

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

Tokyo Union Theological Seminary

Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2012	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2020)	
Related Links	
Tokyo Union Theological Seminary: http://www.tuts.ac.jp/11/english	
Full Text of the Accreditation Results (in Japanese): http://www.juaa.or.jp/accreditation/university/result_2012.html	
Accreditation Standards, Process and other related information (in English): http://www.juaa.or.jp/en/accreditation/university.html	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Tokyo Union Theological Seminary

Notable Strengths

Mission and purposes

- It is commendable that Tokyo Union Theological Seminary actively and consistently disseminates its educational mission and purpose to students as a unique academic community of higher education seekers pursuing religious callings. For example, a chapel service is held four days a week; student-faculty meetings are held for students to talk about their requests with faculty and staff; students present their ideas with a set theme related to the seminary's philosophy; freshman orientation provides an introduction to studying theology; and students discuss topics they choose at class meetings.

Student support

- The seminary has been offering various scholarships to support students financially for the last twenty years. This is a commendable effort on the part of the seminary, considering its small budget.

Suggestions for Improvement

Mission and purposes

- The seminary offers a six-year program from undergraduate to master's education with the purpose of cultivating persons of talent. But the mission and purposes of the undergraduate and master's programs have not been defined separately. Under the School Education Law, the purposes for the undergraduate and graduate programs differ, so the mission and purposes for these should be differentiated.

Educational content, methods, and outcome

- The criteria for awarding degrees have not been clearly established in the Faculty of Theology or the Graduate School of Theology. These should be defined in accordance with the mission and purpose of the seminary and made public.
- In the Faculty of Theology and the master's and doctoral programs in the Graduate School of Theology, some classes are offered jointly, having the same syllabus and containing the same content and grading criteria. This should be improved in accordance with purpose of each program.
- In the Faculty of Theology, the maximum number of credits a student can register for per year has not been set. This should be improved in accordance with the purpose of the credit system.
- In the Graduate School of Theology, criteria for examining degree-seeking dissertations have not been clarified. This should be improved, by specifically stating the criteria for students in the Student Handbook (and other handbooks).

Enrollment

- The policies for student admission have not been separately clarified for undergraduate and graduate programs. These should be made public, especially for

program applicants.

Education and research environment

- The seminary does not have regulations for research ethics nor an ethics committee. This should be improved by establishing regulations for ethics and developing a system for fair ethical review.

Administration and finance

- As student enrollment has never reached its cap, a mid- to long-term financial plan for education and research is needed. Donations did not reach the amount envisioned in the 2007 financial plan, so a realistic financial review should also take place.

Internal quality assurance

- Seminary policies and attainment goals have not been clarified in the seminary's education and research activities, and so it is difficult to confirm that the seminary has built a system to make efforts for improvement and reform. The seminary's measures to assure the quality of its education and research are insufficient. The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle should function effectively to establish an internal quality assurance system for continuous and substantial measures leading to improvement.

Areas of Serious Concern

Faculty and faculty organization

- As of 2010, the seminary as a whole lacks one full-time faculty member to meet the number required by law. Moreover, in terms of the number of faculty required by the law, the master's program lacks one and the doctoral program lacks one. This must be rectified at the earliest opportunity.

Educational content, methods, and outcome

- In the doctoral program of the Graduate School of Theology, students are required to publish a paper in an academic journal, but a research instruction plan does not exist. This must be ensured by implementing an instruction plan for research and thesis writing.

Enrollment

- In the Faculty of Theology, in the last five years, the average of the ratios of enrolled freshmen to the freshman admission cap is extremely low at 0.20. The ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap for the whole seminary is low at 0.64. These numbers must be improved.