Five-Year Project of NASSS
(Nagoya American Studies Summer Seminars, 2007–2011)
in Retrospect

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Introduction

In August of 2011 the five-year Nagoya American Studies Summer Seminar program (NASSS) came to an end. Detailed proceedings for each of the five years have already appeared in the pages of this journal during those years. Therefore this article is mainly focused on the historical context including the formational stages of the NASSS project and its significance in the long history of the postwar American Studies in Japan.

1. A Brief History of the 60-year Post-WWII American Studies Summer Seminars in Japan: From One-Way Lecture-Style to Two-Way Discussions for a Common Cause

(1) Joint Seminar of the University of Tokyo and Stanford University, 1950–1956

The history of the postwar American Studies Summer Seminars began in 1950 with the Joint Seminar of the University of Tokyo and Stanford University, which took the form of a “one-way” lecture with the American side giving the lecture and the Japanese side mainly listening to them. The basic motive was never again to repeat the tragic events of the recent past. Its purpose was to invite leading researchers from the United States and get directly from them the latest academic information. Most of the first generation of postwar Japanese researchers in the field of American Studies participated in this seminar.

(2) The Kyoto American Studies Summer Seminars, 1951–1987, hosted by Kyoto University and Doshisha University

In 1951, an extension of the above-mentioned Joint Seminar began in Kyoto, hosted by Kyoto University and Doshisha University, to acquire from distinguished scholars from the United States the latest fruits of their academic inquiry. This developed into the [1st] Kyoto American Studies Summer Seminars. There was no session in 1953. Nevertheless, this was the starting point for what became 36 enthusiastic and energetic events. Then since 1962
Doshisha University singly hosted the seminars until 1987. A special feature of these seminars was its “boarding-school” style, in which more than 100 young Japanese researchers lived and studied together under the same roof for up to four weeks with four or five American scholars every summer. In the fourth and last phase beginning in 1980, the seminars developed from a one-way-lecture style into two-way professional discussions, reflected by the increased number of Japanese researchers with Ph. D. degrees from universities in the United States and the academic development of the field of American Studies in Japan.

Approaching the last years of the [1st] Kyoto Seminars, the Sapporo “Cool” Seminars began in 1981, hosted by Hokkaido University, and lasted for 16 years. During the Sapporo Seminars two additional purposes were introduced: they were (1) seeking the contribution to the local society and (2) trying to break furthermore the one-way teaching/learning style that dominated from the beginning. Every summer very intensive discussions under an annual theme lasted for one week and as many as ten books in total were published during the 16 years. The Sapporo Seminars contributed considerably to the development of American Studies in Hokkaido, the northern main island of Japan. However, it must also be admitted that they were not completely successful in breaking the one-way, teaching/learning-form the seminars had taken.

(4) KASSS (the 2nd Kyoto American Studies Summer Seminars), 1996–2005, hosted by Ritsumeikan University
After 16 years of Sapporo American Studies Summer Seminars, Ritsumeikan University succeeded to the tradition and KASSS (the 2nd Kyoto American Studies Summer Seminars) started in 1996, lasting for ten years. Their main purpose was the pursuit of the two-way discussion in search of common tasks in the Post-Cold War era. KASSS succeeded in achieving their targeted goals. At the same time KASSS started the special seminars for Japanese graduate students. They also introduced another practice that has now become a tradition, that is, to invite five researchers from Asian Pacific countries every summer.

(1) Decision by Nanzan University to carry on the tradition
Just before the summer of 2004, President Hans-Jürgen Marx of Nanzan University was asked by Dr. Nagata Toyoomi, President of Ritsumeikan University, if Nanzan University could take over the tradition of the Summer Seminars. Responding to President Marx’s request, Kawashima Masaki, Director of the Center for American Studies, drew up a rough tentative five-year plan for
NASSS beginning in 2007 as described in the next section in detail. This basic plan was formally approved by the Council of Nanzan University on July 25, 2004. KASSS ended in 2005 but NASSS did not begin until 2007 because Nanzan was already committed to hosting in 2006 the 40th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Association for American Studies Commemorative American Studies International Symposium: American Studies in Trans-Pacific Perspective, held in Nanzan University on June 9, 2006. In the meantime the Secretariat of NASSS was established in the Center for American Studies and the Director of the Center assumed the position of the Project Director of the NASSS, too.

