

# The Hokusei Times

*Shine Like Stars In a Dark World*

## LINE spreads on campus, connecting for social network

*By Staff Writers*

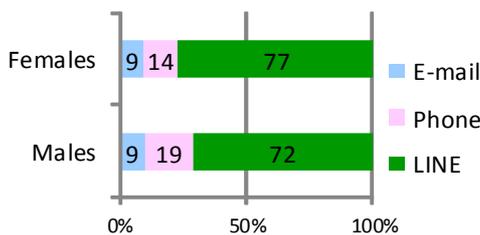
Recently a lot of people have been using the social network service called LINE in Japan since the new communication tool was launched on June 23, 2011. In order to find out about the trend on the usage of the network service among the youth, we have conducted a survey on students of Hokusei Gakuen University, covering 100 students (52 females and 48 males ranging from first-year to fourth-year students). The following is an analysis of the results of the survey.



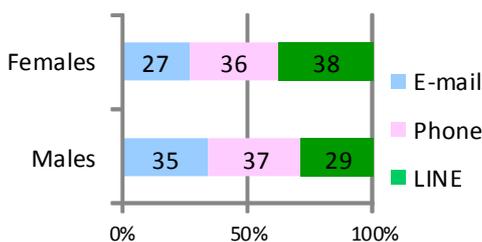
**LINE has become people's necessities in social life.**

*Photo by Ayana Ishiyama*

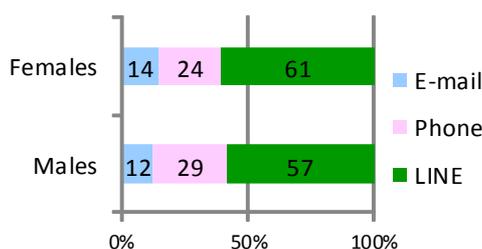
**Graph1: Friends**



**Graph2: Family**



**Graph3: Part-time Job**



The graphs above show how students use LINE and other communication devices differently depending on who they are contacting.

LINE is an application for communicating with people that can be used on smart phones, feature phones, and PCs. It is an instant messenger tool with features such as text chat and internet telephone. As of January 18, 2013, the membership of LINE exceeded 100 million users around the world — in about 19 months after its launch in Japan. Now it has exceeded 406 million in total. LINE has various merits in itself. It allows users to communicate more freely than e-mail, so anyone can use it easily. We can feel free at anytime to contact with friends, or even with the parents. But the message we send to the parents is usually minimally necessary information, so it is about the same percentage as the telephone. Comparing females with males, there is a slight difference in contacting with family. Males use LINE with their family less

often than females. Males apparently feel more self-conscious. Furthermore, part-time job leaders use LINE with their co-workers, too. As can be seen from the Graph 3, 60% are using it. **(Misaki Ozawa)**

The survey also shows that most of the respondents use LINE a lot, with young people spending quite some time for using LINE every day. They have formed some group LINE and private LINE. Table 1 shows that both males and females use LINE a lot spending around 150 minutes a day.

However, there are many problems facing young people today. Recently, the number of children who use LINE is increasing. They spend about 3 or 4 hours on the average every day using LINE. They chat with friends using LINE and play LINE games until midnight, so they go to bed late, and get

Table 1	Time spent for LINE (in minute)	The Number of One-to-one Chat per day
Males	148	5.3
Females	156	4.8

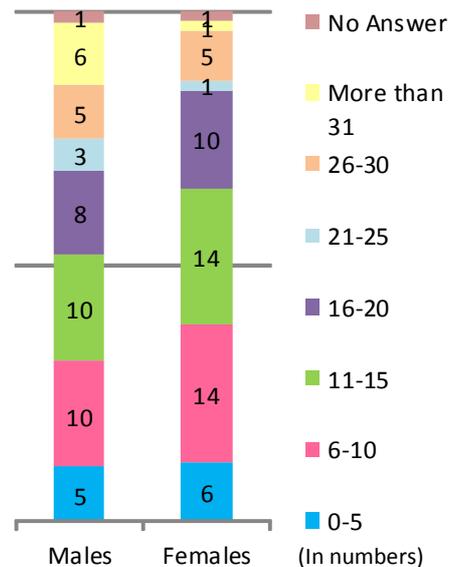
up late, and finally go to school late. Some of their parents are troubled about this problem, and decided to limit the use of smart phones by their children. The parents say to children, "You can use it till 8 p.m., so you do not use it after that." But their children say, "There are LINE groups, and I want to join them. If I don't, I may be left out of my friends." One school in Kagoshima Prefecture conducted a research about LINE, and found that some students use LINE messages more than 100 a day. So the school warned students, "You do not use smart phones, cellphones and computers from 9 p.m. to 8 a.m." and "Apply the rule to every family." LINE is very useful, but this kind of problem is becoming so serious now. **(Yukina Tahira)**

