

THE PRINCE TAKAMADO JAPAN CENTRE FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH

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Affiliated Faculty: Faculty of Arts

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MISSION OF THE CENTRE

Prince Takamado Japan Centre for Teaching and Research (PTJC) continues its efforts to promote the diversity of fields in the Faculty of Arts, focusing on academic collaboration and exchange of students and scholars between Japan and Canada, with the following mandate:

1. To provide opportunities for interdisciplinary study and research which promotes Japan Studies, including language, business, culture, politics, history, technology and science;
2. To strengthen research which situates Japan in a global, transnational and/or comparative context;
3. To become the focus of a network of expertise in these areas in Canada

SUMMARY (Previous Year)

During the 2019-2020 academic year, PTJC organized several key events. Its highlight was the hosting of the lecture “Netsuke and the Role that They Played in Introducing Japan to the West” by Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado on campus. HIH Princess Takamado also met with the board members of the PTJC to discuss the future strategies for the centre. At the same time, as this year celebrated the 90th anniversary of Japan-Canada diplomatic relations, the PTJC promoted its activities widely. In February 2020, the 11th Japan Canada Academic Consortium Student Forum (co-organized by Seinan Gakuin University and Hosei University) was held on the very topical issue, “Energy

Policy for the 21st Century: For the Best Mix.” In March 2020, the Centre organized the Alberta District Japanese Speech Contest. We also hosted a series of brown bag lunch seminars in which UAlberta researchers on Japan studies, including graduate students, met together to share their projects. The collection of essays of our past conference on the 75th anniversary of Hiroshima was also published in April 2020.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS (2019-2020)

Major Activities:

Academic / Research

- Yokai in the Edo Period (Dr. Walter Davis and Dr. Anne Commons) funded by the Toshiba International Foundation and the Japan Foundation
- Heritage Practices: Identification, Diversity, and Digitalization (Dr. Srilata Ravi) founded by KIAS

Programs and Events

- Hosted five talks in the Asian Studies Brown Bag Lunch series (Xiaoting Li, Haiyan Xie, Clara Iwasaki, T.M. Mamos, Chiho Ogawa and Yoshi Ono).
- Hosted a public lecture, “Netsuke and the Role that They Played in Introducing Japan to the West,” by Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado
- Sponsored a guest lecture for the Department of East Asian Studies (Christina Yi, Assistant Professor of Modern Japanese Literature at UBC, “Linguistic Imperialism and the Aporia of Silence in ‘Artists of the Peninsula’ and Spring on the Peninsula”)
- Organized two Japanese Language Proficiency Tests
- Hosted the Alberta District Japanese Speech Contest (funded by the Japan Foundation, Mitsui Co Foundation, the Alberta Japanese Business Association, and the Consulate-General of Japan in Calgary)

Japan-Canada Academic Consortium:

- Co-organized the 11th Japan-Canada Academic Consortium Student Forum, “Energy Policy for the 21st Century: For the Best Mix.” with Seinan Gakuin University and Hosei University
- Began preparation for the twelfth forum with University of Waterloo & Renison

Undergraduate Scholarships:

Ritsumeikan Summer Program Scholarships:

No scholarship was offered due to the COVID-19

JPEX/JACOS Scholarships in Engineering:

University of Alberta: Bryce Nelson, Ryan Costello, Jordan Pitman and Willow Dew
Keyano College: Nichole Clarke, Tunica Prince and Maricristine Zamora
University of Calgary: Steven Ma, Joshua Day, Armin Ghezlbashan and Zabrain Magsi

National Japanese Speech Contest (Scholarship by the Prince Takamado Japan Canada Memorial Fund):

Lily Feng, York University (Beginners Category)
Anson Wong, York University (Intermediate Category)
Alexandre Rondeau, University of Montreal (Advanced Category)

Event Details:

July 7, 2019: Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)

This was the seventh year the University of Alberta hosted a summer edition of the JLPT. As the sole institution that organizes this exam in summer, we received 216 applicants from many parts of North America. It provided both high school and university students with a great opportunity to visit the U of A campus. At the same time, it offered U of A students who took courses at the Department of East Asian Studies a chance to get qualifications to search for jobs in Japanese industries and to study in Japanese universities.

