

3. Education and Research Organization

(1) Description of Current Conditions

Assessment/Evaluation Parameter (1): Are the colleges, graduate schools, affiliated research institutions, centers and other organizations appropriately established in light of the university's mission and purpose?

Evaluation Points

- Alignment between university mission and purpose, and college (departments and courses) and graduate school (graduate school and major) structure
- Alignment between university mission and purpose, and organizations such as affiliated research institutions and centers
- Education and research organization, academic trends, social demands, consideration of factors such as international environment that surrounds university

In response to the changing national and international social and educational trends, APU reviews its educational and research organization as appropriate in line with the university's mission and purpose.

The Opening Declaration states: "Given that the 21st century will see the emergence of a global society, we firmly believe that coexistence between mankind and nature, as well as between diverse cultures, will be indispensable for the peaceful and sustainable development of the Asia Pacific region." Based on this recognition, the mission and purpose of APU is to "nurture the young talent capable of contributing to the future shape of the Asia Pacific region" (Ref. 1-1). Even today, this mission and purpose is understood to be important, and APU's educational and research structures have been creating in line therewith.

APU's mission and purpose in terms of research are as stipulated in the Opening Declaration: "to create a new academic discipline which will help shape the [Asia Pacific] region's future" (Ref 1-1).

To support its research objectives, the university has not only established the International Cooperation and Research Division (ICRD) as a university organization, but also set up the Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies (RCAPS), which covers a diverse range of disciplines.

1) Education and Research Organization

At present, APU, is an education and research institution focused on social sciences that has two Colleges, each with one Department, two Graduate Schools, one research center and three other organizations that provide support university-wide education.

Undergraduate Programs	College of Asia Pacific Studies-----Department of Asia Pacific studies College of International Management-----Department of International Management
Master's and Doctoral Programs	Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies-----Major in Asia Pacific Studies (Master's Program) -----Major in International Cooperation Policy (Master's Program) -----Major in Asia Pacific Studies (Doctoral Program) Graduate School of Management-----Major in Management (Master's Program)
Affiliated Research Centers	Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies Media Resource Center Educational Development and Learning Support Center Center for Language Education

[1] Colleges

In light of our mission, APU's educational and research structures are oriented towards meeting the need for human resources equipped with an international perspective. With a university-wide scope, APU's educational organization is based on liberal arts and undergraduate major education with a particular focus on the field of social sciences. Although the undergraduate Colleges and Departments employ policies to provide academic content that reflects changes in social trends and human resources development needs and to enhance the quality thereof, frequent structural reorganization of the Colleges and Departments is not anticipated; however, since the opening of the university in 2000, we have made some adjustments where necessary, including changing the name of one College and boosting faculty numbers in response to increased student intake.

[2] Graduate Schools

The Graduate Schools are designed to respond primarily to the concrete human resources needs of the countries and regions of the Asia Pacific. In accordance with APU's mission and purpose, the combined master's and doctoral program of Asia Pacific Studies was established in the Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies in an effort to create a new academic discipline that will help shape the Asia Pacific region's future, and it serves as a fundamental part of education and research at APU. To cultivate professional practitioners, we also established the Major in International Cooperation Policy in the Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies as well as the Graduate School of Management.

[3] University-wide Educational Structures

APU has three university-wide educational organizations: the Media Resource Center (MRC), the Center for Language Education (CLE), and the Educational Development and Learning Support Center (EDLSC). The MRC administers all information networks at APU including the library, a fundamental piece of the education and research infrastructure. The CLE is an important educational organization that supports dual language education by ensuring that students who enroll on either a Japanese or an English basis can become proficient in their non-basis language* by graduation. The EDLSC was established to provide support to ensure that students from around the globe who possess diverse set of academic backgrounds can make a smooth transition into the education system offered at APU.

* The language other than the language of enrollment. The non-basis language for Japanese-basis students is English, while the non-basis language for English-basis students is Japanese.

[4] Research Structure

RCAPS collaborates with ICRD to promote research related to the Asia Pacific region and disseminate related research achievements.

RCAPS was established in 1996, four years before APU opened. Its major activities are as follows:

- Convocation of the Asia Pacific Conference, an international academic conference, once per year;
- Publication of Ritsumeikan Journal of Asia Pacific Studies (once per year) and the APU Journal of Language Research (once per year; succeeded Polyglossia from AY2016)
- Convocation of RCAPS Seminars and RCAPS Current Research Seminars;
- Online publication of working papers;
- Administration of the following affiliated research centers for specified purposes:

APU Center for NEXT Generation Business and Industrial Creation (APU-NEXT); Center for Democracy Promotion; Research Center for Muslim Affairs (RCMA)

To elaborate on the “creation of a new academic discipline” set forth in the Opening Declaration, APU in 2010 played a leading role in the establishment of the International Association for Asia Pacific Studies (IAAPS), which holds international academic conferences every year and publishes a journal called Asia Pacific World twice a year. However, because RCAPS engages in a comprehensive range of activities and the AP Conference has become more international, APU discontinued the International Association for Asia Pacific Studies conference from AY2015, incorporating related activities under RCAPS.

2) Progress since Inception

Considering the fact that APU is a young university (having opened in 2000) and that it has an extremely unique mission and purpose, the university has worked to carefully analyze the activities of its alumni in Japan and abroad, and to examine its educational structures and establish and change its organizations, while keeping an eye on both domestic and international trends.