According to a survey conducted by the Japanese Home Affairs Ministry, the percentage of the people in their 20s who use LINE was 49 percent in 2012, but it surged to 80 per-

cent in 2013. The application is useful for communicating with friends. However, there are a lot of risks in using the service. First, if the users do not set it up properly, they may face the risk of getting their LINE account stolen. For example, one of LINE's functions, "shake it search," which enables the users to exchange their account with each other, can be abused by some strangers and the users might get strange messages or annoying messages because their account have been stolen if they keep the function on.

Some of them are addicted to LINE, especially young generation users, according to an article written by a Japanese economic newspaper. They use it all the time, and feel that they must reply as soon as they get a message as if it is their duty. They get weary of it, but cannot stop doing it. **(Nozomi Hirao)**

**Graph4: The Number of Group Chat**



*The number of group chats that the students are engaged in on a daily basis.*

## Ignoring Messages Causes Troubles among Users

BY AYANA ISHIYAMA

These days, as LINE has become people's necessity to communicate with others, a new buzz word often used among students is: "KS," an abbreviation of "Kidoku Suru." Kidoku means marked as already 'read,' and "suru" is a Japanese-English derived from the English word 'through,' meaning in this case "ignoring the message." Some students feel they are obliged to reply to LINE messages because of the controversial function.

In short, senders of LINE messages now can know if receivers have read a message or not, and if they don't respond to it, the senders' thoughts will go like this: "He/she ignored my message." The word KS was invented because, among LINE users, the obvious "ignoring" is a big problem that has unfavorable effects on relationships between friends or romantic partners.

The problem will be like this:



*This shows the typical situation of "KS."*

one asks the other why he/she doesn't reply. In order to avoid the awkward question, several students have their own rules when using LINE: they don't read messages when they cannot reply the message right away. Moreover, a few said that they do not keep up with LINE communication too obligatorily and sometimes choose not to respond even after reading a message.

The Mark as Read function can trigger irritation, frustration, anger, sorrow, and other various emotions among the users. "When is he/she going to answer this?" or "He/she hasn't responded despite having marked my message as already 'read,' okay, he/she is not interested in me." These reactions are commonly heard. In fact, a few students who answered the survey said that they have had arguments with their friends because they did not reply in spite of having marked LINE messages as read.

The survey shows another aspect of the LINE usage by Hokusei students. This is a gender-segregated graph which is based on answers to a question, “Do you need the Mark as Read function?” (see Graph 5). The “Mark as Read” means the message has already been read. The number of those who answered “yes” is more than “no” altogether.

However, there is a difference between males and females. While only 33% of the male respondents want the Mark as Read function, 60% of the female respondents said they need it. Women said that they want to confirm that the messages are reached or not. “When I don’t need a reply, the Mark as Read function is useful,” said a first-year female student. “If I don’t receive a reply to my email, I get worried that my friends might be involved in an accident or something,” said a first-year male student. No other emails but LINE can give the sense of safety by the Mark as Read function.

LINE users are now more closely communicating with their friends and family than before. A female respondent said, “I never exchanged emails with my father before, but now I exchange messages with him on LINE.” She would say, “Please come to pick me up, Dad.” Then the father would reply “O.K.” LINE’s strength is the immediacy and the convenience - LINE is the best tool for talking silly contents daily. (Ikumi Sagawa)

As is shown in the Graph 5, male students answered “No” to the question on whether or not they need the “Mark as Read” function by 20 percent more than female students.

The different attitude toward the controversial function between males and females seems to indicate that males consider LINE messages as obligation more than females.

Unfortunately, LINE can be a device that excludes somebody from a group. In fact, a male freshman has witnessed his friends gossiping about one of their friends who is not in the group chat.



