

Report of the “International Review Meeting”, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004 (19:30 – 21:00),  
Takakura Hotel (G. Remijn)

Present:           Prof. Yutaka Tojihara  
                          (leader COE program Kyushu University, Japan)  
                          Prof. Yoshitaka Nakajima  
                          (sub-leader COE program, Kyushu University, Japan)  
                          Prof. Kengo Ohgushi (Kyoto University of Arts, Japan)  
                          Prof. Jin-Hun Sohn (Chungnam National University, South-Korea)  
                          Prof. Victor Candas (CNRS, France)  
                          Prof. Keiichi Sato (Illinois Institute of Technology, USA)  
                          Prof. Gert ten Hoopen (Leiden University, The Netherlands)

19:30 – 19:40 Prof. Tojihara opened the meeting and explained about the ‘mid-term’ review and evaluation of the COE program to be held in January. Prof. Nakajima introduced the people present at the dinner and further explained that one of the purposes of the COE program is to create a new graduate school. All present are asked for their opinion and advise regarding the COE program.

Prof. Kengo Ohgushi:

- The international symposium was a success. It was a stimulating experience for the participants and, especially for the students, a good training. Furthermore, the symposium was a good opportunity to learn more about other scientific fields than one’s own.
- With regard to the new graduate school, Prof. Ohgushi mentioned that it might be helpful to give financial assistance to prospective students, as a way of attracting competent students.
- (With regard to the graduate school): students should be able to study physiological and psychological research. Design is for artists; fundamental research is necessary as a basis for a good graduate school.

Prof. Keiichi Sato:

- The members of the COE program are working in three different areas and everyone is doing domain specific research. Some members do applied research,

some members do theoretical research, whereas others do methodological research. The most important question seems to be: what is the commonality between the members' research? The research done in the individual areas seems of high quality, but in order to create any significant output, it is necessary that some research is combined.

- Therefore, in order for the COE program to function properly, it seems necessary to set a common goal, to work on something together.
- It may be necessary to integrate departments, but at least the members should try to work together as much as possible. Integration and interdisciplinary work are important.
- Do not concentrate on elderly and handicapped people only. Try to design for everyone. Because everybody gets old, everyone will suffer to some extent from handicaps such as declining eyesight, for example.
- Is it possible to attract funding from companies (applied research)? Interest from companies justifies research.
- Try to work together with foreign countries. Try to make an international network as proof of the collaboration.
  
- (With regard to the graduate school): try to integrate fields of study, such as physiology, psychology and design, maybe computer science.

Prof. Gert ten Hoopen:

- What about advertisement of the COE? It seems difficult to find the webpage and it is unclear when the exact starting date of the COE program was, so it is difficult to give some advice on this point. Therefore,
- Concerning the progress of the COE program, is it possible to compare the list of activities of the COE program with that of other COE programs, in order to check roughly whether the COE program is on schedule?
- It seems very necessary that all members of the COE program publish their research in English.
- It may be necessary to hire more post-doctoral students from abroad, in order to increase the number of publications in English.
  
- (With regard to the graduate school): Students should be able to connect applied research and fundamental research. Both are necessary to make a good graduate school.

- Try to select good textbooks for the new graduate school (maybe English textbooks?)

Prof. Jin-Hun Sohn:

- Write academically good papers to show the value of the COE program.
- It is possible to even use translators for making English publications
- It seems necessary that all COE members work on a common product (e.g. computer chair, robot). Through working on a tangible product you can show that all departments involved are cooperating.
- Related to this, an interdisciplinary platform is wished for. Research (and maybe even departments) need to be integrated. Most members seem to work in different directions. Thus, set a common goal (a product) and work on it together. Try to reduce the number of research topics from (about) 40 to about 5. For example, 'Design for the handicapped', 'Design for well-being', 'Developmental design', etc.
- It may be necessary to hire more post-doctoral students from abroad, who can write in English.
- It may be advisable to have a functional MRI system
- Advertise the COE program. For example, where was the press (or TV) during the COE symposium?
- (With regard to the graduate school): physiology, psychology, English, and design should be the main points of study in the graduate school.

Prof. Victor Candas:

- It is necessary to publish in English. It is a pity, for example, that a lot of interesting research in Japan is only published in Japanese (a possible journal is the European Journal of Applied Physiology).
- There is a problem of advertisement. Most researchers in the West tend to ignore research in Japan (or Asia), so it is very necessary to show what the COE program is about. This is also necessary to attract post-doctoral students from abroad. For example, what is the motto of the COE program? Advertise yourself, and let people know that the COE program is doing well.
- Maybe possible to publish a book?
- What the COE members are doing seems all very individual. What is the common goal? Also, who does what in the current situation? There seems to be a lack of

coordination between the activities of the members.

- In the design for elderly and handicapped people, also try to think of people with reduced physiological functions, such as people with declining eyesight, or pregnant women, etc.
- Try to cooperate with institutes and universities abroad. Instead of a center of excellence, think of a network of excellence. Internationalization is important for reasons mentioned above.
  
- (With regard to the graduate school): Try to make an internationally oriented graduate school, try to attract good students from abroad.
- The need for applied research is fast. Companies etc. need quick results and pay money for quick results. It is very necessary, however, to continue fundamental, theoretical research. Otherwise, you don't have basis for a good graduate school.