



Ritsumeikan University

Ritsumeikan University Academy Report, Ritsumeikan Style, AY 2016 Plenary Council Special Issue
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Published on March 2, 2017, by Office of Public Relations, Ritsumeikan University



SPECIAL ISSUE

Academy Report 2016

Memorandum of the Plenary Council of the University

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“Toward the 2016 Plenary Council”



<http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/features/zengakukyo2016/>



Ritsumeikan Style SPECIAL ISSUE

Significance and Course of Discussions in the AY 2016 Plenary Council of the University

About the Plenary Council of the University

The Plenary Council of the University (hereafter simply “Plenary Council”) is an organ established in order for all members of the Ritsumeikan University (RU) learning community—undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty and staff, and the Executive Board of Trustees—to discuss and engage actively in improvements and reforms to education, research, and student life. Meetings of the Plenary Council are conducted in line with the principle of self-government by all constituents of the university, and are attended by representatives of four the primary components of the university (the Student Union, the Graduate Student Council, the Faculty/Staff Union, and the Executive Board of Trustees), with the Ritsumeikan Co-operative, which provides support for student life, participating as an observer.

To date the Plenary Council has met on a schedule coinciding with revision of tuition fees and their calculation methods. These meetings have involved reviewing achievements and future issues in the areas of education/research and student support, and discussing directions for reform and improvement in these areas in conjunction with the proposals regarding

the fee policy and tuition calculation formula to apply in the subsequent period. The Plenary Council was established in 1948, and since 1979 has been held every four years in a General Assembly format open to all constituents of Ritsumeikan University. The outcomes of discussion in the Plenary Council and the matters confirmed by each party are documented in a Plenary Council Memorandum, which becomes the basic policy for subsequent improvements and reforms in the university and across the Ritsumeikan Academy.

The last Plenary Council was held in the 2011 academic year (“AY 2011”), and the next General Assembly was therefore scheduled to be held in AY 2015. However, the need arose to pursue discussions on both the R2020 latter phase plan and tuition fee revision formulas in the same academic year, while taking into account various issues within the university as well as policy developments in the national education ministry. The Executive Board of Trustees was unable to formulate its policies by the end of the 2015 academic year, and the General Assembly thus had to be postponed. Instead, in order to confirm the progress made in discussions

during AY 2015, it was resolved to hold an expanded Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting with the Chancellor in attendance, and continue discussions into AY 2016.

In preparation for holding the Plenary Council General Assembly in AY 2016, in June 2016 a special issue of *Ritsumeikan Style* was published under the title “Directions for Enhancement of Education and Student Life and Tuition Policies up to AY 2018 at Ritsumeikan University: Toward the 2016 Plenary Council.” Building on the discussions undertaken in AY 2015, the parties to the Plenary Council participated in representatives’ meetings and various types of discussion meetings, leading up to the Plenary Council General Assembly held on October 12, 2016.

This Memorandum documents the course of discussions and outcome of deliberations in the AY 2016 Plenary Council and discussion meetings, the plans agreed subsequently through discussion with individual Colleges, Graduate Schools and other organs, as well as the prospects and challenges as we work toward their realization.

Significance of the AY 2016 Plenary Council

In March 2016, Ritsumeikan University formulated a framework plan for the latter phase (AY 2016 through 2020) of R2020: Creating the Future—The Ritsumeikan Academy Master Plan (“R2020 latter phase plan”). This latter phase plan aims to maintain Ritsumeikan’s position as a first-choice academy, university, and school. It notes that in the field of education especially, greater emphasis than ever before is now being placed not on what is taught, but on the process by

which each individual student learns independently and grows into someone who can contribute to the global community. A major objective set by the R2020 plan in this regard is for Ritsumeikan to return to its starting point as a private comprehensive academy, take responsibility for the diverse growth of its students within our globalized, multicultural society, and generate creativity and innovation out of diversity. AY 2016 is the inaugural year for the R2020 latter phase plan, which will

provide the basic direction for the Ritsumeikan Academy’s activities over the next five years.

The AY 2016 Plenary Council was interlinked with discussions of the Academy’s master plan, and its facilitation of ongoing diverse discussions among students and faculty/staff is viewed as highly significant in the course of crystallizing and implementing the directions in enhancement of the university and its campuses to be pursued through to 2020.

Process and Major Points of Discussion Leading to the AY 2016 Plenary Council

1 Discussion process leading to the AY 2016 Plenary Council

In the first half of AY 2015, the Executive Board of Trustees released a special issue of Ritsumeikan Style titled “Academy Report 2015 : Creating Learning, Learning in the Commons – Towards the Plenary Council of the University” (June 2015). Designed to provide material for discussion, this document set out the achievements and issues in relation to initiatives taken since AY 2011, and the Board’s position on future directions. A number of meetings were held in parallel with this release. In May, there was a Financial Affairs Division Discussion Meeting (attended by the Student Union and Graduate Student Council); in June, the first Joint Discussion Meeting, focusing on internationalization (attended by the Student Council); in July, the second Joint Discussion Meeting, focusing on academic affairs, student life, campus development, and finance (tuition and scholarships), (attended by the Student Council), an Osaka Ibaraki Campus (OIC) Discussion Meeting, and a Financial Affairs Division Discussion Meeting (attended by the Graduate Students Council. These led to a Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting held on July 31.

The Representatives’ Meeting reflected on the findings from a survey on students’ attitudes to globalization, conducted jointly by the Student Union and university authorities, and confirmed that a significant portion of the student body had high levels of interest but low levels of engagement in globalization, and that it was important to take measures to enable such students to take the next step forward.

Further meetings were held in the second half of AY 2015: in September, a Kinugasa Campus Discussion Meeting; in October, the third Joint Discussion Meeting, focusing on the R2020 latter phase plan and scholarship programs from AY 2017 (attended by the Student Union), and a Biwako Kusatsu Campus (BKC) Discussion Meeting; and in November, the fourth Joint Discussion Meeting, focusing on graduate school issues (attended by the Graduate Students Council). These led to an expanded Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting on December 16, 2016.

The December 16 meeting confirmed that in the context of the Ritsumeikan Learning Forest Project discussed mainly within the Student Union to date, students should be aspiring to the ideal of fostering “learning and the development of individual talents in order to nurture just and ethical global citizens” (Ritsumeikan Charter). A proposal was tabled and confirmed by the parties to the meeting regarding the three elements essential for student growth (diversity, reciprocity, and identity development, including through peer learning) and three mindsets essential for extracurricular activities (acceptance, collective creation, and

contribution), both of which should be self-defined by students, and the idea that curricular and extracurricular activities are mutually complementary and function to enhance one another.

In regard to tuition and scholarships, it was argued that consideration should be given to possibilities for expanding financial support scholarships in light of the polarization of parental household income levels, and applying scholarships promoting internationalization not only to outbound and inbound student mobility, but also in a manner that contributes to the internationalization of the university as a whole. Furthermore, in response to demands from the Student Union, a new Campus Discussion Meeting was held at OIC, which had opened in the 2015 academic year. This proved a valuable opportunity to respond to campus-specific student concerns and interests, and it was requested that such discussion meetings continue to be held on each campus in AY 2016 and beyond. The Executive Board of Trustees confirmed that these various discussions that took place in AY 2015 would be continued in further deliberations in AY 2016.

In the first half of AY 2016, following the formulation of the R2020 latter phase plan in March, briefing sessions outlining the plan were held in May, and a special issue of Ritsumeikan Style was published and distributed to all students under the title of “Directions for Enhancement of Education and Student Life and Tuition Policies up to AY 2018 at Ritsumeikan University: Toward the 2016 Plenary Council” (June 2016). An expanded Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting also held in June to confirm the outcomes of AY 2015 discussions and begin consultation in preparation for the Plenary Council General Assembly. At this meeting, in light of the failure to hold the Plenary Council as scheduled in AY 2015 due to the Executive Board of Trustees’ circumstances, the Student Union, Graduate Student Council and Faculty/Staff Union questioned the Board’s position on the future of the Plenary Council and the proposal regarding tuition fees for the two-year period up to AY 2018. In response, the Board presented a discussion paper regarding the future of the Plenary Council, and this became one of the points for deliberation at the Plenary Council General Assembly itself.

Discussion on specific issues was then advanced through campus-level Academic Affairs Discussion Meetings (attended by the Student

Union) in July, an OIC Discussion Meeting (Student Union) and Joint Discussion Meeting (Graduate Student Council and Student Union) in August, and a discussion meeting on the future of the Plenary Council (Student Union), Kinugasa Campus Discussion Meeting (Student Union), and BKC Discussion Meeting (Student Union) in September. The Campus Discussion Meeting took into account specific campus conditions while addressing issues including: (1) enhancement of dining environments such as expanded menus and alleviation of crowding in cafeterias, (2) parking issues in consideration of the neighborhoods adjacent to the campus, and (3) operation of “commons” with a variety of functions.

Informed by the discussions that had taken place in the first half of AY 2016, in September the Executive Board of Trustees published a special issue of Ritsumeikan Style, titled “Towards the Plenary Council of the University for AY 2016: Progress of Discussions to Date and Major Issues in Academic Affairs and Student Life,” which set out the key points of discussion in the lead-up to the Plenary Council General Assembly. Each party was also provided with an overview of the measures addressing priority issues in the R2020 latter phase plan, as determined by the Executive Board of Trustees (see Figure 1). Building on these various developments, an expanded Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting was held on September 28, and the General Assembly of the Plenary Council on October 12.