(2) Planning the Five-year project of NASSS and its Three Pillars

As for the basic concepts of the NASSS project, we had to put emphasis on what new tasks were expected for us as American Studies scholars in the era of the increasingly borderless world evolving since the end of the Cold War. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned long and precious experiences of the American Studies Seminars for more than half a century, we began to organize NASSS on the following three main pillars.

Firstly, we intended to inherit the high-level two-way professional discussions developed in the course of the long history of the Postwar American Studies Seminars so that the first-class researchers from the Asian-Pacific countries would be able to share values to tackle common issues. For that purpose, following the examples of KASSS we decided to invite three distinguished scholars from the United States for each annual conference as the Keynote Speakers for the Professional Conference in the following three sections: social sciences, international relations, and literary and cultural studies. In addition, we decided to follow the examples of KASSS and invite foreign scholars from other Asian-Pacific countries. The Professional Conference was to consist of the following two parts: the Plenary Session in which three Japanese commentators would meet with and respond to the papers presented by the three U.S. keynote Speakers; and the three section-workshops in each of which two Japanese or other Asian-Pacific presenters would present papers that would then be responded to by the relevant Keynote Speakers.

Secondly and most importantly, we decided to revive as a main feature the program particularly for graduate students that was initially introduced at the Doshisha seminars and then revived for a while at KASSS. The main purpose was to provide the younger generation and future international leaders with the opportunities not only for better Japan-U.S. relation but also for the building of a more desirable common ethics which should be shared by the people world over in a more globalizing international society. The point we wanted to put emphasis on was that while Doshisha seminars and KASSS gathered only Japanese students, we were determined to call out to graduate students not only from all
over Japan, but also from abroad: that is, to students from not only the United States but also China, Korea, the Philippines, Australia, and other Asian-Pacific countries. To repeat the basic concept of the International Graduate Student Seminar, above all, we wanted to provide the youthful participants with the opportunities to share the time and space, exchanging opinions in the presence of distinguished professors from the United States and other Asian-Pacific countries under the same roof, until midnight if they liked, and sharing the same meals, so that they would be able to build and reinforce a sense of mission toward the forming of a set of more desirable ethics which would be really worth sharing in a more and more globalized society. All the student participants would also be allowed to attend the Professional Conference. The three Keynote Speakers of the Professional Conference were to be main instructors with the help of the Japanese scholars of the Executive Committee and the guest researchers from the Asian-Pacific countries.

As the third pillar, we thought we would have to contribute as much as possible to the local community to promote better understandings of the United States. NASSS especially sought to welcome local junior and senior high school teachers. As for our contribution to the local business leaders as well as the citizens in general, in the years of 2008, 2009, and 2011, we were planning to have special seminars before starting the NASSS sessions. We hit upon this idea mainly because Nagoya has economically strong connections with the United States. In the years of 2007 and 2010, the plenary sessions of the Professional Conferences were to be open to the public providing the general audience with the convenience of a simultaneous interpretation service. In retrospect, however, we have to acknowledge that we were not completely successful in the point of contribution to the local community because we held only one independent lecture open mainly to the local citizens, in the summer of 2008 concerning the U.S. presidential election. We did provide simultaneous interpretation for the Plenary Sessions ever year, which considerably gathered more general audiences than the previous Summer Seminars.

(3) Establishing an administrative framework and fixing annual themes

We made efforts to establish a functional and suitable administrative framework and made a three-layered structure as follows: Executive Office consisting of the staff of the Center for American Studies of Nanzan University; Executive Committee consisting of the staff of the Executive Office and other off-campus researchers mainly from Nagoya and Tokai Region; Advisory Committee made up of distinguished scholars nationwide.

We, the Executive Office members, decided to follow the example of the Sapporo “Cool” Seminars and to propose five annual common themes: America and Religions (2007); American Studies from Different Perspectives: Gender and Comparative Approaches (2008); Americanism and Social Justice (2009);

The Preparatory Committee Meeting, the substantial kickoff event for NASSS, consisting of the Executive Committee members and other main off-campus researchers in Nagoya region, was held on July 15, 2005 and the above-mentioned basic concepts of NASSS were formally established. Then in the first Executive Committee meeting on October 7, the candidates for the Nationwide Advisory Committee were elected, among whom we secured the participation of 17 distinguished Japanese scholars. The first joint meeting of the Executive and Advisory Committees was held on July 14, 2006 and the overall NASSS program was approved with some modifications and then in the second joint meeting on February 23, 2007 the detailed procedure of the first NASSS was decided: the first two days were for the Professional Conference consisting of the Plenary Session and three separate Section Discussions; and another two-day International Graduate Student Seminar.

