

University Accreditation Results
(Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for university)

Prefectural University of Kumamoto



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Public	Location: Kumamoto, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2016	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2017 – March.31.2024)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Prefectural University of Kumamoto

Overview

Prefectural University of Kumamoto (hereafter, the University), whose predecessor was Prefectural Women's College of Kumamoto (formed in 1947), established the Faculty of Letters and the Faculty of Human Life Sciences in 1980. After creating the Graduate School of Language and Literature in 1993, the University became a co-educational university and, in 1994, established the Faculty of Administrative Studies and was renamed Prefectural University of Kumamoto. After a series of reorganizations and reforms, including the formation of the Graduate School of Administrative Studies in 1998, the Faculty of Environmental and Symbiotic Sciences in 1999, and the Graduate School of Environmental and Symbiotic Sciences in 2003, the University currently has three faculties and three graduate schools. The University, whose campus is located in the city of Kumamoto, Kumamoto Prefecture, was incorporated as a public university in 2006. The University has engaged in educational and research activities through its focus on regionalism and has adopted "Think Globally, Act Locally" as its slogan.

After its accreditation review by Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2010, the University stipulated the "Second Term of the Midterm Plan" (for 2012 to 2017) in 2012. The University has held "improvements in the quality of its education," "promotion of characteristic research," and "further promotion of local contribution activities" as slogans and has reviewed its missions and introduced a variety of policies. The University also launched the Education Promotion Center in 2014 to enhance common courses across the University, and has worked for university-wide information collection and analysis by incorporating the Institutional Research Office for Education into the center.

In this accreditation, JUAA has noted that the University has redesigned a university-wide education curriculum with the "*Moyaist* Nurturing System" and has worked to foster individuals who will be instrumental in revitalizing the region. To accomplish this, the University has integrated social contribution programs into the curriculum and has added "local understanding and leadership" in common subjects across the University. In addition, considering the fact that many students obtain employment within the region, the University has directed practical support for job-hunting by establishing the Student Adviser System, where students can consult with peers regarding job searches.

However, the University has several issues to address. The maximum number of credits a student is allowed to register for per year has not been set in some faculties. Also, in the Graduate School of Administrative Studies, the coursework has not been provided in the doctoral program. JUAA hopes that the University will work for quality assurance in education, and that the results of quality assurance will contribute to the University's further development.

Notable Strengths

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- It is commendable that by encouraging students to learn independently through integration activities for the community and by working across faculties, the University has created a curriculum that develops individuals who contribute to the local community. For example, the University established "*Moyaist* Junior Training: Community" and "*Moyaist* Junior Training: Disaster Prevention" as common subjects across the University. In these subjects, first-year students learn about problems in Kumamoto Prefecture from the viewpoints of regionalism and

disaster prevention. The University also established “New Studies of Kumamoto” as a selected requirement for first- to fourth-year students. In addition to these subjects, the University has emboldened students to solve problems in cooperation with the local community through a “regional-oriented subject” (which is a specialized course in each faculty), as well as through participation in region-oriented research. Lastly, the University has encouraged student participation in volunteer activities and has established the “*Moyaist* Nurturing System,” which produces graduation research involving local collaboration for fourth year students.

Student Support

- It is commendable that the University has established a system where third-year students can obtain advice from fourth-year students regarding job-hunting experience. The University conducts consultations on employment searches, and fourth-year students who have received employment offers are appointed as advisers (Campus Career Angels) for third-year students. These advisers are selected indiscriminately. The University trains these advisers as consultants through the initiative of the Career Center, and gives them opportunities to reflect on their activities and share these reflections. The Student Adviser System, which focuses on job-hunting support, reflects the University’s assumption that there are significant numbers of students who intend to secure employment in Kumamoto Prefecture.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- In the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Administrative Studies, the curriculum does not appropriately combine research work with coursework. The program should provide proper educational content considering the purpose of a course-based graduate school.
- In the Faculty of Administrative Studies, the Faculty of Environmental and Symbiotic Sciences, and in the fourth year of the Faculty of Letters, the maximum number of credits students are allowed to register for per year has not been set. This should be improved considering the purpose of a credit system.

Area of Serious Concern

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The Department of Human Habitat, Faculty of Environmental and Symbiotic Science must hire an additional full-time faculty member, and an additional professor to satisfy the Standards for Establishment of Universities.