

Sapporo Otani University (札幌大谷大学)

Evaluation summary

Standard 1. Mission and Objectives, etc.

Taking the teachings of Shinran Shonin, the founder of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist sect, as its founding principles the University concisely expresses that teaching in the words “there is not a single life that cannot be lived through.” The University is the only one in Hokkaido providing musical and arts education through its combined Faculty of Music and Fine Arts, and its Faculty of Sociology that contributes to the local community through human resources development. The teachings of Shinran Shonin are widely publicized on-campus, on the University website, and during on-campus events and in the President’s lectures. In accordance with these teachings, the educational objectives, three policies of diploma policy, curriculum policy and admissions policy and the curriculum itself are continuously reviewed.

Standard 2. Learning and Teaching

A policy on student admission based on its educational objective has been stipulated, and the University is making efforts to recruit new students. Although there has been some improvement in this area over recent years, the full enrollment quota is yet to be achieved.

Consideration is paid to consistency between the educational curriculum design policy and policy on awarding degrees, it is possible to study both music and the arts on the same campus and innovation is displayed in the teaching methods. Support for learning and class instruction is carefully implemented. The evaluation of academic results and awarding of credits is conducted stringently, with a Grade Point Average (GPA) result evaluation system used, and a system for launching formal objections in place.

The internship system has been established centering on the Faculty of Sociology, and is spreading to the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts. The Faculty Development (FD) Committee and Academic Administration Committee conduct tuition questionnaires, and the tuition improvement plans are available for perusal in the library. There are also plans for a new school building in order to respond to earthquake resistance standards.

Standard 3. Management, Administration and Finance

Regulations in line with the University’s incorporated entity’s articles of endowment are in place, and appropriately operated mainly by the Board of Managing Directors. There is a kindergarten, junior and high schools as well as a junior college located within the grounds of the University. In April 2015 the Sapporo Otani University Grand Design was drawn up, and moves are underway for the mutual exchange of information between these constituent schools and the realization of these reforms. As the President of the Sapporo Otani University and the Sapporo Otani Junior College are one and the same person, a Joint Faculty Council has been established, and is operated in a suitable manner. Pursuant to the management reform plan formulated in the 2015 academic year, the University is aiming to secure a balance in income and expenditures to establish a stable financial base.

Standard 4. Self-Inspection and Evaluation

Self-inspection and evaluation is implemented by a Self-Inspection and Evaluation Committee jointly with the Sapporo Otani Junior College, with the President acting as the Chairperson. In line with the evaluation standards of JIHEE, evidence-based research and data collation and analysis are carried out. The Self-Inspection and Evaluation Report is drawn up each year and made public. This work is mainly taken charge of by the Operation and Planning Office that is directly affiliated to the President, and it is planned that in the future Institutional Research (IR) functions will be created and systemized for self-inspections and evaluations.

In summary the founding principles of the University has been permeated through the faculty and staff, and consideration is paid to it in the mission and objectives, educational content and support for students given at the University. The University collaborates closely and in smooth operation

with the affiliate junior college on the same campus. It is to be hoped that under the keywords of “the arts” the Faculty of Sociology that collaborates closely with the local community mainly through internships, and the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts mutually improve and expand and develop.

Note that with regard to the University’s unique initiatives regarding its mission and goals, the general comments on “Standard A. Social collaboration” should be referred to.