THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF JAPAN
2019 - 2020

www.ouj.ac.jp/eng/
President’s Message

Since its establishment in 1983, the Open University of Japan (OUJ) has grown to become the largest distance education university in Japan with its own broadcasting station and study centers across the country. As an open university, OUJ has an open admission policy in its undergraduate programs and so far nearly 1.6 million students have studied at OUJ. OUJ is playing a central role in providing higher education and lifelong learning to anybody in Japan from every walk of life who wishes to take on the challenge of taking a formal university education at his and her convenience.

Through broadcasting and online learning systems as well as face-to-face classroom teaching, we aim to foster academic knowledge and skills among our students. The OUJ faculty members are experts in their respective areas of study and we are committed to provide students with general education which will become the basis for their live endeavors and to meet the various needs for them to learn throughout their lives.

Making our students at the center of our services, we are pushing the university to a higher level in providing quality educational services. We have implemented various quality assurance mechanisms for our broadcasting and print materials. We are now in the process of developing a new quality assurance mechanism in which online educational contents and services are assessed to meet the students’ demands within sustainable financial and administrative frameworks.

During my tenure as a president, I am planning to explore the possibilities of integrating broadcasting, online and on-site teaching and learning for equipping our students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable them to successfully deal with the issues associated with continuous progress of the society and to advance their own well-being.

It is a great privilege for me to be the president of The Open University of Japan in this transformative period, and to contribute to this university’s further growth in the future. I would like to ask your continuous support to build an exciting future for the university together.

President Shin Kisugi

Glance at OUJ

Our Missions
The Open University of Japan (OUJ) was established, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Our objectives are:
1. As a lifelong learning institution, OUJ provides a wide range of opportunities for obtaining higher education.
2. As a new system of higher education, OUJ provides high school graduates with flexible and mobile opportunities to continue their education into universities.
3. As a higher education institution taking advantage of the benefits of the academic network, OUJ enhances coordination and cooperation with the existing universities aiming to conduct higher education in the new era, utilizing the latest research outcomes and teaching methods. At the same time, with the mission to improve the quality of higher education in our country, OUJ cooperates firmly with other universities by: promoting credit transfer, exchanging faculty staff and distributing e-learning materials.

History
Apr. 1983 The University of the Air (U-Air) was established
Apr. 1985 Undergraduate students were accepted and broadcasting lectures were started
Apr. 1989 The first bachelor’s degree was awarded
Jan. 1998 Nationwide broadcasting over CS (communications satellite) digital broadcasting was launched
Oct. 1998 Students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs were accepted at Study Centers throughout Japan
Apr. 2001 The School of Graduate Studies was established for Master’s Degree
Dec. 2006 Terrestrial digital broadcasting service (the Kanto region only) was launched
Oct. 2007 U-Air was renamed as the Open University of Japan (OUJ)
Oct. 2011 Nationwide broadcasting over BS (Broadcast Satellite) digital broadcasting was launched
Oct. 2014 Ph.D. Program was installed to the School of Graduate Studies
Apr. 2015 Online course service was launched
Apr. 2017 Center for Online Education (COE) was established
Apr. 2018 Research Institute for Learning and Education Strategies (RILES) was established
Oct. 2018 BS new channel to offer a variety of programs was made available (Shifted from terrestrial digital broadcasting)
Department of Liberal Arts: Six areas of Study

Living and Welfare
Create a high sustainable quality of life by cultivating a deep understanding of Food, clothing and shelter, Family, Health and Welfare.

Psychology and Education
Through the relationship with the society, understand various issues related to mental development. Acquire knowledge and methods necessary to support or educate mental development with the aim to actualize a sustainable society.

Society and Industry
Acquire the knowledge and skill to live in the sustainable and rich society by understanding the basic system of fluctuating society and industry.

Humanities and Culture
Deepen understanding of the existence of thought, literature and arts. Quest the history of characteristics and development of modern civilization and domestic culture.

Informatics
Master the concept and knowledge of the existence of information and information-technology that are essentials for people living in the highly information-oriented society.

Nature and Environment
Cultivate the competency of practice and access for pertaining a sustainable future by scientifically understanding the intrinsic value of the nature aspects and recognize the relationship between human activities and nature.

Division of Arts and Sciences:
Master’s Program
The School of Graduate Studies Master’s Program provides opportunities for students from various backgrounds to study at their own pace without leaving their offices or homes, and aims to be a place where students can obtain a degree for general education or advanced professional studies. The school develops human resources, who have decision making skills based on deep and broad educational background and who can commit to the society with their knowledge and vision.

Ph.D. Program
The School of Graduate Studies Ph.D. Program aims to;
- Nurture high-quality professional researchers who can overcome the challenges in the local communities or workplaces with the deepened expertise with the insight to integrate those challenges by focusing on the social and academic meaning.
- Cultivate high-quality educated intellectuals who can support the knowledge based society from various aspects by raising the cultural level to the highest through independent and creative research.

Broadcasting Program Production
OUJ Headquarters is fully equipped to produce and transmit broadcast lectures. Faculty members, directors and camera operators work together to produce high-quality broadcast lectures that are transmitted by technical specialists.

Library
The library’s service is based on the concept of distance education and the library owns reference books of OUJ courses. In addition to printed books, the library carries text books, DVDs and CDs of the OUJ broadcasting programs. Inventory books are about 350,000. There are also about 72,000 e-books available to the OUJ students that can be accessed from their smartphones or PCs.
Broadcast Lecture Courses

♦ Broadcast Lectures (TV, Radio and Internet)
OUJ offers broadcast lectures in a series of 15 times (45 minutes per lecture) in each semester through television, radio and the internet. More than 270 courses in undergraduate programs and 60 courses in graduate programs, totaling more than 330 courses are available. About a fourth of total broadcast lecture courses are renewed yearly since lectures’ lifespan is basically set as four years.

