

Koa Institute of Technology  
and Fujiwara Institute of Technology  
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Seeking to establish an engineering faculty at Keio University in 1936, Shinzo Koizumi—Keio's president at the time—traveled to the U.S. to observe actual conditions related to technical education. Oji Paper president Ginjiro Fujiwara also toured the U.S. around that time, and keenly sensed Japan's technical education lag. These two, who were seeking to improve technical education in Japan, shared the same

views. Fujiwara, who was a Keio graduate, invested his own funds in 1939 to establish a technical college on the condition that it would eventually be donated to Keio University. Fujiwara Institute of Technology was Japan's first private institute of technology. Its operations were integrated with Keio's from the time it was established. Keio absorbed it in the summer of 1944, becoming Keio University's Faculty of Science and Technology as planned, just before students from its inaugural class graduated.

Fifteen years before Koizumi and Fujiwara traveled to America, a member of the imperial family was in Europe—Prince Naruhiko Higashikuni. The prince lived a life of freedom for seven years in Europe—mostly in Paris—and in addition to studying politics and diplomacy at France's top educational institution, the *École Polytechnique*, he befriended artists and cultural figures, including Monet, Degas and Clemenceau.

What the prince most strongly perceived during his studies abroad were the disparities between Europe and Japan's engineering and technological capabilities. It was with that in mind that upon returning to Japan the prince sought to use his experiences studying overseas to establish a technical education institution equal to those in the West. Educational reformer Kuniyoshi Obara, Satoru Mori of the Mori Group conglomerate, physicist and metallurgist Kotaro Honda, philosopher Kitaro Nishida, and author Saneatsu Mushanokoji shared the prince's sentiments, and established Koa Institute of Technology under the guidance of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Shigenao Konishi, then president of Kyoto Imperial University, was appointed the first president of the Koa Institute of Technology. This is a predecessor of the Chiba Institute of Technology, established just three years after the Fujiwara Institute of Technology.

Circumstances overlapped on many points for the Koa Institute of Technology and the Fujiwara Institute of Technology, which were both established to raise the level of technical education in Japan. Both experienced hardships during the World War II era when there were shortages of materials from the time of their establishment. There were also air raids, students were drafted, and the schools relocated to other facilities multiple times.

However, I believe there was a big difference in the educational philosophies of the two schools right from the start. The Fujiwara Institute of Technology advocated technical education that would be of practical use and was established with philosophical roots based on American pragmatism. In contrast, an objective of the Koa Institute of Technology was to train technicians who would contribute to the world, extolling the importance of the arts and sports

together with science and technology education, and aspiring to be a European-style, elite and comprehensive training institution. That all students were housed in dormitories at the time the university was established provides an added understanding of this philosophy.

Both American and European universities have student dormitories, but in contrast to American university dorms that are student housing, European university dorms originated and developed as college dorms and educational venues where faculty and students live together. At England's oldest universities, Oxford and Cambridge the all-dormitory educational system, centered on colleges and dormitories, is still in operation today, eight centuries after the schools were founded. In British English, "university" refers to a complex of colleges and dormitories. I believe that an education based on students and teachers learning and growing together—which is stated in the educational goals of Chiba Institute of

Technology—is indeed linked to European-style elite training and education centered around student dorms and colleges.

The Fujiwara Institute of Technology, Japan's first private institute of technology, was absorbed by Keio University without waiting for students from its inaugural class to graduate. That makes the Chiba Institute of Technology the private institute of technology with the longest history in Japan, and that tradition continues even today. I think that it will be all people concerned in the Chiba Institute of Technology turn to carry on in the tradition of university's philosophy and inherited history of the Koa Institute of Technology when they pass through the university main gate of university.

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