

Final Chapter

1. Chapter Summary

(1) Mission and Goals

APU's mission and goals are clearly stated in the "Declaration on the Occasion of the Opening of APU" upon its inauguration in April 2000. The principles of the mission were re-inspected at the time of the educational reform which was the biggest reform since inauguration, and were affirmed to be a guiding force that our university must continue to firmly adhere to. APU's mission is deeply entrenched in the minds of students, faculty, and staff as embodying the direction of our university's aims. Additionally, the educational and research objectives (human resource development goals) that can be derived from the Opening Declaration are prescribed for the respective undergraduate colleges and graduate schools (majors) and specified in the university regulations.

As touched on above, it can be said that APU's mission and goals were appropriately established and have been made widely and publically known. However, there are issues with regards to a deep understanding of the undergraduate colleges and graduate school's (major) educational and research objectives (human resource development goals) in comparison to the Opening Declaration that has enamored many students and stakeholders. We will endeavor to promote wider awareness and understanding among students and stakeholders from here on.

(2) Educational and Research Structure

APU's educational and research structure has been established in line with the university's mission and goals. Despite the short 15 years of history since its founding, there has been structural reform in accordance with the university's mission and educational and research needs, and it can be said that APU has acted in response to academic developments and societal requests. We will continue to ceaselessly validate and work to maintain the educational and research structure necessary for the university.

(3) Faculty Members and Faculty Structure

Both the type of faculty that the university aims to attract and its faculty structure organization policy is clearly set in accordance with our mission. Hiring and promotion decisions are made based on this policy. The university-wide faculty structure will continue to be designed to ensure that half of the faculty is from overseas and that APU's dual language education in Japanese and English is possible. Within this, we will make efforts for quality improvement in line with international accreditation such as AACSB faculty standards, etc.

(4) Educational Program, Instruction, and Outcomes

1) Educational Objective, Diploma Policy, Curriculum Design and Implementation Policy

APU's educational program, diploma policy, and curriculum policy is set in accordance with the educational and research objectives established in line with the university's mission and goals. Based on the curriculum design policy, the "course offering policy" is confirmed as the curriculum policy for the academic year and implemented appropriately. These policies are made public online, and although this information is widely known among university faculty and staff, we will endeavor to make a greater effort in notifying students especially through the use of printed materials.

In addition to the self-assessment process, the verification of the adequacy of these policies is comprehensively reviewed at times of academic reform. In the AY2011 curriculum reform (undergraduate colleges) and the AY2014 curriculum reform (graduate school), these policies were verified appropriately and the verification was reflected.

2) Educational Program

A detailed curriculum has been configured along with the establishment of an educational program that corresponds to APU's educational objectives, diploma policy, and curriculum policy.

The undergraduate program is based on a dual language education in Japanese and English and composed of Common Education Subjects (Language Education Subjects and Common Liberal Arts Subjects) and Major Education Subjects. Common Education Subjects are common across the colleges. APU has been developing fulfilling 1st year student seminars intended for students who come from varied educational backgrounds. The content of Major Education Subjects is aligned with the objectives of each college.

The graduate school curriculum is in English only. Seminars are arranged for the respective graduate schools for the completion of coursework and the graduate thesis.

3) Educational Instruction

Educational instruction in line with the curriculum objectives is being appropriately institutionalized with regards to matters such as the maximum number of registerable credits, the formation of a grading system that promotes proactive participation from students, syllabus content and administrative checks, etc. With regards to improvements to the curriculum, educational program, and instruction, it can be said that we are progressing with reform as needed. We have been collaborating with overseas universities in the implementation of a systematic training program in addition to the practice of incorporating faculty members' own voluntary initiatives which has become a tradition since the founding of the university.

It is necessary to further pursue initiatives that encourage the analysis and application of course evaluation survey results as well as the implementation of training programs that fit the special characteristics of APU.

4) Outcomes

With regards to gauging outcomes, APU has been progressing with indicator development and assessment for language education, 1st year student seminars, College of International Management and Graduate School of Management (AACSB), and one part of the overseas active learning programs. From here on, it is necessary to implement learning outcome assessment within the colleges and graduate programs that are currently not employing this practice, comprehensively analyze data (Institutional Research) including past and present student grade evaluations, and construct an all-encompassing system to measure outcomes.

Degree conferral is strictly managed by the colleges and graduate schools based on degree conferral criteria.

(5) Student Admissions

APU admissions policy is set in accordance with the respective colleges and graduate schools' educational and research objectives (human resource development goals) and has been made public online.

Roughly half of the undergraduate admissions slots are reserved for international student enrollees. Due to the dual enrollment system in both spring and fall, detailed admission policy with regards to student recruiting and screening has been defined and implemented for each recruiting period and target region. We will continue to strive to secure students from 100 countries and regions to further enhance our diversity.

With regards to intake capacity management, both the graduate school and transfer student intake is not at full capacity. The insufficient number of transfer student enrollees is especially a problem requiring an urgent solution. As of the present, the number of transfer student enrollees is less than Japan University Accreditation Association's recommended guideline of 0.7.

(6) Student Services

Policies regarding student services are clearly defined. International students make up approximately half of the student body and there are many services available to them especially in the form of scholarships (tuition reduction system), initiatives that provide support for international students' daily lives, and career assistance. Support services place a priority on student growth through student-led activities making use of APU's multicultural environment. In light of the above, it can be said that student services are being carried out in an appropriate manner.

