

The 46th START Program (Thailand)

For around two weeks from September 5th to September 21st 2017, 24 first-year students led by Associate Professor Hisashi Kuwayama (Graduate School of Education) and another faculty member participated in the 46th START program, studying at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, the Kingdom of Thailand. Aside from attending lectures, the students joined field trip to local companies and Japanese companies based in Thailand, UN agency and others.

At Chulalongkorn University, students attended Thai language classes and English lectures on Thailand's economy, politics, history and culture. They also learnt about techniques required when making presentations in English. Students who attended English lectures for the first time initially struggled to understand the content, but they were aggressive to learn by asking questions in English in class. Also, most students had no prior experience with Thai language, but after learning the basics in class and interacting with local people, they learnt the meaning and the importance of "communication skills". Moreover, They deepened cross-cultural exchange through activities with Chulalongkorn University students, like touring around campus and Bangkok city and discussions on their countries' respective cultures. Also, they experienced the diversity of Thai culture and history from their cultural field trip to historical structures such as a temple in the suburbs of Bangkok and the world heritage site Ayutthaya Historical Park.

In order to gain viewpoint on "Global Career", they visited Japanese companies and education organizations based in Thailand, as well as local companies and other international organizations. They attended lectures and learnt about the joys and challenges of working overseas and the values of global human resources. They had many discoveries after talking directly to business people who work abroad and people who are engaged in international cooperation. It was a valuable opportunity for both students who already have a clear objective and students whose goals are still undefined to reconsider what they want for their future.

As a culmination of the program, students made a group presentation in English on studies they did prior to arrival in Thailand, compiled with a theme

they learnt during the program (such as Thai politics, economy, society, education, culture) and the results of interviews with local students.

During the follow-up session after returning to Japan, students gave presentations on what they had learnt during the program, and how they would utilize this experience in their campus lives and future. Through these presentations, students were able to articulate their future goals and be more precise on their efforts to achieve them.



Interaction with Chulalongkorn University students



Visiting Wat Poh



Workshop session during company visit



Presentation on learning achievements