2 Major Discussion Points Raised by the Student Union and Graduate Student Council

■ Major discussion points raised by the Student Union

The Student Union pointed out the importance of systematic learning attuned to career

paths, and proposed discussion points including the following: (i) self-directed, pro-active learning across all facets of curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular student life, (ii) interaction among students, including globalization, and (iii) support for achieving balance between curricular and extra-curricular pursuits. The Student Union also raised several points related to student life, including: (iv) the development of environments enabling safe, secure, comfortable, and healthy learning, and (v) tuition fee policy and scholarship programs.

In regard to point (i) (self-directed, pro-active learning across all facets of curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular student life), the priorities identified were to develop curricula in which small-group classes provide the cornerstone of learning at each year level, and to address the differences in activities and support offered to Orientation Conductors in different Colleges. Both the Student Union and the university authorities confirmed the significance of and roles played by the peer support groups that underpin small-group classes, and acknowledged that it was important for peer support groups, ES, and faculty/staff members to communicate and develop shared goals so that certain standards can be maintained across all Colleges in small-group class learning and student support. The Student Union also called for the development of learning and experiential spaces where students could gain an actual sense of how to apply their learning in wider society, with a view to enhancement of the specialized learning that takes place in seminars and research labs. Furthermore, they requested functional improvements in tools such as syllabus and manaba+R in order to motivate students to learn in a self-directed manner. In regard to liberal arts subjects, the Student Union acknowledged that systematized study of a broad range of knowledge was important in order to foster “just and ethical global citizens.” They pointed out that liberal arts subjects could hardly be said to be a priority in the current overall curriculum and that some improvements in class operation were considered necessary, and called for ongoing discussion informed by a proper grasp of current conditions.

The Faculty/Staff Union also commented on the topic of self-directed, pro-active learning, pointing out that lecture-format subjects accounted for the bulk of credits required for graduation, and that it would therefore be necessary to develop classes to generate self-directed, pro-active learning in these subjects as well.

In relation to discussion point (ii) (interaction among students including globalization), achievements and challenges were identified in the various areas of interaction among Japanese students, interaction between Japanese and international students, and interaction among international students. An attitude sur-

vey conducted jointly by the Student Union and university authorities revealed that the majority of Japanese students have a high level of interest in interaction with international students and intercultural understanding, but a low degree of actual engagement in such activities. The Student Union argued this low engagement may be caused by factors such as language proficiency and the lack of opportunities for everyday interaction, and also pointed out that understanding of international students’ attitudes is still inadequate, underlining the need for further efforts to grasp the current situation.

Concerning point (iii) (support for achieving balance between curricular and extra-curricular pursuits), the Student Union positioned self-directed activities in the extra-curricular sphere as one of the crucial components of learning at university. Proposals were put forward concerning the necessity of developing ways to enable such activities to complement in-class learning, to assist students finding it difficult to achieve balance, and to provide support for management, accounting and other aspects of the operation of extracurricular activity organizations.

The Student Union elaborated on point (iv), development of environments enabling safe, secure, comfortable, and healthy learning, by pointing out the necessity of improvements to facilities on each campus, especially the problem of high temperatures in the OIC Arena during summer. The Student Union also stated that despite the multi-campus development of RU with the opening of OIC in AY 2015, the participation rates of OIC students in extracurricular activities remains low, and called for assessment and analysis of this situation and ongoing measures to rectify it. Furthermore, the Student Union requested that continued consideration be given to methods for promoting inter-campus exchange beyond the boundaries of the university’s three campuses, not limited to the operation of shuttle buses.

In relation to point (v) (tuition policy and scholarship programs), the Student Union strongly demanded efforts to raise income from sources other than tuition and student fees, and a continued response to the polarization of household income levels, through the provision of financial support for effective zero-income households (gross annual income of 3.29 million yen or less) and those with annual income of 4 million yen or less.

■ Major discussion points raised by the Graduate Student Council

The Graduate Student Council engaged in vigorous discussion of issues including: (i) diversity, (ii) career paths, (iii) research commons, and (iv) tuition and student fees.

In relation to point (i) (the diversity of graduate students), the Graduate Student



Council identified several challenges in light of the fact that RU’s graduate student body is becoming more diverse in a variety of ways, such as “globalization of students studying at RU,” “globalization through influx of international students from abroad,” and “diversification in the form of students from a variety of backgrounds coming together to study.” They called for action to address this growing diversity through concrete steps such as addressing the low usage rates of the many study abroad programs available, using both Japanese and English for notices on campus and in administrative offices, and catering for working adult students, those raising children, and those with disabilities.

Point (ii), career paths, positioned graduate students not merely as “objects” of education, but as “subjects” playing their own part in education and research at the university alongside faculty members. The Graduate Student Council pointed out that while students are playing this role through activities such as Teaching Assistant (“TA”) positions, the opportunities to apply for such positions are scarce in some stand-alone Graduate Schools. They also drew attention to inadequacies in the conditions and number of positions available for postdoctoral fellows (“PD”), a key career path for students completing doctoral programs.

Discussion on the issue of commons, point (iii), highlighted positive evaluations of the research commons in OIC and Kyurinkan, opened in AY 2016, but also pointed to the lack of progress in promoting exchange and learning beyond individual Graduate Schools and the need for more initiatives in this area. On this basis, the Graduate Student Council requested that when developing research commons from now on, the university authorities should engage in sufficient dialogue with graduate students, continue to evaluate and improve existing facilities, and ensure that research spaces other than commons are not eliminated.

In relation to point (iv) (tuition and student fees), the Graduate Student Council declared its support for the plan to institute a major reduction in tuition for master’s programs and to maintain the current tuition levels for doctoral programs. At the same time, the Council stated that it does not support the scaling back of scholarship programs that accompanies the Master’s program fee reductions.

Priority Initiative and Outline	
(1) Development of Faculty Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of faculty personnel organization in order to develop new educational environments, including globalization
(2) Undergraduate Academic Affairs Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advancement of initiatives to strengthen College-specific educational capabilities
(3) Student Life / Extracurricular Activities Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of balance between curricular and extracurricular pursuits, maintenance of current levels of support under financial assistance scholarships, development of students through the 2020 Tokyo Olympics/Paralympics
(4) Enhancement of Graduate Schools and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of tuition fees in master’s programs, advancement of schemes for graduate school excellence and research enhancement programs in individual graduate schools
(5) Globalization of Education and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of overseas activity bases, development of JMOOCs, advancement of international student job placement support and global career development

Figure 1 Outline of Initiatives Addressing Priority Issues for Ritsumeikan University in the R2020 Latter Phase Plan

I Diverse Learning through Curricular, Co-Curricular, and Extra-Curricular Activities; Development of Environments to Support Learning

The discussion of academic affairs in the Plenary Council since the last academic year has been characterized by vigorous debate over questions such as how to enhance educational quality to provide students with a firm sense of their own growth over the four (or six) years of their undergraduate education, how to acquire the capabilities appropriate for students living in a global era, and how to create a variety of spaces for interaction on campus taking into account the goals of cross-cultural understanding and multi-cultural coexistence. As an outcome of these discussions, the Plenary Council was able to confirm several points to be advanced in the area of academic affairs from now on.

1

Systematization of Learning and Substantiation of Course Credits in order to Achieve Educational Objectives

In order to achieve the educational objectives set by each College, it is important that students advance steadily along their path of learning in the direction of those objectives. If students pursue their studies with an understanding of the relationship between their College's educational goals and the individual subjects offered, they should be able to acquire skills in proportion with the credit awarded for completion of those subjects. RU will pursue the enhancement of student learning under the "Ritsumeikan Model of Learning" set forth in the R2020 latter phase plan.

With a view to promoting systematic learning informed by students' own objectives, the university will formulate academic guidelines, review the three core academic policies (Diploma Policy, Curriculum Policy, Admission Policy) in line with the educational objectives of each College, and develop curriculum maps (outlining the correspondence between educational objectives and individual subjects) and curriculum trees (outlining relationships among each year level toward achievement of the educational objectives, and relationships among individual subjects). It will also strengthen initiatives enabling students to clarify their own learning objectives through reflection on their achievements, such as the development of learning maps and career sheets.

The Plenary Council confirmed that the university organization as a whole would work toward developing clear achievement objectives for each class and study activities beyond class, such as preparation and revision.



This point is important not only for promoting systematic learning, but also for supporting students' efforts to balance their curricular and extra-curricular activities. It also connects with the issue of substantiation of course credit. The Plenary Council confirmed that study time should be secured in proportion with the credit awarded for completion of each subject, that learning processes and outcomes should be measured and progress toward achievement of objectives made visible, and that approaches to verifying learning outcomes should be the subject of ongoing discussion. In regard to the assurance of student quality at the point of graduation, or the verification of outcomes of Bachelor's degree education, moves have been made recently to make the graduation thesis (or research, or project) mandatory. This direction will be maintained, and discussions continued on the theme of approaches to verifying learning outcomes in a manner consistent with the academic features of each College.



