

Panel Discussion
The 17th International Conference on Education Research
October 12-14, 2016

Title

Exploring Dimensions of Liberal Arts Education in East Asia:
A Boon or Bane for Competitive Higher Education?

Organizer

Global Research Network team, International Christian University, Japan (<http://grnl.weebly.com/>)

Panelists

- Professor Insung Jung, International Christian University, Japan
- Professor Kyoung-Mee Chung, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Yonsei University College, Korea
- Professor Toshi Sasao, International Christian University, Japan
- Professor Mikiko Nishimura, International Christian University, Japan
- Professor Wha-Chul Son, Handong Global University, Korea

Moderator

- Prof. Sasao, International Christian University

Target Audience

University faculty and graduate students in higher education and related fields

Panel Description

In the increasingly digital and diverse East Asian contexts, institutions of higher education are being challenged to provide competitive educational opportunities for the new generation of students. The challenges and opportunities are further compounded by history, economics, globalization, and diverse needs represented by different segments of the region in East Asia. The purpose of this panel is to bring together scholars from both Korea and Japan to explore several dimensions of the remerging and growing trends in higher education in East Asia, i.e., liberal arts education. More specifically, we would like to closely examine the following topics:

1. Challenges and Potentials of Liberal Arts Education in East Asia (Prof. Nishimura)
2. Liberal Arts Education via Curricular and Extracurricular Activities in a Residential College of Yonsei University (Prof. Chung)
3. An Analysis and Comparison of Core Curriculum in Liberal Arts Colleges: Implications for East Asia Higher Education (Prof. Jung)
4. Juggling Teaching and Research at Liberal Arts Colleges in East Asia: Implications for Quality of Education and Faculty Development (Prof. Sasao)
5. Christian Faith and Liberal Arts Education in East Asia (Prof. Son)

Format

We would like to ask for a 2-hour slot at the conference. The moderator will give a brief introduction of panelists and discussion guidelines with an overview of the panel (10 minutes). Each panelist will have 10-15 minutes of their presentation (15 minutes X 5 = 75 minutes). It will be followed by 25 minutes of questions and answers among the panelists and the floor participants.

Reference

Jung, I., Nishimura, M., & Sasao, T. (Eds.) (2016). Liberal arts education and colleges in East Asia: Possibilities and challenges in the global age. Springer.
<http://www.springer.com/gp/book/9789811005114>

Presentation 1

- **Topic:** Challenges and Potentials of Liberal Arts Education in East Asia
- **Presenter:** Prof. Mikiko Nishimura, ICU
- **Abstract:** Despite the rising demand for vocational and practical education, the values of liberal arts education are still highly regarded and many higher education institutions have been integrating liberal arts education as an approach to the development of a well-rounded education, flexible and creative thinking, civic engagement, and internationalization demanded by globalization. East Asian universities, particularly those in Japan, S. Korea, Taiwan and China, are showing an increased interest in liberal arts education and small, independent dedicated liberal arts colleges and general education programs have been developed in these countries. However, liberal arts education in East Asia is facing a number of challenges including lack of understanding of liberal arts education, preference for vocational and professional education, a lack of integrated policies and limited funding support. The presentation illustrates multiple interpretations of liberal arts education in East Asia and its consequences that are often contradictory to the intention of liberal arts education.
- **Presenter bio:** Dr. Mikiko Nishimura is a Senior Associate professor of Sociology of Education at International Christian University. Her primary research interests are analysis of education reforms and policies, community participation and accountability in education, and school choice. She has worked in education planning and research at the basic and higher education levels in Africa and Asia.

Presentation 2 (Video Conferencing)

- **Topic:** Liberal Arts Education via Curricular and Extracurricular Activities in a Residential College of Yonsei University
- **Presenter:** Prof. Kyung-Mee Chung, Yonsei University
- **Abstract:** Yonsei University started the residential college in 2013 and the University College is in charge of the RC. The goals of the general education in Yonsei University changed significantly since the beginning of the RC in 2013, the UC, which is now responsible for the Yonsei RC system. The University College (UC) at Yonsei was established in 1999, and has been collecting data to evaluate effectiveness of general education system via surveys to the freshman twice a year (beginning and end of the school year). In order to evaluate the impact of RC on students' life, the survey items were modified significantly. In this presentation, data from 2013 to 2016 were analyzed. Descriptive and statistical analyses were conducted. The results suggested positive impacts of RC on general education, especially in academic area including reduction in academic retention rate as well as increase in study hours. Implications of these results on the Yonsei RC system as well as general education systems are discussed.
- **Presenter bio:** Dr. Kyong-Mee Chung is a professor in psychology at Yonsei University and has been serving as an associate dean at the University College at Yonsei. Since her involvement at UC in 2015, she has been working on diverse issues related to general education system, including facilitation of intensive tutoring services, ability-based curriculum development for math and science, and establishment of evaluation system for general education system.

