

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

Tohoku Gakuin University



<b>Basic Information of the Institution</b>	
Ownership: Private	Location: Miyagi, Japan
<b>Accreditation Status</b>	
Year of the Review: 2017	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2018 – March.31.2025)	

## **Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Tohoku Gakuin University**

### **Overview**

Tohoku Gakuin University (hereafter, the University) was formerly founded as the Sendai Theological Seminary in 1886, and after being renamed Tohoku Gakuin in 1891, the school was chartered as a specialized training college and launched as a university under new School Education Act system in 1949. At present, the University, which continues to evolve, is comprised of six faculties (Letters, Economics, Business Administration, Law, Engineering, and Liberal Arts) and six graduate schools (Letters, Economics, Business Administration, Law, Engineering, and Human Informatics), which are spread out over three campuses located in Miyagi Prefecture: the Tsuchitoi and Izumi campuses in Sendai city and the Tagajo Campus in Tagajo city.

Since undergoing the Japan University Accreditation Association's (JUAA) FY2010 University Accreditation in 2010, the University has stepped up its efforts to pursue internal reforms and initiated numerous projects, resulting in notable improvements. Moreover, in 2016, with a view to celebrating the 150th anniversary of its foundation, the University formulated and announced the Tohoku Gakuin University medium-term plan "TG Grand Vision 150" to work towards further improvement.

The University promotes education with "Respect for Dignity of the Individual and Perfection of Character" as its founding spirit based on evangelical Christianity. The University adopts a variety of unique approaches to focusing on liberal arts education in pursuit of the perfection of character through the "TG Basic" core curriculum established to promote a basic liberal arts education in all of its faculties. In addition, the University measures its four-year educational outcomes through student opinion surveys conducted at the time of graduation and each faculty is expected to incorporate the results of these surveys into their educational reform initiatives. Because it is located in an area affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, the University publishes a general academic journal entitled "Disaster Studies" and many faculty, staff and students participate in disaster volunteer activities nationwide. These efforts are commendable as they demonstrate the Universities strong connection to the local community. However, there are challenges to be addressed, including the managing of student quotas for admissions and the capping of the number of credits

students can register for in a single year in the Faculty of Letters.

The University's internal quality assurance system checks and evaluates the University on three levels: academic staff, undergraduate and graduate schools, and the University as a whole. These evaluations are then verified by the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. In addition to conducting a self-evaluation and assessment every three years, the University is currently in the process of advancing the First-stage of its Medium-term Plan (2016-2020) and its Single-year Action Plan based on its "TG Grand Vision 150." Self-evaluation plays a key role in the University's internal quality assurance. The University is expected to continue to effectively operate the internal quality assurance system for its further development in the coming years.

### **Notable Strengths**

#### *Educational Content, Methods, and Outcomes*

- It is commendable that the University emphasizes liberal arts education as a way to cultivate the richness of humanity and advances humanistic and intellectual basics through its TG Basic core curriculum. To realize its diploma policy, TG Basic courses introduce the basics of a liberal arts education to all faculties. The humanistic dimension is provided via Christian theology based on the University's founding spirit in conjunction with various courses that inspire students to contemplate living well including career design. The intellectual basics are provided through courses designed to develop logical thinking, mathematical thinking, writing skills, and information processing abilities. Furthermore, the University-wide Educational Program Committee verifies the effectiveness of these programs with a view to further reform the liberal arts education they provide.
- It is commendable that the Program in Asian Historical and Cultural Studies in the Graduate School of Letters, introduces an off-campus training system that provides the opportunity for students to conduct document investigations, archeological research, ethnological studies, and research presentations in Japan, China and South Korea with the goal of enhancing students' research skills. In addition, graduate students participating in this off-campus training are appointed as curatorial researchers at the Tohoku Gakuin University Museum to further

develop their abilities by experiencing the profession firsthand. These include creating displays, serving as guides, and conducting investigative research. These unique educational programs, attended by all students enrolled in the master's and doctoral degree programs, produce graduates who can be employed in professional positions, such as curators and cultural property conservation technicians.

