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◆リーダーズインタビュー

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◆海外滞在記
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Mr. Nigel Smith (head of content)

I'm ultimately responsible for the development and delivery of all of the course on Futurelearn. Partners making the courses understand how to make the courses, that they meet our quality criteria-all FutureLearn courses have to meet a certain standard -so part of my job is setting what those standards are, communicating them, making sure that they are understood by al of the partners. I have a team that work with me who work more directly with the partners. It's also about making sure that that team understands, is confident, and can work really closely with the partners we work with around the world to develop courses.

Since the year 2000, a movement of the open educational resources(OER) was developed for a wider and more open way of learning. Currently, it is called MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses). MOOCs allow easy access to universities for free. In addition, this service offers opportunities for andragogy (which means adult learning) for diverse people.

FutureLearn is one of the providers of MOOCs. In recent years, the cultivation of human resource and the knowledge management of the enterprise as a whole account for an important weight for corporate growth. As a result, andragogy (adult learning) and online learning are attracting attention. Among Moocs, Futurelearn puts corporate value in, be open, empower others, learn together, think big, have fun. They aims to pioneer the best social learning experiences for everyone, anywhere.

We interviewed with Mr. Nigel Smith (Head of Content) and Ms. Niamh O'Grady (Head of Communication) on 8 Feb. 2018. Both of them are working at the Futurelearn as head of their departments.

<FutureLearn in Camden Town, is a district of north west of London. >
<Futurelearn is in the building of the open university>

The purpose of the visit was to gain a deeper knowledge about the area of ICT and Education and to get information about the progress ten years after.

Through the interview done by Ms. Akaike Miki. (Doctoral Student) and Ms. Ishii Keiko. (Master Student), who visited FutureLearn in London, we were able to gather hints on how to improve GCL students' projects and on how to become the leader that we want for fut.ure society. The above-mentioned students were interested in the Quality of Service, in Knowledge Management or organizational learning.

About the FutureLearn

• FutureLearn was established in 2012 as a company owned by the UK Open University as a response – a British and European response – to the MOOCs platforms in the US. Coursera and edX being the two biggest platforms, because the UK has got a very strong, long heritage in education generally, but with Open University distance learning as well. I think we're also a country that is very good at a lot of digital innovation, user experience, those types of things. So, what we did when FutureLearn was founded was built on the pedagogy and teaching expertise of the Open University, but also the media, online, content, digital delivery from people from very different disciplines. We are focusing on healthcare, business management, digital skills, and teaching.

What is a differences of other MOOCs?

• At the core of their learning experience on a FutureLearn course is social interactions, which is quite different from the way that works on Coursera and edX. What is particularly different is that the experience is much more like what the experience would be if you were using Facebook or Twitter, you know, those types of interactions. So, what we did was take a lot of academic research – you know, how do people learn through talking to each other – but then make the experience for the learner feel very familiar for them. Because you know if you were used to doing Facebook, for instance, they could very easily understand the benefits of how FutureLearn works.

About the partners

• The first university – most of the initial universities – to start teaching courses on FutureLearn were based in the UK. And our first international partner was Monash University based in Melbourne, Australia. But within a year we had our first partner from Japan – Keio University – not far from you. And so, we have grown the partnership in terms of universities. It's a 50/50 – about a half split – between UK universities and international universities. We also grew the membership to move beyond just universities. We also work with organizations like the British Council, who you might be familiar with. They have a presence and an office in Tokyo. And also, organizations like Raspberry Pie Foundation, The British Film Institute: so none higher education organizations.

About the Learners

• We have grown a lot – there's now seven-and-a-quarter million users signed up to FutureLearn. The courses – you know, like all MOOCs – they typically have enrolments in the thousands, some in the tens of thousands, and the learner base as well has become more international. About a quarter of our learners are in the UK but the rest are all based around the world. We do them by continent rather than country, and almost half are from Europe. And the second biggest area is actually from Asia (24%) And then it's Africa, North America, Australia and South America.

