

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

Tokyo University of Agriculture



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2019	
Accreditation Status: Accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1.2020 – March 31.2027)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Tokyo University of Agriculture

Overview

Tokyo University of Agriculture (hereinafter referred to as the “University”) states as its educational and research purpose to promote “Practical Science,” in line with its founding principles, and engages in the teaching and study of theories and applications related to agriculture in the broad sense, including areas such as life science, environmental science, informational science, and bioindustry. The University newly established and reorganized its faculties and departments in accordance with the Second Mid-term Plan N2018 (2015 to 2018) (hereinafter referred to as the “Mid-term Plan N2018”), and became a comprehensive agricultural university with 6 faculties (23 departments), namely the Faculties of Agriculture, Applied Bioscience, Life Sciences, Regional Environment Science, International Agriculture and Food Studies, and Bioindustry, and the Graduate Schools of Agriculture and Bioindustry in AY2018. In accordance with the Third Mid-term Plan N2022 (2019 to 2022) (hereinafter referred to as the “Mid-term Plan N2022”), the University has built on the organizational reforms implemented in the previous term in order to expand its coverage of agricultural areas in response to further social changes and enhance education and research.

The University clarified its decision-making process in the previous term, and established an internal quality assurance structure with the University Council of Tokyo University of Agriculture (hereinafter referred to as the “University Council”) as the responsible organization in January 2018. Aiming to enhance its functions to support PDCA cycle implementation in individual faculties and graduate schools, the University is engaged in ensuring education quality. Under this new structure, the outcomes of the action plans implemented for achieving the mid-term plan are checked and evaluated each year toward making improvements in the next year, and Self-Inspection and Evaluation Committee of the University Council is given the responsibility of verifying the effectiveness of the action plans. We hope the University makes this system function effectively. Under the internal quality assurance system described above, with respect to education, the University has adopted a numbering system that indicates subject levels and compulsory/optional subject classifications, and developed a curriculum tree that indicates the relationship of the degree award policy with each subject and also shows course registration years. Through these efforts, the University has encouraged active student learning and enhanced first year education.

The University conducts practical education and research that leverages Japan's broad climatic zones at various farm locations, and is fulfilling its role as a joint research hub through initiatives such as the cutting-edge research activities conducted at the Nodai Genome Research Center. These are distinctive endeavors. The University is committed to disseminating its research findings. For example, the University makes its research findings available to the local community, companies, and other entities in the Food and Agriculture Museum, Culture Collection Center, etc. The University has regularly held the International Students Summit (ISS) on Food, Agriculture and Environment, which gathers faculty members and students from partner universities around the world, and strived to stimulate international exchange. It is commendable that the University conducts this kind of distinctive educational and research activity.

On the other hand, a degree award policy (diploma policy) and curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy) need to be established in some departments. Sufficient measures have not been implemented to give substance to credits in some faculties. Other issues related to curricula and learning outcomes include the absence of a limit as to the number of credits recognized as pre-obtained credits in graduate schools and the absence of examination criteria for special assignment research. These issues should be addressed.

The University implemented major reforms, including faculty and departmental reorganization, in accordance with the Mid-term Plan N2018, established an internal quality assurance system as part of the reform, and has improved system functionality. Going forward, the University should therefore promote efforts to visualize learning outcomes in line with the Mid-term Plan N2022, verify the effectiveness of internal quality assurance by checking and evaluating the outcomes of the efforts, and ensure improved quality assurance.

Notable Strengths

Education and Research Organization

- The University has established Abashiri Cold-climate Farm in Abashiri City, Hokkaido, Miyako Subtropical Farm in Miyakojima City, Okinawa, and Isehara Farm in Isehara City, Kanagawa, which is located in a temperate zone. Leveraging Japan's geographical features that are produced by a variety of climatic conditions ranging from cold districts to subtropical zones, the University has established facilities for conducting practical education and research in various domestic and global climatic

zones and has utilized the facilities for education and research. For instance, Isehara Farm provides training opportunities and education to students from partner universities around the world, making it a place where the University conducts practical education and research in accordance with the wide range of agricultural fields it covers. This is a commendable endeavor.