***Different styles of LINE usage should be more accepted so that students can enjoy the handy, communication tool more freely.***

*Photo by Ayana Ishiyama*

LINE has changed the nature of communication. “I don’t tell my LINE account easily to others,” a senior female student said. “Contacting people became so much easier, and I don’t want others to contact me so handily.” One can know if a message is delivered and read, and most of the time, he/she can get the reply in an instant. Because of the easiness and capability of knowing the other’s KS, chatting tends to continue forever, which is why young generations spend so much time with LINE.

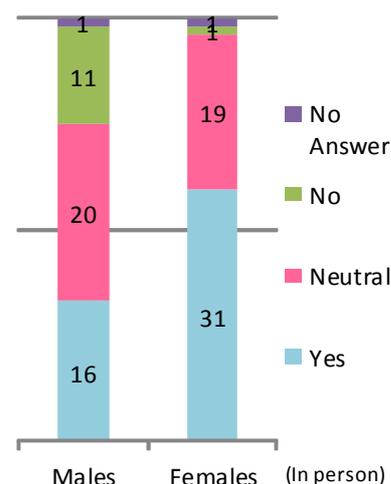
Surely, it is fun to have friends with you at every moment wherever you are

online, even if they are not near you. However, young generations seem unable to separate their own private time from social time because of frequent usage of LINE. Many students reported that they don’t want to see too many notifications in a group chat.

Those episodes show that LINE has a potential danger of bullying and that students are very obsessed with LINE and spend much time with it. The results of the survey suggest the need for more moral use of the LINE application. (Ayana Ishiyama)

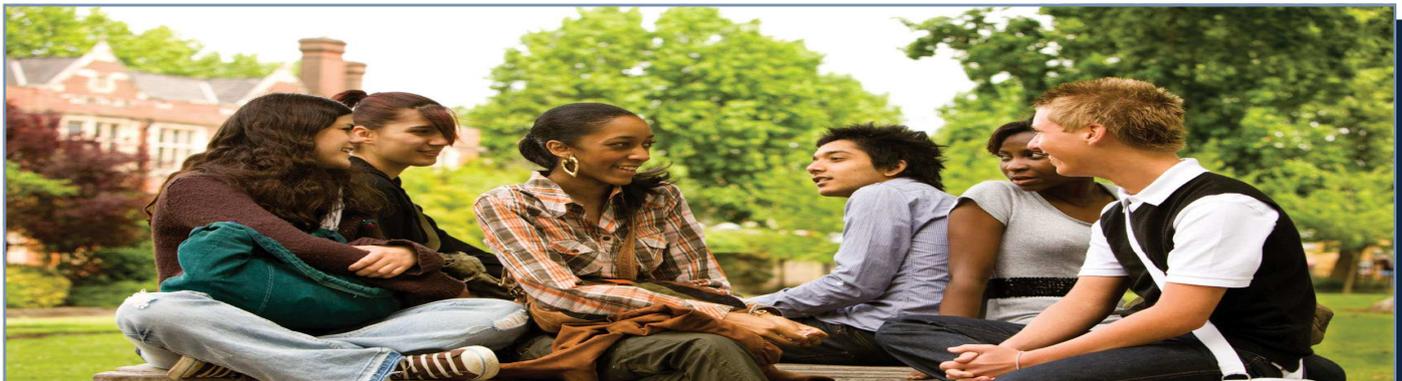
It seems there are many advantages and disadvantages when using LINE. This application makes people pull closer to each other, while some users find it uncomfortable to use LINE because they feel like being watched all the time as they use it in everyday life. It is a great way to get in touch with people who live far away or even in different countries when they have LINE. However there is a trend that people are relying too much on LINE and being too sensitive when they don’t get responses right away. We have to admit that LINE is a really convenient application but we must remind ourselves of the main purpose in using those communication applications such as LINE, twitter, or Facebook. It is “To share your stories with people ANYTIME.” It is not to keep your eyes on others’ lives 24 hours like surveillance cameras. People use LINE because they want to communicate with others around them, not to have an unnecessary argument over why they didn’t get a response for 3 hours although the message had been read a long time ago. People have their own different life styles. So maybe we should be a bit more tolerant toward the late responses. Particularly, impatient girls, let’s wait for a bit, shall we? Just because your boyfriend takes an hour to say “How are you?” that doesn’t mean that he doesn’t love you. At least he did reply “How are you?” So people, be patient and have a good life with LINE. (Hikari Chiba)