(4) Fund raising activities

The success of NASSS depended on how much funding we could secure. We were able to take over the subsidies from the various foundations that contributed to KASSS and other previous Summer Seminars, such as the American Studies Foundation, the Japan-United States Educational Commission (Fulbright Commission), the Japan-United States Friendship Commission, and the Nagoya American Center/Consulate of the United States. We also had to search for additional resources to finance the newly extended programs such as events contributing to the local community including simultaneous interpretation, and among others, the International Graduate Students Seminars (IGSS). Fortunately we were more successful than we had expected in persuading the following academic and educational foundations to support the first year events of NASSS in 2007: the Japan Foundation’s Center for Global Partnership (as the co-host of the NASSS giving ¥5 million and its Abe Fellowship providing the expenses to invite two foreign professors from the Asian-Pacific countries); the Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation (¥1.5 million); the Tokai Television International Foundation (¥100,000); the United States-Japan Foundation ($35,000). Most of the above-mentioned foundations kindly continued to support us for the rest of the years. Additionally the following local and nationwide leading corporations kindly donated as much as 7.8 million yen in total to NASSS’s five-year project: Aisin Seiki Co., Ltd.; Central Japan Railway Company; Chubu Electric Power Co., Inc.; Denso Corporation; Kowa Company, Ltd.; Meiko Trans Co. Ltd.; Shachihata Inc.; Simul International Inc.; Toyota Industries Corporation; Toyota Motor Corporation; Toyota Tsusho Corporation. In retrospect, the annual budgets were as follows: ¥21,002,700 in 2007, ¥18,769,850 in 2008, ¥
15,107,000 in 2009, ¥13,455,000 in 2010, and ¥12,278,870 in 2011.

We also cooperated with the Graduate School of International Area Studies of Nanzan University and applied for the three-year governmental “Good Practice” (GP) subsidies from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in the summer just after the first NASSS. Our application featuring the International Graduate Student Seminars was granted so that by the second NASSS we were able to hire Dr. Fukito Masami as the three-year-limited assistant professor for the coordination of NASSS and the classes of the Graduate School of International Area Studies from April 2008 to March 2011.

We also secured co-sponsorships of such public organizations as Aichi America-Japan Society, Aichi Prefectural Board of Education, and Nagoya City Board of Education.

3. Summaries of the Proceedings of the Each of the Five-Year Project of the NASSS

(1) NASSS 2007 (July 28–August 1): America and Religions

Three Keynote Speakers were as follows: Professor Gary Laderman of Emory University (Religion), Professor Andrew Rotter of Colgate University (Diplomatic History), and Professor Hortense Spillers of Vanderbilt University (Literature and Culture). The Japanese Commentators were Professor Morimoto Anri of International Christian University, Professor Aruga Natsuki of Saitama University, and Professor Ohsawa Masachi of Kyoto University. Professor Mori Koichi of Doshisha University took the role of the moderator. The number of the participants in the Plenary Session was approximately 300, including local citizens. Foreign guests in addition to the Keynote Speakers were as follows: Professor Park Ihn-hwi of Ewha Women’s University, Korea (International Relations); Associate Professor Ai Xiaoming of Sun Yat-sen University, China (Literature and Culture); Associate Professor Renato Cruz De Castro of De La Salle University, the Philippines (International Relations); Professor David Goodman of the University of Melbourne, Australia (Social Sciences). Another three professors, Mr. Etel Solingen of the University of California’s Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (Social Sciences), Ms. Sayuri Shimizu of Michigan State University (International Relations), and Mr. Adrian Favell of the University of California at Los Angeles (Literature and Culture) took part and were sponsored by the “Abe Fellowship” of the Japan Foundation’s Center for Global Partnership. Professor Thomas J. Sugrue of the University of Pennsylvania also participated in the first NASSSS as the special guest of the JASSS (the Japanese Association for American Studies) and the OAH (the Organization of American Historians) joint program. On the second day, the three Section Workshops were held, in each of which two Japanese researchers were presenters. For more detailed information, please take a look at Nanzan Review of American Studies (VoL. XXIX). The Photo1 was taken in the Plenary
Session on July 28.

