

IVEP

Hokkaido University-Kasetsart University

International Vet Exchange Program 2023

Achieving Global Standards of Excellence in Veterinary Education



Student Report from School of Veterinary Medicine, Hokkaido University September 23rd to November 19th

Project Managers
Kasetsart University

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Saki UEDA, 5th year

For the first of all, I would like to thank all of people who related to our exchange program. Especially, professors and clinicians of KU and HU who coordinated and held our class, Pee Nhoo and Oikawa-san who supported and helped our program and Thai student who told me about many pleasures in Thailand. During the 2 month of exchange program, every day, I strongly realized that I am in the situation I am in today because of the support of many people.

Next, I will write about somethings I got during my stay.

Firstly, I will explain about my impression about education. I was surprised at difference between Thai and Japanese one. Japanese veterinary students are assigned to a laboratory in their fourth or fifth year, and their main learning activity is research toward writing a graduation thesis in their field of interest, but Thai students are not assigned to a laboratory. In place of that, upper-year students participate in long-term clinical rotations that cover almost all fields of veterinary medicine, and they also make up output training by giving presentations every Friday. From this, it can be said that Japanese curriculum is that training to be specialists, while Thailand has a curriculum that trains generalists. When we are assigned to a research lab in university, we can pursue a field that interests us, and we can deepen our learning through research, which is different from classes or practical training. However, activities are largely left up to individuals and their own lab and are divided into those who actively participate and those who only do the minimal amount. And then, I don't think there are many people who utilize the knowledge gained through laboratory activities even after graduation. On the other hand, Thai educational system not only allows students to observe clinical settings, but also has liberal facilities for students to improve their clinical skills, and there are many opportunities to think about animals more independently, so it is a good opportunity to get the skills and knowledge that will be useful after graduation. I felt that every student could get most of the target. On the contrary, I think that because students have few opportunities to be exposed to research activities, there are fewer students who aspire to become researchers, and more students choose to go on to study abroad rather than within Thailand. I can't decide which is better, but I thought it would be better to include a little more clinical practice in the Hokkaido university's curriculum and more opportunities for students to think on their own initiative and make presentations.

(Euthanizing a pig for necropsy by myself)



In addition, staying in Thailand left a strong impression on infectious diseases too. For example, ASF, FMD, Brucellosis, salmonella and even diarrhea by market food. I understood the influence of national geographic for expanding of infectious diseases like that Thailand borders several countries, but Japan is an island nation. Also, I learned the importance of preparing for infectious diseases that have not yet occurred in Japan, such as establishing a quarantine period.

Secondly, what I would like to mention something I got during studying abroad is a broader perspective over the Asia. There are two elements to this: looking at other countries in Asia and looking at Japan objectively from the outside, which is important in studying veterinary medicine such as infectious disease control and understanding different cultures. In particular, this broad perspective had a great influence on my future career choices and future prospects. I already planned to become a clinical equine veterinarian after graduation and my goal is reducing the number of horses that do not have the opportunity to receive veterinary care in Japan. However, I heard in this program that Thailand and other countries in Southeast Asia are in the same situation as Japan, with a lack of equine veterinarians and equipment. From this, I recognized that the place to realize my goals should not be limited to Japan, but that I should look broadly at Asia as a whole. So, I would like to be an equine veterinarian who can contribute to improve the quality of equine medicine in Asia by using advanced technology and knowledge from Western countries.

And also, I tried to improve my English communication skill. Before I went to Thailand, I didn't have confidence of my English skill, but another HU student Maya was so good at English. So, I tried to speak English actively following her example. I asked questions to professors and talked with Thai friends. Although I didn't have enough English vocabulary, thanks to their kindness and carefully listening to me, I could tell them something what I wanted to tell. I will continue to study English especially vocabulary because this is easy to study in Japan. However, I think to express my opinion in English is really necessary skill in the International academic scene in our future. In that sense, this program was a great learning experience.

Finally, after completing this program, I realized the attraction of studying abroad while still a student. Even if it is only for a short period of two months, the time you spend in university for studying or with the friends you make while studying at school will be an irreplaceable treasure. Furthermore, it is also a good chance to realize your own strengths and weaknesses, as well as hints for the future. In this year only two HU students went to KU, but I want as many of my juniors as possible to have this wonderful experience from next year onwards.



