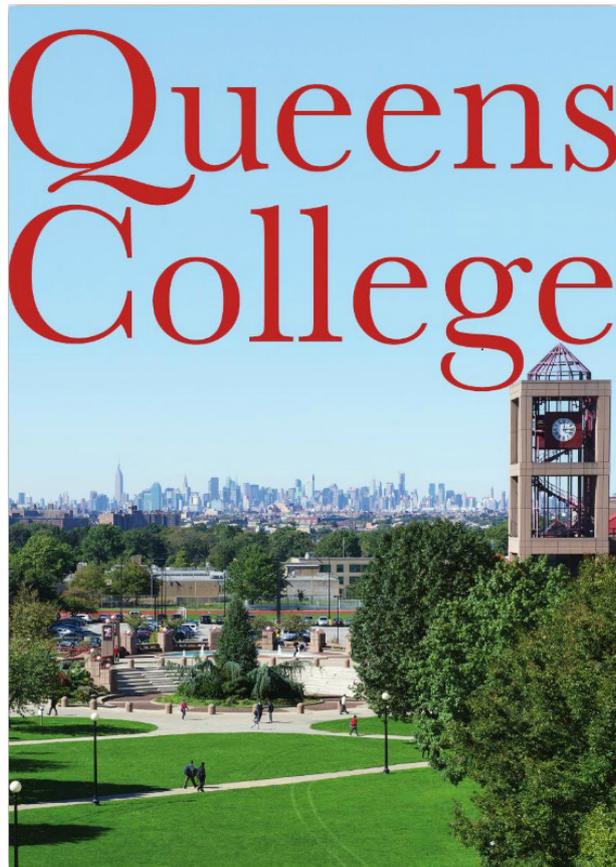


*Toyohashi University of Technology,
Institute for Global Network Innovation in
Technology Education*

News from QC

(Vol. 24 2016/11/21)



■ Reports

**Education in the Center of the World and Attraction of Queens College
Providing a Learning Place across Different Fields**

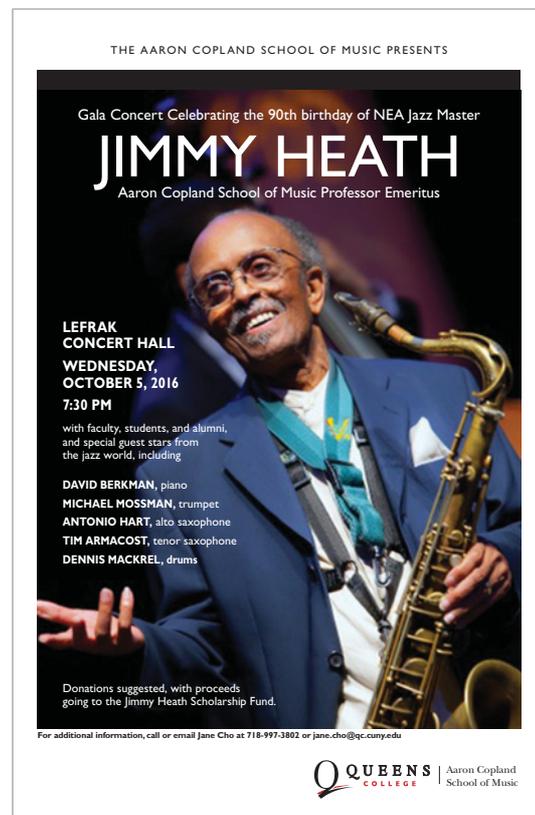
Eri Yoshida, Toyohashi University of Technology

Winter seems to arrive in New York about a month earlier than in Toyohashi. As soon as I had felt early winter cold at the beginning of October a skein of wild geese migrated southward over Queens College.

The fall semester started late in August and half a term has passed. I have acclimatized myself to new classes and have been enjoying them. I have registered 3 major courses for a credit and observation in this semester. In addition to the major subjects, I have been attending teaching in English and English support classes prepared for our training at Queens College to improve my English and understand the education system in the US. I have been learning the American education from various angles based on basic teaching methodology, education curriculum, and assessment to be implemented for the City University of New York in next April. In particular, the nation's first and largest off-campus internship program since 1966 by the City University of New York partnering with New York City's Department of Cultural Affairs is a remarkable education program to provide undergraduate and graduate students with opportunities to serve their communities and learn about careers in the public sector in various fields, such as law, education, social work, graphic arts, journalism, and engineering (www.nyc.gov/html/dcas/html/work/psc.shtml). The students are able to acquire professional skills and experiences during their 6-month training and to surely prepare on campus for the future by taking courses and a degree proper to the vocation until the graduation.

Furthermore, this students' training meets community needs, indicating the high quality of the American education. Such substantial education conducted by the incorporation of New York City, the university, and community in the center of the world have been producing distinguished leaders in every field. The English support class has been focusing on mastering correct pronunciation of English for sounds challenging for Japanese speakers and on paying considerable attention to grammatical errors often made by nonnative speakers in writing.

