

**Teachers College
Columbia University
Japan Alumni
Association**



Chris Carl Hale

TC Tokyo Group 17

Education:

MA TESOL, TC Tokyo
2006

EdM in Applied Linguistics,
TC New York,
2009

EdD in International
Higher Education
Northeastern University
Boston, 2015

“After finishing TC Tokyo, I was “infected” with the learning bug.”

TC Alumni Spotlight – Chris Hale

On campus in Tokyo and New York

Describe your path since graduating TC until now. After graduating from TC Tokyo in 2006, I moved to New York to attend TC and pursue an MEd (Master of Education) in applied linguistics. While at TC NY, I lived on campus and taught ESL at CUNY Queens College. Naturally, having attended both TC Tokyo and TC NY, I found myself comparing them, and have to say that while the main campus had excellent facilities, students and faculty, I actually preferred the more close-knit community in Tokyo! Having earned degrees in both places, I can confidently say the Tokyo program was equal in terms of quality and rigor to the one in NY. This is a great testament to the founders of TC Tokyo. After returning to Japan in 2009 to accept a teaching position at ICU, I was lucky enough to be hired by TC Tokyo director Bill Snyder to teach in the program that I loved as a student. I taught in the program from 2010 until the end in 2013. But I'm happy to be working for Bill again in the MA program at Kanda. After ICU, I was hired by NYU to be the inaugural director of their branch campus of the School of Professional Studies (SPS) in Tokyo. I served in that position for three years, and recently accepted a position at one of the most interesting and progressive universities in Japan, Akita International University, where I teach in the graduate school of teacher education. Somehow in the middle of all this, I managed to complete my EdD (Doctor of Education) with Northeastern University in 2015.

What has been the biggest challenge in your career? How did you overcome it? Probably the most challenging thing was as director of NYU SPS Tokyo, I was responsible for creating, essentially, an entire school from scratch. While there was a general “blueprint” for how to proceed, NYU in New York gave me significant autonomy in terms of curriculum design and faculty hiring. Thankfully, I had a solid background in TESOL from TC, and a vast network of alumni to draw from. I knew I could solicit the support of my TC colleagues, and I certainly did! I could also look at John Fanselow as a source of inspiration as I tried to replicate a US program in Japan. Not only in the start-up phase of SPS Tokyo did I draw on the TC Tokyo alumni, but also in delivering a series of year-long teacher-training seminars for Japanese teachers of English provided by the US Department of State and US Embassy in Tokyo. As an administrator, it was a relief to know that I had access to such a quality roster of educators.

What would you do if you could take a one-year sabbatical? After finishing TC Tokyo, I was “infected” with the learning bug. That is the reason I went to TC NY, because I wasn't done learning! If I could take a one-year sabbatical, I would definitely enroll in a post-doctorate program somewhere. Currently, I'm interested in international higher education, and in particular how the liberal arts, as an educational approach, is being interpreted and implemented around the world. If I could have a year to study, I would travel to these universities and really get to know how the model is working, and what the societal outcomes have been. Who knows, maybe I'll get the chance!

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