

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

Hakuoh University



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| Basic Information of the Institution | |
| Ownership: Private | Location: Tochigi, 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 Hakuoh University

Overview

Hakuoh University (hereafter, the University) traces its roots back to Ashikaga Textile Women's School, which was established in 1915. After becoming Hakuoh Women's Junior College in 1974, the University opened as a single-faculty university, with the Faculty of Business Administration, in Oyama-shi, Tochigi Prefecture, in 1986. The University has a Main Campus and an Eastern Campus and currently houses three faculties (the Faculty of Business Administration, the Faculty of Law, and the Faculty of Education), two graduate schools (the Graduate School of Business Administration and the Graduate School of Law) and one professional graduate school (the Law School).

The founding philosophy of "plus ultra," Latin for "further beyond," has been transformed into four concrete ideas on which the University bases its educational and research activities.: (1) to contribute to the development of society and the revitalization of industries, the economy, culture, and others sectors within local communities during the 21st century as a consistently modern, innovative and passionate institution of higher education; (2) to cultivate persons of talent who can position current situations in the proper perspective, anticipate the future, and think and act with long-term and broader perspectives in a rapidly changing global society; (3) to cultivate persons of talent who may play active roles in leading Japan in the 21st century; and (4) to actively engage in the study of different cultures, collecting the latest information appropriately while building a framework to utilize it.

The University was reviewed and accredited by Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2009. However, the evaluation included ten pieces of "suggestion for improvement" and one "recommendation." The University had made serious and active efforts to improve on some issues, but the outcomes were unsatisfactory and further efforts were expected.

In the current accreditation review, it has been identified that the University has not only made efforts to solve the problems pointed out in the "recommendation" of the previous evaluation and improve other issues, but it has also continuously made active efforts to change the organization by putting an effective internal quality assurance system in place and setting up a framework that adapts it to the University's philosophy and the current environment surrounding the University.

In particular, the University, based on its founding philosophy and the middle- and long-term objectives to build a university focused on both its locality and globality, has decided to foster students who can use international perspectives to contribute to local communities. From that point of view, the University has worked with students to collaborate with and contribute to local communities in a variety of ways and has put a great deal of effort into student career support services to help students enter society with the capacity to become active members of local communities. These efforts are highly commendable.

Meanwhile, there are several challenges that the University should take immediate action on. One of the challenges is that policies on degree award in some faculties and graduate schools do not clearly state the learning outcomes of knowledge and skills that students should acquire to complete the course. Another is that the curriculum design policy merely explains the actual contents, methods, and so forth of education but does not provide sufficient detail about the basic concepts of the contents and methods of education. Also, graduate schools allow students to take undergraduate courses without differentiating the evaluation methods.

In addition, regarding the internal quality assurance system, the University's failure to provide a report detailing results of implementation for improvements since 2013 clearly demonstrates that the system is still far from the level required to regularly fulfill its effective function. In the future, the Self-Study Committee that should lead quality assurance is expected to periodically produce such reports and to take creative measures that make quality assurance more objective and valid by introducing such as practices monitoring by external

experts.

Prior to this accreditation review, the Law School had already undergone a law school accreditation review by JUAA in 2013, and had undergone a supplementary review in 2014. Thus, JUAA reviewed the School this time by examining the improvements made after that time from the standpoint of University Accreditation (institutional certified and accreditation).

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- It is commendable that the University has made significant efforts in support of teacher training, and it has started to produce visible results, including an increase in the number of students who have passed the examination. For example, given that many students, mainly from the Faculty of Education, intend to become teachers, the University has put an effective system in place to support students. This support includes setting up an office to prepare students for the teacher employment examination. Graduates of the University who are now elementary or junior high school teachers are available for support, holding seminars and offering individual students advice on how to succeed in the examination. The education students also participate in a program that supports their learning by sending them to local elementary and/or junior high schools.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- In all faculties except the Department of Health and Sports Science Major, the policies on degree award do not specifically indicate the knowledge and skills required to complete the programs. This should be improved.
- The curriculum design policies in all faculties and graduate schools except the Law School explain only the current contents of each program and fail to explain the basic concepts of the educational contents and methods. This should be improved.
- The Graduate School of Business Administration and the Graduate School of Law do not specifically differentiate the assessment criteria for undergraduate courses taken as a part of required credits for degree completion. This should be improved from the perspective of quality assurance for graduate education.

Enrollment

- In the last five years, the average of the ratios of enrolled freshmen to the freshman admission cap is high at 1.25 in the Faculty of Education. This situation should be improved.
- In the master's programs of the graduate schools, the ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.10 in the Graduate School of Business Administration, and 0.45 in the Graduate School of Law. These numbers should be improved.