About the Curriculums

• We've got a fairly broad curriculum. All types of university courses are offered, but we've got a particular focus in areas of healthcare, business and management – so courses that really help people do their jobs better – digital skills and teaching. So that's

a very top-level overview. In addition to short courses – so most of what we do are short courses – there are more and more courses on FutureLearn which are offering academic credit, including full postgraduate degrees. Deakin University in Australia, and Coventry University here in the UK, are now offering full-taught postgraduate degrees, which are taught entirely using FutureLearn.

What is the point in choosing certain universities or partnerships?
• There are a number of different reasons. When FutureLearn just started I think the number one reason why a lot of universities wanted to join in partnership was about the global reach. To be able to highlight that institution to millions of people around the world who may not be familiar with their organization. And obviously more and more student recruitment happens internationally – so students will come from other countries. For universities those students pay more money, so for a university in many cases it makes financial sense to recruit international students. So that is one reason: just global brand awareness and student recruitment.

Also around research, so the dissemination of research. For instance, a lot of FutureLearn courses are funded from research grants. So, if you've got a research project, maybe one of the ways to get money for the funding is around – one of the outputs might be public engagement. Now typically, 10-15 years ago, that would happen by people printing paper leaflets, going to the science fair, or whatever. Now if you can make your research actually visible, publish it online in a course thousands of people around the world will see, then you're going to engage more people. So, public engagement around research. Also, a lot of courses are developed to generate research. If you're teaching something online to large numbers the course itself generates a lot of data, and that data can then be used for research projects.

Break through from typical style of Universities
• Some other reasons are to do with general innovation around teaching and learning. Most

universities know that teaching and learning is becoming more digital. Traditional face-to-face learning is becoming less popular, and academics need to understand how to teach in this new way. And using FutureLearn as a catalyst to make people think differently about how teaching can happen online has been a very powerful output for FutureLearn. Once somebody from one of our partner universities told me a couple of weeks ago that working with FutureLearn has helped them transform their academics from 20th century academics into 21st century academics, because it's challenged how they think. And related to that is using these courses for blended learning. So, the way a university student may be on campus, but they may be taking a FutureLearn course with this global cohort. If you're a 19-year-old undergraduate studying business, most of your fellow undergraduate students will have very similar experiences to you and no actual business experience, but if you're taking an online course where there's a manager from Tokyo, a manager from Hong Kong, somebody from London, all talking about their own experiences, well then actually even though the course is online, the experience of that undergraduate student might be a richer one. So those are some of the motivations.

About the Free Mium Model
• I should also add that it is a "Free-mium" model that most of our courses are on, and so people buy certificates on the courses. And some of our very popular courses are earning quite a lot of money back to the university as well, which is obviously a positive.

About the cannibalization between universities
• There are two – we work with more than a hundred partners from around the world, and some have one viewpoint, and some have another viewpoint.
• Some universities feel very, very strongly that they want – sometimes they ask if they can have exclusive permission to teach, and be the only FutureLearn partner to teach, anatomy. Because this is where our strength is, and if another university teaches anatomy on FutureLearn then that will cannibalize our course.

• The other viewpoint is that FutureLearn is just the platform – it's a delivery system – and all the universities all around the world compete on everything. If the University of Tokyo is competing with Waseda, you know, you both have the same classes available, well: you've got to make a decision. Do you want to go to The University of Tokyo or do you want to go to The University of Waseda? And you can have the same argument about FutureLearn: so, you make a decision based on what you think is the reputation of the university, have you taken a course from this university before on FutureLearn and did you like it, so those are some of the considerations.
• Generally, we try our best to put universities in contact with us. It's very much about being a partnership, so the partner universities are not just a partner with us, they then become a partner with all of the other FutureLearn partners. So, where this has happened before has been around literature – say, Shakespeare.

