

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

Gifu Shotoku Gakuen University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Gifu, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2016	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2017 – March.31.2024)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Gifu Shotoku Gakuen University

Overview

Gifu Shotoku Gakuen University (hereafter, the University) was founded as Shotoku Gakuen Gifu Kyoiku University in 1972. After changing its name to Gifu Shotoku Gakuen University in 1998, the University established the Faculty of Nursing in 2015. Currently, the University has four faculties (the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Foreign Languages, and the Faculty of Economics and Information) and two graduate schools, and the University conducts its education and research activities on its Hashima Campus as well as Gifu Campus, both of which are located in Gifu City, Gifu Prefecture.

After the last accreditation review by Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA), the University established the Faculty of Nursing as well as courses for Special Support Education and School Psychology in the Department of School Education in the Faculty of Education, and reviewed the curricula in the faculties of Foreign Languages and Economics and Information. Also, the University built a system for self-study and evaluation, which is led by the Self-Study Committee, and made efforts to improve the quality of its education through teaching reforms by establishing the Conference for Teaching Management and the Internal Review (IR) Promotion Committee.

In this accreditation review, it is commendable that the University recently started an inter-disciplinary liberal arts education system offered across the faculties (Yawaragi Basis) which is aimed at “cultivating the power to support each other, create, and take initiative in the future,” at Hashima Campus. The system is a new approach to liberal arts subjects based on the University’s founding spirit and serves as a model for teaching about the school. Also, based on an agreement with the local education board and in cooperation with local kindergartens, elementary schools, and junior high schools, the Faculty of Education has continuously conducted the Crystal Plan and made efforts to effectively manage the plan through revisions of evaluation points and constant reviews of education methods, such as using a learning support system.

However, the low ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap in the Faculty of Economics and Information must be improved. Also, the research instruction plan is not sufficiently clear, and the criteria for examining degree-seeking theses are not clearly stated for graduate students in the Graduate Schools of International Cultural Studies and Economics and Information. These issues should be improved. Moreover, the maximum number of credits students can register for per year has been set high at all levels in the faculties of Education, Foreign Languages, and Economics and Information. The University should improve this in accordance with the purpose of having a credit system. Lastly, the low ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap in the master’s course for the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies and the master’s course for the Graduate School of Economics and Information must be improved.

Notable Strengths

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- The University built the Yawaragi Basis, the interdisciplinary liberal arts education system offered across the faculties of Education, Foreign Languages, and Nursing, to enable students from the three departments to study together and acquire intellectual thinking and methods skills required beyond their individual fields. This system, which centers on “Harmony” (one of the principles indicating the founding spirit), categorizes such liberal arts subjects as those related to

philosophy and linguistic ability, history and culture, locality, and environment and those related to interactions with society into four categories: “Live with Each Other,” “Support Each Other,” “Study Together,” and “Cultivate Together.” It is commendable that the liberal arts subjects are systematized based on the founding spirit, and nurture students in a wide range of common knowledge beyond the fields of their departments, as well as the ability to understand society and people.

- As an effort in the Faculty of Education, and based on agreements with several local education boards such as one in Gifu City, the University has cooperated with local kindergartens, elementary schools, and junior high schools and has continuously implemented the Crystal Plan, which involves hands-on practices and experiences in each grade. Through the Crystal Plan (CP) Committee, which includes the Good Practice (GP) Committee in the Faculty of Education as well as outside educators, the University has continuously reviewed and effectively managed the plan. Specifically, the University has clearly defined achievement goals for the Crystal Plan by stipulating and improving the plan’s evaluation points. Based on 13 basic criteria, the valuation points indicate the abilities that educators need as well as their corresponding practice subjects, so that students may work to achieve their objectives and share these objectives with faculty members. It is commendable that by using these evaluation points, the University has visualized step-by-step acquisitions of practical teaching abilities through self-evaluations by students as well as by faculty members. Both of these evaluation results are filed in portfolios as part of students’ learning history in the University’s learning support system.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- The maximum number of credits students can register for per year has been set according to a student’s grade point average (GPA) immediately prior to the given semester. In the Faculty of Education, those who have a GPA of no less than 2.50 are allowed to register for a maximum of 64 credits, and those who have a GPA of no less than 3.00 are allowed to register for a maximum of 68. In the Faculty of Foreign Languages and the Faculty of Economics and Information, those who have a GPA of no less than 2.50 are allowed to register for a maximum of 52 credits, and those who have a GPA of no less than 3.00 are allowed to register for a maximum of 56. However, since most of the students have GPAs higher than these standards, this system does not work properly and should be improved in accordance with the purpose of having a credit system.
- In the master’s course in the departments of International Education and Culture, and the International Area Studies in the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies, and in the master’s and doctoral courses in the Graduate School of Economics and Information, research instruction plans are not indicated sufficiently. This should be improved.
- In the master’s course in the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies, and in the both courses in the Graduate School of Economics and Information, criteria for examining degree-seeking theses and dissertations have not been stated for students. This situation should be improved, by clearly stating them for each course in the graduate student handbook.

Enrollment

- The ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.16 in the master's course in the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies, and 0.05 in the master's course in the Graduate School of Economics and Information. These numbers should be improved.

Area of Serious Concern*Enrollment*

- The average of the ratios of the last five years of enrolled freshman to the freshman admission cap is low at 0.79, and the ratio of enrolled students to the student enrollment cap is low at 0.75 in the Faculty of Economics and Information. These numbers must be improved.