

**Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation
for Professional Graduate Business School**

Graduate School of Project Design, Course of Project Design



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2021	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.1.2022– March.31.2027)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Graduate School of Project Design, Course of Project Design

The Graduate School of Project Design, Course of Project Design states as its goal “to develop human resources with expertise in the field of business management, especially project design” in response to the social demand for “promising individuals who can pioneer new paths for society, have the strong will and intelligence needed to create a prosperous future, and possess outstanding leadership and realizing skills.” In order to achieve this goal, the Course has formulated a medium-term plan for 2020–2023 based on the school corporation’s medium-term plan. The plan clearly expresses the Course’s intention to focus efforts on the following three areas: improvement of education and research, nationwide adoption of project design, and establishment of a doctoral program. Aiming to improve education and research in line with the plan, the Course has revised its rules and three policies (degree award policy (diploma policy), curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy), admission policy) and introduced a new curriculum. In response to the previous Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for Professional Graduate Business School by the JUAA in 2016 that pointed out the need for “Project Design Studies,” a unique concept developed by the Course, to be defined and established, the Course has launched a journal for project design-related research and created opportunities for full-time teaching staff to present their research achievements, for example.

The Course engages in the development of human resources specializing in business management, especially in the field of project design, in response to social demand, which is a distinctive feature. It has developed an educational program that allows students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed in the project design cycle leading from conception to plan design, and that confers a Master of Project Design (MPD) degree upon students. Placing importance on the Project Design Plan that students create as a culmination of their studies, the Course has developed a system that allows students to get research guidance from multiple perspectives by participating in a main seminar and sub seminar. However, in spite of the educational program’s orientation toward design, the opportunities for students to actually implement or commercialize their designs during enrollment are limited. Therefore, the JUAA hopes the Course develops an educational program that involves design implementation.

The JUAA identified a number of issues with the Course that require addressing. The issues can roughly be divided into the following three types:

First, although the Course has worked on its unique concept “project design studies” through consistent research and other efforts in response to the previous Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for Professional Graduate Business School, the concept has still not been clearly defined, which is an issue. In addition, even though the basic subjects and specialized subjects are offered as core subjects for learning in the curriculum, only two credits are earned in compulsory subjects, making it unclear what are the fundamental subjects in project design studies. Therefore, the Course needs to design a curriculum that allows students to systematically learn about project design studies if it wants to highlight its distinctive features. The MPD degree awarded in the Course is presented as a degree that adds the aspect of creative imagination to an MBA degree. However, basic subjects in marketing, finance, and other areas essential to corporate management are only offered as elective compulsory subjects, and corporate ethics subjects, which are essential for highly skilled professionals, are not offered at all. This should be improved.

Second, in part to solve the first issue, research activity must be conducted to define and establish “project design studies.” Although the Course is working on a number of initiatives to this end, it is vital for full-time faculty members to possess research skills and for the Course to actively promote research. As it stands, the Course has a faculty consisting of members with considerable achievements and experience, both academic and practical. However, as there is no criteria or requirements that specifically describe the research skills required of full-time teaching staff upon hiring or promotion, these should be stipulated. Additionally, the Course should create a research environment and support system for full-time teaching staff, promote research activity, and appropriately evaluate research activity when evaluating achievements.

Third, regarding educational activity, improvement is needed in the areas below to ensure that students take subjects in a systematic fashion. For instance, the maximum number of credits students can register for in a year exceeds the number of credits required for course completion. Therefore, measures should be implemented to ensure that students take subjects each year in a well-balanced fashion. Another issue is that the subject lesson plan and criteria for assessment of academic achievement are not clearly presented in the syllabus. Improvements should be made to ensure appropriate syllabus creation. Attendance is handled differently among teaching staff in the assessment of academic achievement, and there are cases where students earn credits without attending at all. Therefore, the Course should ensure rigorous and fair assessment of academic achievement. In addition, given the importance of tracking, analyzing, and evaluating the careers and achievements of graduates to identify

educational outcomes, the Course should consider creating a useful system to improve the current low questionnaire return rate among graduates.

Regarding the first and second issues, the Dean (who advises the President in university management and serves as a coordinator with the school corporation) and other teaching staff have discussed the concept of “project design studies” in depth in FD training sessions, etc., and efforts have been made to ensure that all teaching staff are on the same page. These activities are expected to lead to the establishment of “project design studies” and the development of a curriculum based on the concept. Moreover, as the Graduate School aims to establish campuses in locations other than Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka, and Nagoya, the current campus locations, in order to achieve the goal of nationwide adoption of project design presented in the medium-term plan, as well as planning to establish a doctoral program, establishing the educational system for developing project design skills as a clearly defined academic field is the most important challenge for the Course. In view of the fact that the Course has developed a step-by-step curriculum and secured the necessary faculty, the JUAA has determined that the Course conforms to the standards. However, the JUAA strongly urges the Course to appropriately address the numerous issues described above to ensure the quality of education. Furthermore, the JUAA hopes the Course makes further improvements to its program by broadening its scope, such as learning from project design-related educational initiatives in other countries.