**Graph5: Need for "Mark as Read" Function**



*Students provided their views about the "Mark as Read" function.*

# Freshmen's real voice on school life revealed



By Hikari Chiba

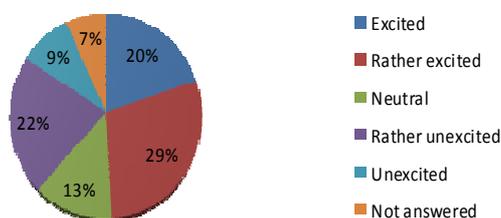
It has been almost 4 months since the freshmen of 2014 started their life here at Hokusei Gakuen University. It must have been difficult for them to get used to the new learning environment of higher education with new people. Not knowing what is about to start to life brings people a lot of feelings such as nervousness, excitement, or even joy. A survey was conducted on campus to find out how the freshmen of this year initially thought about their school life here, and how they think it now. Many students imagined a university life would be filled with motivation, new experiences and friends for life... However, there are some who are actually disappointed about Hokusei. Here are the real voices of our newcomers towards their lives here. The survey reveals how they feel about the Hokusei Life, with some interesting ideas to make this school a better place. The survey was carried out in May covering 45 freshmen (23 girls, 22 boys) to find out their honest opinions and frank views.

The first question is concerned with the initial feelings they had before entering Hokusei. Regardless of gender, almost half of the respondents answered that they had "positive feelings" toward the new life at the university. On the other hand, one fourth of them answered they

were "nervous." One of the main reasons for causing nervousness in them was **building new friendship with other students**. Following the friendship anxiety, **part time jobs** came up as a second main reason. One female student of the English department explains: "I was not sure if I can keep up with both studying and working!" Another research proved that a lot of freshmen answered that they have never had a part time job before. Therefore many of the freshmen must be struggling with managing to keep the balance between works and studies. Here is some advice from a 3rd year student: **NOTHING comes first before studying as long as you are a student.**

Half of the freshmen answered they were initially excited to enter Hokusei. How about now? The next question focused on the gaps between the reality and expectations

**Freshmen's expectation rate for new life at Hokusei**



## Girls

■ YES ■ NO



## Boys

■ YES ■ NO



they had before, that may have led to disappointments. Sometimes highest hopes can lead to a great disappointment. Here are their real voices. There is a slight difference in numbers by gender, but a large percentage of them — 53% of the boys and 37% of the girls — have felt disappointed in Hokusei life. Why? There were some particular reasons for the disappointments. The following are the top three reasons.

- 1. Too many required classes.** 14 students (out of 45) agreed that there are too many required classes.

2. **No serious attention towards learning among most of the students.** There are many students who sleep in class.

3. **Small facilities (Especially Seikyo "The co-op store" is considered as too small)**

Although there were so many complaints by freshman about facilities issues, some students find our library really helpful and bigger compared with other ones because of the number of books they have. Some say, "**We can find anything in the library, for our essay, or even just for your interests.**" Our library seems like an important place where students can enhance their knowledge in any categories and fields. Furthermore, there are some interesting answers about disappointments in Hokusei. **No lockers, and the short business hours at Student Support Office.** Freshmen have more classes than their upper-class



"We need a locker."

students and therefore they have to carry around many textbooks with them.

Related to the facilities issue, what facilities or services do freshmen wish to have at Hokusei? Here are three most interesting ideal services that they strongly wish for.

1. **More elevators or escalators**
2. **Free WiFi service around campus**
3. **IC card auto charging machine for student ID cards**

The interesting idea suggested was **private rooms for napping!**

The effect of a short nap has been studied by many scholars all over the world for a long time, and recently it is scientifically proven that taking a short nap brings **powerful concentration and heightens efficiency of work.** In other words, it might be a good idea to provide private napping rooms on campus.

