

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

Kyoto Notre Dame University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Kyoto, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2022	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2030)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Kyoto Notre Dame University

Overview

Kyoto Notre Dame University provides education and research to undergraduate and graduate students based on its educational philosophy of “Christian education of women” and “cultivation of women with ‘Virtus et Scientia (Virtue and Knowledge),’” along with its action guidelines for embodying such educational principles as respect, dialogue, sympathy, and action. The University has formulated a Medium-term Goals and Plan that outlines six basic goals in education, research, social contribution, and administration as well as a roadmap to achieve these goals during the AY2020 to AY2024 period.

As for the University’s internal quality assurance, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for formulating implementation policies and plans, and instructs the Self-Study Committee to play a central role in compiling self-study reports based on the results of each department’s self-study. After receiving the reports, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee instructs each department to formulate and implement improvement plans, with the instructions reported to the University’s top decision-making body, the Administration and Management Meeting. In terms of academic affairs, the Teaching and Learning Management Meeting discusses and implements the necessary measures to enhance systematic education and student learning outcomes. The University also carries out external evaluations to objectively assess the self-study process. With the system introduced in AY2020, the University strives to operate the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle across the board. The Policy on Internal Quality Assurance, however, states that the Internal Quality Assurance Committee is in charge of promoting internal quality assurance. In fact, the Teaching and Learning Management Meeting reviews the three diploma, curriculum, and admissions policies, conducts self-study of the curricula, and makes improvements. This situation indicates that the roles and connections of the system’s two organizations are unclear, and that the meeting bodies for internal quality assurance should be structured with their roles clarified in the system. Moreover, there are discrepancies between the rules and actual status of the Administration and Management Meeting and University Council, both defined as decision-making bodies, and the Teaching and Learning Management Meeting. The rules should be reviewed based on actual conditions with improvements made to

ensure the organizations work effectively together in operating the internal quality assurance system.

Regarding the University's education, all faculties and graduate schools appropriately design their curricula based on the diploma and curriculum policies. The University has established a set of "ND6" competencies that students are expected to acquire upon graduation, and lists it in the curriculum map to visualize the competencies to be acquired through coursework. In addition, the faculties use their assessment policies and checklists to monitor student learning outcomes. But the evaluation items specified in the checklists are unclear in their links to the diploma policies and ND6. For the graduate schools, it is difficult to describe the learning outcomes specified in their diploma policies and measurement methods as appropriately linked to each other. These issues should be addressed with methods established to properly measure the learning outcomes stated in the policies.

There are other issues the University needs to address. The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap as well as the average ratios of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap over the past five years are low in all undergraduate faculties and departments. This situation should be corrected. The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are also low in the master's course of the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences and the doctoral course of the Graduate School of Psychology, and the Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Language and Culture, continues to fall short of fulfilling its transfer student quota. Moreover, the University has been unable to establish a solid financial base to sustainably carry out educational and research activities, with numerical targets not specified in its financial plan. These issues should be addressed.

On the other hand, the University's Campus Support System for students with disabilities is highly commended as an outstanding initiative. The Campus Support Promotion Office plays a central role in offering specifically designed support by organizing teams consisting of supervisors, faculty, and staff in relevant sections, including the student counseling office, to respond to the needs of each student requiring special accommodations. The system also trains notetakers who play an important role in assisting hearing impaired students. This is a highly commendable effort expected to bring educational benefits in light of the University's educational principles.

In the years ahead, the University is expected to address these issues through further internal quality assurance efforts and continue to make social

contributions by developing a number of distinctive initiatives.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- The University has established the Campus Support System to offer academic assistance to students requiring special accommodations. The Campus Support Promotion Office plays a central role in providing students in need with specific support by organizing teams consisting of supervisors, faculty, and staff in relevant sections, including the student counseling office and student council. Students are paid as notetakers for the hearing impaired, and training courses are provided for student supporters, with this approach expected to bring educational benefits. It is commendable that this support system allows students to enjoy a worry-free campus life, and that the University manages to accommodate and facilitate learning for students with disabilities.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- The University's Policy on Internal Quality Assurance defines the Internal Quality Assurance Committee as an organization responsible for promoting internal quality assurance, but the Teaching and Learning Management Meeting reviews the three policies, conducts self-study of the curricula, and makes improvements. This situation indicates that the roles and connections of the two organizations in the internal quality assurance system are unclear, and that the meeting bodies for internal quality assurance should be structured with their roles clarified in the system. Moreover, the Administration and Management Meeting and the University Council, both defined as decision-making bodies, and the Teaching and Learning Management Meeting specify the key teaching and learning items in their reviews, but there are discrepancies between the rules and the actual conditions. The rules should be reviewed to improve and effectively operate the internal quality assurance system in coordination with the Internal Quality Assurance Committee and the Teaching and Learning Management Meeting.

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The faculties use their assessment policies, checklists, and other means to monitor student learning outcomes, but their monitoring is not clearly linked to the ND6 competencies to be acquired by students upon graduation and the diploma policies. The graduate schools use dissertations and subject grades to monitor student learning outcomes, but this method is inadequate for measuring the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policies. These issues should be addressed with the learning outcomes appropriately measured as specified in the diploma policies.

Student Enrollment

- The Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Language and Culture, continues to fall far short of fulfilling its transfer student quota. This situation should be addressed.
- The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are low at 0.15 in the master's program in the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and 0.08 in the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Psychology. These ratios should be improved with the graduate schools' student quotas thoroughly managed.

University Management and Finance

- As the University's balance sheet for operating activities remains negative, the ratio of financial assets to the required reserve fund is showing a downward trend despite maintaining a certain standard. This situation indicates that the University is far from establishing the financial base necessary to sustainably conduct its educational and research activities. To address this issue, the University should formulate and implement a financial plan specifying the target values and measures to achieve them, thereby establishing a solid financial foundation.

Recommendation

Student Enrollment

- The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are low at 0.87 in all undergraduate programs, 0.80 in the Faculty of Contemporary Human Sciences, 0.73 in the faculty's Department of Life Environment, 0.80 in the faculty's Department of Psychology, and 0.87 in the faculty's Department of Child Education. The average ratios of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap over the past five years are also low at 0.85 in all undergraduate programs, 0.77 in the Faculty of Contemporary Human Sciences, 0.70 in the faculty's Department of Life Environment, 0.78 in the faculty's Department of Psychology, and 0.84 in the faculty's Department of Child Education. These ratios should be corrected with the faculties' student quotas thoroughly managed.