In order to pursue learning in a systematic manner, it is crucial for students not to stumble at the foundation stage. The university will continue its work to develop learning support programs that complement foundational education. The commons which have been established on each campus will also be utilized as the university works to provide students with a sure footing in the foundational phase of their learning, and to extend their abilities.

The Student Union regards liberal arts education as a major component of learning at university. There is a need to clarify the positioning of liberal arts education within overall curriculum of each College, enhance class content in line with educational objectives, and sort out matters such as class sizes and methods. The Plenary Council confirmed that the university will review the outcomes of the 2012 reforms to liberal arts education and, taking into account the roles expected of higher education institutions into the future, work toward a further round of liberal arts education reforms around the year 2020.

2

Development of First-Year Education as the Foundation for Self-Directed, Pro-Active Learning

There have been wide-ranging discussions to date on approaches to first-year (freshman) education, including the need to en-

sure smooth transition from senior high school to university learning and establish motivation for learning at university, and the importance of first-year education is increasingly acknowledged. In the Plenary Council, discussion of this topic was pursued from the standpoint of education to build the foundations for self-directed, pro-active learning at university.

There is a need to devise learning styles involving collaboration with peers (and utilizing commons), in line with the educational characteristics of each College. It is important to develop modes of learning beyond the passive approach of attending lectures and taking notes. In the context of the capabilities that new students should acquire by graduation in four (or six) years' time (in other words, the capacity to function in wider society with one's career in mind), the learning style advanced in small-group education from first year, involving collaborating with peers to formulate solutions to problems, can foster the foundations for the skills students will need in wider society. The Plenary Council confirmed that consistent emphasis will be placed on small-group education at RU into the future. In addition, it acknowledged that the provision within small-group classes of course guidance and learning support attuned to career paths at a consistent standard across all Colleges and year levels, as recommended by the Student Union, is an important part of enhancing the quality of small-group education.

At the same time, it is necessary to work on motivating students and devising new teaching approaches in the lecture-based subjects positioned as core or foundation elements of undergraduate education, with a view to connecting these subjects with small-group education.

It goes without saying that in the course of advancing a variety of educational initiatives and providing support for students, it is crucial to take into account the current conditions, circumstances, and needs of students. In its pursuit of enhancements in first year education, the university will develop a multi-faceted understanding of student conditions through tools including the survey on student learning and growth implemented for the first time this academic year. Surveys of new enrollees this academic year suggest that many students have not developed habits of independent study by the time they enter university. The Plenary Council discussed and confirmed the importance, in light of these conditions, of enhancing first-year education designed to develop self-directed approaches to learning.

In line with these discussions, a variety of methods, including the aforementioned survey on student learning and growth, will be employed to gain a grasp of student realities.

On the issue of transition and motivation for learning at university, the Plenary Council discussed the importance of students learning together with others both at the same year level and beyond (peer learning), and accessing appropriate guidance from senior students and faculty/staff members (students). The Council confirmed that concrete support initiatives would be developed to ensure that these peer support and advising systems function in accordance with learning objectives and with appropriate timing. It also acknowledged the importance of the syllabus at the stage of making study choices, especially as a means to raise students' motivation to study through course selections with which they are satisfied, and confirmed that improvements would be made to tools such as manaba+R.

3

Cross-Cultural/Multi-Cultural Understanding and Academic Internationalization

Continuing on from last year, the Plenary Council discussed the further internationalization of academic programs at RU in this "global era," and approaches to the globalization of the campus as whole. The Student Union conducted its own analysis revealing that many students have a high level of interest in cross-cultural experiences an exchange, but a low degree of actual engagement in such activities. The Student Union suggested that this may be caused by factors such as inadequate language proficiency (especially output in the form of speaking ability) and lack of opportunities for exchange.

In the course of these discussions, the Plenary Council confirmed an approach whereby more opportunities would be created for students to encounter a variety of value outlooks both within and outside the classroom, and to pursue a diverse range of interaction, both between domestic and international students and among international students themselves. The university will advance initiatives, tailored to the

characteristics of each campus, designed to furnish opportunities for students to practice reading and speaking skills, which cannot be addressed fully in regular foreign language classes due to time constraints and other conditions, opportunities for international students to discuss their concerns and encounter a variety of student activities, and opportunities for domestic and international students to interact. Discussions are currently in progress on the new facilities of Beyond Borders Plaza (tentative title; hereafter, "BBP") and SALSA.

In regard to foreign language education, especially English language education, discussions underlined the fact that students' awareness and understanding of the aims of their learning enhances their motivation and also contributes to their sense of learning progress. It was confirmed that steps would be taken to clarify the goals of studying English and to present achievement objectives for the university English curriculum to students in a comprehensible manner for each subject and proficiency level. This organized clarification of learning objectives will also contribute to the task of standardizing content in each subject, an issue raised by the Student Union. In addition, initiatives will be developed within each College to promote the study of English (and other languages) outside class, including possibilities for using the aforementioned new facilities for interaction among students.

It is extremely valuable for students to gain a variety of experiences overseas in line with their individual interests, both in terms of their personal growth over the four (or six) years of undergraduate study, and because it places them outside the confines of the university and develops their capacity to function in wider society, enabling learning with an awareness of career opportunities in a broad sense.



RU already has many different study abroad programs, but the Plenary Council confirmed that steps would be taken to develop programs more accessible to students in terms of eligibility criteria and other conditions, as well as programs connected with major education in each College.

The Plenary Council also confirmed that internationalization of academic programs would be pursued not only through foreign language education and study abroad programs, but also through internationalization-oriented development of major education subjects and liberal arts subjects, and expansion of the range of subjects using foreign languages.

4

Development of Systems for Self-Directed, Pro-Active Learning through Curricular and Extra-Curricular Studies

The provision of support for students to become “independent learners” who pursue their studies in a self-directed, pro-active manner is a task not limited to first-year education. It is essential to formulate systems across all stages of the Bachelor degree program, and in both curricular and extra-curricular forums. In the course of discussions, the Student Union highlighted the limited availability of opportunities for undergraduate students to experience connections between what they have learned and the wider society in which they live, and asserted that motivation for self-directed learning could be enhanced through direct experience of how one’s learning is useful in wider society.

As noted briefly above, it is increasingly important to develop active learning methods that demand self-directed student engagement, rather than the traditional learning style in which students listen passively to lectures by their instructors. In a comprehensive university like ours, disciplinary differences across Colleges result in diversity not only the kinds of knowledge required, but also the learning styles adopted. It is therefore important to consider the desirable approaches to active learning, such as PBL (Problem-Based Learning), in line with the characteristics of each College. The Plenary Council confirmed that as well as developing educational methods such as connection of learning with the community and wider society and study abroad/overseas experience, efforts will be made to develop various academic systems to support these methods.

5

Giving Shape to the “Ritsumeikan Model of Learning” and Developing Commons

In past years the Student Union has proposed a student paradigm using the metaphor



of a tree: a student with “roots” of solid academic ability, a “trunk” of identity as a Ritsumeikan University student, numerous “branches” in the form of their various activities at university, leading to the “fruits” or “blossoms” of abundant individual attributes. Models for the ideal Ritsumeikan University student are naturally founded in the university’s educational ideals and the principles of the Ritsumeikan Charter, but discussions over the framework for the “Ritsumeikan Model of Learning,” have also established the objective of producing students who tackle learning tasks in a self-directed manner and take on challenges across borders in our globalized society. Various educational and student support policies are being developed in line with these models, and further work will be undertaken into the future.

Discussions are already underway with a view to giving more concrete shape to the Ritsumeikan Model of Learning, but in discussions with the Student Union in the Plenary Council, it was confirmed that in light of the distinctive educational features and learning priorities each College, and the characteristics of each of the three campuses, the university would proceed to develop and give concrete shape to the Ritsumeikan Model in conjunction with enhancement of learning support and utilization of commons. The university will continue to consult regarding the kinds of learning support services required and their effectiveness, taking into account campus characteristics, educational features of each College, and analysis of current student conditions.

In regard to common learning support initiatives across all Colleges, there is a need to develop systems outside of class to complement learning in the areas of academic writing and reading, and to supplement education on a range of foundational skills (information and literature searches, use of learning software and manaba+R, etc.). Moreover, in order to

promote the idea of “learning together with peers” as canvassed above, it will be crucial to foster and elevate the skills of students in peer support roles such as ES and Orientation Conductor. The ideas and significance of peer learning will be communicated to students, and support programs developed in areas including training for peer supporters. When advancing a systematic approach to learning, it is important to review learning outcomes and offer appropriate advice at each stage of the Bachelor degree program. Consideration will be given to approaches to advising in line with undergraduate educational practice, beginning with promoting wider utilization of the learning maps and career charts already in use. Furthermore, as part of this learning support, the university will sustain and enhance the initiatives to support foundational learning in specialist fields (such as mathematics learning advice, physics help, and biology/chemistry help programs) mentioned briefly above.

On all campuses including OIC, opened last academic year, “commons” have been developed as spaces for students to gather, interact, and learn together. The Plenary Council confirmed the importance, in the context of RU’s promotion of self-directed learning, of examining the functions, usage patterns, and human service dimensions of these commons, and designing learning to make use of them as spaces for out-of-class learning and group study, as well as for wider interaction. Out-of-class support for foreign language learning and international student support services will also be centered on the new commons known as BBP/SALSA, introduced above as facilities for the promotion of international exchange.