(Picture with Dr. Aksorn after the certification ceremony)

Maya KOBAYASHI, 5th year

I will report here what I got from the 2023 IVEP program in Kasetsart university.

In this year's program, I could join one-week clinical rotation about aquatic animals, livestock animals (equine, bovine, swine), exotic animals, veterinary public health, and clinical pathology. I have been interested in infectious diseases, and I have a future goal to make contributions in solving problems related to infectious diseases including livestock diseases and zoonosis. Especially I would like to study diseases' control in a field, and social factors affecting its transmission. I applied for this program to get a field-based viewpoint, and in fact I got a lot.

This program provided me with many opportunities of visiting farms including cattle and pigs. These experiences were precious for me that I could observe farms by myself and asked questions to farmers. Through these activities, I literary realized how important it is to use effective vaccines, make laws including movement restriction and compensation system, and develop fast, accurate and inexpensive diagnosis methods. For example, I heard that imported vaccines against African swine fever were used but now they stopped using them due to no efficacy. In addition, a professor told me that sometimes farmers bring cattle suspected with foot and mouth disease to a slaughterhouse because of no compensation systems. I could easily imagine that a new infectious disease will be quickly endemic in case control systems are not built. On the other hand, Thailand recently has no case of avian influenza in poultry, and it is one of the biggest countries in its export, that is a national economic benefits. The check for avian influenza free status is conducted 5 days before and on the day of slaughter. It was valuable for me to learn different levels of control countermeasures. These learnings made me think about my future career, like what should I do? as a researcher developing vaccine? Or as a governmental veterinarian making laws? This is my biggest homework now.

In addition of farm visiting, veterinary public health was also interesting for me in thinking about human society rather than livestock. The class content was to visit a national park that has a problem of Human-Elephant conflicts and think about its solutions based on the concept of One Health. In this national park, wild elephants appear in residential area and not only eat crops but also attack local people and their houses. It was interesting for me to think and discuss with professors about the guessed reasons for elephants' movements, land use and environmental changes affecting elephants, and countermeasures local people should take. I got interest in field-based public health. In addition, the land use around the park have changed from durian to more beneficial palm plantations, and then a case of Nipah virus infection has started to be confirmed because fruits bats came to inhabit. Moreover, there are infectious disease cases around their border area with Cambodia because workers come and go. In this class, I could recognize again that human activities have big impacts on transmissions of infectious diseases.



We visited a pig farm

One more impressive subject was pathology. I could join one-week clinical pathology and also have several times of necropsy. In a necropsy, many lesions like lung partial consolidation, irritation on gastric mucosa, pseudomembrane in ileum and cecum were found from pigs with dyspnea and diarrhea. It was interesting that each lesion represented clinical symptoms, and I understood the importance of necropsy in terms of that it is possible to guess pathogens from lesions. I had experiences of necropsy but the most cases were without any symptoms so I feel that I did not understand fully that point. And also study about pathological diagnosis was meaningful for me. So far, I was not familiar with clinical pathological diagnosis. Diagnosis should be fast and accurate but moreover, cost should be also considered. Although diagnosis with PCR is still difficult in terms of its cost, it is possible to conduct pathological diagnosis with one-tenth cost. I noticed that the limitation of PCR method and utility of pathological method in clinical fields.

This program provides students with clinical practice but I think it will be good opportunity for students like me who have interest in infectious diseases and other subjects. I can say that this IVEP program will be filled with learnings by setting own goals.

Let me introduce a little bit about my life in Thai. Every day I enjoyed eating. There are markets inside and outside campus and every day I felt happy thinking of what to eat today! In my impression, Thai people put more value on eating than Japanese. I also have good memories with Kasetsart university students. We talked about not only our countries but also more ordinally topics like what we studied on that day. It was very fun for me to have a small chat when we came across inside campus, making me feel like they were my real classmates. On weekends, I traveled around Thailand with Saki including Bangkok, Ayutthaya, Kan- chanaburi, Chiang mai, and Phuket. I think it was precious experience, only once in my life to travel every weekend planning all courses and booking everything by ourselves. Sometimes we met accidents in our traveling but I enjoyed overcoming everything with our own ideas and ไม่เพ้อโร spirit.