More specifically, APU has (1) changed the name of the College of Asia Pacific Management to the College of International Management (in AY2009) to provide a clearer picture of the College's academic content, (2) implemented academic reforms associated with interdisciplinary fields and also increased student intake capacity (in AY2006), and (3) established the Educational Development and Learning Support Center (EDLSC; in AY2008) mainly to respond to domestic and international educational trends and strengthen faculty development (FD).

Moreover, the university has undertaken measures as needed in response to social trends both at home and abroad, including changes in advancement to higher education in the Asia Pacific region (e.g., setting country/region-specific international student admission quotas) and the need to develop graduate students into national and local government officials in the Asia Pacific region (e.g., Japanese Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) Program, Japanese Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship for Young Chinese Leaders (JDS China), Indonesian Advanced Human Resources Development Project, Asian Development Bank Japan Scholarship Program, and the Joint Japan/World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program).

APU also aspires to comprehensively engage in research on the Asia Pacific by leveraging RCAPS, its all-encompassing university-wide research organization. In response to the demands of society, it flexibly administers limited-term, externally-funded research centers under the auspices of RCAPS, and engages in liaison activities through ICRD.

Assessment/Evaluation Parameter (2): Is the faculty organization regularly assessed and evaluated for suitability? Are efforts made to improve the faculty organization based on these reviews?

Evaluation Points

- Assessment/Evaluation conducted based on adequate evidence (i.e., documents and data)
- Improvements made based on assessment/evaluation outcomes

Since our inception in 2000, the AY2004, AY2006 and AY2011 academic reforms have been used as turning points to review the education and research organizations at APU.

To verify whether the education organizations are in alignment with APU's mission and purpose and the demands of society, we examine our educational objectives, diploma policy, curriculum policy, educational content and methods by way of a process that consists of research and analysis conducted by the Division of Academic Affairs, discussions in the Faculty Council and Faculty Discussion

Meetings, and confirmation at the University Senate Meeting. The results of the most recent review were incorporated into the AY2017 academic reforms (Ref. 3-1; Ref. 3-2; Ref. 3-3). The first full cycle of these academic reforms concluded in AY2020, and after a comprehensive review thereof, we will plan the next round of academic reforms in or after AY2021.

As for research organizations, verification is conducted by way of a process that consists of research and analysis conducted by the International Cooperation and Research Division, discussions in the Graduate School Faculty Council Meetings, and confirmation at the University Senate Meeting (Ref. 3-4).

(2) Strengths and distinctive features

APU restructures organizations as needed in response to education and research challenges, with examples including the establishment of the EDLSC in AY2008, the renaming of the College of Asia Pacific Management in AY2009, and the incorporation of IAAPS under RCAPS in AY2015 (Ref. 3-5, 3-6).

Based on the need to improve the teaching ability of its faculty and develop the competence of staff who support the university's education and research activities, APU launched the Institute for Professional Excellence in Global Learning (IPG) in AY2016 (Ref. 3-7). The institute provides long-term career development programs in which members learn alongside each other with the aim of helping faculty and staff to enhance the quality of education, research, and administration, which forms the backbone of global learning at the unique education environment offered by APU, and to efficiently provide and implement education, research, and administration. Going forward, the institute also plans to open up some parts of its programs and curriculum to faculty and staff of other universities as it aims to become a hub for FD/SD activities in the Asia Pacific region.

(3) Problem areas

APU reviews outstanding issues centered on various educational organizations in its academic reforms, but as the reforms for the colleges and graduate schools are held in different periods, the university has not sufficiently implemented reforms that consider the correlation between the curricula for the colleges and graduate schools. The connection between freshmen education subjects, language subjects, and major subjects must be improved, and there is a need for academic reforms based on coordination between the Education Development and Learning Support Center, the Center for Language Education, and the colleges.

The umbrella organization that laterally organizes research at APU is RCAPS, but the university also operates ICRD as an internal institution. Although APU conducts timely reviews of the responsibilities allocated to each organization, the activities of RCAPS have expanded beyond categories related to Asia Pacific studies (the original scope of its mandate), resulting in an unclear

focus. Accordingly, there is a need for continual discussion at both ICRD and RCAPS.

(4) Summary

APU reviews its academic reforms every several years, and revises education and research organizations in response to social demands. Using a four to six-year academic reform cycle, the university will continue to examine how its education and research organizations align with the university's mission and purpose. In particular, it will focus its review on international compatibility, which is a key focus area.

APU deems its present research organization to be adequate based on the scale of the university and its fields of specialization. The ICRD Meeting is led by the appointed Vice President, the College Deans, and Associate Deans, who are joined by nearly 10 other members including the RCAPS Director and Deputy Director. The Research Office serves as the Secretariat. The ICRD Meeting is operated through close collaboration between the ICRD, RCAPS, and the Secretariat. Decisions are made in a relatively short time, and major issues are elevated to the University Senate Meeting. The ICRD Meeting and RCAPS Steering Committee Meeting are both held in English, and committee members span a range of nationalities (half of APU's faculty body consists of foreign nationals) and the effort made to ensure there are no gaps in the information flow (Ref. 3-8; Ref. 3-9).

ICRD and RCAPS formulate annual plans for various activities, report achievements to the University Senate Meeting at the end of the academic year, and accordingly establish a PDCA cycle. While research activities are driven by the efforts of individual researchers, ICRD and RCAPS work to support and energize such efforts as organizational initiatives (Ref. 3-10; Ref. 3-11; Ref. 3-12).