II Toward the Enhancement of Graduate School Education

Discussion at the Plenary Council led to confirmation of the following approaches and initiatives in relation to academic affairs in the Graduate Schools.

1

Significance and Directions of Graduate School Reform

In the Mid-Term Plan for Graduate School Reform under the R2020 Latter Phase Plan (Executive Board of Trustees, December 9, 2015), it was confirmed that academic reforms would be pursued in accordance with the three human resource development goals, and the graduate schools would be developed in a manner that contributes to the enrichment of Bachelor degree education and the enhancement of research.

The significance of the Graduate Schools at Ritsumeikan University lies both in the provision of opportunities for graduate students to undertake learning and research, and in the major role that graduate schools can play in enhancing research activity and enriching education programs at the Bachelor degree level. RU’s advancement of graduate-level academic activities in Graduate Schools across the fields of humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences elevates research quality and helps us to become a highly distinctive global research university.

In regard to enhancement of graduate education and elevation of research in the context of globalization, the R2020 latter phase plan has identified important priorities in internationalizing the Graduate Schools and bolstering the foundations for RU’s deployment as a global research university. The Graduate Student Council presented discussion points addressing support programs responding to educational internationalization, development of environments in which a diversity of graduate students can pursue their research and learning, and the provision of support for the activation of joint research projects and other activities transcending individual realms and fields of research. These and other matters will be addressed in the course of giving shape to graduate school programs into the future.

In regard to the enhancement of Bachelor degree education, graduate students are currently utilized in the provision of educational support to undergraduate students through their work as Teaching Assistants (TAs) in class, outside class, and in research laboratories and the like. These roles are significant from the perspective of graduate students’ own career development, and they will become even more sophisticated as more active learning formats such as PBL are introduced.

In regard to the future advancement of graduate education, the Plenary Council confirmed the following points taking into account its discussions held in the 2015 and 2016 academic years, and based on the R2020 latter phase plan, mid-term plan for the Graduate

Schools, Fourth-Phase Career Path Development Support Program, and tuition and student fee policies.

2

Advancement of Globalization

As globalization progresses, society expects universities to produce individuals capable of taking leadership roles in the international community. In regard to education in the Graduate Schools, the approach to globalization will give full consideration to the distinctive features of each field of research and also be informed by developments such as RU’s selection for government funding under the Top Global Universities project.

Assistance will be furnished in both curricular and extra-curricular spheres so that graduate students can utilize the various support systems and programs available and develop capabilities to enable them to play active roles in our globalized society. These initiatives will be developed while taking into account the various demands raised in the Plenary Council concerning the need to make it possible for a diverse range of graduate students (international students, working adults, students raising children, etc.) to pursue research and learning at RU.

3

Improvements to the Substance of Graduate Education

In accordance with the Basic Policy on Graduate School Educational Reform (Graduate School Committee, July 15, 2011), work has been advanced on the formulation of approaches to drafting the three basic policies, and improvement of coursework and research guidance. Building on this work, each Graduate School is now formulating and refining its human resource development goals and three basic policies. Initiatives targeting all graduate students include the introduction of research guidance plans to ensure planned implementation of research activities, and research ethics education in order for graduate students themselves to gain an awareness of the noble ideals of academic research and to pursue their research with a view to the elimination of improper conduct.

In the course of curricular reforms into the future, discussions will be held in regard to the three policies that give shape to educational objectives and take into account human resource development goals, and efforts will be made to develop curriculum maps for each Graduate School. The goal of these activities is to enhance the appeal of graduate studies and make education in the Graduate Schools even more substantial; they will thus also help to attract the required number of graduate students and to maintain and increase their quality.

4

Advancement of the Graduate School Career Path Development Support Program

The Graduate School Career Path Development Support Program began as the Doctoral Program Career Path Development Support Program in 2007, and has since helped graduate students acquire the abilities essential for research activity and to gain employment and other opportunities in their career path following completion. For graduate students in doctoral and integrated master’s/doctoral programs, the key is to formulate a clear pathway for one’s career after degree completion; it is also increasingly important to expand postdoctoral (PD) opportunities.

In the Fourth-Phase Graduate School Career Path Development Support Program, commenced in the 2016 academic year, systems to support research activities within Japan and to subsidize internships in doctoral programs were newly established in addition to the existing programs of subsidies for academic conference activities by students (master’s and doctoral), subsidies for practical research activities by master’s students, and research funds to promote international research activities in doctoral programs.

Greater efforts will be made from now on to strengthen organic linkages between the Graduate Student Career Path Support Center and the academic affairs of each Graduate School, with a view to ensuring that a diversity of graduate students (including international students, working adults, and students raising children) are able to form solid career paths toward employment and further study.

5

Exploring Models for Collaboration with Colleges, with Other Graduate Schools, and with Research Institutes and Centers

RU currently has 20 graduate schools, and work is underway to establish more new schools in the future, including a professional graduate school of teacher education. The opening up of new fields of research in the graduate schools helps to promote and enhance research at our university, and also makes the research undertaken by graduate students more sophisticated and 細分化. For this reason, there will be even more need in the future to extend collaboration between the graduate schools and the university’s research organizations, institutes, and centers, and use those collaborations to promote and enhance research.

At the same time as affording the respect naturally due to the individual autonomy of each student’s research activities, it is important to initiate joint research projects that transcend discrete realms and fields of research. The Executive Board of Trustees will work to enhance research activity even further through programs that enable graduate students to make full use of research commons and other environments for research-related interaction.

III Toward the Enrichment of Student Life

In the AY 2016 Plenary Council, the Student Union and university authorities pursued discussions based on a common understanding that “students should learn and grow through self-directed activities and interaction with a diverse range of others in all aspects of their curricular and extra-curricular life.” In-depth discussions were also held in regard to challenges identified by the Student Union in terms of enriching student life in line with globalization and the multi-campus arrangements arising from the opening of OIC in 2015.

Based on discussions in the Plenary Council and with each party thereto, the Executive Board of Trustees will prioritize the four challenges outlined below in the enrichment of student life from AY 2016 onward, and advance initiatives including specific programs to address each of the issues in the course of the R2020 latter phase plan. In order to push these initiatives forward, scholarship and subsidy systems will be reviewed and new systems instituted from the 2017 academic year.

1

Challenges in the Enrichment of Student Life

(1) Development of Environments that Support Diverse Student Learning and Enable the Pursuit of Safe, Secure, Comfortable and Healthy Learning and Student Life

(i) Development of diverse commons and refurbishment of facilities

On the Kinugasa Campus, by March 2018 earthquake-proofing of the Student Center will be undertaken, along with refurbishment of the first and second floors of the Student Center with a view to creating

interactive spaces (commons) for information dissemination across cultural, artistic, sporting, and other spheres of activity, and enabling exchange among students and with members of the local community. In addition, in order to maintain building coverage ratios the former library will be demolished and cleared by March 2017. These commons in the Student Center will be newly equipped with kitchens, which are in high demand from students and will furnish opportunities for interaction centered on culinary pursuits. In addition, sound-proof facilities in existing music practice spaces will be utilized to create a Music Hall (tentative title) to expand opportunities for performing arts groups.

Moreover, three spaces on the Kinugasa Campus (west plaza, central plaza, recreation plaza) have been developed in the course of campus improvement works to enhance amenity. There have also been issues in relation to the shortage of outdoor space for eating and relaxing on campus. This will be addressed by the development of an open plaza on the former library site, providing more space for students to spend time and share their activities with others. The use of this former library site as a space for student interaction and relaxation was discussed and developed taking into account the opinions of students themselves, solicited through workshops with the Student Union and various student activity groups. The space will be made available from April, 2017.

At BKC, construction of the Sport and Health Commons was completed in fall, 2016, and its use by the general student body is being phased in incrementally in two stages: the first in the latter half of AY 2016, and the second from AY 2017. The first phase will see facilities opened for use in official curricular and extra-curricular activities, while the second



*“Yunge” lounge space on the first floor of the Student Center (usage scheduled to commence in November 2017)
*This image was created at the planning stage in January 2017 and is subject to alteration

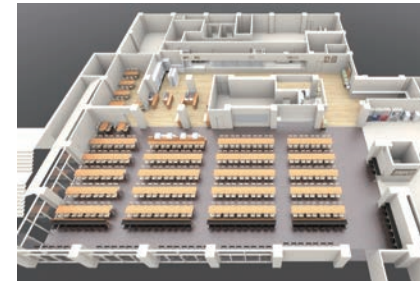
phase will involve promotion through events, trial usage, and the like. The four core services of the Sport and Health Commons (area service, program service, club service, liaison service) will be implemented from the second phase onward.

The BKC Quince Stadium will be officially accredited as a Type 4 sporting facility, allowing athletes’ performance to be quantified as official records. This is expected to contribute to education and human resource development as students gain an understanding of sports from a natural science perspective and learn how to apply theory in practice. It will also yield benefits in terms of enhancing athletic performance, responding to the sporting needs of ordinary students and faculty/staff members, and contributing to sports development and health promotion in the local community. The area in which Quince Stadium and the Sport and Health Commons are located has been designated as the BKC Front Zone, and discussions will be pursued over how to make this zone a unified, attractive hub for initiatives such as (1) enhancement of sporting activities, (2) promotion of sports, and (3) exchange with the local community. Further consideration will also be given to relocating the student facilities on the second floor of BKC Central Arc to Co-Learning House III and expanding the floor space allocated to them, as well as developing the learning commons on the first floor of Across Wing.