### *Social Cooperation and Contribution*

- To fulfill its responsibility as a university located in an area affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, the University is taking appropriate steps to deal with disaster recovery in the medium and long term as well as to address regional challenges and social issues from a multifaceted perspective which goes beyond individual academic disciplines. For example, under the leadership of the University president, the President's Office played a central role in collaborating with each faculty and graduate school to begin publication of the academic journal "Disaster Studies" in 2012. In addition, in cooperation with local newspapers, the University holds a continuing symposium with the main theme of "Revival and Creation: Tohoku's Regional Empowerment." The journal "Disaster Studies" disseminates a wide range of information that includes contributions from all over the country and publishes articles related to the symposium. These initiatives are commendable because they demonstrate the strong roots the University has to the local community.
- It is also commendable that the University set up a disaster volunteer station immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake. With its students taking the initiative and actively participating in nationwide volunteer activities, its goal is to serve as a core disaster volunteer cooperative network among universities. The University also holds an annual inter-university joint disaster volunteer symposium with a multifaceted theme focused on student volunteers. These initiatives are planned and managed in collaboration with students and academic/administrative staff and students play a leadership role in holding in-depth discussions which reach beyond the bounds of the university. These initiatives offer the opportunity for students to acquire knowhow on volunteer coordination and methods for organizing collaborative activities. In this way, they significantly contribute to the cultivation of volunteer leaders.

### *Administration and Finance*

- It is commendable that, in an attempt to improve the motivation and quality of its administrative staff members, the University has established a basic training policy and seven tiered qualification system for staff administrative position. It has also organized various internal training programs which include the allocating of a President's research grants program to administrative work studies, and short-term staff exchange program with other universities. Importantly, the administrative work studies and staff developmental activities have helped to encourage problem-solving across different administrative bureaus and to improve overall problem-solving skills. Research activities are conducted on various themes including "How to reducing student drop-out rate" and "The development and expansion of support systems for students with disabilities." These efforts have led to the implementation of specific measures including the establishment of a Dropout Prevention Committee and a Student General Health Support Center.

### *Suggestions for Improvement*

#### *Educational Content, Methods, and Outcomes*

- All departments in the Faculty of Letters limit the number of credits students can register for in a single year to 44 for first through third year students and to 48 for fourth year students. Courses that are part of the teaching credential program, however, are exempt from this upper limit. These courses are nonetheless included in credits required for graduation which results in many students taking credits far exceeding the upper limit. This situation should be remedied given the stated purpose of the credit system.

#### *Enrollment*

- In the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, the average ratio of freshman enrollment to the cap on freshman enrollment over the past five years and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are high at 1.22 and 1.23, respectively. On the other hand,

the ratio of transfer students to the transfer student admission cap is low at 0.1. These faculties should improve these ratios to properly manage their student quotas.

- The ratio of transfer students to the transfer student admission cap is low at 0.25 and 0.33, respectively, in the Departments of General Humanities and History, and the Faculty of Letters. Similarly, it is 0.15 in the Faculty of Economics, 0.06 in the Faculty of Business Administration, 0.04 in the Faculty of Law, and 0.1, 0.2, and 0.5, respectively, in the Departments of Human Science, Information Science, and Regional Design, Faculty of Liberal Arts. Even though the Departments of Mechanical Engineering and Intelligent Systems and Electrical Engineering and Information Technology in the Faculty of Engineering have set a transfer student admission cap, no students have transferred in. These ratios should be improved.
- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is also low at 0.38 in the Master's Program in the Division of Letters, 0.06 in the Master's Program in the Division of Economics, 0.30 in the Master's Program in the Division of Law, 0.08 in the Doctoral Program in the Division of Engineering, and 0.25 and 0.11 in the Master's and Doctoral Programs in the Division of Human Informatics. No students are enrolled in the Doctoral Program in the Divisions of Economics and Law. These ratios should also be improved.

#### *Education and Research Environment*

- The libraries on the Tsuchitoi, Izumi and Tagajo campuses do not employ any librarian or other staff with expert knowledge in a full-time regular staff. This situation should be improved.