What is attractive contents in same area
• There were about four or five courses about Shakespeare on FutureLearn, but they were all very different. They all have a different focus. So most academic topics are very large topics, most of our courses are between 2 and 6 weeks long. So, even if a course is on anatomy, unless it is very beginner's level introduction to anatomy, the chances of it being identical is quite rare. So, it's a mixture of seeing how competitive people would like to be, helping them understand the differences between their courses if there are any. But then we also do our best to make sure that if we schedule the courses throughout the year they complement each other rather than compete with each other. But as we have more courses and more partners, that is not always easy.
• What we do is…well, let's take the local example. The Keio University, in Tokyo. They have developed courses on FutureLearn. They have a very impressive archive and rare books department, and so they've developed a series of courses around rare books. You know, Japanese history through rare books, etc. etc. That's their idea. They own all of the content. It's their job to create the content, publish it on our platform.

What we do is we provide a lot of guidance around learning design, pedagogy, best use of using the platform. We advise them how to make their content work for FutureLearn, but what we don't do is say, "Okay, you know, University of Birmingham, we know you're very strong in this area, here's some money: go and make this course." We don't commission or order courses. But what we increasingly do is try to make sure that our partners understand where the demand is, or areas where we know we do not have courses, and try to suggest to them that it would be really good if you had a course in this area, and we would love it if you had a course in this area, but we don't actually say, "You must make a course in this area."

About demanding of Leadership
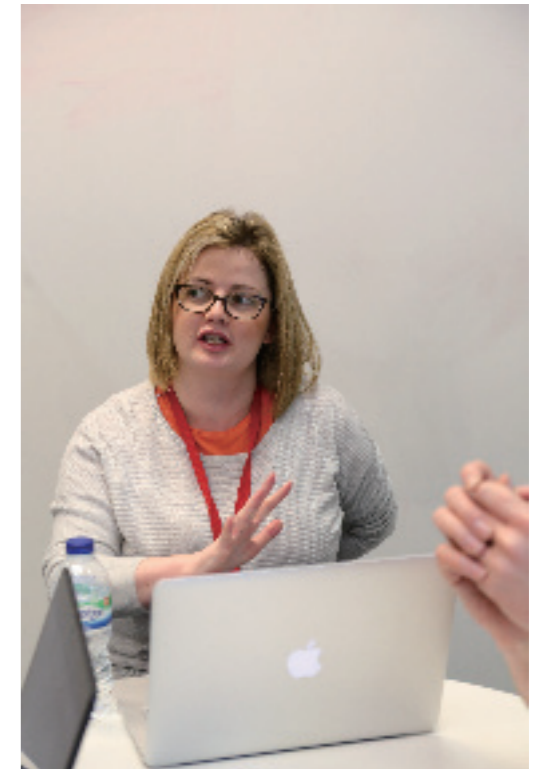
• I think there are two perspectives. One is the internal perspective and one is the external perspective. We're quite a small company, but we've grown quite fast. I joined FutureLearn in 2014, so nearly four years ago. And there was about 40 people in the company. And now four years later there's about 120 people. It's grown three-fold in four years in terms of staff numbers, and it is a very multidisciplinary company. You've got people

like me and my team working with partners and working on course development, learning design, all of that sort of stuff. You've got people like working in PR and communications. But then there are a lot of people in this company who are technologists: software engineers, designers, user experience, and researchers, etc. so I think leadership in an organization like this, one of the most important things is understanding how all of those different things work. I'm not a software engineer and can't write code. But I need to understand how they do it, why they do it, what motivates them, what doesn't motivate them, in order to meet the company's strategic aims. So, a lot I think is about understanding motivation, understanding what people's different skills are, and basically understanding what the functions are of the different parts of the company. I think that is an important thing. And I think from a leadership point of view just visibly demonstrating that you do understand that. So, you know, inspiring people, getting them to buy into what is my vision for the company, based on my own experiences. So, from an internal point of view, I think that is very important.