At OIC, the university is aware of the dangers involved in using indoor areas of the Arena in high-temperature conditions in summer, and will install air-conditioning facilities to provide an environment in which activities can be undertaken safely.

(ii) Improvement and enrichment of dining environments

As part of the AY 2017 refurbishment of the Zonshinkan on Kinugasa Campus, the seating capacity of the basement dining hall will be increased from the current 450 to 500. A variety of dining environments will be provided beyond indoor cafeterias, such as the Lunch Street (following on from the BKC Lunch Street) that was launched on a trial basis at OIC in the second half of this academic year, and the new café to be opened in the BKC Sport and Health Commons. The



Renewal of Zonshinkan Cafeteria (scheduled to re-open in December 2017)
*This image was created by the Ritsumeikan Co-op at the planning stage in January 2017 and is subject to alteration

university is also working with the Ritsumeikan Co-op to develop food menus in response to globalization. Specifically, the Co-op is planning to obtain “Muslim Friendly” accreditation to coincide with the opening of the revamped Zonshinkan basement dining hall in AY 2017.

(iii) Advancement of campus-wide no-smoking policy

In regard to the implementation of a campus-wide no-smoking policy, rather than debating the policy itself, the Student Union requested that the Executive Board of Trustees concentrate on pursuing thoroughgoing measures to prevent passive smoking. The Graduate Student Council suggested that the campus-wide no-smoking policy has resulted in an upsurge in smoking in secluded areas of campus and surrounding precincts, leading to a rise in passive smoking. On this basis it proposed that the no-smoking policy be replaced by designated smoking areas.

In light of the steady decrease in smoking rates among undergraduate students as a result of the campus-wide no-smoking policy, the Executive Board of Trustees will continue the policy as well as implementing campaigns on smoking etiquette and quit-smoking initiatives. In concrete terms, more emphasis will be placed on activities accessible to large numbers of non-smokers with the aim of creating a clean, smoke-free campus environment under the slogan: “100% SmokeFree RITSUMEIKAN.”

(iv) Implementation of student life seminars

for safe, secure, and healthy living

Recently, the university authorities have been consulted on a variety of problems arising in the course of student life, including theft, traffic accidents, and incidents at eating and drinking establishments. The Board of Trustees has conducted awareness-raising activities in relation to these problems in student life through seminars on timely individual topics. From AY 2017, the opportunities for more systematic, planned information provision to individual students and extra-curricular activity groups will be enhanced through a series of Student Life Seminars designed to promote safety, security, and good health.

(2) Supporting Students to Tackle Challenges Beyond Borders

(i) Expansion and priority strengthening of student fields of activity: Support for enhancement and revitalization of extra-curricular pursuits

The fields of student activity extend from clubs and circles to community development and revitalization in collaboration with community groups, volunteering, international cooperation, and a range of other activities in the wider community and internationally. In order to enable more students to pursue such activities and to enrich the content thereof, RU is developing extra-curricular programs that allow students to deepen their awareness of social issues and build collaborative learning relationships.

A review has been undertaken of the student growth support scholarship system that provides support for such activities, and new scholarship and subsidy programs will begin operation in AY 2017 (see Table 2). Improvements will be made to ensure that messages concerning desired approaches to curricular and extra-curricular study are communicated in a comprehensible manner from the university/Colleges to students, application processes are simplified, and post-award activities and budgetary spending are manageable.

In conjunction with the scholarship pro-

grams, with a view to fostering more enriched and dynamic activities, enhancements will be made to “soft” forms of support such as assistance for organizational management and community-building, and provision of opportunities for scholarship recipients to showcase their achievements and interact.

(2) Selection of and support for priority enhancement clubs

From AY 2012, while maintaining appropriate support for all extra-curricular activity groups, the university has also been selecting certain clubs for priority enhancement. Such clubs are those which are active at the top level nationally, and whose activities help to cultivate the identity of the Ritsumeikan Academy. The support offered to date is considered the first phase, and will be sustained into a second phase from AY 2017, with a new enhancement policy formulated and some adjustments made to the clubs selected for enhancement.

(iii) Support for student growth through participation in the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics

In 2020, Tokyo will host the Olympics and Paralympics, a major celebration of sports and culture. This event is an opportunity to garner the attention of wider society and propel greater international exchange, and RU will develop ways to foster student growth through it. In concrete terms, in addition to providing enhancement programs for competitive student athletes, the university will establish scholarship/subsidy programs open to all students.

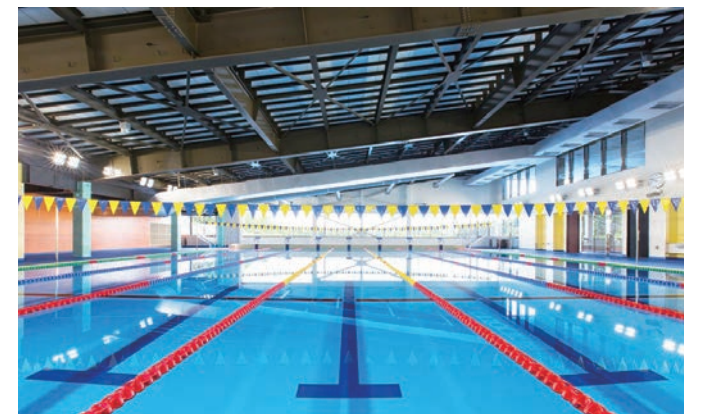
In this way, support will be furnished for activities that lead to internationalization and social engagement through a variety of modes of participation in the Olympics, Paralympics, cultural programs and related events. Support will also be advanced for the promotion of sports for the disabled and publicity initiatives to foster a sense of inclusiveness through extra-curricular activities across the whole Ritsumeikan Academy.



East plaza redevelopment on former library site (usage scheduled to commence in April 2017)
*This image was created at the planning stage in December 2016 and is subject to alteration



Exterior of the Sport and Health Commons (completed in September 2016)



Indoor pool in the Sport and Health Commons (completed in September 2016)

(3) Fostering Interaction in a Diverse Student Body; Creating and Activating Diverse Communities

(i) Promoting student interaction to generate new activities and learning opportunities

The strength of our university lies in the diversity of our students and activities. It is considered crucial in the context of the university's "diversity" and "multicultural environment" to treat student life in both its curricular and extra-curricular dimensions as a learning opportunity, and to create environments in which a diversity of students interact and grow together. Informed by this idea, assistance has been furnished recently for the formation of new learning communities, and many new communities have been born. Concrete examples include both the autonomous development of communities by students, and communities created through collaboration between students and the university authorities, such as the Micronesia RPG Challenge and Pekerechupu. Support will be provided not only to generate more new communities, but also to sustain the growth of those that are already active.

Another important challenge is to provide new opportunities for mutual growth and community-building in areas such as interaction between international and domestic students, a particular challenge identified by the Student Union. Taking into account patterns of student activity in a multi-campus environment and the characteristics of each campus, support will be offered to students pro-actively planning and implementing cross-cultural exchange activities. A new subsidy program to promote such cross-cultural exchange will be introduced from AY 2017.

(ii) Shuttle bus services to promote inter-campus learning and extra-curricular activities

Since the opening of OIC in 2015, shuttle bus services have been operating across the three campuses. In AY 2015 the Student Union conducted a survey of extra-curricular activity groups regarding shuttle bus services, and the timetable for these services was revised in AY2016 on the basis of the survey results.

The university will continue to take into account student usage patterns and needs as it seeks to optimize the provision of inter-campus travel services for learning and extra-curricular activities. When considering future modes of extracurricular activity in our multi-campus university, one important question is what approach to take to developing environments and providing support for students both to pursue activities on the campus at which their College is located, and to move across different campuses for those activities. The Executive Board of Trustees and the Student Union share the same awareness of this issue, and will continue to work together to ascertain actual student conditions and explore

and discuss support strategies.

(iii) Activation of extra-curricular activities at OIC

The Student Union pointed out that the rate of participation in extra-curricular activities among students at OIC is relatively low compared to other campuses. The Executive Board of Trustees will move promptly to assess and analyze this situation and to formulate and implement support appropriate to the conditions at OIC, such as start-up assistance for new clubs and circles, and assistance for generating new forms of extra-curricular activity reflecting the distinctive features of OIC, such as collaboration with companies and local communities.

(4) Enriching Support for Student Life and Growth through Balance between Curricular and Extra-Curricular Pursuits

(i) Support for student growth through balance between curricular and extra-curricular pursuits

Extra-curricular activities furnish important opportunities for learning that fosters capacities of self-directed thinking and action, collaboration, and management. The Executive Board of Trustees will enhance the support furnished to help students to connect their learning across curricular and extra-curricular spheres and grow into self-directed learners. Concretely, it will provide support that takes into account individual student circumstances and needs in relation to self-management of time and tasks to achieve balance between curricular and extra-curricular pursuits, and the development of managerial and organizational structures so that extra-curricular activity groups can be operated toward the achievement of their objectives. Specific support methods will include self-evaluation sheets, peer support programs and other tools enhancing access to consultation services and periodic support, and the implementation of training sessions on organizational management. These programs will be developed incrementally from AY 2017 through AY 2020.

