

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

Aomori Public University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Public	Location: Aomori, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2018	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2019 – March.31.2026)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Aomori Public University

Overview

Aomori Public University (hereafter, the University) was established with the three educational principles of “assuming responsibility for education to assure its quality for society,” “devoting itself to undergraduate education rather than faculty education,” and “contributing to local community development as a university open to society.” To these ends, it strives as a public university to cultivate graduates with expertise in business administration and economics and return its educational outcomes to the local community. It also focuses on the basic educational policies of “avoiding excessive teaching,” “consistently teaching what should be learned,” and “developing creativity through intellectual training that encourages students to constantly ask ‘why’ and think independently.” The University’s second medium-term goals and plans adopted since fiscal 2015 set the targets of verifying and reorganizing its educational programs, promoting pioneering research on problem solving in partnership with the city of Aomori, and providing qualified human resources to the local community, with educational and research activities initiated by the Faculty of Business Administration and Economics and the graduate school based on these themes.

The University attaches particular importance to community contribution and cooperation, with the Career Center playing a central role in career support activities involving faculty members by, for example, planning and organizing bus tours to regional companies and public institutions. It is highly commendable that these efforts have led to a high percentage of students being employed in local areas and the neighboring Tohoku and Hokkaido regions. The University also undertakes initiatives befitting a university that contributes to the local community, with students conducting surveys and participating in event planning and management under partnership agreements with prefectural municipalities to help solve problems and promote regional development.

In addition, the University introduces various educational programs for regional studies and has strived since its establishment to maintain its educational quality by, for example, using a grade point average (GPA) for graduation requirements. Apart from these efforts, however, there are several issues the University needs to address. The University needs to work toward improving its curriculum design and implementation policy and monitoring and evaluating learning outcomes from multifaceted perspectives. Challenges for the graduate school include insufficient quota fulfillment and the lack of

fundamental approaches to enhance the quality of its faculty members.

As for internal quality assurance, the Academic Affairs Meeting, the Student Affairs Meeting, and the upper-tier School Administrative Meeting conduct inspections and evaluations. These meeting bodies are under the control of the Directors' Meeting, which is responsible for carrying out the final analysis and making improvements based on the inspection and evaluation results. The Directors' Meeting implements improvement initiatives after hearing opinions from the Educational Research Advisory Council, the Faculty Council, and other groups. The Strategic Meeting was also formed as an institution that monitors and examines key items with cross-sectional approaches. When dealing with items related to contact and arrangements with corporations over budgetary measures and other issues, the Strategic Meeting deliberates on improvements, with decisions made by the Board of Trustees through the Management Advisory Council based on their deliberations. However, the development of a mechanism to verify the effectiveness of this system and the University's fundamental policies regarding internal quality assurance are not explicitly stated, and the policies and procedures should be clarified to develop a more effective system.

The University has undertaken the training of experts in business administration and economics, and committed itself to producing qualified graduates, thereby enhancing its significance as a university that contributes to regional development. In the coming years, the University is expected to further advance its educational and research activities, assure its educational quality to enhance students' learning outcomes, and fulfill its accountability as a higher education institution dedicated to regional contribution.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- The Career Center plays a central role in introducing various career support activities with faculty members actively involved in visiting companies and communicating closely with representatives of recruiting service companies, and organizing and expanding bus tours for students to local companies, public institutions, and other organizations. The University also actively offers career support, including publishing the "Job Hunting Handbook," providing job search guidance, and sharing information with parents or guardians. It is commendable that these efforts have helped improve the employment rates and maintain a high percentage of students employed in local areas and the neighboring Tohoku and Hokkaido regions in recent years, thereby

contributing to local communities and attaining the outcomes connected to the University's mission.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- The University has built partnerships with local municipalities through its continuous social contribution and field research activities conducted by students from the Department of the Regional Frontier. In the village of Sai, for example, the University has equipped each household with communication network terminals to disseminate news, alerts, and announcements to residents and confirm their safety, with students conducting hearings and door-to-door surveys to monitor equipment use. The University has received more requests for partnership agreements from other municipalities, and mutual partnership agreements are being implemented over the long term. In addition, students visit partner municipalities in the prefecture to work with local residents to host the "Marutto Yoidokoro Festival," where communities are promoted through specialties jointly researched and planned for sale at festival stalls. It is commendable that this festival, currently hosted by the University, has become a major event in Aomori City involving students connecting universities and residents.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Outcome

- The basic concepts related to curriculum design and implementation are not specified in the curriculum design and implementation policy of the Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, and the Master's Program and the Doctoral Program of the Graduate School of Management and Economics. This issue should be improved with the content of their degree award policies reflected in specific terms.
- The Faculty of Business Administration and Economics measures learning outcomes using GPA, questionnaire surveys by graduates, and qualification examination results, but it is difficult to describe the use of these measurements as effective in monitoring the learning outcomes stated in the degree award policy. This issue should be improved.

Student Enrollment

- The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.38 in the Master's Program of the Graduate School of Management and Economics. This ratio should be improved with the graduate school's student quota thoroughly managed.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- Faculty development (FD) as the graduate school's primary function is not conducted. This issue should be improved so that FD can be implemented appropriately.