“The people there were gods and midgets and knew themselves mortal and so the midgets walked tall so as not to embarrass the gods and the gods crouched so as to make the small ones feel at home. And, after all, isn’t that what life is all about, the ability to go around back and come up inside other people’s heads to look out at the damned fool miracle and say: oh, so that’s how you see it!”

Ray Bradbury, “Dandelion Wine”
Akita International University

“Toto, we’re not in Kansas anymore.”

AIU in The Dark

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AIU in The Light

- Small Liberal Arts College founded in 2004
- Number of Students 880
- Student/Faculty Ratio 12:1
- More than half of the faculty are from outside Japan
- Generally very globally oriented institution

Salient Features of AIU

- All classes are taught in English.*
- All students are required to spend a full academic year studying abroad.
- Approximately 25% of students on campus are international students.
- Over 180 exchange partner institutions
- Residential Campus (90+%)
- Experiential Learning, Campus and Community Engagement
Impact of Government Support on Higher Ed. in Japan

- University Categories
  - National: (86) Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka Universities...
  - Private: (600) Keio, Waseda, Meiji, Sophia, ICU...
  - Public: (91) Yokohama City U, Aizu, AIU...

- Government Funding
  - Regular: Even private universities receive annual government support
  - Special Grant Programs: Competitive

Government Support for AIU

- Public University: Akita Prefecture Funding
  - 40% of annual operating budget

- Re-Inventing Japan Project (Inter-University Exchange Project)
  - 2011-2016 ($1.8 million)

- Global Human Resources Development Project (Go Global Japan Project)
  - 2012-2017 ($3.0 million)

- Top Global University Project (Super Global University Project)
  - 2014-2023 ($1.2 million 2014-2016)
Re-Inventing Japan Project

- International Experiential Learning: Project-Based Learning (PBL)
  - Developing Resilient Rural Communities in the US and Japan (w/ Oregon State U)
  - Disaster and Crisis Management (w/ U of Utah)
  - Living Well Later in Life (w/ Dickinson College)*
  - Transnational Community and Immigrant Incorporation in Japan and the US (w/ UC Berkeley)
  - Local Contribution of Universities in Japan and The US (w/ U of Oregon)
  - Marketing and Branding in Tourism (w/ SFSU)

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Less Expensive PBL Initiatives

- PBL in Asia
  - Multidisciplinary Approaches to Green Economy (Burma)
  - Sustainable Development Goals: Approaches and Practices at The Border (Thailand)

- PBL in Akita
  - Community Development
  - Community and Environment
  - Preserving Local Folk Culture
  - Teaching English to Elementary School Students

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Global Human Resource Development Project

- Active Learning Support Center → Autonomous Learning
- Language Development and Intercultural Studies Center
- Academic Achievement Center
- Academic Career Support Center

- Faculty Development
  - Global Recruitment
  - Inbound and Outbound Faculty Exchange (51 in/31 out)
  - FD Seminars

- Outcomes Articulation and Assessment
  - College Learning Assessment
  - E-Portfolios
  - Credit Transfer Data Base

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Top Global University Project

- 24-Hour Liberal Arts
- Curriculum Alignment: World Standard Curriculum
- Benchmarking: Academic, Administrative, and Student Services
- English Village and Teacher Seminars

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24-Hour Liberal Arts

- International and Japanese students room together
- Residential Global Issues Seminars
- Living-Learning Communities
  - Diplomacy House, Romance Languages House, Japanese Arts and Culture House, and 日本語ハウス
- 41 Student Clubs and “Circles”
- Mixed classes (excluding English and Japanese language courses)
- Community Engagement: Local > Global > Local

Community Connections

- 200+ Community outreach events each year
- Connections to Akita: Rural but Real
- Akita’s Cultural Heritage
  - Kanto Matsuri
  - Shiraiwa Kamakura Festival
- English Village and Teacher Seminars
- Visits to (and by) local elementary, middle, and high schools
Kanto Matsuri

Shiraiwa Kamakura
Curricular Alignment

- Continuation of Faculty Mobility program (GHRD)
- Shared/Common Syllabi (PBL)
- COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning)
- Japan Studies Program
- Partners Programs
  - Australian National University
  - William & Mary
- International and Internationally Trained Faculty

Benchmarking

- Benchmarking Areas
  - Academic Affairs (2016)
  - Administrative Affairs and Human Resources (2017)
  - Student Affairs (2018?)
- Benchmarking Partners
  - Dickinson College
  - Georgetown University
  - College of William and Mary
Benchmarking Inspired Curricular Initiatives

- From “Basic Education” to “Core Curriculum”
- English for Academic Purposes
- Global Issues Seminar (in first or second year)
- Japanese for International Students
- Japan Studies
- Distribution Requirements
- Writing in The Discipline
- COIL
- Capstone Seminar
- From Two Majors to Four and a Major/Minor Option

Global Issues Seminars

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. NO POVERTY
2. ZERO HUNGER
3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4. QUALITY EDUCATION
5. GENDER EQUALITY
6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERG
8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10. REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13. CLIMATE ACTION
14. LIFE BELOW WATER
15. LIFE ON LAND
16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
18. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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An Emerging AIU Curriculum for Global Citizenship

Global Science & Technology
FORESIGHT & INNOVATION
Science, Technology & Humanity: Fusion in the Digital Age

Global Business & Sustainability
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY & SUSTAINABILITY
Global Business, Economics & Sustainability

Global Society & Politics
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & GLOBAL CONNECTION
Global Society, Political Science & International Relations

Global Culture & Communication
IDENTITY & SELF-REALIZATION
Identity, Creativity & Communication

Connecting Akita to the World

Entire Curriculum in English
+ 180 Overseas Exchange Partners
+ Full Academic Year Study Abroad
+ COIL & Global Issues Seminars
+ Japanese Language and Partners Programs

Connecting the World to Akita

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Not Alone

13 Top University Types and 24 Global Traction Types

Fueled by MEXT grant incentives, national, public, and private universities across Japan are establishing international schools, departments and programs where all instruction is in English.

The work is not easy, and change comes slowly and cautiously to a place like Japan, but increasingly, Japan’s colleges and universities are welcoming to the world.

The Last Slide

“Oh, so that’s how you see it!”

Yeah. AIU—a wee one walking tall so as not to embarrass the gods.

Thank you.