

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

Rissho 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 Rissho University

Overview

Rissho University (hereafter, the University) was established in 1872 as Shukyoin, based on Idaka Danrin, an educational institution of Nichiren Buddhism. Rissho University was established in 1924, according to the University Order, and in 1949 the University became a new university under the School Education Law. Currently, the University has eight faculties (Buddhism Studies, Letters, Economics, Business Administration, Law, Social Welfare, Geo-Environmental Science, and Psychology) and seven graduate schools (Humanities and Sociology, Economics, Law, Business Administration, Social Welfare, Geo-Environmental Science, and Psychology). The University is carrying out education and research activities according to its founding mission on its Shinagawa Campus in Shinagawa Ward, Tokyo, and on its Kumagaya Campus in Kumagaya City, Saitama Prefecture.

After its accreditation review by Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2008, the University has conducted fundamental reviews of its self-study system, led by the University's president. In the newly designed system, under the Self-Study Committee, chaired by the University's president, the vice president in charge assumes responsibility for organizing small committees and special committees; in addition, faculties, departments, graduate schools, centers, and other entities form the base of the system as executing organizations. Moreover, the University has introduced "self-study result lists," and has annually conducted organizational self-studies of faculties, departments, and others entities. Results from each executive organization have been continuously compiled in annual reports and publicized.

In this university accreditation review, it has been revealed that the Faculty of Buddhism Studies and the Faculty of Geo-Environmental Science have made a variety of efforts towards University improvement such as specialized education introducing field work abroad. Also, the University has made great efforts regarding organizational and continuous support to students with special needs, social contributions such as "Children's University of Kumagaya," and raising students' spirit of independence through cooperation with the community.

However, the University still has some issues to address. Contents of policies on degree award and curriculum design policies have been insufficient in certain faculties and graduate schools. Moreover, with regard to student enrollment management, over-enrollment in certain faculties and under-enrollment in certain graduate schools has been observed. Hereafter, JUAA hopes that with regard to its internal quality assurance, the University will compile and manage all data in an integrated fashion, as well as improve the effectiveness of system review by building a system for consolidation, management, and application through institutional research (IR).

Notable Strengths

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- It is commendable that the establishment of experience-based research subjects, such as Field Studies on Buddhism Abroad and Field Studies on Domestic Buddhist Culture, has combined lectures and experience-based learning and has deepened understanding of Buddhism and enhanced motivation for learning in the Faculty of Buddhist Studies.
- It is commendable that the University conducts activities leading to international

exchanges and exchanges with other universities, vitalization of active efforts for learning, and widening of knowledge and cross-cultural understanding. For example, in the Faculty of Geo-Environmental Science, the Department of Geography offers a course titled “Method to Conduct Research and Fieldwork Abroad,” and the Department of Environmental Systems offers “Experiment on Environmental Conservation Activities.” These courses provide opportunities for experience-based learning, enabling students to learn the basics of local surveys abroad and to understand actual life conditions and social characteristics abroad.

- It is commendable that full-time faculty members observe each others’ classes and share information to improve the teaching of individual faculty members. Faculty members choose the objective or theme for each academic year and then discuss it in the faculty development workshop. Also, the introduction of the outside examination in the Faculty of Law has enabled the faculty to enhance students’ motivation for learning while objectively grasping their basic academic abilities and systematically incorporating the outcomes into their educational activities.

Student Support

- It is commendable that the University has implemented systematic and continuous university-wide (including students) support for students with special needs. For example, under the initiative of the Support Council for Students with Special Needs, the Support Department for Students with Special Needs, the nurse’s office, and the Student Counseling Department work together, along with other students, to offer support to students with special needs.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- It is commendable that the University has made contributions to society from industrial, educational, and other perspectives by making concrete efforts to realize its policies to facilitate reciprocity in cooperative projects with the community and cultivate a spirit of independence among students. For example, as part of industrial cooperation between companies and students, the University has co-developed “Rissho University Original Sake,” and in tandem with the Education Committees in Kumagaya City and Namegawa Town, it has offered “Children’s University of Kumagaya,” which provides opportunities for experience-based learning in three fields.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- The undergraduate program in the Faculty of Business Administration, the master’s program in Buddhist studies in the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, the master’s programs in the Graduate School of Business Administration and the Graduate School of Psychology, the doctoral programs in Buddhist studies and philosophy in the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, and the master’s programs in the Graduate School of Social Welfare and the Graduate School of Psychology do not clearly state the learning outcomes required for the completion of the programs. This situation should be improved.
- In the master’s program in sociology in the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, the master’s programs in the Graduate School of Economics and the Graduate School of Law, the doctoral programs in history and Japanese literature,

and the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Economics, the curriculum design policies describe current practices but do not indicate the basic ideas regarding educational contents and methods. This situation should be improved.

- The curriculum of the doctoral program in philosophy in the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology does not appropriately combine research work and course work. Considering the purpose of a credit-based degree granting system, the doctoral program should offer appropriate educational contents.

Enrollment

- In the last five years, the average of the ratios of enrolled freshman to the freshman admission cap is high at 1.20 in the Department of Interpersonal and Social Psychology in the Faculty of Psychology. Also, the ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap is high at 1.20 in the Department of Clinical Psychology in the Faculty of Psychology, but low at 0.24 in the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Geo-Environmental Science, and at 0.17 in the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Psychology. These numbers should be improved.