

**Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for
Law School**

**Meiji University Professional Graduate School
Juris Doctor Course Juris Doctor Program**



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2023	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2029)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for the Meiji University Professional Graduate School Juris Doctor Course

Based on its educational philosophy of nurturing “legal professionals who place value on ‘individuals’ and respect human rights,” which is a modern interpretation of the University's founding spirit of “Rights and Liberty, Independence and Self-Government,” the Meiji University Professional Graduate School Juris Doctor Course (hereafter “Law School”) has set forth the goals “to instill in students the deep compassion, high sense of ethics and creative thinking deemed suitable for the legal profession; to provide students with broad general education and highly specialized legal knowledge; and to offer practical education needed to improve students’ ability to solve legal problems, thereby developing students into legal professionals with the outstanding qualities and skills needed to make a contribution to society and the international community.” In light of its educational philosophy and goals, the Law School has defined the ideal legal professionals as practitioners who: (1) Place value on individuals and respect human rights; (2) Possess a critical mindset, seek out social order, and contribute to human development; and (3) Contribute to the creation of a gender-equal society. These characteristics are consistent with the purposes of the law school system and the university-wide philosophy and goals.

The Law School has established its educational objectives based on the above educational philosophy and goals, and is implementing various measures to achieve them. With the purpose of nurturing “specialized” legal professionals with a deep understanding of the front-line issues and able to achieve success in the areas of corporate law, intellectual property, gender, the environment, and medical affairs and bioethics, the Law School enthusiastically offers a large number of advanced and cutting-edge subjects mainly in these five areas. This distinctive feature is highly commendable. In many of the courses, including the advanced and cutting-edge courses, the Law School adopts practical teaching methods such as bidirectional and multi-directional discussions and question-and-answer sessions. It is commendable that students highly evaluate these courses and show a high level of satisfaction.

In addition, not only full-time faculty members but also adjunct faculty members who hold concurrent positions and assistant instructors participate in FD workshops to share information among all faculty members and actively exchange views on how to evaluate and improve class contents. These efforts have led to the adoption of specific

measures and resulted in “team-based education.” As part of such efforts, the Law School has introduced a class teacher system in order to meet students’ learning needs. At the same time, assistant instructors who are Law School alumni and qualified as lawyers serve as deputy class teachers and seminar instructors, providing students with learning guidance and support through consultations on independent study, supplementary review classes, and seminars. Furthermore, faculty members and assistant instructors work together to share information on students’ learning status and class contents in order to provide detailed study guidance through such measures as feeding back the information on the contents of makeup classes and seminars to regular classes. The study guidance and support provided by the assistant instructors are believed to be functioning effectively for students, given the support system’s virtuous cycle, with alumni who have passed the bar exam assuming the position of new assistant instructors. This support system is highly evaluated by students as an initiative improving their academic abilities in synergy with regular classes and can be identified as a distinctive effort.

There are several areas of improvement, however, identified in the certified evaluation and accreditation.

First, the law basic subjects account for a large portion of the credits required for program completion. The program design is even more heavily tilted toward the law basic subjects compared at the time of the last certified evaluation and accreditation for law schools. The Law School should review the program design so that students are not required to take subjects disproportionately heavy in any particular subject category.

Second, the Law School provides a mock courtroom that serves its educational purpose, but the facility is located far from the main building where the Law School classes are held. To reduce the burden on students going back and forth between the main building and the mock courtroom during breaks, a better location should be found.

The third area of improvement concerns makeup examinations. Some of the makeup examination questions are almost identical to those in regular examinations. To ensure fair and strict assessment of academic achievement in the makeup examinations, school-wide discussions are required on possible ways to ensure their rigor, including by establishing and sharing an agreed policy among faculty members on drawing up questions for these examinations.

The fourth area of improvement is related to quota management. The numbers of freshman enrollment and student enrollment have exceeded the freshmen cap and student enrollment cap over the years since the capacity reduction in AY2018, though student enrollment was below capacity in AY2023. Going forward, the Law School is advised to carry out appropriate quota management, while implementing the selection

process with attention paid to real competitive ratios.

Fifth, in light of the current situation where a significant number of students repeat the same year, take a leave of absence, or drop out of school, it is necessary to develop school-wide measures to identify at an early stage those students at risk of repeating the same year and provide appropriate study guidance and support to mitigate this situation.

Sixth, the common research room and discussion room used by graduate students for self-study are located separately from the main building where classes are held, requiring students to move back and forth between buildings; at the same time, the building and facilities are old and showing their age. This setup is inappropriate for a long-period, long-hour study environment and improvements are recommended.

The seventh area of improvement relates to utilizing the academic achievements of alumni and helping current students formulate their career plans. The Law School is advised to establish an organization-wide system to provide continuous support to alumni who did not pass the bar exam by maintaining close communication and obtaining information on their career paths, as well as consolidating information held individually and privately by faculty members.

The eighth area of improvement concerns faculty organization. The ratio of female faculty to full-time faculty members is low, and the majority of full-time faculty members has been in their 50s and 60s over the years. The Law School is advised to correct these areas to achieve a more diverse faculty organization.

Some of the areas of improvement were pointed out in the last JUAA certified evaluation and accreditation for law school. The Law School should take appropriate actions to address the issues that have yet to see improvements.

To make the improvements raised above, the Law School is recommended to adopt the results of this certified evaluation and accreditation for law school and continue its self-study efforts, work to assure and improve the quality of its education, and further enhance its distinctive features.