The program deserving special mention was the great achievement of the first International Graduate Student Seminar (IGSS) held in the Nanzan Seminar House from the evening of July 29 to the morning of August 1. As for the academic activities, please refer to the last pages of the 2007 issue of Nanzan Review. All the 32 Japanese students and 18 foreign students (14 from U.S. and one each from Korea, China, the Philippines, and Australia) together with the foreign and domestic guest/staff instructors participated in the “Free Talk Night” held on the nights of July 29 and 30. Our youthful colleague, Dr. Yamagishi Takakazu, an associate professor of Nanzan University, took care of everything concerning this IGSS program. The photo2 would remind all the former participants of one of the most impressive and meaningful experiences in their

![Photo 1](image1)

![Photo 2](image2)
academic lives.

(2) NASSS 2008 (July 25–30): Americanism from Various Perspectives: Gender and Comparative Approaches

As in the year of 2008 was the U.S. Presidential election year, so we were determined to provide local citizens in general with an independent public lecture entitled “The American Presidential Election of 2008: The Future Course of the Japan U.S. Relations and the American Society” chaired by Professor Kubo Fumiaki. Two of the Keynote Speakers, Mr. Michael Masutanduno, a professor of political science at Dartmouth College and Ms. Jennifer Lee, an associate professor of sociology at the University of California, Irvine, delivered up-to-date lectures to an audience of approximately 400 people. Professor Rey Chow of Brown University was the Keynote Speaker for the Literature and Culture Section and was very enthusiastic in the International Graduate Student Seminar (IGSS) in which 14 foreign students (11 from U.S. and one each from the Philippines, Korea, and Australia) and 26 Japanese students took part and enjoyed watching the movie “Rhapsody of August” recommended by Professor Chow and featuring a Japanese family in Nagasaki, one of the two A-bombed places in Japan, which they then discussed till midnight of July 28. The following three foreign professors were invited to NASSS 2008: Mr. Chris Dixon of the University of Queensland, Australia (History and Society); Ms. Yi Okyeon of Seoul National University, Korea (Politics and International Relations); and Ms. Dinah Roma-Sianturi of De La Salle University, the Philippines (Literature and Culture). The three Japanese commentators in the Plenary Session were: Professor Takemura Kazuko of Ochanomizu University; Professor Takezawa Yasuko of Kyoto University; Professor Yoshimi Shunya of the University of Tokyo. The session was presided over by Professor Nishizaki Fumiko of then Seikei University, now at the University of Tokyo. For more detailed information, please take a look at Nanzan Review of American Studies (Vol. XXX).

(3) NASSS 2009 (July 25–28): Americanism and Social Justice

The three Keynote Speakers were Professor Eric L. Muller of the University of North Carolina School of Law at Chapel Hill (History and Society), Professor Marie Gottschalk of the University of Pennsylvania (Politics and International Relations), and Professor Werner Sollors of Harvard University (Literature and Culture). The following three Asian-Pacific researchers accepted our invitations to participate: Professor Rukhsana Qamber of Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan (History and Society); Professor Kim Sung Ho of Yonsei University, Korea (Politics and International Relations); Professor Qian Mansuof the Institute of Foreign Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Literature and Culture). The three Japanese Commentators of the Plenary Session were: Professor Furuya Jun of then the University of Tokyo, now at Hokkai School of Commerce;
Professor Ara Konomi of Ritsumeikan University; Professor Sakai Junko of the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. The session was chaired by Professor Kihira Eisaku of then Kyoto University, now Teikyo University. There were 230 participants in the Professional Conference. Fifteen foreign students (12 from U.S. and one each from Pakistan, Korea, and China) and another fifteen Japanese students studied and discussed until midnight in the two-day International Graduate Student Seminar (IGSS). For more information, please take a look at *Nanzan Review of American Studies* (Vol. XXXI).

On October 2009, Mr. Fujimoto Hiroshi, Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Studies of Nanzan University, took over the role of the Project Director of the NASSS from Dr. Kawashima because of the latter’s illness.

(4) **NAS 2010 (July 24-27): Toward a Common Memory of Our Past**

The main purpose of NASSS 2010 is to provide a forum for considering how to achieve reconciliation between nations of the Pacific Rim and shape a common memory based on shared historical facts.

