

Speech on Entrance Ceremony
Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine
April 6, 2020

Mitsuhiro Yoshioka, M.D., Ph.D.
Dean, Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine

Congratulations on your admission to Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine. On behalf of faculty members, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations and welcome to you all.

Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine was established in 1955 in accordance with the graduate school educational reform. In 2000, under the government's policy to place importance on graduate schools, education and research at the Graduate School of Medicine was enhanced by shifting the center of education and research from the School of Medicine to the Graduate School of Medicine. Also, the Master's Program was inaugurated in 2002, ahead of many other universities.

In April 2017, in order to send out the manpower flexibly to respond to the social needs which change dramatically, the Graduate School of Medicine was reorganized into an organization which solely graduate students belong to, by separating the organization of faculty members, which is newly named as Faculty of Medicine. This reorganization enabled us to provide global education of graduate school by organically integrating different disciplines. In other words, the educational approach has been enabled where faculty of multiple graduate schools, research institutes, or others can take part in the education, and the redistribution of educational resources has been realized without being confined to a research domain. By virtue of this new system, we can promptly respond and establish an educational organization, if requested by the society to implement a new type of education.

Under the philosophies of the Graduate School of Medicine "to lead the world with cutting-edge research in medical science" and "to equip the next generation of medical researchers and medical professionals with a strong sense of ethics and a well-rounded character to contribute to the health and welfare of humanity", the Graduate School of Medicine sets its educational goal to nurture individuals who possess high ethical standards and highly specialized knowledge regarding medicine, life science and social medicine (public health) as well as research and teaching or practical capabilities.

The recent developments in medicine are truly remarkable and these developments are based on the past research products. Without the research of today, there will be no progress in medicine of tomorrow. However, there are alarming circumstances where the number of students who enroll medical graduate schools is decreasing and the number of young medical researchers and physician scientists, who are to play important part in the field of tomorrow's medicine, is also decreasing. What are suggested, as the factors behind this, are decreasing opportunities for researchers to work and introductions of the new clinical resident training systems and the new medical specialist system. It is worried that those factors might incur further serious situation. We would like to pay our heartfelt respects to you who have chosen the way of Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine in these circumstances. I believe the exposure to the front-line researches and engaging in those researches at this graduate school should be a life fortune for not only those who are to play an active role as researchers but also those who wish to become successful and capable medical specialists or highly specialized professionals.

From now on, you will set your own research question and through that research question you will carry out experiments or conduct research by yourselves, discuss the matters, learn how to derive a conclusion, and practice. In other words, you will address the challenge of creating new knowledge. It may not be an easy road to go, but you will be able to be exposed to the academic essence and we are sure that your joy and excitement will outweigh your hardships and laborious efforts. Not only will your product knowledge belong to you but also will be taken over for long as an asset of knowledge shared by many people. We truly hope you will never give up and acquire the 'ability to continue to think with patience'. Also, we hope you will cultivate the spirit of 'respecting and accepting the diversity'.

What are expected during the course in this graduate school are not only to enhance your ability to plan and execute the researches but also to enrich your qualifications and abilities to cope with the dramatical changes of the society, and most importantly to keep challenging.

The "lofty ambition", which was encouraged by Dr. W. S. Clark, the first vice-principal of the Sapporo Agricultural College, has been the philosophy which has served as the backbone of Hokkaido University for over a century. We expect you to cherish this message and to keep your great dream and high ideal. It is our sincere hope that, with that noble spirit, you will finally come to the day to acquire the degree with gaining respectable research result. Once again, congratulations to you all.