August 30, 2019: Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado on campus

PTJC organized a public lecture by Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado and administrative board meeting

September 2019-2020: PTJC Brown Bag Lunch Talk Series

PTJC organized five lunch-time talks in order to create a place for UAlberta professors and students to get together. It was the second year that PTJC organized such an event and was very successful. Talks in March by Laura Velazquez and in April by Walter Davis were canceled due to the COVID-19. Presentations included:

- Xiaoting Li, Assistant Professor, EASIA, “Interpersonal Touch in Mandarin Interaction.”
- Haiyan Xie, PhD student, EASIA, “Misreading the Politics of Chinese Fiction: The Case of Yan Lianke's Child.”
- Clara Iwasaki, Assistant Professor, EASIA, “Gendered Translation: The Transpacific Career of Lao She's the Drum Singers.”
- T.M. Mamos, MA student, EASIA, “Database Animals: Postmodernism and Otaku Culture in Azuma Hiroki's Otaku.”
- Yoshi Ono, Professor and Associate Chair, EASIA and Chiho Ogawa, MA student, EASIA, “The Ikema Dialect of Miyako: Some Challenges Working on an Endangered Language in Okinawa, Japan.”

December 1, 2019: Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)

PTJC organized the winter edition of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test: 110 applicants, mainly from the University of Alberta applied to take it.

February 14-21, 2020: Japan-Canada Academic Consortium Student Forum

The Japan-Canada Academic Consortium held its eleventh annual Student Forum under the theme, “Energy Politics for the 21st Century: Searching for the Best Mix” at Seinan Gakuin University. Sponsored by the JACAC, Seinan Gakuin University, the Japan Foundation, the Embassy of Canada in Japan, and JACAC membership universities. We had a successful forum. Twelve student participants from the consortium’s ten Canadian universities joined twelve students from Japanese universities to discuss the future energy plan.

March 8, 2020: Alberta District Japanese Speech Contest

PTJC organized the 29th Alberta Japanese District Speech Contest at the University of Alberta, which attracted approximately 100 participants. It received financial support from the Consulate-General of Japan in Calgary, Alberta Japanese Business Association, and Mitsui Canada Foundation. Consul-General Shigenobu Kobayashi participated in the event. It also offered a place for students and Japanese language instructors from five universities: University of Alberta, University of Calgary, Mount Royal University, University of Regina, and University of Saskatchewan. Participants presented excellent Japanese speeches that were highly praised by the audience.

March 29, 2020: National Japanese Speech Contest

PTJC supported the 31st National Japanese Speech Contest held online due to the growing concerns around the COVID-19 virus. Mr. Takao Ito from the Consul-General of Japan in Toronto and Ms. Yoko Shimizu from the Japan Foundation, Toronto, gave opening remarks. Mr. Shinichiro Kawai, president, Japan Communications Inc. attended the event as a chief judge. Its contestants represented more than ten universities from seven provinces (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Ottawa area, Manitoba, Alberta-Saskatchewan, and British Columbia).

Cancelled Events (Due to COVID-19)

April 24, 2020: Visit of Ambassador Yasuhisa Kawamura, the Embassy of Japan in Canada on campus

April 25, 2020: Consular Ball Japan

May 12 -June 12, 2020: Ritsumeikan Summer Program

June 15-26, 2020: INT D 225 Ritsumeikan Summer Field Course

Summary: Upcoming Year

In the year 2020-2021, some events will be cancelled due to COVID-19. Our major planned events include a series of four webinars “Ageing Society at the Time of Pandemics: Japan and Canada,” an online conference “Strange Transformations: The Supernatural and Early Modern Japan” in November, and the 12th JACAC Student Forum at the University of Waterloo/Renison College.

People

Director

- Dr. Aya Fujiwara

Administrative Assistant

- Ms. Rei Kondo

Administrative Board

- Dr. Steve Patten, Associate Dean Research, Faculty of Arts
- Dr. Christopher Lupke, Chair, Department of East Asian Studies
- Dr. Geoffrey Rockwell, Director, Kule Institute for Advanced Studies

Advisory Council

- Dr. Randy Goebel, Associate VP (Research) & Associate VP (Academic), University of Alberta (Chair)
- Dr. Lesley Cormack, Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Alberta Vice-Chair
- The Hon. Dan Hays, Member of the PTJCMF Advisory Committee, Former Speaker of the Senate
- Ms. Christine Nakamura, Director, Public Relations, Marketing and Policy Coordination, Asia-Pacific Foundation
- Mr. Gordon Houlden, China Institute, University of Alberta
- Dr. David Welch, President of Japan Futures Initiative, Chair of Global Security at the Balsillie School of International Affairs and Professor, Department of Political Science at the University of Waterloo
- Dr. X lie Yang, Professor, Department of Linguistics, Languages and Culture, University of Calgary

Research Committee

- Dr. Chris Reys, Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies
- Ms. Jia Wang, Deputy Director, China Institute
- Dr. Taka Masuda, Department of Psychology
- Dr. Merek Michalak, Department of Biochemistry