Presentation 3

- **Topic:** An Analysis and Comparison of Core Curriculum in Liberal Arts Colleges: Implications for East Asia Higher Education
- **Presenter:** Prof. Insung Jung, ICU
- **Abstract:** Liberal arts colleges strive to produce creative, thoughtful and well-rounded citizens of the world within several environments. The core curriculum that promotes a strong liberal arts education is considered to be a critical part of such environments. This session will examine diverse approaches to the core curriculum employed in such selected

liberal arts colleges from Asia, N. America and Europe to promote liberal arts core values, and clarifies commonalities and differences across the programs and discuss distinctive patterns. The selected cases include Japan's International Christian University, Singapore's Yale-NUS, Korea's Handong, Hong Kong's Lingnan, USA's Pomona, Amherst, Hope, Williams, Germany's Bard College Berlin and Netherlands' Amsterdam University College. The session will then clarify the ways in which those approaches can effectively further goals of liberal arts education. It will conclude with the implications of those models for East Asia higher education and point out remaining challenges.

- **Presenter bio:** Dr. Insung Jung is a Chair and Professor of Education/Language Education at the International Christian University in Japan. Before joining ICU in 2003, she served as the Director of the Multimedia Education Institute at Ewha Womans University in Korea. She was also faculty at Korea National Open University and conducted extensive research in open and distance learning. She has served as a consultant and advisor in open and distance learning/e-learning to numerous national and international institutions, including Korean ministries, UNESCO, World Bank, APEC, ASEAN, ADBI and IDRC. Currently, she is serving on editorial board of several international journals including: International Review for Research in Open and Distributed Learning, Distance Education, International Journal of Educational Media and Technology, Asian Journal of Distance Education, and Journal of Online Learning and Teaching. Homepage: <http://epiaget.com>

Presentation 4

- **Topic:** Juggling Teaching and Research at Liberal Arts Colleges in East Asia: Implications for Quality of Education and Faculty Development
- **Presenter:** Prof. Toshi Sasao, ICU
- **Abstract:** With the growing presence and importance of liberal arts education in East Asia (Jung *et al.*, 2016), what would be its impact on the well-being or life satisfaction among faculty members? Recent trends and changes due to globalization provide good reasons for “threatened identity” as university professoriates with two major tasks: teaching and research. How could faculty members in liberal arts colleges reconcile their passion in academe? In fact, very little attention has been paid to faculty well-being in faculty development programs in East Asia while technical aspects of teaching are often emphasized. The purpose of this presentation is: (a) to discuss the emerging issues on the well-being of faculty in East Asia as a result of more globalized, liberal arts education policies; (b) to propose a conceptual framework for designing, implementing and evaluating innovative faculty development programs from a social ecological perspective.
- **Presenter bio:** Toshi Sasao, Ph.D., a community psychologist, is Professor of Psychology, Education, and Peace Studies and Director, Peace Research Institute, at International Christian University, Japan. He also coordinates an interdisciplinary peace studies program there. A fellow of American Psychological Association, he is currently on the editorial board for several international journals including American Journal of Community Psychology and Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice.

Presentation 5

- **Topic:** Christian Faith and Liberal Arts Education in East Asia
- **Presenter:** Prof. Wha-Chul Son, Handong Global University
- **Abstract:** How can East Asian institutions of higher education integrate Christian faith and liberal art education? This question involves so many cultural, historical, and social issues that it will take a lot of time and effort for relevant institutions to formulate the question adequately, not to mention to answer it. In this paper, the complicated contexts that pose challenges for the integration will be presented first. The short history of Christianity, multi-denominational setting, various demands posed on Christian institutions of higher education, and the discrepancy between East Asian philosophy and Christian faith create dynamics unprecedented in Western countries. Second, the experience and effort of Handong Global

University will be introduced and analyzed. Although the curricula of “Faith and Worldview” and “Basic Learning” have been revised several times, there are still many remaining challenges concerning the integration of Christian faith and liberal arts. Finally, an observation will be made concerning how those challenges are dealt with by other Christian institutions of higher education in Korea and Japan.

- **Presenter bio:** Wha-Chul Son is an associate professor at Handong Global University in Pohang, Korea, teaching introductory classes on philosophy. His main research area is philosophy of technology dealing with topics such as technology and democracy, classical philosophy of technology, technology and media, and engineering ethics. He authored *Light and Shadow of Modern Technology: Toffler and Ellul* (2006) and co-authored several books on philosophy of technology. He also translated Landon Winner's *The Whale and the Reactor* and Niel Postman's *Conscientious Objections* into Korean. Son earned a BA from Seoul National University, Korea, and his MA and PhD from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium.