

Signing Ceremony for the Inter-University Academic Exchange Agreement

Tokyo Gakugei University(TGU), Phnom Penh Teacher Education College(PTEC), and Battambang Teacher Education College(BTEC) signed an inter-university agreement on March 21st, 2023, with the aim of further promoting future collaboration between the universities. The signing of the inter-university agreement was the first inter-university agreement for PTEC and BTEC.

At the signing ceremony in Cambodia, the project leader, Dr. Asakura explained the background of the agreement and the specific contents of the agreement. In a video message, Director Kokubun from TGU expressed his expectations for the agreement. Director Set Seng from PTEC and Director Bin Chhom from BTEC expressed their appreciation for the agreement and their expectations for school health training and future collaboration in research activities between universities.

It is expected that the TGU will not only support school health classes at the university through the project, but also collaborate in various other areas, such as short-term student dispatch and exchange activities, and joint research.



Performance from PTEC and BTEC students



At the signing ceremony, TGU introduced its university facilities and education courses. Students from PTEC and BTEC performed traditional dances and plays. Students performance was great and every participant enjoyed to watch the dances and plays.

The ceremony was broadcasted through online meetings to the Japanese side, and TGU students participated in an online meeting and had a brief exchange with Cambodian students.



STUDY TOUR

The School Health Cambodia Project held a study tour from 4 to 14 February 2023 in Cambodia. Students from Tokyo Gakugei University (TGU) visited Cambodia to see and experience the culture, the way of life, and the famous monuments. TGU students wrote about what they did and learned during the study tour.

Cityscapes and the charms

●Phnom Penh City

Phnom Penh is a city that has developed rapidly, so the old and new are scrambled, a little bit dusty and stinking of exhaust. It was so hot that I almost fell over, but it was full of life even at night, and I felt that it's a wonderful city. There were many motorcycles on the roads of Phnom Penh. There were also many Japanese motorcycle shops. I was shocked when I saw a four-seater motorcycle.

●Battambang Province

We passed through the wilderness, woods, and rice fields. I saw wild chickens, cows, and dogs roaming around that you don't see at all in Japan. In Battambang, I noticed that there are many monks in orange clothes. From the appearance of the people, I could see that it is a country with strong religious beliefs.

●Siem Reap Province

Siem Reap was much hotter than the other two cities. We visited a floating village on Tonle Sap Lake. I learned that the people who live there are making efforts to preserve precious water for future generations without polluting it any further. Banyan trees, mangroves, and linden trees grow wild. People live by catching catfish and thunder fish.

Cambodian traditional dance

We saw a traditional dance called "Apsara Dance". The costumes and decorations worn by the dancers were distinctive, gorgeous and beautiful. It was a dance characterized by slow, graceful movements and supple movements in which the hands and feet were arched like a bow. I couldn't arch my hands like a dancer. Apsara is a celestial maiden in ancient Indian mythology. Apsaras were also drawn on the walls of Angkor Wat.



When I interacted with the BTEC students, they taught me that each Apsara dance choreography has a meaning. I was taught the choreography, but my hands were too stiff to move like how BTEC students do. There was a dance time during the student exchange. The traditional dance that I learned from Cambodian students was characterized by hand movements and feet steps. The choreography was not often seen in Japan. By dancing with everyone, we were able to connect our hearts and it was a lot of fun.

The bat cave

We went to the bat cave in Battambang on 6th March. We got off the bus, then, saw the gold building like a temple. It was also surprising that there were some wild dogs on the street, and they were very friendly. We never saw the scene in Japan because the dogs are usually kept in the house! (Some of us who don't like dogs, shouted and escaped from wild dogs!)

After arrived at the temple, we had a lot of time, so we bought some foods from food vender. My friends tried boiled duck eggs and crickets. I couldn't try since those were very shocking visuals.

We had heard that bats fly out of the cave around 17:00. However, actual time we saw bats was 18:25!!



Dining in Cambodia

All the meal I ate in Cambodia during this study tour were delicious. I would like to introduce some meals and foods that left a particularly strong impression on me. The first is Kway Teow. It is a Cambodian morning staple dish. This is a dish of rice noodles, vegetables and meat in a soup. It has a simple taste, but it fills my stomach and is perfect for breakfast.

The second is insect dishes. It was my first opportunity to eat bugs, so I was really nervous before I ate it. However, it tasted like seafood, and it was more delicious than I expected. I am glad I took the plunge and tried it.

The third is mango. In Cambodia, mango trees are planted in many houses, and many mangoes were spread all over the city. I was surprised that the mango tree was taller than I thought. I tried one of the mangoes, and it was sweeter and tastier than the Japanese ones.

Before going to Cambodia, I was worried if I could eat Cambodian food, but it was delicious and suited Japanese people. I really love Khmer cuisine, and I want to try it again.



Cambodia buildings

The study tour included visits to many traditional Cambodian buildings.

First, let me introduce the World Heritage Site of Angkor. These are the ruins of the Khmer Dynasty and are located in Siem Reap Province, Cambodia. The Angkor Complex includes many famous monuments that you may have heard of, such as Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom, and the Great Southern Gate. Angkor Thom had murals depicting various scenes. For example, scenes of people picking up or sleeping in class. And the picture on the right is Angkor Wat. I still remember how impressed I was by the vast landscape.

Next, I would like to introduce the Royal Palace of Cambodia. Actually, this royal palace is still in use today, and the king sometimes comes here. The buildings of the Royal Palace are basically yellow. In the garden, traditional Cambodian songs are played live, and in the exhibition room, you can see up close the actual tools used in successive ceremonies.

Every building in Cambodia is rich in nature, and it was heartwarming to see.



What we saw from the boat

In the afternoon of 8th March, we visited Tonle Sap lake which is the largest lake in Southeast Asia. In the Tonle Sap lake, we saw life on the water from the ship. I had previously seen the life on the water on TV and had always wanted to go there in person. I was particularly impressed by the following two points.

First, each house has flowerpots with a variety of plants at the entrance and balcony. I felt the wealth of people's hearts at that scene.

Second, grilled crocodile was more delicious than what I expected. At the Souvenir Shop on the lake, I tried to eat crocodile for the first time in my life. It was salty-sweet and tastes like Japanese pickles which is called *Tsukudani*. My friend and I ate it so much.



I spend a great time in the Tonle Sap. And now, reflecting on the Study Tour for writing this article, I'm so excited and still clearly remember all the scenes.



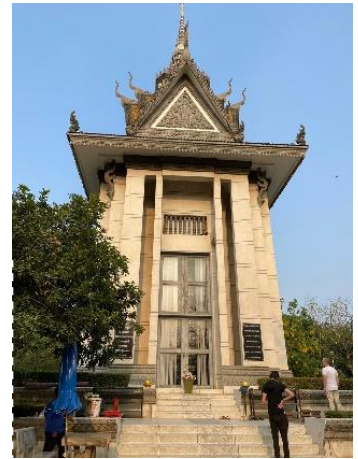
Tuol Sleng(S21) & Killing Field

There were forced labor and a holocaust of intellectual people between 1975 to 1979 in Cambodia by the regime in those days, Khmer Rouge. S21 was an interrogation center and Killing field as the name suggests.

S21 displays mugshots of people who would be housed there due to the crimes for which were being educated or which the Khmer Rouge made up such as being a CIA spy. I couldn't imagine what they are thinking as being photographed, knowing they were heading to die.

In addition, what shocked me the most was the soldiers who carried out those things including children. Khmer Rouge had educated children in their ideology to make children not hesitate to kill their enemies. This fact shows how big the impact of education is. As a future teacher, it made me think deeply about what education should be like.

As you can see in the picture, there was a memorial tower with thousands of victims' skeletons piled up in the killing field. While looking around the field, I was devastated and crying. I couldn't express all I felt, but I can only say that I never forget what I saw. Not to make same mistakes again.



Student exchange meeting [BTEC & PTEC]

We had an exchange meeting with BTEC and PTEC students!

First, we introduced ourselves and then went around BTEC and PTEC. I heard TEC students clean their school every morning.

Then we danced together!! TGU students learned traditional Khmer dance and taught TEC students how to dance with "Koisuru fortune cookie (a Japanese popular song)". We enjoyed a great time!

Our main event was a student exchange about school health.

We separated five groups and made a presentation.

[1.CPR 2. Heat stroke 3. Food poisoning 4. Hand washing 5. First Aid]

☀ Time schedule ☀

1. Opening
2. Greetings from professors and students
3. TGU introduction
4. Campus tour
5. Dance performance
6. Lunch
7. Student exchange[about school health]
8. Closing



We exchanged many ideas and knowledge. Each group made a great presentation. Through this student exchange, we knew about each other and thought about school health! Thank you from the bottom of my heart! See you...

Elementary School and School Health Room in Cambodia

On the last day of our study tour, we visited the elementary school and health center supported by Udon House.

Cambodian children were very energetic, just like Japanese children. The children were trying their best to attend classes. Schools in Cambodia are divided into morning classes and afternoon classes. I found that they spend a lot of time outside of school. So, I wanted to know how the children are doing outside of school. As for sanitation, there are hand-washing stations near the toilets. The hand washing station was built by the school with money raised.

The School Health Room is located in the staff room. It was mainly used for treating injuries and children who were not feeling well and had only one bed. There was no Yogo teacher, and the School Health Room was staffed by teachers who were available. In addition, various health-related posters are displayed, such as hand washing and food nutrition charts.





6 of first-year students 2023 joined the Cambodia study circle!!



ONAKA Satomi

I'm a first-year university student.
I joined this project to study health education abroad.
I like running, baking, and window shopping.



KANOUE Mana

I'm a first-year university student.
I am the manager of the men's handball team.
I participated in this project because I was interested in school health in Cambodia.



NISHIDA Moe

My hobby is watching anime.
I joined this project because I was interested in foreign countries.
I look forward to learning a lot. I will do my best!



HAZAMA Akari

I was interested in this project even before I entered university and decided to participate.
I want to learn about school health not only in Japan but also overseas and become a nursing teacher with a broad perspective.
My hobby is listening to Japanese rock music. Thank you!



FUKUDA Mimi

I am a first-year university student. I joined this project because I wanted to look at health education in Japan from the outside and increase my living knowledge of school health through Cambodia-related matters and workshops.
Through this project, I am looking forward to visiting Cambodia and experiencing the lifestyle, culture, and ideology.



MURASAWA Maya

I'm a first-year university student. I'm the manager of the rugby club at university.
I participated in this project because I wanted to broaden my horizons by studying school health in Cambodia.
I'm looking forward to having various experiences through this project.

**SHCC project is excited to have an exchange program
between TGU students and PTEC・BTEC students!**

