

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

Kenichi Ohmae Graduate School of Business



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2018	
Accreditation Status: unaccredited	

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Kenichi Ohmae Graduate School of Business (hereafter, GSB) sets forth the objectives of “creating world-class innovative knowledge by continually offering free and open-minded intellectual exploration activities that embody a frontier spirit and a high level of professional ethics, as well as cultivating world leaders with the ability to formulate their own decisions and take appropriate action, and helping them achieve advanced competencies through the creation and inheritance of knowledge.” To pursue these objectives, GSB provides education with the aim of fostering people who can play active roles in the ever-changing global business environment. Unlike many other professional graduate schools, as an online school GSB does not require students to commute and eliminates both time and spatial limitations however possible by employing *AirCampus®*, its own proprietary e-learning platform. This is a notable and commendable feature of GSB. The school also provides students with opportunities outside its enrolled courses to study a broad range of fields, including management, business and economy, through “AirSearch” and “Business Breakthrough Channel.” “AirSearch” is a Business Breakthrough Inc.-owned library of educational materials and contents explaining the latest managerial trends and theories. “Business Breakthrough Channel” also offers a variety of business-related courses taught by instructors with practical experience.

“Real Time Online Case Study” (RTOCS) is the educational method used in the three courses offered: “New Economic Principal,” “Corporate Strategy,” and “Modern Management Strategy.” This method is distinct to the online graduate school, and students are required to set their agenda, participate in forum discussions, submit a weekly report, and repeat the process. Moreover, GSB supports students aiming to start their own businesses based on business plans created in “Graduation Research.” After scrutinizing these business plans, the school submits recommendations to the SPOF sponsored by Business Breakthrough Inc. GSB also partially subsidizes the expenses of the alumni association’s general meeting.

As a result, the level of student satisfaction with GSB’s educational program is high. It is also commendable that former graduates actively participate in educational activities as teaching assistants (TAs) who facilitate class discussions.

However, there are serious problems with the composition of GSB’s full-time faculty, as suggested by the previous accreditation review for professional graduate business schools and the follow-up review. The Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) reviewed the educational and research records of GSB’s academic faculty and found more than half to have achievements insufficient to be designated as academic faculty members, and the faculty organization cannot effectively ensure the quality of education that bridges theory and practice. In addition, although GSB adopts the policy that, in principle, academic faculty members teach theory-focused subjects and practitioner faculty members teach practice-focused subjects, the actual faculty organization deviates from the policy due to the shortage of qualified academic faculty members as explained above.

Another issue involves the full-time faculty members over the age of 70 who comprise 36.8 percent of the entire faculty. JUAA expects GSB to correct this imbalance so that no particular age group disproportionately accounts for such a large portion of the full-time faculty, although this is not the reason for JUAA’s conclusion that GSB fails to satisfy the Professional Graduate Business School Standards.

In addition to the serious concerns described above, there are several other issues that need to be addressed. In particular, TAs are expected to evaluate in part the students’ contributions to subject discussions, even though faculty members are responsible for assessing the academic achievements of students. This situation should

be corrected. Moreover, TAs play a very important role in facilitating student discussions on the virtual platform *AirCampus*®. There is a risk that the function of the TAs may lead to the perception that teaching and evaluation, which are duties exclusive to faculty members, are partly delegated to TAs. GSB needs to work further to ensure its faculty members fully understand and share the understanding of their duties.

Furthermore, while the standard course term is set at two years, numerous students enroll in GSB for periods longer than proscribed, which may lead to a misunderstanding that the standard course term is not respected. It is common for professional graduate school students to pursue both study and work. It is expected that GSB will consider and implement measures to lower the ratio of students enrolled longer than the standard course term.