Education and Research Environment

- The Nodai Genome Research Center was established for the purpose of promoting new research on agriculture and other fields. As a joint research, joint use hub, the center is open to other universities, public research institutions, and companies, has contributed to a higher standard of research in genetic information analysis, and made cutting-edge research achievements. In order to develop the joint research hub even further, the University has launched a matching fund joint research program with the National Agriculture and Food Research Organization, with which it has concluded a comprehensive agreement. It is commendable that the University has strived to develop a hub and framework for actively promoting joint research and produced significant results.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- Aiming to use its research findings to contribute to society, the University leverages its unique resources and academic features to hold various events, including the Brewery Tasting Fair involving sake breweries run by graduates, at the Food and Agriculture Museum, which is a hub for disseminating the University's research findings. The museum also functions as an educational hub, holding work experience programs for local junior high school students and acting as a venue for junior and senior high school off-campus learning. Culture Collection Center houses a variety of microorganisms and has contributed to development efforts by companies. This is a commendable achievement.
- The University has held the International Students Summit (ISS) on Food, Agriculture and Environment annually since 2001. The event gathers students and faculty members from partner universities around the world and involves discussions and presentations on food, agriculture, the environment, and educational issues. The University has been developing its educational methods. In AY2019, for example, conventional lecture-style sessions were changed to group sessions that encourage

active student learning. Also, the University has implemented measures to improve the summit program in response to social changes, including the establishment of a program that enables high school students to participate. It is commendable that the number of participant countries, universities, and students has been growing over the years, and that the University has leveraged its distinctive features to contribute to the promotion of international exchange and global educational activities, strived to improve and enhance the summit program, and consistently engaged in the initiative.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Outcome

- The Doctoral Course in the Department of Bioindustry, Graduate School of Bioindustry, does not have a degree award policy corresponding to each degree. This should be improved.
- The Doctoral Course in the Department of Bioindustry, Graduate School of Bioindustry, does not have a curriculum design and implementation policy corresponding to each degree, and the Department of Food, Aroma and Cosmetic Chemistry and Department of Business, Natural Resource and Economic Development in the Faculty of Bioindustry, the Master Courses in the Department of Forest Science and Department of Agricultural Engineering in the Graduate School of Agriculture, and the Doctoral Courses in the Department of Forest Science and Department of Agricultural Engineering in the Graduate School of Agriculture, respectively, do not present the basic ideas on curriculum implementation. This should be improved.
- All faculties set a limit on the number of credits that students can register for in a single year in order to give substance to credits. However, this limit on credit registration does not apply to teacher training course subjects, academic information course subjects, and remedial subjects. Due to this, a considerable number of students in the Faculties of Agriculture, Applied Bioscience, and Bioindustry actually register for credits in excess of the limit. Therefore, the aforementioned limit does not function properly. The limit on credit registration is not applied to students who enrolled from the third year and who cannot obtain enough credits to advance to the fourth year even if they register for the maximum number of credits allowed under the limit on credit

registration, and other measures for giving substance to credits have not been adequately implemented. Therefore, the University should improve the situation in view of the aim of the credit system.

- Each faculty member is given the discretion to allow students who get an “F” grade in the assessment of academic achievement to take a retest or submit an essay and, based on the results thereof, change their score to a “C” grade. That faculty members are given the discretion to choose whether to conduct retests is problematic in terms of ensuring the fair and impartial assessment of academic achievement. This should be improved.
- The Master Courses in the Graduate School of Agriculture and Graduate School of Bioindustry do not clearly indicate the examination criteria related to special assignment research results.
- In the Graduate School of Bioindustry, efforts to grasp the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy have not yet been put into practice. Although all faculties and the Graduate School of Agriculture have attempted to grasp the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy, indicators for performing evaluation based on the results obtained through grasping the learning outcomes have yet to be developed. Therefore, the obtained results should be accumulated, analyzed, and utilized to improve education.

Recommendation

Educational Program and Outcome

- The graduate schools apply the University’s internal regulations when recognizing pre-obtained credits, and the maximum number of pre-obtained credits is not appropriately defined in the graduate school regulations. This should be corrected.