• From an external point of view, another big part of my job is working with hundreds of different partners from around the world, which is an important leadership challenge as well, because especially with the international partners, there's a lot of cultural differences. You know, the way we do things in Britain is different to the way our partners in Hong Kong do something. So, understanding those differences, demonstrating that the way we work, while we may be very different, is beneficial. But then also working out what are the best ways for two different organizations to find some common ground and work together. And then present FutureLearn – me and my colleagues – present FutureLearn back to all those partners in such a way that they feel inspired and encouraged to work with us. So, one way we do that is we hold different events around the world. We've held events in London for our partners, but also in Australia, in China, in Hong Kong. So those are some different things to think about as well.

About the Quality Assurance

• There have been more than a thousand courses on FutureLearn since FutureLearn started. We know, for instance, through our research – what the data says to us – that the best, most effective teaching that can happen, for instance, via video, is that the person who is being filmed feels very immediate to the viewer. If I'm on a video and you're watching me, it is a much more engaging experience if I'm talking to you directly, like this, looking at you, we feel like we've got a relationship, even though there's a screen here, than if I was like, like a TV documentary, looking over here, and it was looking like I was being interviewed, and you're looking at the side of my head. So that is a mark of quality – just how something is shot. Also, the duration. So how long is the video. We know that people will stop watching after 8 minutes, like zero. They get distracted, they get bored, they do something else. We recommend that the videos on our courses are typically between 1 and 3 minutes long. So very short videos, shot in a very engaging way. So that is an example of quality.

• The same is true of written material. Is it written in a way that is easily comprehensible to people, or is there a lot of technical language that people may not understand, Accessibility. Let's say you are blind, but you might use a screen reader, which is where you have some software on your machine that makes an audio of what is on the page. It's electronic reading, because you can't see. So that means, for instance, for a photograph on the website there has to be a description of that photograph for the person that can't see, that is read to them and described. If that were missing that would be a fail – not good quality. I guess there are lots of different angles and parameters that come into play when we think of what constitutes quality. We have thought about lots of them.

<Photo>Presented by Mr. David Avery
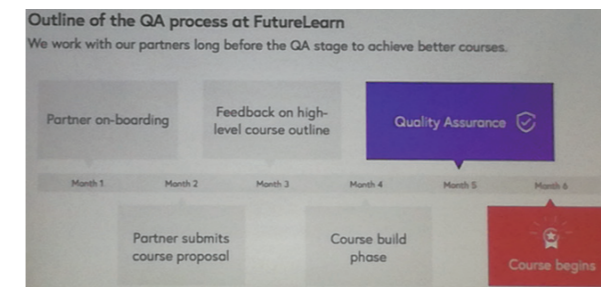
About the accessible for every Learners

• We have some learners who are blind. But the content is accessible, which means if they use special software that is designed to help them navigate a website even though they can't see it with their eyes, they can still take the courses. I met somebody last year who is blind, completely blind, cannot see anything, and she's taking forty courses, or something. Loads of courses. And in a very different experience to our own.

How did you know that customer?

• We do a lot of research of our users. One of the things is that the user experience of learning on FutureLearn is very, very high. One way we find out about our users is by surveying them: asking them questions. So that is a way that we do that. We also invite our learners to tell a story about their learning experience if they want to. Some learners share their stories. we had an event here where we invited some of our learners. About 50 learners came here to meet us and talk to us, and one of them was this person who was blind. We could ask a lot of questions like, "What was your experience like?"

About the future after ten years

• My boss asked me this the other day! It's a question that we often think about. I think one of our ambitions is to transform higher education, enable that digital transformation of higher education. I hope that what will happen is within ten years hundreds of universities around the world will see FutureLearn as their key strategic partner. How they've been able to go on this journey from the 20th century to the 21st century, and we've been a real enabler for that. For our partners, that's what I hope will happen in the next ten years.

