University Accreditation Results

(Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for University)

The University of Shimane

Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Public	Location: Shimane, Japan

Accreditation Status
Year of the Review: 2019
Accreditation Status: Accredited（Accreditation Period: April 1.2020 – March 31.2027）

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results
for the University of Shimane

Overview

The basic principles of the University of Shimane (hereinafter referred to as the "University") are presented in the University of Shimane Charter (hereinafter referred to as the "University Charter"). Its policies include "nurturing individuals who enhance their civil learning, actively learn, and take action," "practicing the 'unification of the sciences' in response to the challenges faced by modern society," "conducting research on local issues from a diversified perspective, actively supporting community activities by citizens and students, and contributing to the community," "building an international hub for research and education with a special focus on the Northeast Asia region," and "implementing university management based on autonomy and cooperation and with a high level of transparency and functionality." The University's faculties and graduate schools are located on its three campuses in Hamada, Izumo, and Matsue. In order to achieve its basic principles, the University has formulated a mid-term plan that takes into account the mid-term goals set by the prefectural government, and engages in educational and research activities including nurturing "glocal individuals" capable of viewing the local community from a global, diversified perspective and developing an environment in which students can teach and learn from each other.

With regard to internal quality assurance, the Self-Study Committee is responsible for overseeing university-wide internal quality assurance. Since 2018, the University has established campus-wide organizations such as the Educational Liaison Meeting, General Education Promotion Center, and University Committee and implemented other measures to enhance the structure for promoting university-wide internal quality assurance. However, an improvement/enhancement process based on the PDCA cycle of each faculty and graduate school has not been established, and a university-wide management structure centered around the Self-Study Committee has not yet been realized. Therefore, the University should clarify the authorities and roles of the organizations involved in internal quality assurance and enable its internal quality assurance system to function effectively under the management of the Self-Study Committee.

As for education, all faculties and graduate schools have established a degree award policy (diploma policy) and curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy) in accordance with the University's overall policy, provide the

necessary subjects so as to enable students to acquire broad general knowledge and develop a deep understanding of specialized areas of study, and have created curriculum maps that describe overall curriculum structures and the systematic relationship between subjects, among other matters. It is commendable that the University has strived to nurture individuals with the expertise and practical skills for solving local issues by awarding students who have taken community-oriented subjects set for each faculty and conducted a graduate research project aiming at solving a local issue with the title of Shimane Community Meister, which was originally developed by the University.

Another remarkable feature is student support. The University has developed an inter-student support system as part of remedial education, adopted a program whereby students are awarded points for extracurricular activities, and implemented other active supportive measures to promote students' independent activity. Support for students with diverse backgrounds include living support for international students by "international student supporters," and in AY2018, the University established the Diversity Promotion Committee on its Izumo Campus with the aim of providing support to students with disabilities or various religious backgrounds. Therefore, promotion of diversity is expected to accelerate in the University. Regarding social cooperation and contribution, the University has created a platform for solving issues faced by local municipalities, businesses, and other organizations by utilizing the University's intellectual resources, and has contributed to the local community through cooperation with international students. It is commendable that the University is fulfilling its mission as a prefectural establishment.

There are, however, some issues that need to be resolved. First, there are issues with the curriculum design and implementation policy, examination criteria related to special assignment research results, and quota management in the graduate schools. Next, some faculties and graduate schools have not been able to adequately grasp the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy. This should be improved. The University should stipulate the criteria pertaining to the hiring of faculty members.

Going forward, we hope the University addresses the issues faced by its faculties and graduate schools under the management of the Self-Study Committee and promotes the distinctive initiatives specific to each campus on a university-wide basis toward achieving its goals in human resource development and local contribution in line with its purpose and basic principles.

Notable Strengths

Education and Research Organization

- The University has established a system in the undergraduate curriculum whereby students who have taken basic subjects, specialized subjects, and seminar subjects involving specialized research and study on local issues faced by Shimane Prefecture are awarded with the title of Shimane Community Meister, and strives to nurture individuals with the expertise and practical skills for solving local issues. This is a commendable initiative that will lead to achieving the goal stated in the University Charter of nurturing individuals who can contribute to community revitalization and development.

