

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

University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Hyogo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2014	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2015 – March.31.2022)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for the University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences

Overview

The University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences (hereafter, the University) was established as a college with a single faculty, the Faculty of Commerce, in Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture, in 1988. Since then it has established other faculties, departments, and graduate schools, reorganized its administrative and academic units, and currently includes the Faculty of Commerce, the Faculty of Service Industries, the Faculty of Policy Studies, and the Graduate School of Marketing and Distribution Sciences. Its founding spirit is “to cultivate talented persons who can contribute to the realization of a truly enriched society and to the world peace through scientific research and education in marketing and distribution.” Following this spirit, the University has developed its research and educational activities with three educational and research missions: to conduct scientific inquiry into marketing and distribution, to value practical knowledge, and to build a university open to the public.

After its accreditation review by Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2007, the University has built upon its unique characteristics, including the establishment of a career support system run “by students for students” as well as activities that enhance cooperation between industry, academia, and government. However, it has some issues to address, including educational aspects such as the graduate school’s underdevelopment of the syllabi, and student enrollment. JUAA hopes that the University will make improvements on these issues.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- It is commendable that the University has made efforts to achieve its goal to support students, enhancing the growth of students through their mutual support of each other. In particular, the University established a place called “Open Space R” for students who find it difficult to make friends and engage in group activities. The open space has functioned as a site where these students are challenged to make contact with other people and practice their communication skills. By offering such a site, the University attempts to solve (potential) problems before students ask for help. Student staff members (called “R Staff”) play a central role in running the site. Graduate students (who study clinical psychology at other universities) also support this program and staff members working for the Office of Student Consultation give advice to the R Staff students. According to the results of questionnaires filled out by students who used the program, it is well received.
- It is commendable that the University has taken initiatives to encourage students’ growth through mutual support of each other. In particular, in its career support education, the University appoints third-year students who are highly motivated for job-hunting efforts as “Career Leaders,” cultivates their knowledge and skills for the job market through a series of seminars, and educates them to become persons of talent who can take leadership roles in disseminating information and planning job fair events to guide other students in their job-hunting efforts. Moreover, the University invites fourth-year students who have found employment to become “Career Tutors” and alumni to become “Career Advisors,” and asks them to participate in supporting the efforts of those students looking for jobs. These programs constitute a notable, fulfilling initiative for career support in which students support each other. In particular, the Career Tutors plan and conduct

projects, including visiting seminar classes of their fellow third-year students to give advice on employment and running a career cafe where third-year students can consult with fourth year students in an unstructured, casual setting. In turn, these projects give fourth-year students valuable opportunities to reflect on their own job-hunting efforts. In short, the University has built a steady system of “career support by students for students.”

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- It is commendable that the University has taken initiatives to give the fruits of its education and research back to society and allows students to deal with actual issues in society and learn directly from them. Through such initiatives, the University has also realized its mission “to value practical knowledge.” In particular, the University has played a central role in planning and running an event called “University Seminars of Kobe Academic Park” in cooperation with businesses and local governments in nearby Hyogo Prefecture. At this event, teams formed by students who are taking a seminar class offered at participating universities write proposals, recommend solutions, and then make presentations on the given themes. Each year, a number of students participate, and they have opportunities to get motivated to study further and become satisfied with the progress of their learning at the University.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- The same policy for curriculum design applies for all faculties; each faculty does not define its own policy. Each faculty should formulate its policy and make it widely available to the public.
- In the Graduate School of Marketing and Distribution Sciences, the policies on degree award do not state learning outcomes at the time of program completion. This situation should be improved.
- In the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Marketing and Distribution Sciences, the curriculum does not appropriately combine research and course work. Considering the purpose of the course-based doctoral program, the graduate school is expected to offer appropriate educational content.
- In the Graduate School of Marketing and Distribution Sciences, the syllabi for some classes are not written and made public in the master’s program, and no syllabi are written and made public in the doctoral program. This situation should be improved.
- In the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Marketing and Distribution Sciences, criteria for examining degree-seeking dissertation have not been clearly stated for the students. This situation should be improved by clearly stating them in the Graduate Student Registration Guidelines and other handbooks.

Enrollment

- In the Graduate School of Marketing and Distribution Sciences, the same policy for student admission applies for both masters’ and doctoral programs. This situation should be improved, with each program defining its respective policies.

- The ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.13 in the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Marketing and Distribution Sciences. This should be improved.