• From a learner point of view, what we want to do is – it's a very accessible, affordable way to learn, and what we know is that a lot of our learners are taking these courses to make a positive change in their life, typically around their opportunities they have in their existing jobs, or they might aspire to have a different job, or they might want to go to university but they might not have that experience. If I'm applying for a job, if I come to your company and you're interviewing me for a job, and I tell you that I've taken these five FutureLearn courses in the area you want to employ me in, then that makes you reassured and want to give me the job because of that. Also in ten years' time, hopefully whatever company you go to will have heard of FutureLearn. We're still quite a small company, so another one of our goals is to have a global impact, I guess.

What are the challenges?

• I think one of the challenges we have comes from a university point of view. Universities are – you may have experienced this yourself – they are not the fastest moving organizations. A lot of academics actually like the way they have been teaching for many, many, many years. Something

new is not something they want to do. So, there is still a level of resistance to this type of teaching. It's eroding, it's getting better, but that is still an issue. I think employers – we're still a little bit away from employers understanding that there is value in these types of courses and qualifications that they may not know about. I think also – from a FutureLearn point of view – going back to the point I made earlier, do we have all of the courses available that we know are going to meet the needs of our learners? We don't necessarily have that. I mean a big thing we don't have is this: at the moment FutureLearn is only in English. For many countries that's quite good because obviously there are a lot of people taking FutureLearn courses to improve their English. It's quite a good way to learn English. But for instance, there's a lot of learners in China who speak no English and might get a great benefit from FutureLearn if it were in Cantonese. And the Chinese MOOCs platforms are now very popular. I mean it's interesting in Japan. I think Japan has been quite slow in digital transformation. All countries are different. There's lots of challenges.

About to make a commitment to improving
• FutureLearn very much began as a start-up. And I think when you are a start-up – when I joined, it had very much that culture of a start-up, where it was fast-moving, actually there weren't many processes in place, because it was like, we need to prioritize… our process was, "We'll get to that eventually." And then as the company grows and you hire people who have certain expectations, then you have to adapt in order to meet those expectations. That means you have to introduce more Human Resources processes, understand how those things work. People don't like to just be told, "Well, we have flexible working." They kind of want to know exactly what that means. Does that mean that flexible working means you can stay at home four days a week and just come into the office one day. So that's what we've had to do. Think hard about what the culture of work means here. So that has been the thing that has been interesting, particularly over the last 12 months. So, we did a big piece of work last year on the values of the company.

So those are: being open, learning together, having fun, and Thinking big company.

<photos>Landscape of the internal company
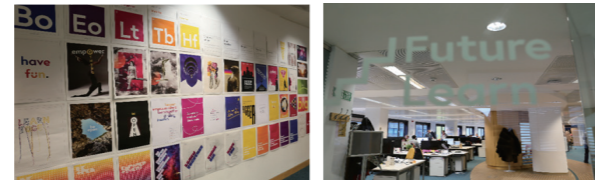
Message from FutureLearn to the GCL students who want to become leaders
• This is the best advice I think: before Christmas, I hired a new person into the team, very junior. An editorial assistant role. And it's the first time that I had interviewed people who were very recent graduates. So, people who were 20 years old, very young people. And their experience of being at university was very different to my experience of being at university, and also the job market…it's a lot harder to get a job today than when I first applied for a job. And the thing that most impressed me about the people I met was how much leadership experience they had got – some of them – while they were students. So, hearing people actually talk about doing programs, volunteering, working on different things while they were students – whether they were working with local businesses, or whether they were involved with some local student initiative – I was really impressed. And actually very, very energized by the fact that young people were thinking of leadership things and what makes a good leader, what the behaviors are that make a good leader. Because even if you're applying for a very junior job, hopefully the company will not hire a 20-year-old and then make them the manager on the first day they get there. But actually if they can explain those things and you can see the potential in them, then you can think, "Okay, great, this is somebody who can join the company, and maybe in five years' time will be a manager, a leader." And, the other thing is you can show leadership and not be a manager. A lot of it is demonstrating behavior that you want other people to emulate. And that is not to do with were you sit in the company. That's just to do with how you do your work. So that would be my advice. You can get

leadership experience in lots of different ways. It's not about working your way up to become a leader. You can be a leader right now.