Student Support

- As part of remedial education in the Faculty of Nursing and Nutrition, the University has established a mentoring system in which senior students help junior students in their studies. This system does not only provide learning support to junior students but also provides senior students with an opportunity to engage in active learning as mentors. A volunteer mileage system whereby students receive points according to their extracurricular achievements and a support program for covering the travel expenses of students participating in disaster volunteer activities have been established on a university-wide basis. It is commendable that the University actively supports students' local contribution and social implementation activities.

- The University has enhanced its support to students with diverse backgrounds. For example, Japanese "international student supporters" are assigned to provide university life-related support, including that related to dormitory life, to international students. In addition, in AY2018, the University established the Diversity Promotion Committee on its Izumo Campus, which is responsible for building facilities that meet the needs of students with disabilities and providing meals that are prepared in consideration of religious backgrounds, among other tasks. The University plans to implement these initiatives on a university-wide basis. These are commendable initiatives that will contribute to the creation of campuses on which diverse students can study in harmony with each other.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

● The University Charter, which presents the University's basic principles, states the goal of promoting local research and contributing to solving local issues. The University has developed the Enmusubi Platform, which is an arena for discussing whether issues faced by local municipalities, businesses, and other organizations can be solved by utilizing the University's intellectual resources. Steadily building on this platform, the University engages in social contribution activities aiming at solving local issues. The University holds the KENDAI Enmusubi Forum, shares information on local issues with those on and outside campus, and disseminates its research findings. In this way, the University utilizes its resources to contribute to the local community, which is commendable achievement.

● The University actively supports international exchange on and off campus. For example, it has established the GLOBAL DREAM HUNT program as a study abroad support program for Japanese students. The program provides grants to students who have planned for their own destination and activities. Also, the University holds an on-campus international exchange event called the World Café and has adopted a language partner system whereby Japanese students and international students teach each other languages. The University provides the opportunity for international students and local residents to interact. International students visit elementary and junior high school students in the prefecture, and they teach each other about their language and culture. These are commendable initiatives that not only contribute to the globalization of the University but also enable the local community to participate in international exchange activities.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

● The University has worked on creating an internal quality assurance structure centered around the Self-Study Committee. However, an improvement/enhancement process based on the PDCA cycle of each faculty and graduate school has not been established, and a university-wide management structure centered around the Self-Study Committee has not yet been realized. The University should clarify the authorities and roles of the organizations involved in internal quality assurance and enable its internal

quality assurance system to function effectively under the management of the Self-Study Committee.

Education and Research Organization

● The Graduate School of North East Asia and Development Studies (Master's Program) does not present the basic ideas on curriculum organization and implementation in the curriculum design and implementation policy. This should be improved.

● The Graduate School of North East Asia and Development Studies (Master's Program) does not specify the examination criteria related to special assignment research results. Therefore, the criteria should be established and clearly presented to students in advance.

● Although the Faculty of Policy Studies has tried to measure learning outcomes via GPA, class questionnaires, and other survey methods, it has not been able to adequately grasp the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy from the results. The Graduate School of North East Asia and Development Studies (Master's Program and Doctoral Program) and the Graduate School of Nursing Science have tried to grasp learning outcomes through the evaluation of research presentations and student questionnaires, but the relationship between these methods for grasping learning outcomes and the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy is unclear. Therefore, measures should be implemented to grasp and assess learning outcomes in an appropriate manner.

Student Enrollment

● The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is high at 3.17 in the Graduate School of North East Asia and Development Studies (Doctoral Program). The University should thoroughly implement graduate school quota management to improve the situation.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

● It is stated in the University of Shimane Faculty Member Selection Rules that the

criteria for faculty member hiring "shall be established separately." However, the criteria have not been stipulated. In order to ensure transparency in the hiring process, the criteria should be established and clearly presented in advance.