Furthermore, in the course of strengthening support for extra-curricular activity groups, a review will be undertaken of the current system of club leaders, deputy leaders, and advisors.

(ii) Enhancement of peer support and support for diverse students

In April 2016, the Disabled Students Support Office and Special Needs Support Office were merged into a new Disability Resource Center, which will provide more holistic support tailored to students' needs. Through a network that also encompasses such organs as the Student Support Room and Medical Service Center, the university will continue to develop environments that support a diversity of student needs.

Peer support approaches have been

introduced in these areas, and are generating mutual interactive learning among students. Into the future, group activities, project work and other peer support-based initiatives will be introduced across more areas as the university develops environments in which students can support and learn from one another.

2 Undergraduate Student Scholarship and Subsidy Programs for AY 2017 and Beyond

Following confirmation by the Plenary Council in AY 2011, the Executive Board of Trustees has been operating the current scholarship programs since AY 2012. The budget for financial support scholarship programs has been expanded over this period in light of economic conditions. The entire university has been involved in debate and discussion on the outcomes of the current scholarship and subsidy programs and the types of programs to be offered from AY 2017 onward. These discussions have taken into account the ongoing financial hardship experienced by students' families, the need to create simple programs that are easily understood by students, and the objective of promoting an environment in which a diversity of students come together to learn—a distinctive feature of our university.

These discussions have guided the development of a program framework with three major pillars: (1) further promotion of diverse student learning through curricular and extra-curricular activities; (2) promotion of global learning in multicultural settings, and (3) development of an environment in which students can learn free from financial insecurity. The basic framework is set out in the table below.

(1) Scholarships associated with the Ritsumeikan Model of Learning

These are divided into "scholarships" for individual students, and "subsidies" for groups. They will support students' growth into independent learners in line with individual capabilities and interests. New programs to be introduced include the +R Challenge Scholarship which encourages students in undergraduate programs to develop problem consciousness and advance it through the pursuit of study topics, and the +R Alumni Association Future Human Resources Scholarship, provided with the assistance of the Ritsumeikan University Alumni Association, which supports students working on activities to achieve goals related to contributing to wider society through engagement outside the campus.

(2) Scholarships associated with the Ritsumeikan Global Initiative

These scholarships will support both inbound international students and students of Ritsumeikan University studying abroad, as well as supporting international exchange activities on campus and contributing to

the internationalization of the university as a whole. Currently under consideration is the establishment of BBP, international exchange commons on each campus designed to create a campus environment for multicultural coexistence. It is expected that BBP will be used for self-directed, pro-active cross-cultural exchange activities by students in a variety of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular settings, and for active language learning outside class. The new Cross-Cultural Exchange Subsidy Program will help develop such an environment by supporting students' diverse

exchange activities.

(3) Financial Support Scholarships

The university will continue to pursue the policy of raising the scholarship award rate for all students within the category considered by the university to be "in need of financial support" (those with household incomes of 4 million yen or less [taxable incomes of 197 million or less]), while seeking to provide most students from households with incomes of 3.29 million or less (considered by the Japan Student Services Organization to be "effective

zero-income" households) with scholarships to the full value of second semester tuition. University surveys of parents of newly-enrolling students reveal that there is still a significant proportion of students enrolling from households in the 4 million yen income bracket, and the Student Union has called for the current levels of support to be maintained. In response, the decision has been taken to continue offering financial support scholarship programs at the same levels as applied up to AY 2016.

Table 2 Overview of scholarships and subsidies for AY 2017 and beyond

Global Initiative	Outbound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Abroad Challenge Scholarship Study Abroad Support Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage student participation in and completion of study abroad programs Support students expected to experience difficulty in participating or continuing to participate in study abroad programs for financial reasons
	Inbound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term International Student Scholarship Tuition reduction for international students (incl. MEXT, government-sponsored, private, DUDP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage non-degree-seeking international students seeking to engage actively in international exchange through curricular or co-curricular programs at RU Alleviate the financial burden on outstanding international students by reducing or exempting them from tuition fees
	Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-Cultural Exchange Subsidy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support students planning and implementing cross-cultural exchange programs pro-actively and autonomously
Ritsumeikan Model of Learning	Academic performance / Activity support (individuals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saionji Memorial Scholarship (for outstanding academic performance) +R Challenge Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage students applying themselves to curricular studies at undergraduate level and achieving outstanding academic grades Encourage students who through their undergraduate studies develop problem consciousness and advance it through the pursuit of specific study topics
	Curricular activity support (groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Community Off-Campus Activities Scholarship (curricular and related programs) Small-Group Education Promotion Subsidy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cover a portion of expenses incurred by students conducting domestic/international surveys, exchange with other universities, academic conference presentations, etc., in connection with undergraduate classes Subsidize the costs of printing presentation materials, hosting seminar conferences and other events, and conducting seminar retreats in the course of undergraduate small-group education
	Extra-curricular activities (individuals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +R Alumni Association Future Human Resources Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage students working on activities to achieve goals related to contributing to wider society through engagement outside the campus
	Extra-curricular activities (groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Community Development Scholarship (Extra-curricular Activities) [tentative title] Learning Community Development Scholarship (Extra-curricular Programs) Learning Community Subsidy for First-year Education Support Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the formation of diverse learning groups in extra-curricular settings on and off campus Subsidize expenses necessary for groups or individual students to participate in programs and other universities within and outside Japan and university programs for international exchange and cross-cultural exchange Support student organizations engaged in support for first-year education
	Competitive certification examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saionji Memorial Scholarship (for competitive certification examinations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commend students with clear career objectives who have passed challenging examinations, and encourage them to be role models for other students
	Extra-curricular activities: Olympics, Paralympics, culture and arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Athlete/Creator Development Scholarship Special Entrance Examination for Applicants with Outstanding Sports Ability Special Entrance Examination for Applicants with Outstanding Cultural/Artistic Ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support students aiming for the top domestic and international levels in sports, culture/arts, and research Select those with especially high abilities in sports and promote the enhancement and activation of sporting pursuits at RU Select those with especially high proficiencies in cultural and artistic pursuits and promote the enhancement and activation of those pursuits at RU
	Extra-curricular activity group support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra-curricular Activity Enhancement/Activation Subsidy 	
Financial Support	Financial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Support Grant Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support students experiencing hardship in their studies for financial reasons
	Support for enrollees from remote areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Scholarship for Enrollees from Beyond the Kinki Region (prospective students) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support applicants with a strong desire to enroll in RU from outside the Kinki region to ensure that their enrollment is not impeded by financial hardship
	Support for students experiencing sudden change in household finances, disaster victims, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ritsumeikan University Tuition Reduction for Students in Hardship due to Natural Disasters Emergency Enrollment Grant Scholarship (prospective students) Graduate School Scholarship for Sudden Change in Household Financial Circumstances (graduate students) Parents Association Scholarship for Sudden Change in Household Financial Circumstances Parents Association Disaster Support Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support undergraduate and graduate students experiencing hardship in their studies due to a natural disaster (for which an emergency disaster headquarters has been established) Support prospective students / successful applicants experiencing hardship in payment of tuition and other enrollment expenses due to sudden change in household finances or natural disaster Support graduate students struggling to continue their studies due to sudden change in household finances or natural disaster Support from the Parents Association of Student Education Assistance for undergraduate students experiencing hardship in their studies due to sudden change in household finances Support from the Parents Association of Student Education Assistance for undergraduate students experiencing hardship in their studies due to natural disaster

IV Tuition and Financial Policies

1

Basic Financial Management Policy to Underpin Qualitative Improvements in Education and Research

The basic principle of the university's tuition and financial management policies is to develop educational systems and environments to promote students' self-directed learning and growth, to enhance scholarship programs, and to promote improvements in the quality of educational and research while maintaining a healthy financial position in the long terms and taking into account the "weight of tuition." This outlook has informed the development of the following five-point basic policy on financial management policies for the R2020 latter phase.

Financial management policy for R2020 latter phase

i) We will establish policy advancement budgets corresponding to annual operational plans based on the outline of the R2020 latter phase framework plan, and provide financial support for the promotion of initiatives that aim to improve the quality of education and research.

ii) Approaching every established school as a basic unit, we will keep expenditures within the scope of revenue while retaining funds set aside for future facility replacements or up-grades for each division.

iii) With regard to new academic initiatives (establishment of new programs, systems, colleges, etc.), assuming there is evidence that suggests these are meaningful and required for the Ritsumeikan Academy as a comprehensive private academy, we will, as a rule, clearly identify financial resources to be allocated to such initiatives, including such measures as reclassification of existing budgets and revenue increases.

iv) To ensure sustainable pursuit of academic affairs and academy development, we will verify whether or not financial expenditures effectively contribute to qualitative improvements, and develop a framework that reflects these findings into operational plans and budget plans.

v) In addition to the active intake of students (i.e., recruitment of enrollees), we will make every effort to bolster the management of the Academy while taking into account the weight of tuition. We will continue to position policies to secure revenue outside of tuition and fees and policies to streamline operations and reduce expenditures as priority issues for financial management, and strive to further advance these policies.