For last, I would like to give a big think you to the all supporters in Hokkaido university, professors, staff, and students in Kasetsart university, and the all people who gave cooperation to us. I also appreciate your kindness, Rakuno Gakuen university students, Andor from Hungary taking classes together, and Saki spending all time together. I could acquire irreplaceable experiences in my life. With making use of these learnings, I will do my best so that I will be able to make contribution to our society. I am really looking forward to seeing Kasetsart university students next year. I will visit Thailand again. See you again. ขอบคุณค่ะ!!

With Kasetsart university senseis, students, and Andor



IVEP

Hokkaido University-Kasetsart University International Vet Exchange Program 2023 Achieving Global Standards of Excellence in Veterinary Education



Student Report from Kasetsart University January 22th to March 14th 2024

From Kasetsart University

Sena (Teewara) Charoensakdi, 6th year

This international exchange program lasts for 8 weeks. During this time, I had the opportunity to experience a lot and visit many places, not only attending lectures or laboratories in the faculty but also participating in outdoor classes. In the laboratory sessions, we attended lectures and performed laboratory work. I particularly enjoyed this part because there were many different labs with various focuses. For the mini-project in this program, we could select our own laboratory for presentation. I chose the infectious disease laboratory, and my topic was "Diagnosing bovine leukemia virus infection in dairy cattle in Hokkaido, Japan," which I found very enjoyable.

During the large animal and wildlife weeks, we had outdoor classes where we visited Maruyama and Asahiya-doubutsuen. We also had the opportunity to see the zoo animal hospital and explore the behind-the-scenes areas. Additionally, we visited Otaru to see the sea lion that caused trouble for fishermen, showing the real-life conflict between humans and animals. Knowing about the conflict is one thing, but seeing it helped me understand it better. In the theriogenology session, I practiced collecting oocytes, performing rectal palpations, and using ultrasounds.

In the clinical diagnosis and pathology session, most of the time was spent in discussions on topics such as histopathology and blood smear analysis. At the veterinary teaching hospital, we listened to the history taking, diagnosis methods, and conclusions of various diseases, and even had the chance to observe surgeries. In my opinion, it's similar to the animal hospital at Kasetsart University, but here in Hokkaido, there are more cases of tumors, whereas in Thailand, infectious diseases are more common.

During the program, I not only gained academic experience but also cultural exposure, tried various foods, and explored different places. As it was winter, the coldest period in Hokkaido, I had the opportunity to experience the snow, which was very beautiful. I also attended the snow festival during this time and enjoyed the delicious food, including desserts. In terms of learning about history and culture, I participated in the Setsubun party and visited the Hokkaido Museum, where I learned a wealth of information about the Ainu (Northern Japan native people) and the history of war.

In conclusion, this was a wonderful and valuable program that provided the opportunity to experience Japan's veterinary medicine teaching, understand different cultures, and much more. I hope that this program will continue in the future.



From Kasetsart University

Sarisa Chanprame (Chompoo), 6th year

The IVEP program afforded me invaluable opportunities to acquire hands-on experience and expand my knowledge base over the course of eight weeks at Hokkaido University. I benefited from hands-on practice sessions, enlightening field trips, and outdoor classes that broadened my perspectives of being a veterinary in Japan. Throughout the program, these diverse learning experiences expanded my horizons and enriched my educational journey. I embarked on an enriching journey at the Laboratory of Infectious Disease, where I delved into various diagnostic methods for identifying infectious diseases. This immersive experience broadened my understanding of diagnostic techniques crucial in the field. Moving into the second week, I rotated through the Life Science Laboratory, expanding my knowledge base and honing practical skills essential for success in veterinary medicine. I also had classes at the laboratory of wildlife, where I had outdoor classes at Maruyama Zoo. Additionally, I had the opportunity to visit a fisherman village in Otaru and had some discussion with fisherman about human-wildlife conflicts in that area. I also spent time at the Laboratory of Theriogenology in the fourth week. This involved a dairy cow farm and Asahi-yama Zoo visit and having hands-on experience in an IVF lab. I engaged in classes at the Molecular Medicine and Comparative Pathology Laboratory, deepening my comprehension of molecular mechanisms underlying veterinary diseases. I had a rotation at small animal medicine and surgery at the Small Animal Hospital in the last week of the program with some case discussions and presentations.

