

Memorandum for 2025 Advisory Board Meeting (Hybrid)

Date: October 18, 2025

Time: 15:00

Location: Room 607 / Zoom

Attendance (in alphabetical order of last name):

- Board Members (3): Mr. Elmar Dresbach (Online), Mr. Hidehiro Konno, Mr. Jeffrey McNeill
- Faculty Members (9): Dr. Caroline F. Benton, Dr. Junjian Gu, Dr. Takashi Hirai, Dr. Kevin K.W. Ho, Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe (Chair), Dr. Toru Noda, Dr. Jiayin Qin, Dr. Caroline S.L. Tan, Dr. Aki Tonami.
- Administration Staff (1): Mrs. Nozomi Hanawa

The following is a summary of the discussion at the 2025 board meeting:

☐ Welcome message:

Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe.

☐ Introduction from faculty members:

Overall introduction

Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: Overall introduction for the current situation on MBA-IB, including mission statement, student profiles, faculty profiles, and adjunct professors. See introduction material in Manaba (MBA-IB Faculty Document → Advisory Board → “2025 Advisory_Board 10102025.pptx - 2025-10-16 16:20:29”).

Supplementary information regarding the introduction slide

Dr. Keisuke Ito (slide 5; introduced by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe on his behalf due to another teaching commitment).

Dr. Jiayin Qin (slide 4, self-introduction)

Dr. Toru Noda: MBA-IB speaker series (slides 14-16)

Dr. Caroline S.L. Tan: TSSP (slides 19 and 20); Overseas Business Study Seminar (slide 21)

☐ Main comments and questions from board members:

Mr. Elmar Dresbach

- Regarding the overseas business studies seminar: expressed willingness to provide network support in finding companies in Germany to be visited.
 - Replied by Dr. Caroline S.L. Tan and Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: thanked Mr. Elmar Dresbach for his offer. Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe will share Dr. Caroline S.L. Tan's email address with him for further communication.

- Regarding the diversity of international students: suggested finding ways to advertise more effectively and reach more candidates from European countries.
 - Replied by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: acknowledged the suggestion and stated that we may consider who our program is competing with (e.g., Kyoto University MBA).
- Regarding the startup and AI education: highlighted the necessity of startup education based on his own experience.
 - Replied by Dr. Caroline S.L. Tan: noted that the program previously offered startup-related courses, but student reception was not very positive.
 - Concluded by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: even though it was not successful before, the program can try again.
- Regarding the age diversity among students: suggested utilizing the age diversity among students to create more opportunities for exchange between younger and older students.
 - Commented by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: agreed with the suggestion and stated that we would consider ways to better pair young and older students.

Mr. Jeffrey McNeill

- Regarding the increase in international applicants: noted that while the increase in applications is positive, he wanted to know whether applicant quality has improved, as he recalled that this was a challenge mentioned last year.
 - Replied by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe and followed up by Dr. Caroline F. Benton: explained that the quality of international applicants is generally lower than that of Japanese applicants, as their working experiences differ significantly. International applicants tend to have less work experience, which is naturally related to age differences, even though the program conducts a blind review regarding demographics such as age, gender, and nationality.
- Regarding extension to lifelong learning: due to decreasing population and shrinking funding, suggested broadening the program's target and promoting lifelong learning opportunities. Examples included executive education programs and courses on designing one's life after age 50. He pointed out that this is a universal challenge for universities and referred to Harvard as an example.
 - Replied by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: agreed with this suggestion and stated that we might consider this idea.
- Regarding the startup and entrepreneurship education: stated that entrepreneurship courses are popular in U.S. universities, which led to a brief discussion about the differences between American and Japanese characteristics (e.g., conservatism, risk avoidance). He suggested reintroducing startup education and startup mindset courses.

→ Replied by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: stated that we might consider it.

- Regarding donations from alumni: suggested making better use of alumni resources and attaching a clear purpose to alumni donations.
 - Replied by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: showed the current efforts being made by the University of Tsukuba and agreed with the suggested approach.

Mr. Hidehiro Konno

- Regarding the relationship between universities and alumni: noted that such relationships are two-way and emphasized that students should feel a stronger bond with the MBA-IB program rather than the entire university.
 - Replied by Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe: agreed on the two-way relationship perspective and explained the program's ongoing initiatives to collect funds from alumni.

□ Closing remarks:

Dr. Remy Magnier-Watanabe.