

**Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for
Professional Graduate Business School**

The Graduate School of Business,
the University of Hyogo



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Public	Location: Hyogo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
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The Graduate School of Business (hereafter, GSB) at the University of Hyogo states its basic mission as “making contributions to regional developments by cultivating business management professionals who can take an active part in bridging their local societies and the world, and by producing talented persons who can take responsibility for social innovations.” Based on this mission, it defines its unique purposes as follows: to “foster professionals specialized in business, those who possess highly specialized professional abilities such as broad knowledge, the ability to think and decide, global perspectives, and leadership.” In addition to their “high innate dispositions, professional ethics, and specialized abilities,” those who graduate will be “equipped with high degree of management abilities to take responsibility for managerial and administrative practices in private companies and public institutions.”

In order to achieve this purpose, the GSB has set up three courses of study: Business Innovation, Regional Innovation (including its certificate program for Japan Small and Medium Enterprise Management Consultants), and Healthcare Management.

The Business Innovation course aims at fostering talented persons who can take an active part in international business practices and societies. It is a course for those who move straight into the GSB after having just earned a bachelor’s degree. Students mainly take classes during the weekdays.

The Regional Innovation course aims at cultivating management professionals who possess practical management skills based on business theories. It is a course for adult, non-traditional students who already have jobs. Students mainly take classes offered on Saturdays. In addition, this course aims at producing management consultants for small and medium businesses who understand high-level management theories and who can make contributions to the local economic developments. To meet this aim, the GSB holds a course to become a registered Japan Small and Medium Enterprise Management Consultant.

The Healthcare Management course aims at fostering managerial administrators for private and public medical institutions who have strong management skills. It is a course for both those who move into the GSB Program after having just earned bachelor’s degrees and those adult, non-traditional students who already have jobs. Students mainly take classes offered on Saturdays.

The faculty members in the GSB engage in their education and research activities based on the above purposes, aims, and organizations of course of study. The GSB has two strengths that should be commended.

First, the GSB has taken the initiative to make contributions to local society and its developments by setting up the “Industry-Academic-Government Conference for Innovation and Human Resources” to promote cooperation between the school, industry, and local governments. Local economic associations and organizations have been the main constituency of the conference along with the school. The conference has made it possible for the GSB to implement education connected with the local communities. This kind of initiative is necessary for professional business schools focusing on vitalization of local communities. It can be said that this is a unique initiative that meets local needs while offering site-based education.

Second, it is commendable that the school has constructed a curriculum that integrates theory and practice, and that it has offered students an education through the experiences of actual sites. In particular, each of the three courses offers a fieldwork

study, in which practice-oriented education is implemented at actual sites within and outside of Japan. Through the class, students acquire skills to conduct research, analyze, and evaluate the data, give advice, and formulate strategies.

Having highlighted these strengths, Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) would like to mention that it is necessary for the GSB to make its presence more visible as future competition increases among business schools, including professional business schools focusing on management in the future. Although a number of considerations can be made, JUAA can point out that the four concerns below are especially important.

First, it is necessary to make efforts to link the three courses of study in the GSB organically in terms of strategies and educational content. In particular, the GSB should strategically consider a system to produce synergistic effects of the three courses, while devising a measure to organize a curriculum that goes beyond the boundaries of the three courses.

Second, regarding the curriculum, in the Business Innovation course, there are efforts to strengthen English abilities for businesses and study abroad opportunities. However, education from global perspectives is also needed for the Regional Innovation and Healthcare Management courses. Therefore, it is expected that the GSB will address the issue of globalization through educational methods in these courses such as offering lectures in English.

Third, concerning student support, it is expected that the GSB will enrich the system through which it determines student wide-ranging needs and use the results to improve its services for students. In addition, as a task for the future, the GSB needs to develop not only the faculty's individual responses but also a systematic and institutional measure to respond to students' concerns expressed in the consultation meetings concerning their course takings and campus lives.

Fourth, in terms of educational and research environments, it is urgently needed for the GSB to improve the Internet environment, as it is not yet well developed. The school enrolls adult students and those who commute from a distance. It is necessary for the GSB to develop a learning environment that allows the students to have access to various electronic journals and databases, to make forms available through the Internet, and to make it possible to submit them to offices through it.

It is expected that the GSB will improve itself as a professional business school in the future, as it has developed an education centered on practice-oriented, site-based education, meeting the demands of the local communities. For that purpose, it should make efforts to continuously conduct self-studies and evaluations, to improve and reform its education, and to further strengthen its unique characteristics, leading to its further development and enrichments.