

Outline of the CSSI

The Center for the Study of Social Stratification and Inequality (CSSI), which was established in 2003 under the 21st Century Center of Excellence (COE) program, is now supported by the Global Center of Excellence (GCOE) program of Japan. The center is the sole education/research center in Japan which focuses on social stratification and inequality. In terms of research activities, it aims to serve as a leading institution for international studies on disparity. In terms of academic exchange, it aims to serve as a hub institution for education and research on disparity problems in Asia.

The CSSI now tackles the following three key problems: (1) the empirical problem of elucidating the extent and types of disparity; (2) the theoretical problem of explicating the mechanisms that give rise to disparities; and (3) the causal problem of clarifying the social impact of disparity and making policy recommendations based on the study of the impact.

In order to tackle these problems in an interdisciplinary and integrative manner, the CSSI established the following five research divisions: the Structure and Change of Social Stratification and Inequality Research Division (hereafter abbreviated as the Structure and Change Research Division), the East Asia Research Division, the Minority Research Division, the Fairness Research Division, and the Transnational Migration Research Division. Faculty members of the center, who are sociologists, social psychologists, cultural anthropologists, religious anthropologists, a historian, and economists, engage in research and educational activities on social stratification and inequality from various viewpoints in one or two division(s).

In addition to the research and educational activities carried out by each of these divisions, the CSSI promotes organic cooperation among the divisions through regular workshops and international symposia. The center will invite visiting professors to the GCOE primarily through International Academic Exchange Agreements. Furthermore, the center will launch an international project on poverty with the Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality (SCSPI) in order to focus on disparity from the perspective of absolute poverty. The CSSI will jointly host an annual one-week summer school with the SCSPI.

The center has two educational programs for postdoctoral researchers and doctoral students. Both of the programs encourage young scholars to advance their own research projects and to present the results of their projects in the international arena. The center academically and financially supports young scholars under these programs.

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