

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

Japan Women's University



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 Japan Women's University

Overview

Japan Women's University (hereinafter referred to as the “University”) was founded on the following philosophy: “Women should be educated first and foremost as human beings, second as wives, and third as citizens.” Aiming to develop the founder’s Three Education Principles, namely “True Conviction,” “Creativity,” and “Cooperation and Service,” the University upholds the educational policies of “learn and act independently” and “believe in yourself and act independently,” and conducts educational and research activity in order to fulfill its role as a higher education institution for women living in the modern world. In preparation for its 120th anniversary in 2021, the University formulated and announced a future plan, Vision 120: Toward Our 120th Anniversary (hereinafter referred to as “Vision120”), in 2011, and is currently implementing the Japan Women's University Mid- to Long-term Plan (AY2014 to AY2023) that was drawn up for the purpose of achieving Vision120. The University has consistently worked on improving and enhancing educational and research activity. For example, it established the JWU Research Center for Higher Education of Women and started planning for the establishment of the JWU Education Center for Social Collaboration in AY2019, and has been making preparations for the campus reorganization project scheduled for AY2021, which will involve moving the Faculty of Integrated Arts and Social Sciences to the Mejiro Campus.

The University Reform Steering Committee was established in 2018 as the organization responsible for promoting university-wide internal quality assurance. Building on the existing framework in which the Self-Study Committee played a central role in self-study activities, the University has developed a system whereby the University Reform Steering Committee manages the PDCA cycles implemented by each faculty and graduate school from a university-wide perspective. The relationship between the University Reform Steering Committee and the other divisions under the internal quality assurance system is schematized in the Organizational Chart on Internal Quality Assurance in Japan Women's University. Going forward, we hope the University Reform Steering Committee provides effective support for improvement based on the results of self-study conducted by individual divisions and thereby contributes to the improvement of the educational and research activities carried out by the University’s faculties and graduate schools.

Regarding education, all faculties and graduate schools have established and announced a degree award policy (diploma policy) and curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy) for each degree to be awarded. The educational program provided in the distance learning curriculum is designed leveraging the characteristics of distance learning. Undergraduate program (non-distance learning) curricula are systematically organized, each culminating in a graduation thesis, which is set as a compulsory subjects. The curriculum trees provided for each department and the subject numbering system introduced in AY2019 are notable in that they help students earn a degree by encouraging systematic course registration and step-by-step learning.

In Special Seminar and Lectures in Practical Ethics 1, a compulsory subject for first-year students in all faculties, and Special Seminar and Lectures in Practical Ethics 2, a compulsory subject for second- and third-year students, students develop their skills for living in society as women through lectures and seminars. This is a distinctive and highly commendable endeavor. Since 2007, the Recurrent Education Program provided by the Lifelong Learning Center has consistently offered a one-year systematic education program to support women seeking re-employment. The Lifelong Learning Center has worked on improving the program, by revising the curriculum in response to changes in participant composition and participant needs, for example. Applicants to the program are currently increasing, and a high employment success rate among job-seeking participants has been maintained. This is a remarkable achievement.

However, there are some issues that should be addressed. Regarding management of student body size, some faculties, departments, and graduate schools have a high or low ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap. As for the measurement of learning outcomes, the relationship between individual initiatives and the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy is unclear. Some departments are not doing enough to give substance to credits. Therefore, the University should improve the situation in view of the purpose of the credit system.

Going forward, we hope the University solves these issues through internal quality assurance efforts, and accelerates its remarkable initiatives for further development of its program.

Notable Strengths

Educational Program and Outcome

- The University sets Special Seminar and Lectures in Practical Ethics 1 and Special Seminar and Lectures in Practical Ethics 2 as compulsory subjects in order to encourage students to deepen their understanding of the meaning of studying at university, promote self-development, and develop their skills for living in society as women, and holds the subjects in a methodical order. More specifically, after learning the University's mission and purpose in their first year, students build personal relationships and reflect on themselves through participating in an off-campus seminar involving an overnight stay. Second- and third-year students participate in discussions with internal and external lecturers who are invited to give talks on topics such as "Women's Body and Mind," "Women and Work," and "Women and the World," and develop a broader perspective and improve their general education. It is commendable that these initiatives have led to the enhancement of students' ability to independently develop a future image of themselves as women thriving in modern society.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- Leveraging its distinctive characteristics, the University offers a The Recurrent Education Program as a program for supporting women seeking re-employment. The Lifelong Learning Center has long played a central role in the program's management, making improvements to it in response to social needs, etc. In 2016, the program's curriculum was revised based on the opinions gathered from lecturers, partner companies, program participants, graduates, and other stakeholders. Furthermore, the Lifelong Learning Center has worked on improving the program in response to changes in participant composition and participant needs. For example, it divides participants into classes according to their working experience, has enhanced participant convenience by providing on-demand content, and offers career counseling. Thanks to these efforts, applicants to the program are increasing, and a high employment success rate among job-seeking participants has been maintained. The program represents the University's fulfillment of its social role as a higher education institution for women, and is thus a commendable endeavor.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Outcome

- All faculties set a limit on the number of credits students can register for in a single year. However, the limit does not apply to subjects related to obtaining qualifications, and thus a considerable number of students actually register for many credits in excess of the limit in some departments. Although some departments set conditions on registration for subjects related to obtaining qualifications, no other satisfactory measures have been taken to give substance to credits. Therefore, the University should improve the situation in view of the purpose of the credit system.
- The faculties measure learning outcomes using various methods, but, with the exception of the questionnaire survey conducted at the time of graduation, the relationship between the methods and the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy is unclear. In the graduate schools, the correlation between the thesis examination criteria, which are indicators for measuring learning outcomes, and the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy is unclear. Faculties and graduate schools should use diversified methods to appropriately grasp and evaluate the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy.

Student Enrollment

- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is high at 1.25 in the Department of Studies on Contemporary Society, Faculty of Integrated Arts and Social Sciences. Therefore, the University should significantly improve undergraduate quota management.
- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.45 in the Master's Program in the Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Social Sciences and 0.11 in the Doctoral Program in the Graduate School of Science. Therefore, the University should significantly improve graduate school quota management.