♦ Textbooks
The OUJ courses are designed to be studied through both broadcast lectures and textbooks which are specially written for each of the courses by the OUJ faculty members and/or other experts in the given field. Some of the textbooks are highly valued by the general public and even after termination of the courses; some are revised with a fresh look and sold as the “OUJ Book Series”.

♦ Student Assessment
Midterm Assignment
After the 8th week of the broadcast lecture courses, the students are required to complete the midterm assignment. The assignment is originally paper-based, but the online version is also available as an option to those students who wish to complete the assignment online. Completing the assignment is one of the requirements before taking the final exam at the end of the semester.

Final Examination
At the end of the 15th week of broadcast lecture courses, the students are required to sit on final exams which are carried out in their registered Study Centers. Those students who pass the exams will be granted credits.

Online Courses
For the first time in the history of the university, full online courses are offered in 2016. Those online courses utilize the learning management system, Moodle, to deliver video lectures as well as reading materials online so that students can view those lecture videos and read related materials at anytime and anywhere.

Online quizzes given at the end of each session test students’ understanding of the materials and students can get immediate feedback after taking those quizzes. In addition, students can ask questions directly to their instructors and also participate in online forums to discuss materials with other students. Those courses are created by course teams that include the instructors, instructional designers, production crews, and a program manager.

OUJ is planning to significantly expand the line-up of online courses in coming years. Student learning activities and assessment methods in those online courses will be designed according to the objective of each course.

Research Institute for Learning and Education Strategies (RILES)
RILES was established in April 2018 for the purpose of crystallizing OUJ Vision ’17 by analyzing its enormous quantity of data. Specifically, RILES focuses on the following two points;
① Research studies to pursue a better method for learning and teaching, and practical use of its outcomes
② Information gathering and analyzing for improvement of our management, and practical use of its outcomes
By conducting the above stated, OUJ will attempt to improve and expand our education system and management, which may also contribute to enhancement and improvement of higher education in Japan.

Support Office for Students with Disabilities
In order to guarantee fair education for all OUJ students with disabilities, and to support OUJ faculty and staffs who make efforts for improving learning and students’ life environment, the support office was established in 2016.

Center for Online Education (COE)
Center for Online Education was established in April 2017, with the objective of promoting education at OUJ based on ICT. To build a new era of OUJ, COE is focusing on research and development, and has established three research groups for evaluation, content development and learning environment, as well as R & D projects for pioneering contents. The following are the visions and missions set as the basic principles for operation of COE;

Visions: To renovate the basement of future learning system of OUJ, and to promote OUJ as the world leading center in the field of lifelong learning.

Missions: To enhance the quality of working environment and system performance for lecturers, and to encourage production staffs to help each other and improve their own skills. That is for all the learners regardless of any conditions they are under and eventually for the future development of lifelong learning.
Face-to-Face Courses (Schooling)

Classroom sessions, known as “schooling”, along with broadcast lectures, are pivotal in teaching and learning at OUJ. OUJ offers more than 3,200 courses which cover a wide range of subjects’ characteristic in the Faculty of Liberal Arts. In addition to usual lectures and hands-on experiments, the class sessions sometimes include a variety of formats such as fieldworks and on-site observation visits.

Classroom sessions are usually designed, planned and held at the Study Centers throughout the country. The Study Centers in each locale not only offer general courses but courses in distinctive subjects unique to the given region such as history and culture, industry, nature, and so on. Furthermore, several Study Centers collaborate with nearby universities and research facilities to offer such courses.

Types of Students

◆ Regular Student: Enroll for graduation with academic degree

◆ Non-Degree Student: Enroll in subjects of interest for a semester/year (For Career Advancement, Social Contribution, Lifelong Learning and Academic Research)

◆ Credit Transfer Student: Enroll for acquiring credits in OUJ and transfer to affiliated universities, colleges, schools

Study Centers

OUJ has 50 Study Centers (4 in Tokyo), 7 Satellite Spaces and 64 Audio-visual Rooms throughout Japan. The Study Centers are used for conducting face-to-face class sessions and credit certification examinations. In addition, tutorials, and academic counseling are offered there.

There are facilities for students to view or listen to broadcast lectures, and library services are also provided at the Study Centers. They also function as venues for students to hold extracurricular activities and friendly exchanges.

The Study Centers are located on campuses of public/private universities or in facilities of municipalities. The Satellite Spaces and Audio-visual Rooms are established for giving easier access to the above mentioned facilities to those students who live far away from the Study Centers in their prefectures.

[Map of Study Centers]
International Cooperation

OUJ has made collaborative agreements with eleven universities worldwide, as of 2019. Under these international exchange agreements, OUJ will direct its efforts towards collaborative course material development, joint research, dual degree programs, and exchange of faculty member, administrative staff and students, in collaboration with the partner institutions.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Region</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Date of Agreement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Royal University of Bhutan</td>
<td>18 Aug. 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso</td>
<td>28 Sep. 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Athabasca University</td>
<td>13 Oct. 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>The Open University of China</td>
<td>7 May. 2009</td>
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<td>Universitat Oberta de Catalunya</td>
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<td>Taiwan</td>
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<td>16 Apr. 1993</td>
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<td>15 May. 2012</td>
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<td>The Open University</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>University of Maryland University College</td>
<td>15 Nov. 2009</td>
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The OUJ is actively participating in international activities as a member of international organizations as the followings:

- AAOU (Asian Association of Open Universities)
- ICDE (International Council for Open and Distance Education)
- EDUCAUSE
- IMS GLC (Instructional Management System Global Learning Consortium)
- GUIDE Association

Access

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