While I was studying at the laboratory of wildlife, I had a chance to follow the Ph.D. student and the professor to collect some blood and swabs sample from wild deer in Asahikawa during the hunting season. It was so interesting and heartbreaking for me at the same time, because hunting wild animals is not what we usually do in Thailand, but I did find it so interesting to experience the different cultures overseas.

Other than studying, me and my friends were so happy living and spending time in Hokkaido. We had so much fun finding where to go and having fun every weekend. During the program it was winter, and it was so cold every single day, but we kind of got used to it in the couple of weeks after we arrived. We've tried various kind of Japanese food, but my favorite probably would be The Soup curry and all kind of the ice cream.

Being an exchange student at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Hokkaido University offers a multitude of benefits. I gain access to world-class education and research facilities renowned for their excellence in veterinary sciences. This provides a unique opportunity to learn from distinguished professors and experts in the field, fostering a deep understanding of both traditional and cutting-edge veterinary practices. Additionally, being immersed in the rich culture of Japan, particularly in Hokkaido, allows me to broaden my perspectives and adaptability, enhancing my intercultural competence. Furthermore, this program facilitates collaboration and networking opportunities with fellow students and professionals from around the globe, paving the way for future partnerships and career advancement in the field of veterinary medicine. Overall, the experience of being an exchange here not only enriches my academic knowledge but also fosters personal growth and global awareness.



From Kasetsart University

Pimmada Puettimas (Pim), 6th year

An international veterinary program gave me a great opportunity to be an exchange student in Hokkaido university and get a new experience there. During 8 weeks, I gained many skills and knowledge from many laboratories that we joined such as laboratory of infectious disease, laboratory of microbiology, laboratory of theriogenology, laboratory of wildlife biology and medicine, laboratory of internal medicine and laboratory of surgery.

Living in Hokkaido was a new experience for me because I had never lived in a city with snow before. It was a little bit hard for me at the beginning but after that I got used to it. In first two weeks, My friends and I had to change the laboratory that we studied everyday according to schedule and we did many types of lab works instead of cell culture, western blotting and immunohistochemistry. This was a great practicing for us because when we studied in KU, we didn't have many chance to do the lab works like here. In the next two weeks, we studied in laboratory of theriogenology, laboratory of wildlife biology and medicine. We had a chance to go to the field trip. We went to Otaru for learning a conflict between fishermen and sea lions. We went to the zoo that are Maruyama zoo and Asahi-yama zoo for learning a management and visited vet hospital there. It was so fun and interesting because we didn't have many chance to learn something like this before. After that, I had to study in a laboratory that I chose, Laboratory of surgery, and do the mini project with Thai PhD student. In that week, I observed many surgery cases and did that mini project that the topic was cell culture and ELISA determine drug effect on cytokine-induced endothelial cells in the lab. After finishing that week, I had a clinical rotation. I learned how to differential diagnosis from blood smear and histology slide that was a good practice for me because in Thailand we focused on a clinician part not a pathologist part so we never differential diagnosis from only blood smear or histology slides. When I studied in the hospital, it's quite similar to Thailand but the cases were different. Many cases in the vet hospital were mass so we learned a lot about the mass and tumor here.

For the traveling part, I traveled around Hokkaido with my friends almost every weekends. We went to snow festival at Odori, Lake Shikotsu lake and Susukino. We also went to many aquariums that are Odori aquarium, AOA aquarium and Noboribetsu marine park. Some weeks we went out with other KU students who studied at Rakuno gakuen university. We went to Jozankei together. Another week we went to Moiwa for skiing. It had one week that Japanese friends, Maya and Saki, brought us to Ishiya chocolate factory. We can see the procedure of making a chocolate and dessert there. Our last weeks we went to Noboribetsu for sightseeing at the hell valley and went to bear park. We enjoyed traveling around Hokkaido so much. For the food, my favorite food is soup curry. My friends are also love it so we tried a lot of soup curry restaurants because Japanese friends and Professors suggested us that every restaurants are different.

In the last part, I would like to say thank you to every friends especially Maya and Saki, professors, staffs, especially Oikawa san and Thai PhD students for taking care of us and giving us a lot of knowledge. I got a lot of memorable experience when I staying here. I had done many things that I never did before. Lastly, I would like say thank you to the IVEP and Thai professor for selected and gave me a chance to join this program.



