

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

Meiji Gakuin University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2015	
Accreditation Status: Accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2016 – March.31.2023)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Meiji Gakuin University

Overview

Meiji Gakuin University (hereafter, the University), whose origin was an English institution named the Hepburn School (founded in 1863), was approved as a university under the new education system with day and night divisions in the Faculty of Letters and Economics in 1949. As of 2015, the University has six faculties (the faculties of Letters, Economics, Sociology and Social Work, Law, International Studies, and Psychology) and seven graduate schools (the graduate schools of Arts and Letters, Economics, Sociology, Law, International Studies, Psychology, and Business and Law). The Graduate Law School stopped admitting students in 2013. The University has its campuses in Minato Ward, Tokyo, and Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, and has developed its education and research activities in accordance with its founding spirit, “Christian-based moral education,” and its mission, “Do for Others.”

After its accreditation review by Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2008, the University has aimed to realize its mid- and long-term plan, “The 21st Century Hepburn Project,” and has reconfirmed its mission and purpose, which was led by the Self-Inspection and Evaluation Steering Committee. Moreover, the University has worked to deepen discussions towards realizing its founding spirit and mission, to make the situation clear from an objective point of view, and to acknowledge the University’s advantages, tasks, and problems.

It is commendable that the University has realized its founding spirit and mission in its educational research institutions and their activities, such as those conducted by the International Peace Research Institute, Meiji Gakuin University (PRIME) and the Volunteer Center. The activities of these centers have contributed to university-wide common education in the form of “the Meiji Gakuin University Core Curriculum,” and the support system, led by the Volunteer Center, has initiated a variety of fruitful volunteer activities. Moreover, efforts to further University’s mission and purpose through the university-wide common education are unique among other institutions.

However, the University has several issues to address. There are problems with the contents of its policies on degree award and the contents in curriculum design policies in some faculties and graduate schools, as well as insufficiencies in syllabus content, the lack of clear standards for examining theses in some graduate schools, and the failure to fulfill the admission quota in graduate schools. In addition, a cooperative relationship between the university executive and each office still need to be improved. It is expected that the University will build a cooperative relationship between them, and the faculty and staff will work together for improvements and reforms.

Notable Strengths

Education and Research Organization

- It is commendable that the University achieves high rates of student participation in volunteer activities by encouraging students, in a systematic way, to take volunteer-related courses offered by the Volunteer Center. In this way, the Center has acted as an institution that realizes the University’s founding spirit and mission. In addition, PRIME and the Volunteer Center have not only held research conferences and seminars, and supported students’ volunteer activities, but have also offered the contents of these activities in a university-wide course, “Modern World and Human 4,” and other volunteer-related courses.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- It is commendable that the University has created a support system, as part of its efforts to make social contributions and advance the University's educational philosophy of "Do for Others." The University has an effective system to support volunteer activities and community contributions by students, including "Do for Smile @ East Japan" and "1 Day for Others" volunteer activities led by the Volunteer Center, and the Volunteer Fund Student Challenge Award. In particular, "1 Day for Others," which consists of 60 programs, is well-attended by students every year.
- It is commendable that the University has made significant local contributions through social education. In particular, "Minato Ward Challenge Community College" (CC College), whose purpose is to foster community leaders, is a unique effort targeted at residents over 60 years old. All the graduates of CC College have joined the "Challenge Community Club" (CC Club), an independent community volunteer organization that leads volunteer and community activities around Minato Ward.

Suggestions for Improvement

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- In the Faculty of Law, the procedure for hiring new faculty members has not been stipulated. This should be improved.

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- The policies on degree award of the master's and doctoral programs in the Graduate School of Economics, the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Law, and the master's program in the Graduate School of International Studies do not indicate the learning outcomes of knowledge and capabilities required for the completion of programs. These programs should indicate the required outcomes.
- The curriculum design policies of each department in the Faculty of Letters and the Department of Social Work in the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work only describe the current states, but do not state the basic ideas on educational content and methods. Also, the curriculum design policies of the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Law describes the method and system of research guidance, but does not state the basic ideas on educational content and methods. These programs should improve their policies.
- The curriculum of the doctoral programs in the Graduate School of Sociology and the Graduate School of Law are not considered to be proper combinations of research work and course work. Considering the purpose of a credit-based degree granting system, the doctoral programs should offer appropriate educational content.
- The maximum number of credits a student can register for per year is 50 for the third- and fourth-year students in the Department of International Business in the Faculty of Economics, and students in all faculties except the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work can take credits over the maximum number in the final year of enrollment with the permission of the department chair. This should be improved in accordance with the purpose of having a credit system.

- Although the criteria for writing syllabi have been defined across the entire university, the content of syllabi varies depending on each faculty member. The syllabi should be improved for the purpose of students' self-study.
- In the master's and the doctoral programs in the Graduate School of Sociology and the Graduate School of Psychology, and the master's program in the Graduate School of International Studies, the criteria for examining theses and dissertations are not clearly stated. This should be improved by stating the policies clearly in the Course Catalogues for the graduate students. Also, in the doctoral program in the Graduate School of International Studies, the criteria for examining dissertations are not clearly communicated to students beforehand. This should be improved.

Enrollment

- The ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.45 in the master's program in the Graduate School of Letters, 0.23 in the master's program in the Graduate School of Economics, 0.43 in the master's program in the Graduate School of Sociology, 0.15 in the master's program in the Graduate School of International Studies, 0.06 in the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Economics, and 0.07 in the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Law. These numbers should be improved.