

SAPPORO UNIVERSITY (札幌大学)

Evaluation summary

Standard 1. Mission and Objectives, etc.

The University was founded in the 1967 academic year to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the start of the Japanese government's project to develop Hokkaido. Fifty years having elapsed, the University has been looking towards the next half-century and is aiming to build a university that will last for 100 years.

Established at the request and with the support of Hokkaido's economic, industrial and educational sectors the University seeks to develop human resources who can contribute to the local community and made a lively pioneering spirit its founding principle. It cites its educational objectives as being the fostering of lively, intellectual and trustworthy people.

The founding principles and educational objectives are detailed in the Incorporated Educational Institution Sapporo University Articles of Endowment, Sapporo University Regulations. The University had five faculties but following restructuring in the 2013 academic year the Research Faculty of Regional Development was established as the sole faculty, and intends to provide comprehensive liberal arts education, with regional development as its distinctive quality.

The University has formulated its medium-term plan "Reform Roadmap - SU 50," and is starting to tread the path towards the "100 year university" target.

Standard 2. Learning and Teaching

The University's sole Research Faculty of Regional Development consists of 13 majors including regional development, Russian language, sports and so on, enabling students to take sub-majors; it is developing a diverse liberal arts-based education, and tackling the challenge of a type of education emphasizing learning diversity, collaborative regional creation and the autonomy of learning.

The educational curriculum is a liberal arts education curriculum but the educational methods are based on the foundation of autonomous student efforts. A unique system is in place in which the faculty in charge of advising students on career paths and the staff in charge of the "Motivation Up Program" for career support collaborate with each other in providing student support.

In order to check the degree to which educational objectives are being attained a person-in-charge of Institutional Research (IR) is posted but the fruits of this remain to be seen. In order to make the most of the uniqueness of Hokkaido, the Urespa Scholarship has been established for Ainu students, and the efforts to enthusiastically support them and their social activities deserve special mention.

The University's campus is located in the southern part of Sapporo City, and is equipped with a diversity of facilities. In particular, the Child-rearing Salon Stove is a facility open to parents and others involved in bringing up children.

Standard 3. Management, Administration and Finance

The University stipulates the Code of Conduct for the Incorporated Educational Institution Sapporo University Staff, and advocates the maintenance of management discipline and integrity. Internal regulations have been created and are followed regarding environmental conservation, human rights and safety.

Educational and financial information are publicized on the University's website.

The functions that should be performed by the Board of Directors and Board of Councilors are organized and systemized in line with the Incorporated Educational Institution Sapporo University Articles of Endowment. The authorities and responsibilities of the University's executive offices down to its subordinate bodies are clarified and functioning. This means that interdepartmental communication is vital, and these links are well kept.

The total capacity of students is not being reached, but there are at the moment no major problems with the financial base. As the University buildings are aging there is a need to follow the results of earthquake durability surveys with an eye on the future.

The accounting audit follows the so-called three-type audit system and its operation is stringently enforced.

Standard 4. Self-Inspection and Evaluation

Independent and autonomous self-inspection and evaluation is conducted as specified in Article 21 of the Sapporo University Regulations and elsewhere. In order to perform highly transparent self-inspection and evaluation, evaluations are oriented towards the evidence-based format. Subsequently a person-in-charge of IR is posted and internal data collated, but it will require more trial and error as well as accumulated experience before this data can become fully used.

The accumulation of evaluation results and experience is crucial in operating a PDCA cycle for cross-university reforms, and it is to be hoped that the roles of Faculty Development (FD) and Staff Development (SD) will make a sizable contribution towards this.

In summary, the University is fulfilling the four standards, and it is very much hoped that its autonomous evaluation activities will lead to improvements in the quality of the education it provides.

Note that with regard to the University's unique initiatives regarding its mission and goals, the general comments on "Standard A. Community contribution" should be referred to.