

Takeyama Seminar

Speciality: Economic Geography and Service Design

"Creating services that meet the needs during this changing time"

Please tell us what you specialize in.

My research focuses on the creation of new services. The Japanese economy up until now has been manufacturing-oriented, but as the economy is becoming more and more service-oriented, services are necessary to meet the needs during this rapidly changing time. At times, I am researching ways to create services that transcend national borders and expand overseas as a global business. Originally, my specialty was economic geography, and my research focused on how mobile phones and smartphones would change people's lives in urban areas. However, in order to make service business flourish in Japanese society in the future, I have been involved in practical research projects where I actually create services together with 3-4 companies and we think "what kind of services we should create and how we should create it". As these projects are held in university, it would be meaningless to do the same thing as an internship or a business contest. We do not want to simply come up with good ideas and call it a day. We want to think about what is required in today's Japanese society and create services that actually meet the needs during this time.

"Learners create the value"

Please tell us about your educational philosophy.

It is important to teach, but it is more important for learners to create value and produce knowledge. Although I provide students the opportunity to do so or support them by thinking about themes together, it is essential that students apply what they have learned proactively. In the case of lectures, we are dealing with so many students, so there is a limit to how interactive we can be during class time. However, in small-group lectures such as seminars, we can be more interactive, so we keep this in mind.

"As a student, I was in a somewhat unique seminar"

Please tell us about your student days.

When I was a student, I was in a somewhat unique seminar. It was a seminar that specialized in quantitative geography. Of course, I studied quantitative geography, but I had a professor who was always pursuing "what learning is" and "what knowledge is". We experimented with different learning styles and did fieldwork as well as computer-based learning. There, I realized that humans have various modes of knowledge and that learning is diverse and fun. I then went to the University of California in the US where I earned my degree and started my teaching career at Keio SFC. The geography department (at UC) was not orthodox at that time, and through my student life, I experienced the difficulty and joy of encountering problems that could not be solved by existing academic studies. I do not pursue a single field of study, but I connect various fields and disciplines.

"Enthusiasm is important!!"

What are you looking for in a sophomore who is interested in joining Takeyama Seminar?

First, take a look at the activities of Takeyama Seminar. Since it is important to be enthusiastic about something, I want students with enthusiasm to come. You do not have to have some kind

of special knowledge. I am looking for students who are instinctively passionate about what they want to do and get hooked on it.

"Let's face history"

Final comments

I want you to be interested in what is currently happening in the world, regardless of politics and the economy. Furthermore, it is good if you can link them to events that happen around you. There is no right answer, so please think about how you can contribute to Japanese society and the world in the future. I hope that the number of people who think on a larger scale with a broader perspective would increase. I feel that existing things may collapse in the future. That is why I want you to do interesting things with the awareness that you have the chance to change the world. When you are a student, you tend to adapt yourself to the world, but because we are in an era where the world continues to drastically change, what you think may be correct. Japan today is an information society, and it is important to have one's own theme (issues and perspectives) in order to survive in a world that is overflowing with such information.

Sidenote:

The theme of Takeyama Seminar, one of the most popular seminars in the Faculty of Economics, is "Creating New Value". This is exactly what Professor Takeyama has had in mind since he was a student, and it is an extremely important idea for us as well. This interview was not only an introduction to the seminar for second-year students, but also a valuable experience for us. Thank you so much for taking your time.