2

Tuition Policy for AY 2017 Enrollees

In regard to tuition fees, the Executive Board of Trustees pursued discussions with the parties to the Plenary Council taking into account the increasingly diverse situations of students and growing polarization of household income levels, and the discussions over academic affairs and scholarship policies in the context of the R2020 latter phase plan. Informed by the basic financial management policy, the Executive Board of Trustees has been considering specific content and financial resources for the priority measures for Ritsumeikan University that were established in the process of formulating the R2020 latter phase plan framework (see Figure 1), but has now determined not to finance these measures through revised tuition fees, but rather to do so by re-allocating existing expenditure budgets. This means that the existing tuition policy will continue to apply from AY 2017, and tuition amounts for AY 2017 enrollees will remain the same as for AY 2016 enrollees (no revision).

3

Tuition Policy as part of Graduate Schools Policy

In response to discussions at the AY 2011 Plenary Council, the Executive Board of Trustees positioned graduate schools policy as a priority issue in the R2020 latter phase, and decided to reduce tuition levels in master's and integrated master's/doctoral (years 1 and 2) programs in AY 2017. The Graduate Student Council and Student Union welcomed these reductions, but also stated that they were not necessarily in agreement with the accompanying reduction in scholarships, and that in the context of graduate student policy it was important to raise the quality of graduate students and academic programs as well as to secure sufficient student numbers. The Executive Board of Trustees will advance graduate school policy that leads to qualitative improvement of undergraduate education and enhancement of research, and plans to evaluate the progress of its policy in AY 2017/2018 from the perspective of both quantity and quality of graduate school education. The decision has also been taken to continue until AY 2020 with the so-called "500,000 yen tuition" for doctoral programs and integrated master's/doctoral programs (third year and above), in conjunction with the career path development support programs.

4

AY 2018 Tuition Revision Formula

In regard to tuition for AY 2018 enrollees, while basic tuition fee levels will remain the

same, the Executive Board of Trustees has decided to raise the factor used in the tuition formula to take account of consumer price increases from 0.5 to 1.0. The Executive Board of Trustees justified this decision by referring to the ongoing difficulty in resolving the "two-fold structural inconsistency" in which private educational institutions are placed, and explaining that advancing the priority programs and other educational improvements and innovations while not raising the basic tuition levels would demand even more rigorous financial management in the R2020 latter phase, and that there was thus no choice but revise the tuition formula to meet expenditure increases resulting from rising prices.

The Faculty/Staff Union responded by declaring that it could not support this change as the Executive Board of Trustees has provided no financial outlook and no concrete financial justification for the rate change. The Student Union acknowledged that expenditure was necessary in order to enhance learning, but also pointed out the importance of maintaining and expanding scholarship programs in line with students' household financial conditions, and working to secure more income from external sources.

The Executive Board of Trustees declared that it would further strengthen efforts to secure income from sources other than student fee revenue, including government subsidies for education/research enhancement, partnerships with industry, donations and other mid to long-term initiatives, in the context of the revenue strengthening and expenditure reduction policies established under the basic policy for financial management.

5

Tuition Proposals for AY 2019 and Beyond

From now on, it will be necessary to closely assess changes in the competitive environment in which universities operate, the impact of stricter regulation of enrollment quotas, and the progress of graduate school policies and other programs. It is possible that policies on academic affairs and students support may need to be revised during the R2020 latter phase in line with changing social conditions and operational progress, and if so, it will be necessary to consider response strategies including financial affairs. This understanding informed the Executive Board of Trustees' decision to propose tuition up to AY 2018, a time-frame for which the general outlook is known. A proposal concerning tuition for AY 2019 and beyond will be tabled around AY 2018.

V The Future of the Plenary Council

Established in 1948, the Plenary Council has operated for many years as a consultative body with student involvement based on Ritsumeikan's principle of governance by all constituents. Up to the mid-1970s, rather than being held periodically every few academic years, the Council was held whenever a revision of tuition fees was proposed, with the revision coming into effect the following academic year. It was at the AY 1979 Plenary Council that a formula was proposed entailing revision of tuition fee levels based on the rate of improvement in academic conditions over a four-year period, plus percentage increase in the consumer price index. In line with this tuition fee revision formula, the Council was held every four years thereafter up to AY 2011.

In line with this historical development, the Plenary Council was scheduled to be held in AY 2015. However, the need arose to pursue discussions on both the R2020 latter phase plan and tuition fee revision formulas in this same academic year, while taking into account various issues within the university as well as policy developments in the national education ministry. The Executive Board of Trustees was unable to formulate its policies by the end of the 2015 academic year, and the General Assembly of the Plenary Council thus had to be postponed. In light of this outcome, together with the fact that the tuition fee proposals were made for only the two years up to AY 2018, the parties to the Plenary Council engaged in discussion on the form that future Plenary Councils might take.

In these discussions it was re-affirmed that the Plenary Council is an important system for RU in light of the university's educational ideals and the historical achievements of the Council to date. On this basis it was confirmed that the official rules of the Plenary Council would be maintained in their current form.

It has also become clear, however, that some problems have emerged in terms of how the Council is operated under current student conditions and other circumstances. The Student Union declared that the current format used in this Council does not reflect the conditions and needs of students and the Student Union itself. This format involves the various parties to the Plenary Council each reviewing achievements and challenges in regard to the matters confirmed at the previous Council, and identifying points for discussion at the next Council in relation to the operating environment, academic affairs, student life, and tuition and financial affairs. These discussions do not always correspond with the interests and concerns of students themselves, and they entail a heavy workload as it takes considerable time to build up each discussion point.

Taking into account these issues, the Plenary Council has agreed to pursue the following three improvements to the Council's mode of operation.

(1) Rather than having each party raise discussion points in relation to all issues, the party tabling the issue shall be responsible for explaining it and proposing discussion points, in response to which the applicable parties shall state their opinions and views.

(2) Channels and forums for discussion such as discussion meetings shall be created with respect for the concerns and interests of current students, such as problems and demands for improvement emerging from everyday student life.

(3) The Executive Board of Trustees shall pro-actively introduce a variety of methods for the central Student Union and a variety of other students to participate and engage in the processes of university and campus development.

In regard to the operation cycle of the Plenary Council, each party expressed different views, and a conclusion could not be reached. However, the parties concurred on the necessity of holding the Plenary Council when university-wide tuition proposals are made, and using it to discuss proposals from the Executive Board of Trustees concerning the policies for academic affairs, student support, and financial affairs pertaining to the proposal. For this reason, it was confirmed that the next Plenary Council would be held in AY 2018, when a proposal for tuition from AY 2019 onward is tabled.

The following points were confirmed in regard to the Plenary Council itself, based on discussion among the parties and on the assumption that the operational changes stated above are made.

● In light of the significance of and roles played by the Plenary Council to date, the rules of the Council shall not be amended, and the Council shall be held as usual.

● The Plenary Council shall involve discussion and decisions by the four parties, while respecting the intentions and autonomy of the Student Union. The Council shall be held at least when the Executive Board of Trustees tables a university-wide tuition proposal, and the next occasion shall be in AY 2018, when the proposal for tuition to apply from AY 2019 is made.

● A decision was not reached regarding the Plenary Council's operational cycle, so this issue shall be the subject of ongoing discussion leading to the AY 2018 Plenary Council.

● A variety of discussion channels and opportunities for participation and engagement by a diversity of students shall be established, taking into account the concerns and interests of students.

● At least one Plenary Council Representatives' Meeting shall be held each academic year.

■ January 25, 2017

Chancellor, The Ritsumeikan Trust

Chair, Central Standing Committee, Ritsumeikan University Student Union

President, Ritsumeikan University Graduate Student Council

Executive Committee Chair, Ritsumeikan University Faculty and Staff Union

Executive Director, Ritsumeikan Cooperative (observer)



VI Tuition and Financial Policies (alphabetical order)

Academic Affairs Discussion Meetings

See “Discussion Meetings / Joint Discussion Meetings.”

Academic Guidelines

The university has been working to improve undergraduate (Bachelor degree) education in a learner-centered manner with a view to achieving the educational objectives of each College. The current Academic Guidelines, confirmed in AY 2014, aim to raise the quality of teaching and learning through the establishment of systematic curricula for the realization of human resource development goals and educational objectives, enhancement of specialized small-group education at each year level, implementation of first-year education aimed to effect a shift to university-level learning, clarification of the core subjects and major foundation subjects in each College, educational quality assurance and enhancement in response to globalization, and the teaching practices, sharing of educational activities, and improvements (FD activities) required in order to realize these aims.

Academic Writing

The ability to write academically, fostered through acquisition of skills such as reading and interpreting of texts, conceptualizing, verifying information, and generating ideas.

Admission Policy

A basic policy on what kinds of abilities, qualities and attitudes are required of students enrolling in the university.

Beyond Borders Plaza (BBP)

One objective of the R2020 Plan is to use curricular and extra-curricular learning to cultivate students with the multi-cultural collaborative capacity to forge their path in global society and collaborate with others to resolve problems. There are plans to create systems for learning outside class for students who wish to interact and learn together with their domestic and international peers on campus, and those who wish to concentrate on their foreign language studies, with the support of faculty/staff members and peer support students. (No special facilities will be put into place at OIC, as the entire campus is treated as a commons.)

