

**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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