

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

Senzoku Gakuen College of Music



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Kanagawa, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2022	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2030)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Senzoku Gakuen College of Music

Overview

Senzoku Gakuen College of Music sets forth the educational philosophy of “cultivating creative talents with rich personalities,” and defines its purpose as “teaching and researching specialized arts and sciences in depth; developing advanced capabilities; accumulating broad and profound knowledge; nurturing individuals with character based on the founding spirit; and cultivating human resources with hearts full of humility and love for others, noble characters, international perspectives, and the ability to act, thereby contributing to the advancement of culture.” Based on this purpose, the Faculty of Music and the Graduate School of Music have established the objectives of human resource development as well as education and research. In AY2019, the Senzoku Gakuen Medium-term Plan 2020-2024 was formulated with a focus on the seven goals of “improving the quality of education and research,” “steadily accepting students from various backgrounds,” “strengthening student support,” “maintaining and improving the educational environment,” “promoting social cooperation and contribution,” “engaging in international efforts,” and “optimizing management and finances.” The College is working to improve its management in line with the plan.

As for the College’s education, the Faculty of Music and the Graduate School of Music have established diploma and curriculum policies based on the College’s purpose, founding spirit, and guiding principles, and designed the curricula consisting of required specialized subjects, elective specialized subjects for each course, elective specialized subjects for all courses, and general education subjects. The faculty and the graduate school have also adopted assessment policies to evaluate student learning outcomes based on indicators, and to confirm the achievements of the curriculum and diploma policies using student surveys on satisfaction at the time of graduation and other means. A GPA (grade point average) system has been introduced for course guidance by academic advisors (AAs) and other staff, and under the guidance of academic producers (APs), the AAs offer students under their charge advice about campus life, including course guidance, until graduation. It is notable that this system effectively supports students in both their studies and campus life. However, the curricula allow students to graduate without taking any general education subjects in liberal arts, and the College is strongly recommended to design

the curricula in accordance with the diploma policy stipulating that degrees are awarded to “individuals with well-rounded character traits who have acquired sufficient specialized knowledge, skills, and versatility.” Moreover, the syllabuses contain inadequate descriptions of lesson plans. The same issue, along with the College’s inadequate liberal arts education, was pointed out in JUAA’s previous certified evaluation and accreditation results, and the following review results of the College’s improvement report also noted insufficient improvement efforts. The College needs to appropriately address these protracted issues.

Regarding the College’s internal quality assurance, the Internal Quality Assurance Promotion Committee headed by the president was formed in AY2020 to formulate policies and establish a system for internal quality assurance. The system for inspecting and assessing each division is overseen by the Self-Study Committee in charge of the faculty and graduate school. With the vice president serving as chairperson, the committee checks the inspection and evaluation items, instructs the evaluators to conduct inspections, and receives and reports the results to the faculty council. The committee decides on the key inspection and evaluation items every academic year before conducting self-studies, but these items are limited to certain areas and do not cover all activities of the College. In addition, the above issues of an inadequate liberal arts education and insufficient curriculum descriptions were raised in JUAA’s previous evaluation results, but little progress has been made since. These situations indicate that the College is far from properly operating its internal quality assurance system. Moreover, the College has inspected and assessed the faculty council as a key self-study item and specified its direction as an “open faculty council,” but council membership was restricted following a revision of the school regulations. This inconsistent move is considered contrary to the College’s improvement efforts. The College should conduct effective inspections and assessments on the appropriateness and responsibilities of the faculty council members under the revised regulations. Based on the results, the College is strongly urged to assure the quality of its education in order for the faculty council to fulfill the necessary role in helping the president make appropriate decisions. The College’s management issues should be addressed as well.

There are several more issues the College needs to address. In terms of faculty development (FD), the College has not undertaken initiatives aimed at enhancing its research activities and promoting social contribution and other efforts. This situation should be addressed with appropriate FD activities implemented to improve the curricula, lesson content, and teaching methods as well as clarify the

overall policy for upgrading the faculty organization. As for the College's student enrollment, the department has set freshman enrollment caps, but education programs are based on courses and majors, and the target freshman enrollment number for each course is actually decided by the president. This issue should be addressed with specific standards and rules established. Moreover, the College's faculty consists primarily of non-tenured members, and most AAs, who play an important role in the College's education, are part-time lecturers. From the perspective of improving the educational environment, the College should review the appropriateness of freshman enrollment in each course, faculty organization, and faculty development.

The College has increased the number of courses offered in the department in response to more diversified learning content, and plans to raise its enrollment cap starting in AY2023. With quality assurance of the College's education becoming increasingly important with this expansion, the College is expected to address these issues by enhancing its distinctive learning and student support, while establishing a more organically connected network among the president, faculty council, faculty and courses, and internal quality assurance organizations.

Suggestions for Improvement

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- As students are allowed to graduate without taking any general education subjects, the College should review the curriculum and provide course guidance for students to achieve the learning outcomes stated in the diploma policy stipulating that degrees are awarded to “individuals with well-rounded character traits who have acquired sufficient specialized knowledge, skills, and versatility.” The same issue was pointed out in JUAA's previous evaluation results, but little progress was confirmed when the improvement report was submitted. The College should not ignore this issue.
- The College's syllabuses offer inadequate lesson plan descriptions, with the latest version still containing overly simplified explanations in some sections. The same issue was raised in JUAA's previous evaluation results, but little progress was confirmed when the improvement report was submitted. The College is implementing such measures as having the syllabuses checked by a third party and holding workshops on syllabus analysis, but these approaches are

insufficient to address the issue. The College should design syllabuses that provide the necessary information for students to take courses and prepare lessons.

Student Enrollment

- Courses established under the department do not set freshman enrollment caps, but the president specifies the target freshman enrollment number for each course every academic year. This situation should be addressed with clear standards and rules established.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- The College has not conducted FD activities aimed at enhancing its research activities and promoting social contribution and other efforts. With FD activities with such aims considered important to upgrade the entire faculty organization, the College should not only improve its curricula, lesson content, and teaching methods, but also formulate a comprehensive policy in a systematic, multifaceted way to enhance the quality of its faculty organization before appropriately implementing FD activities.

University Management and Finance

- In the AY2019 self-study, the faculty council's role was listed as a key inspection and assessment item, and the College therefore set the objective of making the faculty council "open." But council membership was restricted as the school regulations revised in April 2022 stipulate that "the faculty council consists of full-time professors, associate professors, and lecturers primarily assigned to management tasks." This revision has prevented some faculty members from expressing their views at council meetings. This issue should be addressed by reviewing the faculty council's role and the appropriateness of the revision for the faculty council to play the necessary role in helping the president make appropriate decisions.

Recommendation

Internal Quality Assurance

- The Self-Study Committee decides on the key inspection and assessment items every academic year for conducting self-study activities, but these items only apply to certain areas, with the self-study of educational, research, and other activities failing to clarify the notable strengths, issues, and suggestions for improvement as stated in the Internal Quality Assurance Policy. In addition, the College has failed to fully address the issues regarding curriculum design and teaching methods pointed out in JUAA's previous evaluation results, and the improvement efforts based on the self-study results have lost their rationality and consistency with the passage of time. This situation indicates that the College's internal quality assurance system is far from functioning effectively. The College must address these issues by improving the accuracy of its self-study, clarifying the roles and coordination of the organizations involved in internal quality assurance, and operating the university-wide PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle from the perspective of assuring and enhancing the quality of its education.