



*We are pleased to present the first issue of **Critical Thinking**, a newsletter from Mei-Writing. **Critical Thinking** aims to inform researchers and students on current news and events at the Department of Academic Writing (a.k.a. Mei-Writing) at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Nagoya University.*

## PLAGIARISM IN JAPAN

Plagiarism has become a major topic in Japan recently. In the past few months, several incidents of plagiarism have made the news. This winter it was discovered that a 2012 paper on accounting regulations in Japan by a professor at the Nagoya University of Foreign Studies (NUFS), Kazumoto Ido, had plagiarized more than half its content from a paper by a professor at Kochi University of Technology. Since the discovery, other papers published by Professor Ido are being investigated for the possibility of plagiarism. The university accepted his



request for resignation on March 29.

Another incident that has received international attention is the work of Haruko Obokata, a research leader at Riken, a large natural science research institute in Japan. She is being investigated for plagiarizing her doctoral dissertation she submitted three years ago at Waseda University. Investigators believe the twenty page introduction in the 100 page dissertation appears to have been mostly copied and pasted from publicly accessible webpages of the National

Institute of Health (NIH) in the U.S. The Obokata incident has helped spread the Japanese phrase “kopi-pe ronbun” (copy and pasted academic paper) on the Internet.

Some universities in Japan are trying to address the problem of plagiarism with the use of technology. The public universities of Ishikawa prefecture are introducing a computer system that detects “copy-and-paste” plagiarism by comparing submitted papers to a database of previously published work. Actually, finding plagiarism in English papers can

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### SUMMER CAMP 2014

We hope you will join us on September 8-12!



### MEI-WRITING TUTORIAL

Get advice specific to you with our one-to-one tutorials. Visit our website for appointments.



### NU Ideas 2014

Submissions Deadline: June 30, 2014  
Visit the *NU Ideas* homepage.

be quite easy even without sophisticated programs. So many materials are available on the Internet and search engines like Google are so powerful it sometimes takes only a few seconds to find sources that have been plagiarized.

The message is clear: plagiarism is not tolerable in Japan. While using previous research is necessary in all academic writing, the key is to give proper credit by citing sources. But more importantly, a writer must add something new to that previous research by criticizing it,

building on it, commenting on it, or applying it.

There are many ways to avoid plagiarism, but according to Professor Paul Lai of Mei-Writing “from our perspective plagiarism is fundamentally about mishandling ideas. So one way to avoid it is through strengthening argumentation skills.” Students can learn more about Professor Lai’s method in our next issue as we continue our series on plagiarism.

-Tom Kabara

## MEI-WRITING COURSES STARTED ON APRIL 14

Mei-Writing courses began on the 14th of April. The courses assist students with their academic writing, starting with the basics

(e.g. forming a hypothesis) and progressing toward more advanced skills (e.g. avoiding fallacious reasoning). The courses are unique in that they are not language courses, but are courses in critical thinking.

Classes are offered in English, French, German, and Chinese. The course content can be applied to any field, so graduate students from all departments and majors are welcome to join. Students who were not able to enroll during the spring semester are more than welcome to register for the fall.

-Nathan Hamlitsch



## MEI-WRITING TUTORIALS

If you’re looking to publish an academic paper or develop an oral presentation in English, French, German, or Chinese, our tutorials can help. The tutorials are free for all Nagoya University students and faculty members. Make an appointment with one of the Mei-Writing staff. The details for making appointments can be found on the Mei-Writing homepage.

## IMPORTANT DATES

### June 30

**NU Ideas Submission Deadline**

### July 1

**2nd Mei-Writing Workshop**

### July 25

**Summer Camp Application Deadline**

### September 8-12

**Summer Camp 2014**

Logic Puzzle Fun!

Here is a short logic puzzle to test your skills. Find the answer on the Mei-Writing web page at <http://meiwriting.ilas.nagoya-u.ac.jp/> or use the QR code below.

It's the beginning of the semester. You're sitting in your research office thinking about which class you should take this semester. There are two classes you can choose from: Class A and Class B. One class is very easy, while the other is very hard. You want to take the easier class. Two of your classmates, Ichiro and Jiro, are sitting next to you. One of them always lies and one of them always tells the truth. You only have time to ask one question and it has to be to Ichiro. What question can you ask to determine which class is easier?



• PLAGIARISM • LOGICAL FALLACIES  
• LOGICAL THINKING • BASICS OF ACADEMIC WRITING

**MEI-WRITING WORKSHOPS 2014**

## MEI-WRITING

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