

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

Ishinomaki Senshu University



Basic Information of the Institution	
Ownership: Private	Location: Miyagi, Japan
Accreditation Status	
Year of the Review: 2020	
Accreditation Status: accredited (Accreditation Period: April.1.2021 – March.31.2028)	

Certified Evaluation and Accreditation Results for Ishinomaki Senshu University

Overview

Ishinomaki Senshu University holds “gratitude and service to society”, as its founding principle, which has been reinterpreted in modern terms as “the development of Socio-Intelligence.” The University’s academic regulations stipulate that the purpose of the University is “to contribute to the development of local and international society through research in various sciences, and to nurture talented individuals equipped with advanced specialized knowledge and a well-rounded cultural outlook”. In 2019, the University drew up a five-year “Medium- to Long-Term Vision (2020-2024)” to “develop talented individuals with knowledge and skills that can be used to solve various issues in society,” “enhance education and research activities,” and “establish an environment that improves the quality of learning.” It also started to review the composition of its undergraduate programs (reorganization of faculty departments), revise the three policies of the University’s undergraduate programs, and improve the academic management system.

The University is actively encouraging students to acquire advanced qualifications, establishing the “Ishinomaki Senshu University Career Support Scholarship System” as a framework for motivating students to study. Furthermore, with respect to students’ demands, the University has introduced “Discussion meetings between student representatives and the President” and “written proposals to the Joint Committee based on the results of student questionnaires,” leading to carefully designed initiatives in line with the policy on student support.

In terms of social cooperation and contribution, the University uses student volunteer activities and the provision of open lectures to promote partnerships between educational institutions, industrial fields, and local governments that take advantage of the characteristics of the region. The University is also expanding measures related to projects approved by MEXT’s “Private University Research Branding Project”, even after the project period ends.

Drawing on its experience of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the University has been carrying out crisis management measures on an ongoing basis. The regular holding of safety drills and evacuation drills for all faculty, staff and students is to be commended as an effort to cultivate disaster prevention awareness. These drills will be continued even under the COVID-19 countermeasures in AY 2020, allowing awareness of disaster prevention to be passed down among students and faculty.

In terms of internal quality assurance, the “Joint Committee of the Ishinomaki Senshu University Deans’ Committee and Graduate School Committee” (referred to below as the “Joint Committee”), the organization for implementing it, examines proposals for improvement drawn up by the “Ishinomaki Senshu University Check and Review Administration Committee” (referred to below as the “Administration Committee”) and works to solve the problems facing individual organizations. As such, an internal quality assurance framework has been established and is in operation. However, the relationship between the Joint Committee and the Administration Committee as defined in the University’s regulations is unclear. The university must establish regulations that clearly state the roles and responsibilities of these committees. In addition, the internal quality assurance system suffers from some deficiencies, such as discrepancies between policies, regulations, and actual conditions, so improvements are needed to ensure that the system functions effectively.

There are several other points in need of improvement. Specifically, the graduate school has not developed and published curriculum policies and admission policies for individual courses, and students have not been provided with research supervision methods or criteria for reviewing the results of research on specific subjects. These issues require immediate corrective action. Furthermore, with regard to student enrollment, although there are plans to reorganize curricula, etc., persistent under-enrollment of students at the undergraduate and graduate levels should be addressed to ensure proper quota management. It is hoped that by clarifying the original broad objectives of Faculty Development (referred to below as “FD”), including not just improving educational content and methods, but also enhancing faculty members’ qualifications, supporting research, and understanding the University’s mission, as well as through organic cooperation with other departments, FD will serve as an initiative to invigorate educational organizations. In addition, FD activities in the graduate school should be planned and implemented with the goal of revitalizing graduate school organizations.

Going forward, we hope that future developments, such as identifying issues that will highlight the unique characteristics of the University, drawing up improvement plans and implementing their initiatives will help ensure functional and effective internal quality assurance.

Notable Strengths

Student Support

- The “Ishinomaki Senshu University Career Support Scholarship System” is a distinctive initiative that provides support to a wide range of students by awarding scholarships corresponding to the difficulty of the applicable qualifications and achievements, serving as an impetus for students to pursue advanced qualifications. The applicable qualifications are reviewed every year, making an active contribution to students’ career development and the revitalization of club activities as appropriate for the present circumstances. In addition, the University responds to Request Letters submitted by the Students’ Association by providing opportunities for direct exchanges of views with the President and other members of the University executive, which has led to tangible improvements in matters that involve actual budget implementation. The Request Letters initiative is based on the University’s basic mission of “building a university that places students at its core”. It is expected to stimulate the interaction between faculty, staff, and students stipulated in the Medium- to Long-Term Vision (2020-2024) and promote further development of the University, and so it should be commended accordingly.

Social Cooperation and Contribution

- The Open University Center has been actively engaged in research on regional issues. Its projects include “From Earthquake Reconstruction to Industry Creation through New Combinations of Local Resources: Development of Inland Aquaculture Using Plant Matter (Project period: AY 2016–18)”, which was approved as a Private University Research Branding Project (Type A) in AY 2016, and aims to establish recycling-oriented inland aquaculture by growing grass and other plants on abandoned land that is no longer used due to the earthquake and other factors, and producing fish food using the grass and leaves there. This is expected to contribute to the region’s recovery from the disaster while also creating local industry and jobs. Even after the end of the project periods, the University continues to develop a wide range of projects that contribute to solving local issues and return the research outcomes to the community. This is to be commended as an activity rooted in the University’s founding principle of “gratitude and service to society.”

