo Island



Presentation on the final day

(*) INU student seminar: An international seminar on the theme of “Global Citizenship and Peace” held in Hiroshima in conjunction with the annual August Peace Memorial Ceremony. Faculty members, teachers, and students of INU (International Network of Universities) affiliated universities, including Flinders University, gather in Hiroshima to partake in workshops and discuss Global Citizenship. On the final day a model United Nations assembly is held.