University Accreditation Results

(Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for university)

Fukuoka Institute of Technology

Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Fukuoka, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2012	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2020)	
Related Links	
Fukuoka Institute of Technology: http://www.fit.ac.jp/en/	
Full Text of the Accreditation Results (in Japanese):	
http://www.juaa.or.jp/accreditation/university/result_2012.html	
Accreditation Standards, Process and other related information (in English):	
http://www.juaa.or.jp/en/accreditation/university.html	

**Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results
for the Fukuoka Institute of Technology (FIT)**

Notable Strengths

Educational content, methods, and outcome

● It is commendable that the Fukuoka Institute of Technology (FIT) has made efforts to enhance research and education to become the locality's knowledge base. For example, the institute serves as the secretariat institution responsible for educational programs for the Consortium-Fukuoka. It offers mutually recognized (transferable) distance-learning classes taught by faculty from other universities, satellite lectures from Tokyo, and the Four University Joint Seminar, a short-term exchange program.

Student support

● It is commendable that the institute has devised a measure to support students to find employment. In particular, the institute launched the Plus One Project, a project approved by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology in 2009 as its Program for Promoting University Education and Student Support. The project supports alumni who have not yet acquired jobs a year after graduation. The program offers seminars and several weeks of internships, and has proven to be effective as participants in these seminars have increasingly acquired jobs.

Social cooperation and contribution

● The institute's social cooperation and contribution activities are commendable. For example, the FIT Techno Club works together with its member companies to conduct research, develop products, and obtain patents, with two coordinators of the Liaison Office approaching the local community to match requests from local companies, including member companies, with the institute's research techniques and ideas. In addition, the Manufacturing Center offers "summer vacation 'experience' workshops for parents and children," with many elementary and junior high school students and their parents taking part. Furthermore, the Extension Center provides about 300 lecture courses annually with over 2,000 participants.

Administration and finance

● It is commendable that the institute has pioneered a staff development training program that has had great impact on the staff as a whole. In particular, the FIT Administration Staff Training (FAST) Program offers internship opportunities in the United States to core staff members who will bear responsibility for the institute's educational reforms in the future. Approximately 15 mid-career staff are divided into small groups to spend two months interning at California State University, East Bay. The same groups are sent for several continuous years, with noticeable improvements in the program content and results every year. On their return to the institute, these staffers make concrete proposals for reform, some of which are said to be immediately implemented if excellent.

Internal quality assurance

● It is commendable that the internal quality assurance system operates effectively at

the institute. For example, the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle has been functioning effectively by means of each Faculty, Department, Graduate School, and Administrative Office voluntarily stipulating the Action Program according to the Master Plan (MP) to improve education and research activities. Moreover, internal quality assurance has been appropriately implemented by means of two PDCA cycles: self-studies of the institute as a whole by means of the institute's Self-study Committee; and the Financial Committee's action program, with evaluations in three stages (before, during, and after implementation), based on the Master Plan. These two PDCA cycles evaluate the institute and give feedback to both the units evaluated and the institute as a whole.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational content, methods, and outcome

- In the Faculty of Information Engineering, the Department of Information and Communication Engineering, the Department of Information and Systems Engineering, and the Department of Systems Management policies are stipulated for granting degrees, but they have not clarified learning outcomes at the time of program completion. The policies for organizing and implementing curricula for the institute as a whole state educational purposes and learning objectives, but the ideas behind educational content and methods are not clear. The policies for awarding degrees should be clearly defined, and curricula should be organized and implemented according to the policies clarified.

- In the Faculty of Engineering, the maximum number of credits for which students can register each year is high at 50 in the Department of Information Electronics, 50 in the Department of Electrical Engineering, and 60 in the Department of Intelligent Mechanical Engineering, while the maximum number is not set in the Department of Life, Environment, and Material Science. In the Faculty of Information Engineering, the number is also high at 50 in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, 50 in the Department of Information and Communication Engineering, and 50 in the Department of Information and Systems Engineering, while it is not set in the Department of System Management. Given the purpose of the credit system, these numbers should be revised.

- In the Graduate School of Engineering and the Graduate School of Socio-Environmental Studies, measures for improving education and research at the graduate level are insufficient as they have been limited to observing classes and participating in idea exchange meetings at the Consortium-Fukuoka. This should be improved.

- In the Graduate School of Engineering's doctoral program, some students complete all the requirements except the dissertation, and leave the institute before completing the dissertation requirement within the time limit set by the institute. Later, when these students submit their dissertations, even though they do not have enrollment status, they are granted doctoral degrees in the same manner as those students continuously enrolled. This is inappropriate and should be corrected. The institute should modify the ways it has addressed the problem, and, in accordance with the purpose of having course-based doctoral programs, should create measures to encourage degree completion within the required time frame.

Area of Serious Concern

Enrollment

● In the past five years, the average of the ratios of enrolled freshmen to the freshman admission cap and the ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap in the Faculty of Engineering are high at 1.30 and 1.27 respectively. These numbers are high in its departments: 1.24 and 1.21 in the Department of Information Electronics, 1.23 and 1.31 in the Department of Life, Environment and Material Science, 1.33 and 1.25 in the Department of Intelligent Mechanical Engineering, and 1.37 and 1.30 in the Department of Electrical Engineering. In the Faculty of Information Engineering, the numbers are also high at 1.24 and 1.28 respectively. The numbers are high in its departments: 1.28 and 1.33 in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, 1.24 and 1.26 in the Department of Information and Systems Engineering, and 1.26 and 1.34 in the Department of System Management.

When the institute underwent the previous university evaluation and accreditation process conducted by the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA), the JUAA made a recommendation on the institute's enrollment management, and requested the institute to submit a report on improvement, but sufficient improvement had not been made. Because of this, the JUAA asked for another report in this university evaluation and accreditation process; however, enrollment management is not still conducted properly in the Faculties and Departments. The institute must correct the situation as soon as possible.