

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

Showa Women's University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2017	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.01.2018 – March.31.2025)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Showa Women's University

Overview

Established as Japan Women's Institute in 1920, Showa Women's University (hereafter, the University) adopted its current name and launched the Faculty of Liberal Arts in 1949. Presently, the university for women based in Setagaya Ward, Tokyo, features four undergraduate schools (Faculties of Humanities and Culture, Global Business, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Life and Environmental Sciences) and two graduate schools (Graduate School of Letters and Graduate School of Life Sciences) and carries out education and research activities in accordance with its founding spirit "Be a light to the world", the idea of which was inspired by "Ode to the founding of Japan Women's Institute".

After its accreditation review by Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2010, the University has continuously performed self-study on areas requiring improvement under the leadership of the University Directors' Committee consisting of the university president, deans of the undergraduate and graduate schools, and other members.

In the latest review, the strong career support program featuring regular curriculum career education, the working adults mentor program, and the collaborative project with private companies and local governments designed to foster a regional learning center and to develop students' initiative and social skills were recognized as prominent features of the University.

A number of problems were identified in the review, namely the failure to provide clear research instruction plans to students, the inappropriate conferral of the "course doctorate" degree and student enrollment issues. The University is advised to continue with its improvement activities, and JUAA looks forward to seeing further progress in the years leading up to its centennial in 2020.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- Under the career design policy (policy on social and professional independence), the University aims to develop skills and competencies through various career support programs offered collaboratively by the Career Development Committee comprised of faculty members and the Center for Career Development staffed by non-teaching

personnel. Such programs include the working adults mentor program linked with regular curriculum career education and Koyo Career Juku, a student-run career support organization. The mentor program invites women of all age groups with working experience to sign up as mentors. Mentors and students are matched based on their interests and needs, and students are provided individual guidance. The University is commended for its efforts to build strong career support programs and to instill professional values in students.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- To deliver on its commitment to become a local learning center, the University implements a collaborative project that brings together students, faculty members, private companies, and local governments. Overseen by the Liaison Coordination Committee, the project hosts many activities and events open to local citizens, for example, the development of innovative products using IPs licensed from the project's partner companies, a study support initiative for international children living in Japan, and an international exchange support program. Students have the opportunity to present their work or findings at the end of the project cycle and receive academic credits for part of their work. To boost support for the scheme, the University established in 2016 the Showa Liaison Center as an umbrella organization that coordinates the activities of different units and centrally manages information gathering and administrative duties. The University is commended for its efforts to develop students' initiative and social skills and for carrying out these activities that fully embody its social cooperation and contribution strategies.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Content, Methods, and Outcome

- The University is advised to improve the way it provides research instruction plans to students in the Graduate School of Letters (master's and doctoral programs) as well as the following programs in the Graduate School of Life Sciences: Life Sciences and Culture (master's), Psychology (master's), Social Welfare (master's), and Sciences and Culture (doctoral).
- The Doctoral Programs of the Graduate School of Letters and the Graduate School of Life

Sciences confer a “course doctorate” degree, a doctorate of the program-based graduate school system, to former students who completed the required number of credits but withdrew from the program after failing to earn their degree within the prescribed period of study. Such students are awarded the degree upon submitting their dissertation despite having lost their student status. This practice is inappropriate and should be revised. The University is also advised to be more conscious of the purpose of the program-based graduate school system and ensure that degrees are awarded within the appropriate timeframe.

Enrollment

- The average ratio of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap over the past five years and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are high at 1.22 and 1.24, respectively, in the Department of Environmental Science and Design, Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences, and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is high at 1.26 in the Department of Japanese Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities and Culture. These ratios are too high and should be lowered.
- The Department of Health Science of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences has set an enrollment cap for transfer students but has accepted no transfer students. This situation should be corrected.
- The University is advised to improve the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap in the Master’s Program of the Graduate School of Letters, which currently stands at 0.33.

Area of Serious Concern

Enrollment

- The average ratio of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap over the past five years and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are high at 1.25 and 1.23, respectively, in the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the same ratios are high at 1.21 and 1.22, respectively, in the Department of Social Welfare, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. These ratios are too high and

should be lowered.