There must be a lot of changes in their lives as they go to university. Asked when they realize that they are a university student, the majority of them answered the moment when;

1. **They drink alcohols**
2. **Skip classes**
3. **Wake up late**
4. **Dye and perm their hair**



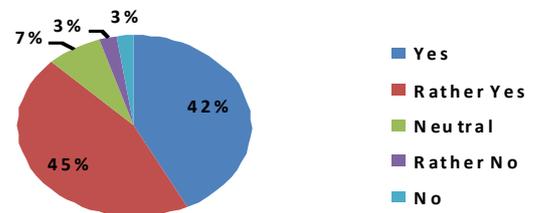
Many students feel nostalgic when they see students in school uniforms like "Oh, I was wearing the same uniform till just a few months ago." While in university, students no longer wear uniforms, there is one invisible thing you have to wear/ have all the time with you. That is "Responsibility." With great freedoms come with great responsibility.

Lastly, the freshmen answered whether they are happy they decided to enter Hokusei. Over 80% of the respondents answered that they are happy choosing Hokusei, while just only one girl answered "no." The main reasons why the major-

ity of respondents are grateful with their decision are;

1. **Many native speakers of English**
2. **Carrier supporting classes and seminars**
3. **Surrounded by many kind sophomores, juniors and seniors**

### Satisfaction rate of choosing Hokusei



*Their new life at Hokusei has just started. Four years may seem long but it is not. Time flies. The freshmen were asked if there were anything they would want to achieve before they become a sophomore. The survey shows that almost 1 in 3 students would want to get a*



*boyfriend or a girlfriend, and It was quite surprising that many boys answered that there are so many cute girls at Hokusei while no girls*

*made any comment about boys. There may be cute girls, however that doesn't mean those cute girls are all available for boys who are currently single. So if you have someone special on your mind, just go get her/him! No time to worry or hesitate, otherwise your rival would go take your princess or prince away from you before you even get a chance to pursue them. Second of all, many students would want to get a part time job and save money for whatever comes to their needs. The survey shows half of*

*the students have part time jobs and the other half don't. It is a great way to earn money but working is not always about money. It is more important how you can grow up and how many*

*things you can learn from working and people you work with. That is the real meaning of doing a part time job. Learn for your future life, brighten your life with your experiences. Remember, whatever you do in your part time job, nothing will be in vain in your future life. (H.C.)*



Japanese Pop singer, Kyaripamyupamyu on commercial of "an", the recruit magazine

# Renewal of Home Page of English Dept.

By Misaki Ozawa

The home page of the English department was redesigned in March this year to promote the better image and get more publicity about the department. The highlights of the renewal include giving out more clear messages about the academic merits of the department and creation of the Facebook account for inviting more interactions between the campus and outside the university. Major headline messages on the opening page read “The Door to the World; Many Options for Studying Abroad and Overseas Experiences,” “High Employment Rate (96%) Achieved” and “Teaching English in Small-class.”

The HP is an important tool of communication for commercial purpose better than printed publications such as brochures and school pamphlets. As many people today use computers and smart phones, the HP can be viewed by anyone anywhere at anytime. In order to fulfill the needs for viewing the page, the university commissioned a professional website builder to create a more useful and helpful page. The redesigning of the HP has two purposes. First, to serve both teachers and students at Hokusei who want to share information on campus with each other. Second, to serve the general public such as future students aspiring to



enter Hokusei, their parents or high school teachers. As the population of high school students is decreasing, Hokusei is determined to secure high-level students for recruitment. The English department of Hokusei is well-known and popular in Hokkaido, but the faculty and school authorities share a sense of crisis now. They need to step up efforts in public relations for better recruitment of aspiring students.

## Information Exchange



Since the Facebook page of the English department was created on June 18, 2013, many people especially university students have used it, and it is a good place to obtain new information and build communication with people inside or outside of the English department. They would like to share the campus news with a lot of students including high school students. Now, about 220 people have pushed “Like!” button on the page. It is a function of the communication software to indicate “I like the content.” With the function, we can see and check how many people shared the

news and liked it. Basically, the stories on the Facebook are offered mostly by students. If students have some news of school events or club activities, they can offer and make a request for carrying the stories. Some of the news carried on the page, for example, featured a Hokusei student who won an award in French oral contest, introduction of university club activities and classroom scenes. The purpose of the Facebook page is to provide a place where people give their opinions and exchange views. But it is updated twice a month now. Prof. Tomoharu Yanagimachi, the chief of the English department, said, “We are short of stories to update the page. So if you have some news or information, please don’t hesitate to come to us.”