<photo>from left side; Ms. Ishii, Ms. O'Grady, Ms. Akaike in front of the entrance of FutureLearn
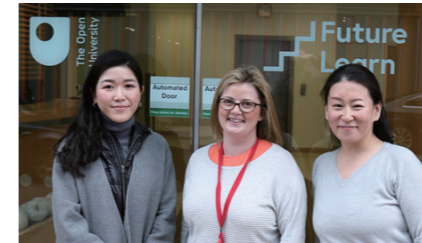
 Ms. Akaike, who is a reporter, went to Genève, Switzerland, in order to attend meeting, which named the "UNESCO Regional Consultation Meeting for Western" on 15, 16 Feb.2018. There, she was able to meet Mr. David Avery, the Senior Partnership Manager of Futurelearn (his boss is Mr. Nigel Smith!), and he discussed and presented the Quality Assurance process of FutureLearn.

(Reported by Akaike M. & Ishii K.)

■ 海外滞在記　　増田理恵さん (D1) アメリカ

インターンシップ滞在記
医学系研究科健康科学・看護学専攻　D1 増田理恵

＜自己紹介・インターンシップ先＞

　私は児童虐待予防のための政策評価に関心があります。今回のインターンシップでは、アメリカの公的機関や大学が持っている児童虐待に関するデータを用いてなんらかの政策評価を行うことと、アメリカにおける児童虐待に関するデータベースを日本に導入するうえでの課題を明らかにすることを目的としました。

　インターンシップ先は米国ノースカロライナ州の University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) の School of Social Work です。大学の中だけではなく、地元の Child Protection Service、裁判所、Service provider 等にもしばしば実習に行っています。期間は 2017 年 8 月から 2018 年 2 月までの 6 か月間です。

＜インターンシップ先の決定まで＞

　最初にインターンシップ先と連絡を取ってから、かなり長い間相談を重ねてきました。GCL コース生を継続できることが決まった修士 2 年（2016 年）の 4 月ごろから、指導教授の橋本英樹先生とインターンシップ先について相談を始め、最初は橋本先生の知り合いの先生に声をかけていただいていました。しかしなかなかぴったりの先生にめぐりあえなかったので、読んでいる論文の中から自分のやりたい研究テーマに取り組んでいる先生を探し始め、直接メールを送ることにしました。現在アメリカでメンターをしてくださっている Paul Lanier 先生は、運よく私が 2 人目にメールした先生でした。

　そこからメールやスカイプで研究計画を相談し続け、2016 年の秋には橋本先生と UNC を訪問し、UNC の先生方と今後の研究について直接相談することができました。2017 年の 2 月には Lanier 先生を東大にお招きして、その間に私が日本の児童福祉関連施設などをご案内する機会もありました。
そのように相談を重ねる中で、アメリカの児童福祉制度の実情を深く知るためには大学院（修士課程および博士課程）の講義をインターンシップ期間中に聴講するのがいいだろうということになり、2017 年の秋学期の始まりから 6 か月間の期間でインターンシップを実施しました。

＜研究について＞

　最初は大学院の講義に出て、現地の学生たちとともに課題をこなしながら、英語での議論や研究のベースとなる知識の習得に努めました。同時に、Lanier 先生とミーティングをしながら、具体的にどのデータを使わせていただくかの議論をしました。ありがたいことに個室のオフィスをいただいたのですが、大学の図書館のほうが開放的で適度にざわざわしているのが気に入ってしまい、図書館で多くの時間を過ごしていました。インターンシップを行うにあたって Visiting scholar という立場をいただけたので、大学の身分証明書があり、大学のさまざまなリソースを使わせていただけたことが本当にありがたかったと思います。

