

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

Nagoya Gakuin University



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| Basic Information of the Institution | |
| Ownership: Private | Location: Aichi, Japan |
| Accreditation Status | |
| Year of the Review: 2018 | |
| Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2019 – March.31.2026) | |

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Nagoya Gakuin University

Overview

Founded on the Christian spirit of “Fear God, Love People,” Nagoya Gakuin University (hereafter, the University) aims to foster leaders who will serve others and society, humanity and the world, as it strives to cultivate the foundations of life-long character development. As the environment surrounding universities becomes increasingly challenging due to such social changes as globalization and the nation’s declining birthrate, the University established the “Medium- to Long-term Plan – Look Forward 2014-2023” in 2013, followed by a five-year concrete action plan based on the medium- to long-term plan to define the institution’s vision and ensure steady implementation of its policies and projects. In 2018 the action plan was revised to formulate the Medium-term Action Plan that lays out the steps to be taken over the next three years. The University is working to improve its education and research activities in keeping with the change in social needs and the environment.

Especially noteworthy are the University’s social cooperation and contribution activities implemented on a university-wide basis and promoted as distinguishing features of the institution. The medium-term plan envisions the University’s greater presence as a base of knowledge playing a key role in creating a vibrant society. To achieve this vision of social contribution, the University has laid out the explicit commitments to (1) become a heightened presence as a base of knowledge, (2) play a role in solving various problems facing the local community, and (3) strengthen its ties with stakeholders. The University is highly commended for exposing students to activities tied to the local community and encouraging faculty members, staff, and students to work together to address local community issues, for example, through the consortium of universities formed by institutions located in and around Seto City, Aichi Prefecture, and systematically incorporating project-based learning (PBL) into the curriculum.

To support its efforts, the University has established a highly effective university-wide student support system in the form of a portal website developed independently. The website allows faculty members and staff to share information about students and answer their questions, concerns, and requests. It is highly commendable that attentive student support services are helping to produce positive results, such as lower dropout rates, a large number of students studying abroad, and a high job placement rate.

Positive findings in the area of education include (1) a systematically structured

curriculum with appropriate subjects in line with the curriculum design and implementation policy being implemented in each degree program; (2) steps being taken to promote learning and ensure that course workloads align with the credit hour definition; and (3) academic achievement assessed and degrees awarded in an appropriate manner.

There are a number of issues the University needs to address, however. To make improvements it is important to establish policies outlining the rationale and methods for achieving the set goals, but some of the graduate schools display inadequacies in their degree award policy, curriculum design and implementation policy, and admission policy. Although the University is expected to assess and make public the achievement of the student learning outcomes set forth in the degree award policy, both the undergraduate and graduate schools fail to fully assess them. Furthermore, some departments and graduate schools have enrollment management issues. To address these issues, an internal quality assurance (IQA) system led by the Academic Reform Promotion Council was introduced in FY2017, but work is needed to fully establish the system and ensure its effective operation. Specifically, the scope of the Council's IQA work, along with the division of responsibilities and the coordination process between the Council and other university-wide organizations, should be reviewed.

Going forward it is important for the University to address the issues identified and work on quality assurance for further development of the institution.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- As a strategy to help prevent dropouts, each student is assigned a class advisor, and the Student Support department and the Academic Affairs department work together to identify and arrange meetings with students not earning sufficient credits or prone to absenteeism. The information obtained in such meetings is shared among faculty members and staff using the learning system feature of the Campus Communication Service (CCS) and used to enhance the counseling and scholarship programs designed to address academic and financial challenges that can cause students to leave the university. These responsive student support services are commended for effectively reducing the number of dropouts.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- In line with its vision of social contribution that includes “become a heightened presence as a base of knowledge” and “strengthen its ties with stakeholders,” the Social Cooperation Center has expanded its collaboration with other universities, businesses, and groups in the area to implement a wide range of activities. Specifically, the University participates in a consortium of five universities located in and around Seto City. It also implements a structured local cooperative education curriculum and courses incorporating project-based learning (PBL) through a community building project designated as the Center of Community (COC) Project by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology and the local medical professional training program offered in partnership with three other universities. Owing to these courses and programs and the regional challenges taken up as topics in mandatory subjects, the University exposes students to activities closely tied to the local community. These are commendable efforts that take advantage of the distinct characteristics of each discipline, undertaken through the cooperation of faculty members, university staff, and students, and contribute not only to student growth but also to creating new culture, community development, and solving local challenges.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- The IQA system exhibits some inadequacies that require correction. For example, the scope of work of the Academic Reform Promotion Council, established with responsibility for the promotion and overall management of IQA, does not cover education and research organizations and faculty and faculty organizations, and the division of responsibilities among the Council and other university-wide organizations, such as the University-wide Self-Study Committee, and the coordination process between these organizations are not fully defined. Furthermore, the Council falls short of assisting the undergraduate and graduate schools in implementing the PDCA cycle to ensure effective management of teaching and learning.

Educational Program and Outcome

- The degree award policies of the Master Program in Economics of the Graduate School of Economics and Business Administration and the Master and Distance Learning programs of the Graduate School of Foreign Languages should state the expected learning outcomes appropriate for the degrees in terms of knowledge, skills, and competencies. The curriculum design and implementation policies of the Master and Doctor programs in Business Administration of the Graduate School of Economics and Business Administration should clearly state the principles of curriculum design and implementation.
- The undergraduate school measures and assesses student learning outcomes through assessment tests and portfolios, and the graduate schools through thesis examination, but the current practice fails to fully assess the learning outcomes established in the degree award policy. The University needs to establish evaluation criteria appropriate for each degree program and ensure the learning outcomes set out in the degree award policy are measured and assessed effectively.

Student Enrollment

- The admissions policy of the Master Program in Business Administration of the Graduate School of Economics and Business Administration should clearly state the attributes and characteristics of the students the program seeks to serve.
- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.21 in the Master Program of the Graduate School of Foreign Languages. Graduate school enrollment should be managed more effectively.

Recommendations

Student Enrollment

- The average ratio of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap over the past five years and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are both high at 1.27 in the Department of Sports and Health, Faculty of Sports and Health. Faculty enrollment must be managed more effectively.