

■ Feature

Okayama University launches “Discovery Program for Global Learners”

A new innovative, multidisciplinary undergraduate program for globally-minded students in Japan and overseas starts October 2017. Students can pursue their undergraduate degree entirely in English, or by combining English-based and Japanese-based courses.

With over 140 years of history and an international reputation for excellence in research and education, Okayama University graduates have made significant contributions to society in the areas of sciences and engineering, arts and social sciences, medicine, dentistry, and pharmaceutical sciences. To further the university’s fundamental mission of “promoting stable and sustainable advancement of human society,” the university will launch the Discovery Program for Global Learners, leading to a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences, in October 2017.

“The Discovery Program for Global Learners aims to nurture young leaders who will take active roles on the global stage,” says Ayami Nakatani, director of the program.

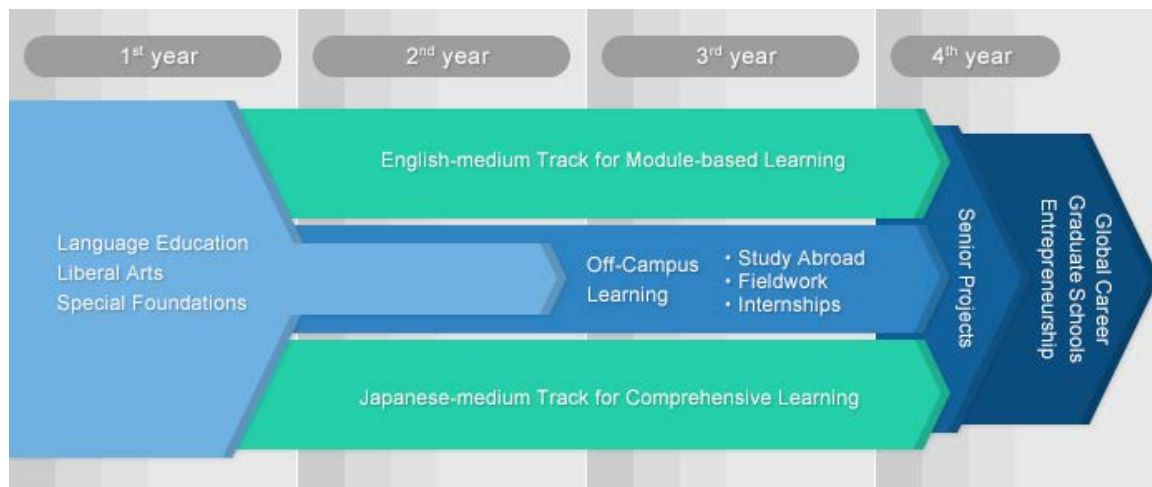
Overview of the Discovery Program for Global Learners

The salience of the program is that the students can pursue their degree entirely in English if they wish, a major shift from the majority of universities in Japan. At the same time, the Discovery Program also allows students to take courses taught in Japanese. Another distinctive feature of the program is the diverse student body, consisting of 30 students selected through domestic application, 30 selected through international application, and few through International Baccalaureate application. They may include, but are not limited to, Japanese students who completed their secondary education in Japan, international students who completed their education overseas, students of all nationalities who were born and raised in Japan by one or more foreign-born parent, and Japanese students who have lived in multi-lingual environments.

Students can select courses from two tracks:

- The Japanese-based Open Track allows students to pursue their studies mainly in the University’s ten existing faculties, ranging from humanities and social sciences to natural sciences and engineering.
- The English-based Discovery Track consists of three clusters: (1) Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, (2) Cultural Diversity and Communities, and (3) Transdisciplinary Sciences for Global Sustainability).

The important point about the Discovery Program is that students can customize and design their own curriculum and areas of study to fit their career goals. Through practical experiences such as fieldwork, internships, and scientific collaboration with faculty members, students can also develop multi-disciplinary skills to tackle wide-ranging global issues.



Curriculum of the Discovery Program for Global Learners

Details about the English-based Discovery Track

The Transdisciplinary Sciences for Global Sustainability cluster is designed to instill students with knowledge and skills in environmental engineering, agricultural science, and astrochemistry. Specific modules offered in the areas of Astronomical and Atmospheric Spectroscopy, Environmental Chemical Engineering, and Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

The Cultural Diversity and Communities cluster covers sociology and anthropology, with modules on “Japan and Beyond,” “Migration and Communities,” and “Environment and Health” for deeper insights into people’s beliefs and practices.

In the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship cluster, students will learn to devise innovative solutions to issues such as poverty and environmental degradation through coursework on economics, management, and philanthropy. Specific courses are subcategorized in the following modules: “Economics and Management,” “Social Business and Entrepreneurship,” and “Philanthropy and Nonprofit Management.”

Support for attaining bilingual communication skills

Multilingual education is an important factor to successfully achieve the goals of the Discovery Program. Students in the English based-track are strongly encouraged to take Japanese language classes for international students offered by the university. Students will meet regularly with their advisors to design personal study plans to meet their individual needs and long-term goals.

The faculty and the staff of the Discovery Program

The diverse and multidisciplinary nature of the Discovery Program is reflected in the program faculty, who represent six nationalities and speak ten languages. The faculty and staff will support students in their student life, including academic and career guidance, and preparation for graduate school.

Message from the Director

“We welcome students with an entrepreneurial spirit, innovative minds, and a strong will to commit themselves to intercultural and interdisciplinary collaboration.”

Okayama University looks forward to welcoming young and motivated students on a new and exciting journey of multidisciplinary Discovery!



The staff of the Discovery Program



Okayama University President Hirofumi Makino with some international students at the university.

Further information about application procedures and scholarships

1. General information
<http://discovery.okayama-u.ac.jp/en/>
2. Scholarships and financial aid
<http://discovery.okayama-u.ac.jp/en/admissions/scholarships/>
3. Okayama University
http://www.okayama-u.ac.jp/index_e.html