(7) Educational and Research Environment

A "Campus Plan Basic Ideas" has been established and a "Campus Maintenance and Renewal Plans Committee" has been set up to identify issues as we progress with our efforts to preserve and improve campus facilities and equipment. APU is equipped with

an extensive amount of land and buildings that exceed the set “Standards for Establishment of Universities.” Taking into account our location and distinguishing characteristics, we aim to improve our educational and research environment in the form of our library and academic information services, as well as upgrade the amenities offered on campus.

(8) Social Cooperation and Social Contribution

Given the background behind the opening of APU as a result of the support and cooperation of Oita Prefecture, Beppu City, and others, we have clearly set local and international social contribution as a priority since the opening of the university. It can be said that we have promoted development through the utilization of our unique characteristics. We have given back through education and research. Another way that our contribution has manifested itself is in the formation of strong ties to the local communities through student activities, etc.

(9) Administration and Financial Affairs

1) Administration

University administration and management is appropriately carried out in accordance with documented regulations based on the policy concerning the administration process and various committees involved in university administration. The administrative structure has been designed as a body capable of managing an international university and it can be affirmed that such administrative duties, where staff must be able to work in both Japanese and English, have been carried out appropriately since the university’s founding.

2) Financial Affairs

Basic Policies for Fiscal Administration have been clearly established beginning with policy that includes, “To ensure stable and permanent management of Trust finances by keeping spending within the range of income and reflecting the mid-term update plan of fixed assets based on the income and expenditure of each division (school) whilst paying attention to maintaining balance sheet indicators.” It can be said that budget drafting and use is being carried out appropriately in line with the set policy and that the university has attained financial security as of the present.

We have had some success in increasing the amount of non-tuition revenue income in the form of increased revenue from subsidies. However, because the stable procurement of tuition revenue income is our bedrock, we are aware that there are many important issues confronting us that require looking into matters such as the insufficient number of graduate school and transfer student enrollees and improvements to the numbers of students taking leave of absences or withdrawing from the university. It is also imperative to work towards increasing revenue via alternate methods such as donations, etc.

(1 0) Internal Quality Assurance

APU practices self-assessment, undergoes a university evaluation and accreditation by external organizations as mandated by university regulations. Given this, it can be said that APU has constructed an appropriate internal quality assurance mechanism. All of these results as well as a disclosure of basic university data are made public online in an effort to fulfill our social accountability. We are proactively working towards international recognition in the form of AACSB accreditation with our priorities set on international viability.

APU has reviewed and evaluated each criterion in the self-assessment process however; the checks and evaluations that were not considered sufficient, such as the establishment of a comprehensive university-wide ranking of prioritized issues, are considered to be items requiring improvement.

2. Achievement Status of Overall Objectives

The achievement status of the overall objectives has been assessed as follows.

(1) Objectives have been highly achieved

- ① Mission and Goals
- ② Educational and Research Structure
- ③ Faculty Members and Faculty Structure
- ④-1 Educational Program, Instruction, and Outcomes (Educational Objectives, Diploma Policy, Curriculum Design and Implementation Policy)
- ④-2 Educational Program, Instruction, and Outcomes (Educational Program)
- ④-3 Educational Program, Instruction, and Outcomes (Instruction)
- ⑥ Student Services
- ⑦ Educational and Research Environment
- ⑧ Social Cooperation and Social Contribution

(2) Objectives have not been achieved sufficiently

- ④-4 Education Program, Instruction, and Outcomes (Outcomes)
- ⑤ Student Admissions
- ⑨ Administration and Financial Affairs
- ⑩ Internal Quality Assurance

3. Prioritized Issues

The following issues are thought to be enveloping the entire university and deserving of prioritized status as touched on in the “Developing Policies to the Future” section of the Self-Assessment Report and above in “1. Chapter Summary.”

(1) Education Program, Instruction, and Outcomes (Outcomes)

The measurement of learning outcomes is the bedrock of our quest to validate our

university's educational approaches; however, these efforts (measuring learning outcomes) are currently stalled and are only being applied to one part of APU's educational initiatives. We must first expand this movement and incorporate IR (institutional research) in order to construct a system that measures the overall learning outcomes during a student's four years at APU.

(2) Student Admissions

Above anything else, it is imperative that the university takes action to resolve the intake capacity vacancies of graduate students and transfer student enrollees. This is a problem requiring an urgent solution especially in the case of transfer student enrollees as the number is less than Japan University Accreditation Association's recommended guideline of 0.7.

(3) Administration and Financial Affairs

The university is thought to have attained financial security as of the present, however, improvements to the balance of revenue and expenditures must be undertaken for permanent financial security. Again, the issues of filling the intake capacity and supervision of these capacity numbers are in need of improvement.

(4) Internal Quality Assurance

The process of self-assessment has been established as a viable mechanism; however, an overall review from a university-wide perspective, such as prioritizing issues, is necessary in order to link this process with tangible improvements to the university as a whole. Together with these efforts, the creation of a culture in addition to an accumulation and succession of knowledge and experience is needed so that we will be able to understand the ideas behind self-assessment with regards to each criterion as well as understand the fundamentals of the process in order to be able to properly assess ourselves.

4. Future Prospects

We are proceeding to draw up a plan for the APU2030 Vision in the midst of the changing landscapes encompassing the university which are constantly moving at a rapid pace both domestically and internationally. Our university must come up with initiatives that will lead to the creation of the next stage of APU incorporating the internal quality assurance mechanism as an intrinsic component.