From Kasetsart University

Thanakorn Chunui (Sky), 6th year

Before I went to Hokkaido, I was very excited because it was my first time having the opportunity to live abroad and also my first time experiencing life in a snowy country. For studying at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Hokkaido University, I attended classes in various laboratory within the faculty such as Anatomy, Physiology, Infectious Disease, Wildlife Biology and Medicine, Pharmacology, Biochemistry, Radiation Biology, Animal Science and Medicine, Toxicology and I attend classes in the small animal laboratory as well, such as Internal Medicine and Veterinary Surgery. I chose the Internal Medicine laboratory for a week-long study period. I am very happy to have studied in this lab. The differences in cases between HUVTH and KUVTH are notable. At Kasetsart university veterinary teaching hospital (KUVTH), there are a large number of infectious disease cases, with approximately 300-500 cases coming to the hospital, which is significantly more than at HUVTH. KUVTH is the biggest animal hospital in Thailand, there divided to specific clinic such as neurology, gastrointestinal disease, endocrine, cardiology etc.

For traveling, I visited many places in Hokkaido such as the Otaru Canal, Otaru Aquarium, AOA Sapporo, Sapporo Beer Museum, Chocolate Factory (Shiroi Koibito Park), Jigokudani Noboribetsu, and Bear Park Noboribetsu. I loved every place so much, and that time was very special to me. Jigokudani was a location where a Thai movie, "Fan Day," was once filmed. I am a big fan of this movie so I was so happy to travel there and also, I am a person who enjoys drinking alcohol a lot. Sapporo beer was very nice taste. I really love to drink it and also I like to eat all Japanese food. It's very delicious.

The student exchange program between Kasetsart University and Hokkaido University is an excellent initiative that provides students with the opportunity to exchange knowledge with each other. Moreover, the program enables veterinary students to envision future collaborations with veterinarians from different countries in preventing the spread of diseases from animals to humans and developing treatment methods for animals in their future professions.

While I was living in Japan, I have been well taken care of by Japanese friends, teachers, dormitory managers, and international friends who live in the same dormitory as me. I am grateful for everything that has allowed me to meet all of you. Thank you to everyone who has helped and taken care of me well, making my life enjoyable and smooth throughout my time there and It's very hard to say goodbye but I need to say goodbye and see you again.



From Kasetsart University

Hattakit Suttiserm (Ray), 6th year

The first moment I arrived in Hokkaido, I felt very cold due to Thailand doesn't have snow like Hokkaido. I have only been exposed to heat and humidity so that is the reason why I felt excited. My second week in Hokkaido was quite more getting used to low temperatures and to get used to Japanese culture. I also had a chance to visit the zoonosis center, animal hospital, and laboratories There are many interesting facilities there and high technology for doing research and diagnosis.

On the second Sunday, We have attended the activity about culture regarding giants and beans. We have made the sushi roll on my own with other international students. After we finished, We had to eat without talking and looking at the northwest and north. The components of sushi are 7 ingredients which means We praise the 7 God. We made our masks and stood at the front of the class. The children threw their beans at us like the giant. It's quite an interesting activity.

Around the third to fourth week of that time, I lived here for around 1 month..We have a chance to go to the Hokkaido Museum. Not only I took a lot of photos but also learned much more about the History of Hokkaido. We had many chances to visit zoos and aquariums such as Maruyama zoo and Asahiyama zoo. I had a chance to give them food and touch the seal. It's a once chance in my life. We got a lecture there by veterinarians who have been working there.

In the fifth week, I studied in our own laboratory and I chose Molecular Medicine, I got a lecture from the Professor in this laboratory regarding the hemolysis and membrane of Red blood cells. We went to Sushi's restaurant. and had lunch together. We have been talking and sharing many topics. It's the best moment for me. From the sixth to last week Mainly I had classes in Animal Hospital (HUVTH) it's quite different from ours such as the number of cases and method of diagnosis. Mainly Thailand's cases are infectious diseases but In Japan, In my opinion, most of the cases are degenerative disorders.

The IVEP program provided me with precious and unforgettable memories. I have gained a lot of experience in the veterinary field that I have never done and seen through all the practices, lectures, and laboratories here. During my journey of 2 months. I have met many foreign friends. before. I appreciate all the staff at Hokkaido University, they always support me. Furthermore, this program provided not only experience but also this program have made a good relationship between both countries.

