

President's message to newly matriculated graduate students FY2021

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Let me express my sincere congratulations to all you newly enrolled students.

Under normal circumstances, I would be honoured to speak directly to you and offer words of encouragement. However, due to the fact that many of our graduate students are also active healthcare professionals, thereby posing an unacceptable risk of infection from COVID-19 to society, we have decided to cancel the Opening Ceremony and send you this video message instead.

Even though the ceremonies have been cancelled, I would like to congratulate each of our new students on behalf of the entire faculty of TMDU. You have worked so hard to get into the graduate school in spite of the new normal that COVID-19 and the infection control measures have imposed on everyone's lives.

Last year, TMDU was recognized as a "Designated National University Corporation" by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan. This means that our institution has been recognized as a world-class university in the competitive international university sphere, which has made significant contributions to the development of society and the economy and played a leading role in National University Reform. TMDU is the only medical institution among the seven Designated National University Corporations. As one of them, our university must aim for "the realization of total healthcare across the globe

transcending generations and mankind". For this reason, I believe we have been given the mission of leading education and research in Japan starting from fiscal year 2022.

Our end goal as a medical university is not only to improve research results, but to return the fruits back to society.

To Master's students, entering graduate school may be seen as an investment that propels them toward the next milestone in their professional career. However, I would like to suggest that you consider your time and effort here from a contribution-to-society perspective, bearing in mind that as a national university, Japanese society is also investing in us.

As for our PhD students, I would urge them to pursue and develop fundamental research in order to attain new expertise, and to do so by focusing on the pillars of Originality, Academic Integrity and Social Impact.

In order to support students' research, we are planning to create opportunities for young researchers to network, and aiming to develop a variety of means for students to obtain scholarships, starting from the next fiscal year.

This year we especially want to focus on intra-university cooperation, emphasizing collaboration between units that transcends specialty or department. Why are we attaching such great importance to intra-university collaboration rather than to inter-university collaboration? The reason is that there are numerous departments at TMDU with very high levels of specialization. We believe that through increased collaboration among these departments we can produce greater value as a university, thus facilitating even more productive linkages to outside institutions in the future.

Due to the new collaboration opportunities arising from the pandemic, our two hospitals-- Medical Hospital and Dental Hospital--will merge into a single hospital, thus giving birth to the new Tokyo Medical and Dental University Hospital. We expect the merging of the two hospitals to be yet another way of facilitating collaboration among university departments.

I would certainly like to challenge all our graduate students to create new networks beyond the limits of their department or specialty. That will bring fortune not only to students but to the university as a whole. I believe that contributing to society, in response to present demands, will as a result lead to further progress for everyone.

Although the pandemic has without question been an immense calamity, the accompanying accelerated changes and progress in society have brought about new realities that we must learn to grasp.

As an organization and as individuals we can expect to experience significant change. Such change will not be limited to medical science and healthcare, but will encompass society as a whole. Undergirding the concept of being "connected" in Society 5.0 and the setting of globally shared goals through SDGs is the idea of cooperation throughout the whole of society. The pandemic has brought to reality a society that was thought to be a dream of the future.

Collaboration is in this way a social demand.

I would like to finish my congratulatory message hoping that you will push forward your research and work together in order to open up the future under TMDU's vision: "Cultivating Professionals with Knowledge and Humanity, thereby Contributing to People's Well-being".