

Brief Report of Summer and Winter Course from Wiwiek Harsonowati (Master Student/MIK)



First of all, I would like to express my thankfulness to my academic supervisor Prof. Dr. Aris Tri Wahyudi, M.Si for the information, recommendation, and the support, he provided me to join this summer course program. With his guidance I was able to apply and join this summer course program and then I was chosen as a participant for winter course program and met researchers and Professors in Japan and finally I got an offer for MEXT scholarship to join on October 2016. I would also like to thank the Head of Study Program of Microbiology, Prof. Dr. Anja Meryandini, MS for giving me permission to join this program. This is a short report how my incredible experiences began.

The International Summer Course Program is a part of an annual short-term International trans-mobility program which was initiated by Ibaraki University (IU) and Bogor Agricultural University (IPB) in 2005. From past decade, the Summer Course is annually held in IPB and the Winter Course in IU. The activities in the program consist of lectures from IPB and other Professors from Japan, student seminars and poster presentations, field trips, cultural night, excursion, group presentation and discussion. All students were encouraged to have a poster and oral presentation of their research in the master program. The summer course participants joined the student seminar, and there was an award for the best presenter and best poster. This year Summer Course was held in IPB (18 – 25 August 2015) with the theme “Practical Bio-resources & Agricultural Sciences toward Regional Sustainability”. Total 27 graduate students from IPB, 5 students from IU, 2 students from Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (TUAT), 2 students from Ryukyus University, and one student from Ehime University participated in the summer course.

In this summer course, I got so many things: experience, knowledge, friends, fun, memories, the best poster award, and many more. I learned about sustainability agriculture, Japanese cultures, and the most important thing is “May be we have same things to do, but how to do is different”.

Three participants were selected from the summer course to join Winter Course program at Ibaraki University, Japan. These 3 students were invited and supported by Ibaraki University. The criteria for selection was based on some points: academic GPA, thesis research (it's preferable for students who already started their research), English proficiency in daily activity, creativity, team works, activity, and an award on student seminar.

In October, IPB announced the names of 3 selected students who can go to Japan to participate in Winter Course Program. I was one of the selected students along with two other students invited by Ibaraki University. Students from IPB are Wiwiek Harsonowati (microbiology/2014/3rd semester), Sangrani Annisa Dewi (agronomy and horticulture/2013/5th semester) and Muhammad Ihsan (civil and environmental engineering/2013/5th semester). Winter course program also invited students from Gadjah Mada University, Udayana University, Kasetsart University (Thailand), King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (Thailand), Khon Kaen University (Thailand), and Brunnei Darussalam University.

Winter course program held at Ibaraki University, Ami campus from 28 November – 4 December 2015, and continued with “International student conference Ibaraki University (ISCIU)” at Mito campus (5 – 6 December 2016). The activities in the program were consisted of lectures from Japan Professors, and invited lectures from Indonesia, Thailand, and Brunnei Darussalam. We also had excursion trips in this program in which we visited Tsukuba botanical garden, NIAES (National Institute for-Agro Environmental Science, GRC (Gene Research Center) of Ibaraki University for lab activities, ASHITA organic farm, JIRCAS (Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences) and Farmers market. This Winter Course Program was closed with presentation from all participants.

During winter course program, I had discussed with Prof. Narisawa (as my supervisor, Prof. Aris suggestion) about my Doctor Degree scholarship program in his laboratory and he welcomed me. In the closing dinner party, Sakagami sensei announced for best presentation and I was chosen as a best presentation award. I received the award certificate and gift from Prof. Narisawa. Since then, Narisawa sensei asked me to contact him to apply MEXT (Monbukagakusho) scholarship. On 5 January 2016, a month after winter course program, I was contacted by Sakagami sensei and informed me about MEXT scholarship at Narisawa sensei laboratory (Bioresources Science Department, Microbiology Laboratory). Scholarship will be started from October 2015 as a “Research student” and enrollment to Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (TUAT) on April 2016. This scholarship started from October 2016 until March 2020 (3.5 years Doctor Degree program). Interview with Prof. Narisawa and Ibaraki university representative staff was held on 5 January 2016 through Skype and the interview was about my current research (thesis research), experience, my interests, and my research plans in his laboratory. Prof. Narisawa had sent me some of his papers to guide me to establish my research plans related with topics in his laboratory about microbes-plant pathogen interaction which is correlated with my thesis research about actinomycetes as biocontrol agents for fungal pathogen *Pyricularia oryzae*.