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Historical Background

Tohoku University was founded in 1907 as the third Imperial University of Japan, following the Tokyo Imperial University and Kyoto Imperial University; and from its start, it displayed to the world an unwavering commitment of an "Open-Door" policy. Departing from the norms of other imperial universities, it has accepted graduates from higher technical schools and higher normal schools, and despite the opposition from the government at that time, becoming Japan's First National University to admit female students in 1913 (admitting three in that year).

At the time of its founding, Tohoku University was able to attract a group of young and brilliant researchers who had trained around the world to serve on its faculty. As part of this reason, a "Research First" principle came to develop, which calls upon their scholars to not only pursue highly productive research but to also put their findings to work in the teaching of their students. In addition to this, Tohoku University has nurtured a tradition of "Practice-Oriented Research and Education," in which their results of cutting-edge research are being put to use for the good of society and the improvement of life style. Evident of our pioneering practice (before the World War II period), are the set up in local venture businesses which foster regional industry and our status as the nation's center for research on family law; the domestic branch of law which is closely associated with our daily lives.

This spirit, which continued strongly through World War II and the rapid economic growth of the postwar period, still remains alive and can be seen in today's new era of advanced globalization. As Tohoku University prepares to celebrate its centennial in 2007, we are confident that our traditions be nourished and that with the help of students and researchers from all over the world, it will not only survive but will flourish even more during the coming 100 years.