＜現地での人間関係など＞

　授業以外に、大学が運営する Writing Center というところで、留学生のライティンググループに参加していました。研究計画の一部や、授業で出た課題について他の留学生からフィードバックをもらえるという意味で貴重でしたし、また英語に自信がない者同士で気楽に話をして人間関係を広げられるという意味でも、とても助けになる場所でした。

　そのほかには、クラシック音楽が好きという共通点で仲良くなったアメリカ人の先生に教会音楽を聴きに教会に連れて行ってもらったりなど、共通の趣味から人間関係が広がったところがあると思います。

＜現地での生活＞

　最初は大学そばの airbnb を 2 週間予約して、その間に長期滞在できるアパートを探しました。しかし、これと思えた物件はさらに数週間先からしか空きが出ないことがわかったため、もう 1 ヶ所の airbnb を経て、ようやく長期滞在できるアパートに入居できました。ベッドなど家具を調達するのが面倒だったので、家具・家電製品がすべて準備されている物件を選びました。個室にプライベートのバスルームがついているのですが、キッチンとリビングは 2 〜 3 人で共有する形です。ほどよくプライバシーが保たれ、話したいときには人と話せるので、私には合った場所だったと思います。

　日本と比べて全体的に物価が高いと感じたので、ランチはサンドイッチなどを作って大学に持っていき、夜は買い置きした食材で簡単な料理をすることが多かったです。Chapel Hill 市内ではなんとバスが無料で、路線によってはそれなりに本数があるので、買い物にはバスを活用していました。また、ある講義を教えてくださっていた先生に「自転車があればもっと便利なのに …」と話したところ、使っていない自転車を貸してくださったのも、先生の優しさに感動するとともに、とても役立ちました。

＜インパクトのあった思い出＞

　なにごとも予定通りにはいかないことです。ひとつは、いよいよ長期滞在できるアパートに引っ越しできるという数日前に、家主から「ハリケーンが来ていてアメリカに戻れないから入居を遅らせてくれ」と連絡がきました。思わずメンターの先生に相談したところ、住む場所がない 3 日間は、先生のおうちに泊めていただけることになりました。「Rie がホームレスになったら Dr. Hashimoto に二度と顔向けができないから」と冗談を言われたのが印象的でした。

　また、研究面でも思った通りには行かないことがしばしばでした。政府のある機関からデータをもらおうと計画していたら、担当者が急に辞職したと言われたり、サンクスギビングやクリスマスの間はみんな仕事を止めてしまうので、手持ち無沙汰な時間が生じたりするなどです。海外では特に、うまくいかないことがあってもメンタル面を維持したり、愚痴を言える先を確保したりといったことが、研究以上に大事かもしれないと思いました。

　もうひとつ、日本と違ってカード決済をする機会が多いのですが、ネット上で論文を探していてフィッシングサイトにひっかかってしまったことがあります。あわててカードを止めようとしたのですが、手元に Visa のカードが 1 枚しかなくて、Chapel Hill では JCB はほとんど使えないので、すぐに銀行口座を作ってデビットカードを作って対応しました。アメリカに行かれる方は、Visa や Master などアメリカで普通に使えるカードを 2 枚以上持って行くことをお勧めします。

＜おわりに＞

　すべてが順調だったとはいえず、また紆余曲折があり進捗は想定よりも遅かったですが、おおむね当初の計画どおりに進んでいると思います。理由をひとつあげるなら、橋本先生と Lanier 先生と私の三者でのコミュニケーションが、準備段階でもアメリカに来てからも比較的密に保てたことかと思います。指導教官の先生の全面的なバックアップが得られたことが何よりありがたく心強く感じました。私はラッキーだったと思うのですが、できる限り指導教官の先生と長期的に相談しながらインターンシップ先を探し、密なコミュニケーションを取ることをお勧めします。