# New English Integrated Class Offered for High-Level Students

By Yukina Tahira

A new school curriculum called “Integrated Class” was introduced from 2013 at the English department. It is a special class for students who have high-level of English skills. Students in this class can learn and develop further their skills in speaking, reading and writing through oral English. Why did the English department introduce the program? Professor Joseph Luckett, a committee member of the program, said there are some students who have achieved a high level of basic English skills, so this class was provided for such students for learning a higher level of English. Students are initially placed in their oral English classes through placement interviews conducted during the orientation week at the beginning of the academic year in April. Prof. Luckett said there is no strict limit to the number of students enrolled in this class, “but we prefer a smaller number, somewhere between 10 and 15.” The interviews for screening are conducted one-on-one between one student and one of the oral English class teachers, with each interview lasting between 3 and 5 minutes. Students who are placed in the highest level of the oral English classes will be offered the opportunity to join the Integrated Studies course. In order to stay in the course, the selected students must receive the permission of the instructor as well as maintaining a minimum score on the TOEFL exam. New students can join the course at the beginning of each semester if they achieve at least the minimum TOEFL score, which is initially set at 500 for first-year students. Since this is a pilot program, the required TOEFL scores may need to be adjusted depending on student performance.

“We hope that some of these students will develop advanced academic English skills that they can use in study abroad programs. Now that Hokusei has associations with schools that offer double degree systems, we think the students in this class will be good candidates for those kinds of programs. Also, we hope that this class will attract students with high-level English skills who have studied abroad, attended high schools with strong English programs, or who have achieved strong English skills in other ways.”



Prof. Joseph Luckett

## Interview

Momoka Sakahara, a second-year student, is currently enrolled as a member of the integrated class from April. In an interview, she talks about the integrated class and her impressions about the program.



Momoka Sakahara

## Impression

*Most of the students in the integrated class study other subjects in English, or go to foreign countries, watch TV programs from abroad, read English books, talk about friends who live in a foreign country, etc. and they enjoy using English very much. I have a lot of homework, but I not only study English harder but also want to use a higher level English, and I want to widen my views. I can take a reading class and an essay class in this program, which allows me to skip required classes. So I can have spare time to do my own work freely and study effectively. I expect to improve my English skills further.*

## Achievement

*In class, we set a date and give a short presentation. We sometimes have an oral report in turns, so I can make use of these experiences in this class in many ways.*

*Thanks to the integrated class and homework, I can learn a lot of vocabulary and now speak English better than before. I study together with students who have a high level of English, so I have come to change my mind and attitude toward studying English.*

# HOKUSESS Starts its Campaign for Gaining Accredited Club status

By Ikumi Sagawa

HOKUSESS, an English speaking society at Hokusei Gakuen University, is currently an unofficial club on campus with the membership of 20. The ESS club is in high gear to gain the status as an officially accredited club of the university.

Their basic activities involve playing some games and holding discussions in English. In addition to usual English department students, economic department students and social welfare department students belong to the club. The members gather in a classroom, which is usually A500, from 6 p.m. to 8



**HOKUSESS members and a foreign exchange student**

Moeko Norota, 2nd president of HOKUSESS, has been the member of the club since it was reborn in 2012. She became the president because the 1st president suggested to her that she becomes the next president. She said she never expected so many motivated students joined HOKUSESS this year. "I would like to make the club with the members together, and it is my ideal way of running a club," she added.

They plan to become an official club in the next year. When it is approved as an official club, they can get the right to use a club budget and a clubroom from school. And furthermore, it will make it easy for HOKUSESS to stay longer. She hopes that HOKUSESS will develop more and more, so she decided to start their campaign for becoming an official club with the members.

They even started considering joining a group named the Hokkaido English Speaking Society League to expand their activities. Seven universities in Hokkaido have joined it. The group holds some competitions in debating skills in English. "It is too difficult for some members. It will open the way to participate in a debate with other universities' students," she said.

p.m. once a week. They get advice from Professor Joseph Lockett as a consultant.

In the first half of the hours when activities are held, they play games such as Chinese whispers. For the last one hour, they discuss whatever topics the members are interested in. "HOKUSESS is not a club just for communicating with foreign students, but we want to improve our English skills through discussions," one of the members said. There are other clubs that aim to have a relationship with foreign students, for example, Hi-C and EASCOM. The clubs look similar, but they have different purposes. "I want every student to know what HOKUSESS is. It is first and foremost an ESS," said Shiori Noguchi, one of the members and a 3rd year student.

