



In 1911, Kyushu Imperial University was born when the new institute of technology and the existing Fukuoka Medical College affiliated to Kyoto Imperial University were merged to form a comprehensive university. Dr. Kenjiro Yamakawa was appointed as its first president.

Addressing the students of Kyushu University, Dr. Yamakawa instructed them, “ do not content yourself merely with mastering the secrets of your chosen specialism and having only a passing knowledge of everything else; you cannot call yourself a rounded person without an extensively cultivated mind. ” The implications of these words are highly relevant to Kyushu University, as one of Japan ’ s leading core universities, and should be passed on to as many of the students at Kyushu University as possible even now, over a century later.

Dr. Yamakawa was born in 1854, in what was then known as the Aizu Domain. Having worked hard at his studies, he went to the USA to study physics at Yale University. After returning home, he became a professor at Tokyo Imperial University, eventually becoming its president. Renowned as a man of great character, he was one of the first Japanese to be awarded a doctorate (doctor of science) and throughout his life was a highly patriotic educator with a strong warrior spirit. After stepping down as President of Kyushu Imperial University in 1913, he took up the post of President of Tokyo Imperial University for the second time, serving concurrently as President of Kyoto Imperial University for a while as well.



To commemorate Kyushu University ' s centennial in 2011, a bust of Dr. Yamakawa was erected on the Ito Campus in May that year, donated by his hometown of Aizu-Wakamatsu City in Fukushima Prefecture.