



## University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP)

### International Secretariat

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27 April 2020

Dr. Sumate Yamnoon, Chair of UMAP and UMAP Ambassador,  
Representatives of UMAP National Secretariat in member countries/territories,  
Colleagues and friends,

I am Etsuko Yaguchi. I succeeded the role of Secretary General of UMAP and President of Toyo University from Dr. Takemura on April 1st this year. On behalf of Toyo University and the UMAP International Secretariat, I am grateful to you for your unwavering enthusiasm and support for UMAP activities.

Special appreciation goes to Dr. Sumate Yamnoon, Chair of UMAP and the National Secretariat of Thailand, for graciously accepting to host the first Board meeting 2020 in Thailand and beginning arrangements for this meeting, which unfortunately changed to this email-based discussion due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The COVID-19 outbreak has disrupted life around the globe and student mobility is no exception. It has been affected tremendously because of the shutdown of borders and cancellation of exchange programs. Students are now either returning to their home or even continuing their study abroad programs thanks to all the UMAP member institutions' thoughtful support.

According to a report by UMAP IS staff, we have many applications from students for the UMAP 2020 Fall/Autumn student exchange program through the USCO System, which demonstrates the eagerness of our students to study abroad. I believe it is our duty to provide them with this opportunity, which is essential for fostering mutual understanding and expanding their worldview, even though the full extent of the consequences of COVID-19 on the higher education sector in the months to come is not yet clear and still unfolding. At this time when the UMAP vision faces a critical challenge, I would like to ask for your continuous support and cooperation for overcoming this difficult situation.

Good news is: we have been successfully expanding our network. This year long-awaited Australia has rejoined UMAP as a full member country. Curtin University now serves the role of National Secretariat of Australia. The UMAP Student Connection Online (USCO) System has been in operation since October 2018 and it is my pleasure to announce that more than 200 institutions have registered their information onto the USCO system, which enables these members to participate in UMAP student exchange programs.

As the UMAP International Secretariat, we fully recognize the enormity of the task of promoting UMAP activities both in quantity and quality, and shall thus continue to work to increase student mobility as well as to ensure the quality of UMAP programs.

Finally, it is our privilege and honor to serve as the International Secretariat of UMAP during our remaining tenure up to the end of this year. I wish good health for all our members and hope to meet all of you at the second Board Meeting in Tokyo later this year.

Thank you.



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Etsuko Yaguchi  
UMAP IS Secretary General

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