University Management and Finance

- Efforts are also being made to foster disaster prevention awareness. The “Ishinomaki Senshu University Disaster Prevention Work Plan,” which was drawn up as a crisis

management measure, has been used a basis for developing a Crisis Management Manual, while guidance on University-wide rules is provided to students at the beginning of each semester. Furthermore, in addition to the evacuation drills held multiple times a year during classes, disaster drills are also held every year at the student dormitories on campus. The cultivation of disaster prevention awareness among students, faculty and staff and the University's substantial crisis management measures for disasters, which draw on experiences of the Great East Japan Earthquake both inside and outside the University, are to be commended.

Suggestions for Improvement

Internal Quality Assurance

- The internal quality assurance system suffers from some deficiencies. The roles and responsibilities of the Joint Committee and the Administration Committee, the bodies responsible for internal quality assurance, are not clearly defined in the University's regulations. There are also discrepancies between policies, regulations, and actual conditions. Therefore, improvements are needed to ensure that the system functions effectively.
- The Ministerial Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act requires the publication of certain educational information. Of this, however, information has not been disclosed on "students' further studies" in the category of "number of students who have graduated or completed their studies, number of students who have continued to further education, number of students who have found employment, etc."; "organizations and number of teachers involved in teacher training", and "professional licenses" in the category of "organizations and the number of teachers involved in teacher training, degrees and achievements held by each teacher, and class subjects that each teacher is in charge of"; and "professional licenses" in the category of "class subjects involved in teacher training; methods, content, and annual lesson plans for each class subject." Improvements are required accordingly.

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The Master's and Doctoral Programs in the Graduate School of Business Administration do not indicate the learning outcomes, including knowledge, skills,

and abilities, that students need to attain in order to receive a degree. This should be improved.

- Although efforts are being made in each faculty and graduate school to ascertain and assess student learning outcomes as stated in the degree award policy, they remain insufficient. Improvements are needed to clarify the relationship between the learning outcomes and measurement methods stated in the degree award policy and to implement these in a more diversified and appropriate manner.

Student Enrollment

- The ratios of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap are 0.17 for Master's Programs in the Graduate School of Science & Engineering, 0.06 for the Doctoral Programs in the Graduate School of Science & Engineering, 0.20 for Master's Programs in the Graduate School of Business Administration and 0.00 for the Doctoral Programs in the Graduate School of Business Administration. These figures are low, so improvements should be made to ensure proper student quota management at the graduate school.

Faculty and Faculty Organization

- There are insufficient systematic and diversified efforts to improve the capabilities of all teachers that are aimed at promoting activities aside from educational improvement, such as the invigoration of research activities and contributions to society. Improvements are required accordingly.
- Graduate school-specific FD relating to educational improvement is not conducted systematically for all graduate school faculty members. Improvements are required so that these can be appropriately implemented for all master's and doctoral programs or for each graduate school.

Recommendations

Educational Program and Learning Outcomes

- The Graduate School of Business Administration has not set a curriculum design and

implementation policy for each degree program, nor does it indicate its basic approach to curriculum implementation. Moreover, the Masters Course of Life Science at the Graduate School of Science & Engineering's does not always clearly express its basic approach to curriculum implementation. This should be rectified.

- Although the Master's and Doctoral Programs of the Graduate School of Science & Engineering, and the Master's and Doctoral Programs of the Graduate School of Business Administration give a schedule for research supervision, supervision methods are not clearly stated to students, making it insufficient as a research guidance plan and is insufficient as a research guidance plan. This should also be corrected.
- The Master's Program at the Graduate School of Science & Engineering and the Master's Program at the Graduate School of Business Administration have not developed criteria for reviewing the results of research on specific subjects. Corrective measures should be taken so that these are established and made public.

Student Enrollment

- The student admission policies at the Graduate School of Science & Engineering and the Graduate School of Business Administration are the same for both Master's and Doctoral Programs. Corrective measures should be taken so they are established and made public for each program individually.
- In the last five years, the average ratio of freshman enrollment to the freshman enrollment cap is 0.73 for the University as a whole, 0.77 for the Faculty of Science & Engineering, 0.47 for the Department of Food and Environmental Sciences, 0.61 for the Department of Mechanical Engineering, 0.75 for the Department of Information Technology and Electronics, 0.66 for the Faculty of Business Administration's Department of Business Administration, 0.83 for the Faculty of Human Studies, 0.81 for the Department of Human Culture, and 0.85 for the Department of Human Education. The ratio of student enrollment to the student enrollment cap is 0.72 for the University as a whole, 0.74 for the Faculty of Science & Engineering, 0.38 for the Department of Food and Environmental Sciences, 0.58 for the Department of Mechanical Engineering, 0.72 for the Department of Information Technology and Electronics, 0.67 for the Faculty of Business

Administration's Department of Business Administration, 0.80 for the Faculty of Human Studies, 0.81 for the Department of Human Culture, and 0.80 for the Department of Human Education. These figures are low, and corrective measures should be taken to ensure proper student quota management at the undergraduate level.