

## Officials from the Lao PDR visited Graduate School of Economics

On June 7, 2023, Ms. Silinthone SACKLOKHAM, Director of the International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Education and Sports, Laos, and Mr. Vilaythone SOUNTHONEXAYMONGKHONH, Deputy Director of the Cabinet Office, Ministry of the Interior, visited the Graduate School of Economics, Yamaguchi University.

They visited our graduate school, which is one of the host universities for foreign students from Laos, as a chairman and a member of Operating Committee of the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship so called "JDS" Scholarship.

The Japan Development Scholarship (JDS) is a project started in 1999 to support international students through JICA's grant aid with the aim of "fostering human resources, such as excellent young administrative officials, who are involved in planning and implementing social and economic development programs and contribute to solving problems in the countries concerned.

As of April 2023, the JDS program in Laos has produced a cumulative total of 440 returnee students, including 40 students in the master's program and 6 students in the doctoral program, who are currently studying in Japan.

Our Graduate School has accepted five JDS Laos students as of today.

The purpose of this visit was to deepen understanding of the program through direct exchange of opinions and hearings with the people concerned and the students themselves, as well as to understand how the JDS students are doing in Japan and how the program is being implemented, so that it can be reflected in better planning and management of the program.

In an exchange of opinions with academic supervisors and Lao students, they had active discussions on challenges and the future development of the JDS program. They also gave us advice on how to promote YU in the future for prospective students in comparison with other countries, that made the visit very fruitful one.