

Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for Junior College

Ryukoku University Junior College



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Kyoto, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2020	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.1.2021 – March.31.2028)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Ryukoku University Junior College

Overview

Based on the founding “spirit of Pure Land Buddhism (Jodo Shinshu)”, the mission and purpose of Ryukoku University Junior College (hereinafter referred to as the “College”) is “To provide specialized education based on the spirit of Jodo Shinshu, and to train talented personnel, as a junior college under the Fundamental Law of Education and the School Education Act.” The College has also defined the (ideal) image of those to be nurtured, based on the life of Shinran Shonin, the founder of Jodo Shinshu, and put it as “to nurture people who ‘seek truth, live in truth, and reveal truth,’. Aiming to practice education based on the founding spirit, to create a new junior college, and to continue to develop sustainably, the Ryukoku Strategic Plan 400 (hereinafter “RSP400”) was established jointly with the affiliated university in 2019 as a long-term plan for the 20 year period from AY 2020 through AY 2039, which is the 400th anniversary of the establishment of the University. The plan is divided into three areas: “Mission: RSP400”, “Vision 2039”, and “Capabilities and Mindset to be nurtured”. The five long-term objectives for achieving these goals are also set, and a medium-term plan will be formulated every four years for a total of five terms. The College is working on enhancing its education and research activities with this RSP400.

The College is one of the University-wide organizations which include the affiliated university, and everything that involves internal quality assurance of the college is conducted within the university-wide framework. The organization responsible for the promotion of internal quality assurance is the “All-University Assessment Council” responsible for implementing and promoting checks and reviews as an organization” and “reviews of various individual faculty members' activities.” University Accreditation Committee established under the All-University Accreditation Council has verified the issues and points to be enhanced based on the checks and reviews of each organization and summarizes the accreditation results. The College has established the “Junior College Self-Check and Evaluation Committee” and is conducting self-Inspections and evaluations of the educational and research activities. In addition, in the field of academic management, three organizations have been collaborating since 2019: namely the “All-University Educational Policy Council”, the “Academic Conference”, and the “Three Policies Validation Committee”.

Regarding education, each department has organized its curriculum

appropriately based on the degree award policy (diploma policy) and the curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy). Curriculum maps are created to enable students to take courses systematically by appropriately combining lectures, exercises, readings, skill practice, experiments, practical training, etc., according to the content of the classes, in order to offer effective education while clarifying the sequential and systematic nature of each class subject's curriculum. Also, there are several methods of measurement used in the assessment of learning outcomes. In the future, in order to appropriately ascertain and assess the learning outcomes set out in the degree award policy, it is desirable to work in line with the assessment policy scheduled formulated in AY 2020.

Various types of outstanding initiatives are seen. Liberal arts program for citizens with intellectual disabilities are being offered by the Department of Social Welfare, with the teachers from the College assigned as lecturers and the students as advisors. Not only is this initiative an activity that distinctively contributes to the society, but it is also a meaningful opportunity for students and people with disabilities to learn from each other. It is highly commendable that the “Researcher System” is established to help promote faculty research activities and this is showing significant results in wider area of faculty research. It is commendable that in addition to the compulsory subject that is offered to the freshman students for learning about the founding spirit of the University that is foundational to its existence as a private university, the College is making various other efforts to promote the understanding of its history and the founding spirit of the College. These efforts include visiting the Nishi Hongwanji Temple (Kyoto City), the origin of the College during new student orientation, and regular preaching by the President on the founding spirit in the “President's Sermons.” What is more, the college is actively accepting students with disabilities and making university-wide efforts to enhance the understanding of students with disabilities. “Office for Students with Disabilities” equipped with specialized staff members with expert knowledge has been established, and the “Guidebook for Supporting Students with Disabilities” is distributed to faculty and staff, etc. It can be said this is an initiative in keeping with the founding spirit to provide equal educational opportunities to all students based on respect for the students’ human rights.

However, there are several issues that should be addressed. In the Department of Social Welfare and the Department of Childhood Care and Education, the maximum number of credits that can be registered in a year is as high as 80, and the actual number of credits registered has increased for a considerable number of students. Although the syllabus describes the required preparation and review, the measures to substantiate the

credits are insufficient. Improvements are required in light of the purpose of the credit system. Regarding the Faculty Development Program (hereinafter referred to as “FD”), further enhancement is desired through studying the implementation methods and topics, and encouraging active participation of teachers, etc.

Moving forward, by engaging in internal quality assurance and studying the steps required for improvement and progress under the guidance of the “All-University Assessment Council,” these issues will be resolved, and by enhancing the distinctive initiatives, further progress is anticipated toward the creation of a new Faculty of Junior College which will continue to develop sustainably.

Notable Strengths

Education and Research Environment

- Many systems to help promote faculty research activities have been developed and utilized in multiple layers. In particular, the “Researcher System” is a system that allows researchers to concentrate on research by being exempted from the obligation of education and such for a certain period of time, and there are actual cases of usage by both overseas and domestic researchers (both for one year). It is commendable that this initiative is showing significant results in a wider area of faculty research.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- “Tomoiki University” (welfare and liberal arts program for citizens with intellectual disabilities), was derived from the “Open College Fureai University Courses” of the Department of Social Welfare,” and has been held every year since 2003 as a special program to provide higher education to people with intellectual disabilities in an easy-to-understand manner. In 2018, the program was selected as a recipient of the “Lifelong Learning Support Activities for Persons with Disabilities” Award, and was awarded the Minister's Award by MEXT. Not only is the above-mentioned initiative a distinctive social contribution activity, but it is commendable that with the junior college faculty members acting as lecturers and students acting as advisors, it is also a meaningful opportunity for students and people with disabilities to learn from each other.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

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