

~ Our Path Toward Becoming a World-Class University ~

Since its foundation in 1907, Tohoku University has held to a tradition of putting “*Research First*”, while maintaining an “*Open Door*” policy in order to emphasize “Practice-Oriented Research and Education”. The results of our research have proven useful in solving many problems facing society, and by educating leaders we have contributed to establishing a just and peaceful society. Our university history has been built through the efforts and accomplishments of those who have passed through the halls of our campuses and facilities during our ten decades of operation.



We live in a time when serious problems that are increasingly difficult to predict arise one after another and threaten human life and dignity. We are faced with various complex and difficult challenges, such as climate change accompanied by global warming, continuing environmental destruction, and problems with medical care, energy, food supplies, and poverty. When examining the tragic reality of the current disaster caused by the earthquake on March 11, 2011, we cannot abdicate responsibility as specialists by saying that it “exceeded expectations”, but rather we have to realize that this is a responsibility with regards to human society that we must shoulder in order to resolve the inconsistency.

In order to contribute to the development of human society, we believe it is our mission to play a leading role as a “world-class university” in helping humanity overcome the challenges it faces today by applying the knowledge we have accumulated over the past century, and by continuing our efforts to achieve innovation in the fields of research and education.

To become a “World-Class University”, Tohoku University announced the “Inoue Plan 2007” (Tohoku University action plan) in March 2007. The Inoue Plan established the specific steps that will be taken to implement a strategic five pillar plan focused on education, research, contribution to society, campus environment and organization / management.

Four years have now passed since the plan was introduced, and during this period the University continues to make steady progress. In the field of education, for example, we are moving forward with the development of our international-standard proprietary liberal arts curriculum, including the expansion of the overseas internship program, while an implementation system for that curriculum is also being put in place. Having been selected to participate in the Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalization (Global 30), we are now promoting initiatives for the internationalization of education including the development and implementation of our “Future Global Leadership” educational programs offered in English, and our plan to more than double the number of international students studying at Tohoku University, from 1300 to 3000.

In the area of research, we have established the Institute for International Advanced Research and Education, which is designed to provide future generations of researchers with the advanced knowledge and creative skills they will need to provide scientific leadership in the 21st century. In addition, the “WPI Advanced Institute for Material Research (WPI-AIMR)” was also established as part of the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI). In addition to our 12 Global COE (Center of Excellence) Programs, we have had two programs selected for the Funding Program for World-Leading Innovative R&D on Science and Technology, and 31 programs selected for the Funding Program for Next Generation World-Leading Researchers.

In other areas, we are making our presence better known internationally through membership in organizations such as APRU (Association of Pacific Rim Universities), T.I.M.E. (Top Industrial Managers for Europe), and AEARU (Association of East Asian Research Universities), and we are facilitating the creation of new venture businesses by promoting cooperation between the university and the private sector. Steps are being taken to create world-class campuses open to students from around the world. We are pursuing a number of other highly original strategies, such as the development of a modern personnel management system to improve our international competitiveness, being externally evaluated by the European University Association, and the establishment of a Tohoku University Endowment Fund. All of these developments are helping to foster a sense of pride in the uniqueness of our institution, and are indicative of how our teaching

and administrative staff, student body, and alumni have all pulled together to advance the interests of the university. These accomplishments give me a great deal of satisfaction.

2011 – Universities must question their *raison d'être* when faced with the tide of sudden changes on the unprecedented scale that we are facing. Tohoku University has been entrusted by society to contribute to humankind as a source of knowledge. In order to carry this out, it is imperative that we implement independent reform that is clearly visible and continue demonstrating the essence of “Research First”, as well as the perseverance and sincerity that are necessary to continually create a new state of education and research.

I believe that by helping all our stakeholders to understand our mission and the various activities carried out at Tohoku University, and by actively seeking the cooperation of a wide variety of peoples as we continue to boldly face the challenges before us, we will become a university that is trusted, respected, and loved by society, and one which is truly capable of contributing to the sustainable development of humanity.

June 2011

Akihisa Inoue
President, Tohoku University

【The Great East Japan Earthquake and New Challenges for Tohoku University ~ Brand New Tohoku University】

I would like to express my heartfelt condolences to the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake, and my deep gratitude for the unfaltering efforts of those providing aid and support to the affected areas. I would also like to express my appreciation for the heartfelt support and speedy assistance received from overseas.

This earthquake in question, with a maximum shaking of level 7 according to observation, was one of the largest recorded in history, and the accompanying tsunami caused enormous damage. However, our campuses proved secure and happily no injuries were sustained. We are closely observing the situation at the nuclear power plant, over 80km away, where there have been leaks of radioactive material. According to measurements taken by the University, radiation levels in Sendai are within the normal range.

Tohoku University is currently putting all its energy in to the restoration of our educational and research capabilities, and started the new academic year on May 6th, 2011.

Faced with an almost unprecedented disaster, we have to seek to implement a paradigm shift to a new human society, based on “Constructing a Safe and Dependable Society”. In addition to contributions from our individual specialists, we established the Institute for Disaster Reconstruction and Regeneration Research as a center of excellence that brings together the world’s wisdom. We will strategically and systematically address research, education and societal contribution that leads the reconstruction and revitalization of the region, and transmit and put these results into practice. Finally, we will contribute to the regeneration of the region, Japan and human society by working vigorously to create a safe, secure society for the next generation in which humans can coexist with nature.

Tohoku University’s Official Symbol, School Colors, Song and Logo



Aiming to create a clearer identity and enhance its international recognition and status, Tohoku University unveiled its official school symbol, colors and song in June 2007.

With the key concepts of ‘creativity’, ‘globality’ and ‘tradition’ in mind, the university adopted the ‘Hagi’ (Bush clover) plant, a traditional symbol of Sendai and Miyagino, as its school symbol. The Hagi, which has also been used in the school logo since 2005, represents a dynamic movement spreading throughout the world with dignity.

The colors purple and black were selected as Tohoku University’s official colors. Purple, which is used in the school symbol, symbolizes intelligence and creativity, while black represents diligence and the power of practice.

Ever since its foundation in 1907, Tohoku University has been committed to its ‘Research first’ and ‘Open door’ policies. It has accepted diverse talent from across the world, and has striven to develop leadership talent and cutting-edge research. On the basis of these traditions, it is hoped that the school symbol will express the essence of Tohoku University’s past and future as a world class research and educational institution.

‘Aobamoyuru konomichinoku’ was selected as the official song of Tohoku University. This beloved song was originally sung by the Tohoku University Students’ Association in 1953 and has been passed down the generations since then.