

Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for Junior College

Yamagata Prefectural Yonezawa Women's Junior College



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Public	Location: Yamagata, 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 Yamagata Prefectural Yonezawa Women's Junior College

Overview

Yamagata Prefectural Yonezawa Women's Junior College's mission is "community contribution through human resource development". The purpose of the college is "to foster female personnel who possess specialized knowledge and skills backed by solid academic training who will steadily support society, and strive to pursue truth and create knowledge, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of the community and society as a whole, as a junior college rooted in the local community."

Regarding internal quality assurance, the "Medium-Term Plan Promotion Committee" has the status of the promotion organization. A cycle with a series of events is established, based on the 6-year medium term goals set by Yamagata Prefecture, which is an incorporated association. The cycle consists of the formulation and implementation of the medium-term plan and the fiscal plan, verification of their situations, and the formulation (disposal) of plan for the next term or the next academic year. In addition, the medium-term and fiscal year achievements are reviewed by a third party "Yamagata Prefectural Public University Corporation Accreditation Committee," (hereinafter referred to as the "Accreditation Committee") and the results are published on the website of the founding organization. However, in the process of internal quality assurance, the division of authority and roles is not clear for the "Education and Research Advisory Council", the "Management Advisory Council", and the "General Affairs Committee". Since the checks and reviews only reflect the fiscal plan based on the medium-term plan, it is difficult to say the strengths and issues are practically extracted in keeping with the mission, purpose, and policy. Establishing an internal quality assurance system to enhance education and improve learning outcomes is an urgent task.

Regarding education, the Department of Japanese Language and Literature, the Department of English Language and Literature, the Department of Japanese History, and the Department of Social Information Science have established a degree award policy and a curriculum design and implementation policy, and have formulated their curricula to cultivate specialized knowledge and skills for students. The fact that each department offers many seminars and practical training to vitalize the independent learning of the students and enhance the educational effects is their distinct feature.

An excellent point is the student support which is substantial, offering services such as career support and support for students with disabilities. As for career support,

in addition to employment preparation courses, individual consultations, interview practice, etc., a teacher qualified as a career consultant is assigned to the “Career Support Center” since 2018 to provide career counseling. Regarding support for students with disabilities, student volunteers also take notes (summaries) of the lessons. Based on the mission, various contributions centered on the Institute for Culture in Life, an affiliated institution, are taking place. It is commendable that the “Yonetan Marutoku Katsuyo Book”, introducing the research themes of faculty members, etc., is distributed to local governments and schools, and efforts are being made to make connections with the local residents and to make things accessible.

However, there are several issues that should be addressed. One issue is the three policies established in AY 2015 do not have sufficient follow-up checks. In addition, although GPA has been introduced as the index system for learning outcomes starting in AY 2019, the indices have not been established and organized according to the degree award policy. Improvements are required to sufficiently ascertain the learning outcomes. In addition, although appropriate repairs are being made on the school buildings, some buildings are aging and have not been adequately examined for their future use. Efforts are required to appropriately maintain and improve the environment for expanding current educational activities.

As mentioned above, in order to achieve their mission and purpose, the fiscal plans were formulated, implemented, and assessed based on the medium-term goals and plans, and the College is working on enhancing education and research, and community contributions through various excellent initiatives deserving acknowledgement. However, since such quality assurance efforts tend to be biased toward corporate assessments, moving forward, measures that are in line with the trends in university education, such as measurement and assessment of learning outcomes are expected to be included in the plans to further enhance education and research.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- With regard to student career support, in addition to employment preparation courses, individual consultations, interview practice, etc., a teacher with career consultant qualifications has been assigned to the “Career Support Center” since 2018 to provide career counseling. Moreover, by utilizing the new online academic affairs system, in addition to providing students with more comprehensive

information concerning employment and educational advancement, the College is constructing a detailed support system in which faculty members and the Career Support Center are integrated. It is commendable that, as a result, the students are achieving their career aspirations with high standards, and there is support conducive to self-realization.

- As a support measure for students with disabilities, a “Guidebook for Supporting Students with Disabilities” has been created showing the consultation system and flow of support and published on the website along with a barrier-free map. In addition, it is commendable that learning support tailored to the needs of various students is being provided, such as note-taking (summaries) by student volunteers starting in AY 2020.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The curriculum design and implementation policies of the Faculty of English Language and Literature and Faculty of Japanese History are such that they specify the ability that students should acquire. Since they do not specify the basic concept concerning the curriculum design and implementation policy, however, improvements are needed.
- Although GPA is introduced as an index of learning outcomes in every faculty, it is difficult to say if the learning outcomes specified in the degree award policy are being ascertained or not. Improvements are required to develop methods and indices to properly ascertain the learning outcomes of each department.

Education and Research Environment

- Although appropriate repairs are taking place on the school buildings, some buildings are aging and have not been adequately examined for their future use. Improvements are required to appropriately maintain and improve the environment required for current education and research.

Recommendation

Internal Quality Assurance

- While the Internal Quality Assurance System centers on the “Medium-Term Plan Promotion Committee,” the authority and roles for the internal quality assurance are not clarified in regulations, etc., for each council, such as the “Medium-Term Plan Promotion Committee,” the “Education and Research Advisory Council,” the “Management Advisory Council,” and the “General Affairs Committee.” Although the fiscal plan based on the medium-term plan compiled by the “Medium-Term Plan Promotion Committee” is reviewed, it is insufficient as checks and reviews to extract the strengths and issues for achieving the mission, purpose, and policy. Therefore, it is hard to say the “Medium-Term Plan Promotion Committee” and other organizations are managing from the perspective of the entire organization based on the results of appropriate checks and reviews, and that the internal quality assurance process leading to improvements and progress of various activities within the College are established. Moving forward, the Internal Quality Assurance System needs to be modified to ensure the procedures and the division of authority and roles concerning each organization are established in the rules and regulations; the checks and reviews essential for internal quality assurance will be appropriately implemented; and the internal quality assurance system will enhance education, improve learning outcomes, and function effectively.