The City University of New York, Queens College (QC) has the ground area (310,000 m²)



**A leaflet of Gala Concert Celebrating the 90th
birthday of Prof. Jimmy Heath**

similar to that of Toyohashi University of Technology (360,000 m²), but holds 4 departments of arts and humanities, education, mathematics and natural sciences, and social sciences, containing 50 divisions on campus. QC has the advantage in obtaining information on different fields without realizing it based on close location of buildings belonging to the different faculties and on web information delivered to students by the college. Students can receive the information and participate in various events across their specialties to strengthen the friendship between people from different fields. Many events including seminars on chemistry and biology, sports and arts events of watching a soccer game and a violin concert were held on campus in this October. Fortunately, a gala concert was splendidly held at a music hall on campus,

celebrating the 90th birthday of Prof. Jimmy Heath, who is a distinguished jazz saxophonist, musical composer, and emeritus at QC and this year's Satchmo™ Award presented by the Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation to him based on his enormous contribution in the world of music and jazz education. I enjoyed to my heart's content the joint performances by him, faculty professors of the music division, coupled with their students. To say nothing of their superb performances, his statement of "Teaching is learning" has been deeply impressed on my mind. Strict guidance by the professors to the student even on a stage also impressed on me their enthusiasm for music education. Furthermore, the first annual arts festival has been held on campus this weekend to provide a community resident with opportunities to enjoy arts.

A midterm report for the QC program

Masayoshi Sekiguchi, National Institute of Technology, Kisarazu College

1. Colloquium

Colloquia will be held on almost every week at the departments of Mathematics or Physics. *Colloquium* is a kind of open seminar organized by departments, in which researchers present their academic studies etc. When I was a graduate student of a department of Astronomy, students always give a talk, while here in QC, students don't give a presentation. Commonly, some audiences or speakers come from outside of the departments.

I got a chance of my presentation at a colloquium of the department of Mathematics on September 14, 2016. I consumed 80 min. There were not many audiences. Some students taking a course by Professor Maller, mentioned below, attended it because he made an announcement in the session before. For my

talk, I tried to make it accessible by students, so they said they enjoyed my talk while professors unlikely enjoyed it.

I wonder I don't have a chance at a colloquium of the department of Physics, too though I hope so.

2. A course for taking credits

The program I am participating in requires us to take credits of any course. I selected *Differential Geometry* which covers local and global analyses of curves and surfaces by means of Calculus. It is a sort of introductory course for master students to differential geometry including the famous among experts *Gauss's Theorema Egregium*. Professor Sudeb

Mitra gives lectures twice a week for 75 min each, in which about 15 students attend. I have

never been absent.

In this country, asking questions is welcome. I have ever heard of an episode in which a Japanese student had never been absent, taken a full note of the lectures but never asked a question. The professor got angry and forbade his further attendance to a class because of a lack of contribution to lectures. I don't care such results. I just tried to ask a question every session.

3. Class observation and my review lecture

We are required to observe a class other than the course for credit. I selected *Differential Equations with Numerical Methods I*, and emailed to Professor Michael Maller for a permission of observation. This course covers ordinary differential equations including second order nonlinear equations. *Numerical Methods* in the title will be taught in the next semester. The frequency, length, and the number of students are same as *Differential Geometry*, twice a week for 75 min each, and about 15.

When asking my observation, I asked a chance to give my lecture. He permitted it in spite of no merit for him. After some sessions, he gave two chances on October 17 and 24, 2016 when he cannot come to QC. See the photograph below. I gave review lectures for fewer students than usual who were glad because of a midterm exam just after my sessions.



Photograph 1: My lecture

Both professors are not good at writing on black boards. Professor Maller writes cacography while Professor Mitra writes calligraphy. Anyway, their letters are hard to read. Moreover, their writing is not well-organized. I understand the contents because I am not a beginner, but I guess it hard for students. In fact, some students complained. I believe I am better than them. A careful observation of their teaching, however, clarifies their intension to foster good students. Exams are not easy. The lowest score to take credit is 70. American students are always forced to compete with others, and feel stress. At the same time, they feel themselves to grow. On the other hand, how about in Japan? It is impossible; therefore, avoidable to summarize Japan. But my own impression on Japanese education is that an intension to train students up has gone to evaporate. Are these differences between Japan and the US ignorable because of culture?

4. Tutoring

One day, a girl asked me to teach after class of *Ordinary Differential Equations*. I guessed she looked at me solving problems of the textbook while the session. She said this semester was the last chance for her. If she failed to take credits, she will lose scholarship. But she cannot solve problems, and she needs help. I welcome her because a tutoring is good for my English exercise. Thus, I started tutoring. There is a special room called Math Laboratory in Kiely Hall which has lecture rooms for math classes, etc. There are many black boards on almost all walls except for windows, many chairs, many desks with old computers in the Math Lab. Many students study, and old men who look like ex-teachers are teaching in the room. I am tutoring her in this room. Sometimes other students ask me questions, for

instance, on differentiating compound functions which is typically hard for Japanese students, too.

5. Special courses for learning English

Host professors at QC provide us with two special courses. *Teaching in English* is a discussion course on education in general, in English. In the beginning weeks, host professors talked too much and Japanese spoke too few, so we were not able to enjoy discussion. I felt we must change it. Therefore, I proposed I hoped to give a presentation at the first session of October, on *Model Core Curriculum* of the National Institute of Technology which I have engaged in for five years. This attempt succeeded. The following three sessions in October were occupied with other presentations by colleagues on a series of education reforms in Japan, internship or job seeking in QC, the higher education in Japan viewed by a foreign student, some aspect of the elementary education in Japan, etc. Thus, we

enjoyed discussion on various topics. These might look out of the course plan, but agree to the course idea. We discussed education in English. Particularly, one of the important elements of our program is to change Japanese typical attitude: from a quiet listening-based session to a discussion-based session.

The other one is *Academic Language Support Course*. It covers English language, namely, pronunciations, grammars, idioms and vocabulary.

6. Writing a book

Here I enjoyed learning Mathematics and English. I wish other substantial results, and decided to write a book for my field, which has a worldwide contemporary problem: *aging population with decreasing youths*. I wish to contribute to my field by writing a book for students. Writing in English is necessary to get many readers and agrees to the purpose of our program. I declare to write a book in English in order to make it an obligation to myself.

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