As an unofficial club, they must hand in an application form to do their activities to the Student Support Office every week. The members take turns to fill in the form. Though it is a troublesome work required of an unofficial club, they seem to enjoy running HOKUSESS by themselves.

At first, there were only two members. They gathered their pals gradually and managed to run it. The original members have already graduated from school. Now, HOKUSESS has about 30 regular members, with the same ratio of men to women. Some foreign exchange students join the activities for cultural exchange at times.

ESS tends to be thought of as being difficult or prudish. But HOKUSESS is not by any means a prudish club. On the contrary, the room where they do their activities is full of laughter. "If someone is interested in HOKUSESS, we will accept willingly by all means. We have an account of Facebook. It is connected to the English department's account. Please check our Facebook page," one of the members said.



**Moeko Norota, second president of HOKUSESS**

# EASCOM celebrates 10th anniversary

By Nozomi Hirao

## Survival of EASCOM

EASCOM (East Asian Student Committee) reached its 10th anniversary in 2014, overcoming a crisis in continuing to exist two years ago. This organization was launched by Hokusei Gakuen University students in order to create a program held in the fall every year. The committee is headquartered in the Students Support Office.

In a tie-up with Hokusei Gakuen, usually a total of 15 foreign students — five from each of three different universities in Taiwan, China and South Korea — visit Sapporo for a 10-day program planned by EASCOM. All activities are arranged by EASCOM students to let Hokusei students and the students from the three areas have a chance to get to know each other through exchanging cultures and ideas. This original 10-day program has been held every year since EASCOM was organized, and many wonderful and lasting relationships have been built.

The crisis started back in 2012 when the Students Support Office came up with a new idea for promoting international exchanges with students from all over the world, and to start the new program, the EASCOM 10-day program was targeted to disband. The

2013 program members



EASCOM leader at that time, Akemi Tanimura, was determined to take an action to preserve the program. She and the central administration group started a campaign to collect signatures from people in support of the program and finally more than 600 names were signed. The leader from each generation also gave messages to support it, and consequently EASCOM has managed to survive the worst situation. Tanimura says EASCOM is not just for fun. There are many negative news reported between Japan and the three areas, but not everything is so bad. EASCOM provides a place for understanding each other in the true sense.

## EASCOM 2014

EASCOM 10-day program is scheduled to be held from October 22nd to November 1st this year. The new leader in 2014, Nao Omote, is in progress to create an unforgettable program. The following are excerpts from an interview with her.

*This year, Indonesia was supposed to join our program as a new member, but unfortunately it was canceled because of their own schedule. This year's program is going to be arranged by sharing events with other organizations. Then we are going to have some events that Hokusei students can join such as a summit event, which provides a chance to debate with students from the three areas, stand shops where Hokusei students can buy the three area's food at reasonable prices and the stage that students from the areas introduce their cultures and so on. All events are really opportunities to talk to the students and hear their real voices, so you are welcome to join us. Finally very few students at Hokusei know EASCOM and our program well but we want more people to know our activities. This is a great opportunity to have a connection with students from those areas and everyone can do it! You can discover new Japan through the conversation with them. We are looking forward to seeing you in the program coming soon!*



Event ad in 2013

# Returnee Comes Back to Hokusei to Pursue her Dream

By Ayana Ishiyama

Nanami Wagatsuma, aged 21 and an English major, has a unique history as a Hokusei Gakuen University student. She is the first-ever student to have successively transferred to Hokusei as a third-year student after finishing a community college in the United States.

Having graduated from Hokusei Gakuen University High School three years ago, Wagatsuma flew to California to enter Citrus College in Glendora, California in June 2011. In fact, it was not her most favorable choice. "I had initially wanted to go straight on to Hokusei immediately after finishing the high school," she said. But she couldn't get the EIKEN Test in Practical English Proficiency Grade 2 by the deadline,



*Wagatsuma passionately talks about her experience*

which was required to be qualified to acquire the school's recommendation for entering Hokusei. About that time, she found information in a pamphlet about Citrus College, where she decided to jump in to pursue her academics. "I thought I would be able to contribute to students as an English teacher in the future if I had an experience of studying abroad and living in America," said Wagatsuma. She studied language arts at the college, taking several foreign language classes and communication classes.