The three Keynote Speakers were as follows: Professor Robert J. McMahon of the Ohio State University (Politics and International Relations), Professor Lisa Yoneyama of the University of California, San Diego [now at the University of Toronto] (History and Society), and Professor Marianna Torgovnick of Duke University (Literature and Culture). Unfortunately, Professor Yoneyama was forced to cancel at the last minute and was not able to attend this year. However, she prepared a twelve-minute message on the crux for the Plenary Session on July 24, and her paper, which we received earlier, was read by one of our staff members on her behalf. Three Japanese Commentators were Professor Kan Hideki of Seinan Jo Gakuin University, Professor Takahashi Hiroko of Hiroshima City University, and Professor Kondo Takahiro of Nagoya University (now at Waseda University). Professor Yui Daizaburo of Tokyo Woman’s Christian University took the role of the moderator. The number of total participants in the Plenary Session was nearly 230, including local citizens, almost as many as the number of participants of the past three NASSS sessions.

The three-separated Sectional Workshops were held on July 25, the following day. We also invited three distinguished foreign scholars from Asian-Pacific countries as discussants for each of these three section conferences to be held on July 25: from the Philippines, Professor Ricardo T. Jose, University of the Philippines (Politics and International Relations); from India, Professor Kousar J. Azam, Osmania University (History and Society); and from Taiwan, Dr. Lee Yu-cheng, the Institute of European and American Studies, Academia Sinica (Literature and Culture).

For more information, please take a look at *Nanzan Review of American Studies* (VoL. XXXII).

From the evening of Sunday, July 25 to the evening of Tuesday, July 27, the
International Graduate Student Seminar (IGSS) was held with 23 graduate students participating: 12 from Japan, 11 from overseas including, the United States, India, the Philippines, and Thailand.

(5) NASSS 2011 (July 23–26): American Studies in the Global Age

Based on our past accumulated efforts of NASSS and as the final year of the five-year NASSS project, NASSS 2011 aimed to offer a place of discussion on the possibilities of the innovation (i.e. transnational perspective or a view that goes beyond a certain discipline) which brings about a break-through in the existing American Studies.

The three Keynote Speakers were as follows: Professor Jeremi Suri of University of Wisconsin, Madison [now at University of Texas, Austin] (Politics and International Relations), Professor Paul A. Kramer of Vanderbilt University (History and Society), and Professor. Anita Patterson of Boston University (Literature and Culture). Unfortunately, Professor Suri was not able to come to Japan at the last moment. However, he prepared and submitted a twenty-page paper for the Plenary Session prior to the conference, which was read by one of our staff on his behalf. Three Japanese Commentators were Professor Kitagawa-Otsuru Chieko of Kansai University, Professor Okano Yayo of Doshisha University, and Professor Tatsumi Takayuki of Keio University. Professor Endo Yasuo of the University of Tokyo took the role of the moderator. The number of total participants in the Plenary Session was nearly 200 including local citizens.

The three Section Conferences were held on the following day, July 24. We invited three distinguished foreign scholars from Asian-Pacific countries as discussants for each of the three section conferences: from South Korea, Professor Park Tae-gyun of Seoul National University (Politics and International Relations); from the Philippines, Professor Oscar V. Campomanes, of Ateneo de Manila University (History and Society); and from India, Dr. Aparna Bhattacharyya of Gauhati University (Literature and Culture).

For more information, please take a look at Nanzan Review of American Studies (Vol. XXXIII).

From the evening of Sunday, July 24 to the evening of Tuesday, July 26, International Graduate Student Seminar (IGSS) was held with 21 graduate students participating: 9 from Japan, 7 from the United States, 2 from South Korea and one from Belgium, Australia and the Philippines respectively.

As the final program of our NASSS 2011, in order to keep and enhance the network of formation of young generations of “scholars” in Japan, on March 25th, 2011 we held a workshop on the future of American Studies at the Nanzan Seminar House. We invited 15 persons, who had participated and had given their presentations at the past International Graduate Student Seminars (IGSS) as graduate students. Five current Nanzan graduate students and one visiting fellow
at Nanzan also attended the workshop. In the workshop, Professor Watanabe Yasushi of Keio University gave us a lecture and then we had in-depth discussions on the future of American Studies as well as the future career.

We are quite sure that during the past five years, we have achieved success in sharing awareness in globalization issues and future tasks of American Studies among the participating researchers of the Asia Pacific region including those from the United States. After finishing all five seminars, we are certain that not only our transnational relationship, but also an intercultural understanding as a whole, will be greatly deepened through exchanging ideas among the scholars abroad and in Japan as well as the younger generations of “scholars” who participated in the International Graduate Student Seminars (IGSS). We are also confident that the International Graduate Student Seminars, which our NASS launched, have especially contributed to bringing about cross-border network of formation of graduate students who are expected to be the core and leading researchers of the next generation.

References