Campus Discussion Meetings

Meetings attended by undergraduate and graduate students and related divisions of the university affiliated with each campus, where substantive opinions are exchanged on the challenges and demands specific to the campus in question.

Career Path Development Support Project

A system in place at RU to support the career paths (employment/further study) of graduate students, linked organically to the admissions,

academic affairs, career development, and scholarship programs of the graduate schools as a whole.

Commons

At RU, spaces that function to foster learning communities are known as “learning commons.” Several of these have been developed, including Piara at the Library and the Peer Learning Studio and Crecore at BKC. At OIC, opened in April 2015, the entire campus has been positioned as a “place of learning” and a variety of commons have been established. The R2020 Plan committed to developing commons as environments to support mutual learning and the development of learning capabilities in groups and communities of students with diverse identities. Other types of commons being developed include sports and health commons (BKC) and research commons (Kinugasa and OIC).

Curriculum Policy

A basic policy on what kinds of educational programs to offer in order to achieve educational objectives, what educational content and methods to use, and how to evaluate students’ learning outcomes.

Diploma Policy

A basic policy that sets out the conditions to be fulfilled in order for students to be judged to have achieved the educational objectives and be awarded their academic degree.

Disability Resource Center

In September 2006, a Disabled Students Support Office was established in order to deliver support for student with disabilities. After the establishment in April 2011 of a Special Needs Support Office focused on support for developmental disabilities, the Disabled Students Support Office focused its services on students with physical disabilities. In April 2016, these two offices were amalgamated into the new Disability Resource Center, which offers comprehensive support for students with physical, developmental, and other disabilities.

Discussion Meetings / Joint Discussion Meetings

Discussion Meetings involve consultation on specific demands and exchange of opinions on matters requiring improvement. For example, Financial Affairs Division Discussion Meetings deal with tuition fees, Student Affairs Division Discussion Meetings deal with student life matters, Academic Affairs Division Discussion Meetings deal with academic issues, and so on.

Educational Objectives

Concrete statements on the abilities students are expected to acquire by the time of graduation, in order for them to achieve the human resource development goals when they

go out into wider society as graduates.

ES (Educational Supporters)

Undergraduate students who provide support for instructors and other students in class. By supporting both instructors and students through assistance with group work in class and responding to questions from students, Educational Supporters play important roles in ensuring that classes proceed smoothly and that more effective learning outcomes are generated. These support activities are also an opportunity for Educational Supporters themselves to engage in specialized learning and cultivate broader knowledge and skills.

Executive Board of Trustees

Ritsumeikan University is established and operated by the Ritsumeikan Trust, and the key organ for determining the Trust’s operations is the Board of Trustees. The daily operations of the Board of Trustees are carried out by an Executive Board of Trustees, composed of the Chairman of the Board, the Chancellor, the Deputy Chairman, Vice Chancellors, Executive Trustees, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Vice Presidents (Trustees), and Deans of the Colleges of Ritsumeikan University and Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (Trustees).

Financial Affairs Division Discussion Meetings

See “Discussion Meetings / Joint Discussion Meetings.”

Human Resource Development Goals: 3 Policies

These Goals state what kinds of human resources each College / Graduate School aims to produce for society, based on its education and research ideals. They indicate the directions to be taken in education at the College / Graduate School, and the capabilities to be acquired in future by students graduating from / completing its degree programs.

Joint Discussion Meetings

See “Discussion Meetings / Joint Discussion Meetings.”

manaba+R

manaba+R is a system introduced from AY 2013 in order to support teaching and learning using online tools. The system, which is used both inside and outside class, has a variety of functions including communication (questionnaires, bulletin boards, etc.), submission of quizzes and reports, provision of teaching resources and materials, and project activities.

Mathematics Learning Advice, Physics Help, Biology/Chemistry Help Programs

These programs provide spaces for students struggling with class and assignment content, seminar exercises, and study methods in sci-

ence fields to pursue self-directed learning, obtain advice on report-writing, and study together in groups. They also provide consultations on mathematics for foundational statistics in the College of Economics and mathematics required for studies in the College of Sport and Health Science. They are staffed by lecturers, TAs, and ESs who can provide attentive explanations and advice. Their aim is for students themselves to extend their capabilities in areas fundamental to their major studies, through discussion with instructors and other students.

Micronesia RPG (Ritsumeikan Project in Globalization) Challenge

A PBL program in which students formulate solutions to waste disposal problems on the island of Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia. Launched in AY 2016.

Muslim Friendly Accreditation

This accreditation system has been created as a Halal standard applicable in Japan, a non-Muslim country. The Cafeteria at APU (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University) has obtained accreditation from the NPO Nippon Asia Halal Association

PBL (Project Based Learning)

Project Based Learning is a type of active learning that involves solving problems.

Peer Learning

Support activities provided by fellow students. Systems that enable students to help one another are expected to lead to growth not only for the students receiving support, but for those providing it as well.

Peer Support Groups

Student groups that provide support for class operation in foundation seminars and small-group subjects, and help new students adjust smoothly to university student life (Orientation Conductor activities). Other groups include international student support groups and organizations (TISA, Padi, etc.) and international exchange / language learning support organizations (Mairu, SUP, etc.), bringing the total number of students engaged in peer support activities to around 3,600.

Pekerechupu

A student group that seeks to promote understanding of culture of the Ainu indigenous people, cultural coexistence, and improvements to the status of Ainu people. Founded AY 2015.

Plenary Council Representatives’ Meeting

In addition to the full Plenary Council format, Representatives’ Meetings and Expanded Representatives’ Meetings are held several times a year, at which a small number of rep-

resentatives of the four parties to the Plenary Council discuss specific issues.

Postdoctoral Fellows (PD)

Specialist research positions in which post-doctoral researchers (those who have been awarded a doctoral degree) engage in duties such as advancement of research projects and research support work. People in these positions who are under the age of 35 as of April 1 in the academic year of employment can use the official title of Postdoctoral Fellow.

Research Commons

RU has established research commons as spaces for research exchange among graduate students, including group discussions, joint research, and sharing and dissemination of research findings both within and outside their own Graduate Schools.

Ritsumeikan Learning Forest Project

A project by the Student Union designed to formulate a model of university learning in which students’ growth is likened to the growth of a living tree. As shown in Figure 3, the model expresses the idea of student growth and includes all the elements necessary for that growth: the roots are sound academic abilities, the trunk is identity, the branches are activities, and the flowers and fruit are skills.

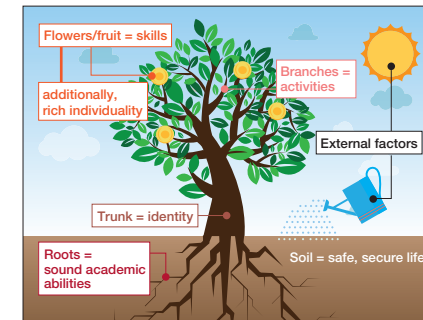


Figure 3

Ritsumeikan Model of Learning

With a view to actualizing the “advancement of self-directed learning in diverse communities,” the R2020 Plan aims to establish a learning style through which learners can both cultivate specialized knowledge and extend their capacity to learn in a self-directed manner across borders. This learning style is known as the Ritsumeikan Model of Learning.

Special Needs Support Office

Established in April 2011 to provide support for students with developmental disabilities and the like. Amalgamated in April 2016 with the Disabled Students Support Office to form the Disability Resource Center.

Stricter Regulation of Enrollment Quotas

The government’s university establishment standards require that “universities shall man-

age the number of students enrolled correctly in accordance with enrollment quotas, in order to guarantee an appropriate educational environment.” To give effect to this requirement, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology and the Promotion and Mutual Aid Corporation for Private Schools of Japan recently lowered the percentage by which enrollment quotas could be exceeded under the standards for approval of undergraduate program establishment and standards for non-disbursement of private university operating subsidies.

Study Time in Proportion with Credit

The government’s university establishment standards stipulate that 45 hours of study are required for one course credit. This is made up of the time in which instructors teach in class (15 hours) plus the time that students spend on pre- and post-class preparation and revision outside class (30 hours).

Survey on Student Learning and Growth

A survey of all undergraduate students, conducted for the first time in AY 2016, with the aim of ascertaining study processes, learning experiences, and learning outcomes through the subjective responses of students, and making improvements in undergraduate curricula, class content, and learning and teaching methods.

TA (Teaching Assistant)

TAs are graduate students who provide support for classes and other educational activities at RU. The TA system aims to (i) enhance education at RU through the TAs working together with instructors to supplement and assist educational activities, and (ii) contribute to TAs’ own career development by providing experience that improves their educational abilities.

Twofold Structural Inconsistency

Public funding of private universities in Japan entails two structural contradictions. (1) Despite the fact that education is a public good, public expenditure on education in Japan is low, and 65% of spending on higher education is from private sources: more than twice the OECD average. (2) Furthermore, despite the fact that private universities (educational corporations) provide public education in the same way as national universities, public subsidies to private universities stand at just one quarter of the level for national universities, meaning that on a per-capita basis, students at national universities are funded by the government at a level 13 times higher than their private university counterparts.