

## **Tazaki Foundation Scholarship Report Letter for LSE Summer School Session 3 (August 4 - August 22)**

My name is Nanami Samejima, I am a senior student at the University of Tokyo, majoring in political studies. I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for the scholarship Tazaki foundation has provided me to participate in the summer school programme at London School of Economics and Political Science.



Due to the generous support, I was able to have one of the memorable experiences and encounterings in London. Throughout the three week course on 'IR114: Power, Inequality and Identity,' we covered the theoretical background and ongoing matters regarding the concepts; class beyond economic definitions, linking it to social relations and cultural forms, with further discussions regarding race and gender, recognizing both as social constructs that also have tangible impacts. Simultaneously we navigated through the intersections, starting with black feminism, class and gender and more; delving into sexuality studies, queer theory and crip theory.

The course consisted of 3 hour lectures in the morning, 90 minute seminars in the evening with essential and background literature provided as daily readings to prepare for the class content. The small sized lecture and seminars made it easier for everyone to participate and kept distances between professors and students extremely close. There were two assessments with one formative ungraded essay submission with feedback that helped us practice for the graded essays. The professors were all extremely motivating, academically aspiring and generous supporters.



The LSE summer school provided abundant access to summer students in regard to library services, mental health counselling and ample opportunities to socialise and participate in events. SPARK is one of the most unique parts of the summer school which is a professional skills programme that provides seminars and speeches on empathetic leadership, postgraduate studies and tackling procrastination. Events included afternoon tea, Westend musicals and field trips.

The most remarkable experience throughout the course was the small sized lectures and seminars that facilitated more interactive conversations. With students coming from different countries and

backgrounds, I have broadened my perspectives as much from these discussions as I did from the lectures. The sociological framework provoked me to reflect about what is and what shaped my positionality in the different societies I have lived in; it also illuminated the nuanced and multi-faceted nature of the complex society, further dismantling the dichotomous interperceptions in research.

Throughout the course, I have encountered some of the most profound, critical and engaging thinkers. The seminar that I looked forward to daily concluded with a consent that the reason why we were able to discuss so interactively, sometimes sharing deeply personal experiences, is due to the collective creation of a safe-space that enabled students to actively participate with comfort. Borrowing my classmates' words, the discussions we had over the three weeks shows that “we each have stories to be heard,” that we are simultaneously all seeking to know each other's stories and connect with one another. I am still slowly digesting the conversations, but I have a feeling I will always come back to the theories and discussions covered in class and the conversations I had with the peers and the teachers during the summer this year.

Once again, I deeply express my gratitude to the Tazaki Foundation for the generous support. I aim to reflect and apply my takeaways from this course into future academic and professional pursuits.