

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

What is sociology? Sociology is a challenging academic discipline that tries to understand and explain all the phenomena unfolding before our eyes and in our minds by focusing on the nature of “society” which consists of individuals but, at the same time, is external to individual consciousness and existence. These phenomena range from our innermost personal anguish to international conflicts, as well as from contemporary popular culture to the foundations of the systems that enable us to lead communal lives.

The Department of Sociology, which marked its centenary in 2007, has a tradition of combining theoretical approaches which throw light on the generation and development of “society” through rigorous and thorough thought, with empirical approaches which analyze current topics from various angles based on social surveys and field research. We are also endeavoring to further develop this tradition into a new style of sociology and social research, in which researchers engage with the actual society and try to work within it.

Since 2008, we have promoted international collaboration in graduate education as an institution selected for the Global Centers of Excellence (GCOE) program by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. We currently participate in faculty and graduate student exchange programs with over 33 partner universities and research institutions in Asia, Europe, and America. In cooperation with Kyoto University Asian Studies Unit (KUASU), we organize courses in English by professors from partner universities, and an annual international student workshop with National Taiwan University and Seoul National University. Students are given credit for attending these courses and programs as well as classes held in Vietnam, China and Korea in collaboration with partner universities.

Courses offered include those on the fundamentals of theory and methodology as well as diverse special lectures in which sociologists from inside and outside the university discuss the latest topics from their current research.



PHOTO : Fieldwork practice in Kumano region