

Results for Certified Evaluation and Accreditation for Junior College

Nihon University Junior College



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Tokyo, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2021	
Accreditation Status: unaccredited	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Nihon University Junior College

Overview

Nihon University Junior College is a junior college consisting of four departments and one advanced course: the Department of Business and Management Studies, Department of Food and Nutrition, and the Advanced Course for Food and Nutrition at the Mishima Campus (Mishima, Shizuoka), and the Department of Architecture and Living Design and the Department of Science and Manufacturing Technology at the Funabashi Campus (Funabashi, Chiba).

The educational philosophy of Nihon University is “independent creativity.” The University has established the Nihon University Educational Charter (hereinafter “Educational Charter”) that presents the policies for nurturing students capable of learning independently, thinking for themselves, and creating their own path. The mission and purpose of the Junior College is “to provide students with scientific and practical specialized education that is closely aligned with general knowledge in order to develop good citizens, in accordance with the founding spirit of Nihon University.” The Junior College has established educational and research objectives according to its mission and purpose, as well as formulating a degree award policy (diploma policy), curriculum design and implementation policy (curriculum policy), and admission policy properly in line with the objectives. In order to achieve the mission and purpose of the Educational Charter and the Junior College, Nihon University formulated the Nihon University Medium-term Plan (AY2021–AY2026) in 2020 and is making efforts to improve its educational and research activities.

Regarding internal quality assurance, a university-wide self-study is conducted every three years, and most of the issues identified in the Junior College have been addressed. However, the current internal assurance quality policy and rules have only been established recently. Moreover, even though a university-wide internal quality assurance system has been developed, committees such as the University Internal Quality Assurance Promotion Committee (hereinafter “University Quality Assurance Committee”) that is responsible for promoting internal quality assurance are not functioning properly. Therefore, we hope university-wide educational management based on the internal quality assurance system is implemented going forward.

As for education, all departments and advanced courses have developed an appropriate curriculum in accordance with the degree award policy and curriculum

design and implementation policy, and students can take courses in a systematic and sequential manner thanks to an overall curriculum structure and a course-taking chart. At the Funabashi Campus, a system has been adopted that allows achievement of learning goals to be measured by multiple evaluation methods. Additionally, we observed that students have trust in faculty members. For instance, class homeroom teachers and seminar instructors provide detailed advice and guidance to students regarding qualification acquisition- and career-related (employment, transfer admission) questions at both campuses regardless of the curriculum.

The Independent Creativity Project is a remarkable endeavor, which aims to improve both curricula and extracurricular education, refining the educational philosophy in a practical manner and helping individual students expand their field of specialty. Launched in 2019, the Independent Creativity Project offers grants for projects developed by students. There have been projects involving exchange between students from Nihon University Junior College and Nihon University, as well as projects in which students put the techniques they learned in lectures into practice. The Independent Creativity Project is expected to produce favorable results as part of the University's initiative to achieve outcome-based education. The Nihon University Intaker System (hereinafter "Intaker System"), a training system for faculty and staff, is one example of a student-oriented initiative that has a history of almost half a century. The Junior College promotes numerous initiatives that involve direct exchange between faculty/staff and students, which is a highly commendable.

There are, however, issues that need to be improved. There are issues with the learning outcome measuring methods adopted by the departments at the Mishima Campus. These issues should be addressed. In the last five years, the average of ratios of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap has been low in some departments. Therefore, there are issues with departmental student quota management.

Since October 2021, serious governance issues have been identified at Nihon University, which has cast doubt on the assessment results on university management and finance under the Junior College Standards. For this reason, we decided to conduct an additional investigation regarding these issues to check Nihon University's governance operations in general. The investigation showed that personnel decisions were arbitrarily made by particular officers, the Board of Councilors and auditor failed to exercise checks on the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Trustees did not conduct adequate discussion. These are serious issues related to the determination and must thus be corrected as soon as possible.

Nihon University is committed to reviving itself, swiftly implementing initiatives with the aim of launching a new governance structure by around July 2022. Sound university management is necessary for the Junior College to fulfill its function. Therefore, the JUAA hopes efforts are made and measures are implemented toward revival and the recommendations and suggestions for improvement are addressed as soon as possible so that the features of the Junior College can be developed even further.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- The Junior College has created the Independent Creativity Project. By encouraging students to implement projects that they have developed, the Independent Creativity Project aims to enhance the three elements of “independent creativity,” the educational philosophy of Nihon University, make students aware of diversity through inter-faculty exchange, and help students deepen their learning in specialized subjects. The Independent Creativity Project is open to all Nihon University students and allows them to acquire project grants. In 2019, a project led by a student from the Junior College was chosen. In addition, there have been projects involving exchange between students from Nihon University Junior College and Nihon University, as well as projects in which students put the techniques they learned in lectures into practice. The Independent Creativity Project is expected to produce favorable results as part of the University’s initiative to achieve outcome-based education.
- The Intaker System has been established to provide counseling to students, under which faculty and staff members who have completed the training are certified as Nihon University Intakers, or elementary level counselors. The Junior College launched the system back in 1973 when counseling was not normally provided at universities. Many faculty and staff members have been certified as intakers to date. Certified faculty and staff members serve as initial counselors at the Student Support Office and contribute to everyday student support.

Suggestions for Improvement

Education and Research Organizations

- The departments and advanced course at the Mishima Campus do not identify or evaluate the learning outcomes indicated in the degree award policy in an

organizational manner. This should be improved.

Recommendation

Student Enrollment

- In the last five years, the average of ratios of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap and the ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap have been low at 0.72 and 0.80, respectively, in the Department of Food and Nutrition. The Junior College should make significant improvement in departmental student quota management.

University Management and Finance

- As personnel decisions related to trustees and staff were arbitrarily made by particular officers, the University must correct the situation to ensure appropriate and fair personnel decisions.
- The Board of Councilors and auditor failed to exercise checks on the Board of Trustees, and governance was not performed appropriately. The University must correct the situation by developing a system for appropriately checking the status of operational execution by the Board of Trustees, trustees, etc.
- Members of the Board of Trustees did not conduct adequate discussion, and the trustees failed to perform their mutual checking function. The University intends to create a new and functioning governance structure, including a system for checking the Board of Trustees. Therefore, the JUAA hopes it develops and implements effective, concrete measures for improvement to achieve sound university management.