Wagatsuma recalls some tough memories in the U.S. "Whenever I had arguments with my friends, I couldn't express my feelings well at first," she said. "They are native speakers so they can tell

me how they feel but I couldn't. Then they couldn't understand how I felt, either." However, she eventually overcame the problem, and her friends came to understand her with patience and waited for her to speak.

Wagatsuma considers volunteer activities as the most valuable experience she obtained in the U.S.; she participated in volunteer activities in a village of Mexico once a month.

"At first, I didn't have a positive image about the volunteering," Wagatsuma said. She was afraid because it was held in Mexico, which is sometimes described with words such as "unsafe."

However, the volunteer activities changed her view. She taught English, brought supplies to people living there, and helped constructing churches, in which she tiled walls and made stained glasses.

"Everybody thinks that local Mexicans are poor and such an area is not safe,

so we tend to avoid going there," she said. "But actually people living there don't think they live in a dangerous place. The experience wiped out my negative image about those 'unsafe' places."

Wagatsuma graduated from Citrus College in December 2013. Her dream has been to become a high school English teacher since her childhood. A diploma from an American university alone wouldn't guarantee she could become an English teacher in Japan, but getting a teacher license at a Japanese university can provide her with opportunities in public and private high schools.

"I needed wider options to become a teacher, so I decided to come back instead of transferring to an American university," she said. "And I wanted to be a student at Hokusei in the first place," she added with a smile.

Wagatsuma is now struggling with assignments for the teaching-course classes. While she feels students are very

close to each other regardless of the school year in Japan, she feels as if she is in a social bind here, missing "the free style of life" in the U.S. that she could do whatever she wanted to do. "I don't want to spend every morning wavering about what to wear for going to school," she said desperately.

Wagatsuma hopes high school students learn more about Japan. She wants to teach positive points about Japan as well as negative points to students when she becomes an English teacher.

Despite the assured food, clothing, shelter, and the sense of security everywhere in Japan, Wagatsuma realized how repressed Japanese people can become in social life.

"We have been told not to do this or that because it troubles other people," she lamented. "But I want students to realize that it is fine to cause troubles sometimes and they can always challenge whatever they really want to do."



**Prof. Toshiya Kawahara**

1. Imamiya High School
2. Cycling, Jazz music, lai-do
3. Newspaper delivery, tutor
4. Okonomiyaki
5. English literature
6. Visiting old Japanese castles
7. India



**Personal Data**

1. High school
2. Hobby
3. Part time job
4. Favorite food
5. Seminar
6. Dream
7. Country that I want to visit



**Nozomi Hirao**

1. Sapporo Tsukisamu High School
2. Eating, sleeping, traveling, driving
3. Hamburger steak restaurant
4. Apricot kernel tofu, noodle, rice
5. International communication
6. Traveling all over the world
7. New Zealand, Peru



**Ayana Ishiyama**

1. Haboro High School
2. Watching American TV dramas and soccer games, reading books, baking
3. Soup curry restaurant
4. Soup curry, seafood, Shabu-Shabu
5. Applied Linguistics
6. Becoming an English journalist
7. Italy, Spain



**Hikari Chiba**

1. Shinkawa High School
2. Watching movies, vacuuming
3. Bar (kitchen and hall)
4. Sushi, Indian curry
5. Intercultural communication
6. Intercultural marriage
7. England, Mexico



**Ikumi Sagawa**

1. Nihon University High School
2. Baking bread
3. ABC cooking studio
4. Soup curry
5. English education
6. Live in a warm country with my husband
7. Finland



**Yukina Tahira**

1. Hokkai High School
2. Cooking, hot spring
3. Yakiniku restaurant
4. Snacks
5. American literature
6. Cooking studio instructor & housewife
7. Canada

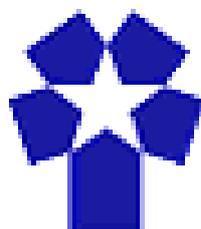


**Misaki Ozawa**

1. Chitose High School
2. Driving, watching soccer game
3. Hotel
4. Ramen, chocolate
5. American literature
6. Happy life
7. France



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