

# A Survey of the Efforts toward Enhancing Faculty Development in Japan

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**Abstract**—The purpose of this study is to determine the features of Japanese universities' Faculty Development (FD) programs and services. Two features of Japanese universities' FD programs and services were observed. First, there were some flagship FD centers, which provided not only representative FD programs and services, but also pioneering ones, such as the Student Consulting on Teaching (SCOT) program, and the "Faculty Developer" training program. Moreover, they provided these programs for members of both their own and other universities. Second, they used Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to increase the number of users, and distributing learning materials in advance and discussing and sharing ideas thoroughly in face-to-face sessions. They also use e-learning programs provided by external organizations to provide FD resources effectively.

**Index Terms**—faculty development, joint usage/education center, ICT usage

## I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to determine the features of Japanese universities' Faculty Development (FD) programs and services. In this study, I focus on organizations that implement FD programs and services for faculty, students, or staff belonging to other universities.

All Japanese universities are legally required to conduct organized training for improving educational contents: FD. According to the latest survey by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) [1], FD in Japanese universities currently has three features (See Figure 1). First, FD programs involving organized seminars and symposiums are the most popular. Second, "Mutual Classroom Observation" and "Workshops to Improve Educational Methodology" to improve individual teaching skills are also popular. However, lower on the popularity list are "Mutual Evaluation of Courses" and "Teaching Consulting." About three-tenths of the universities employ professional faculty developers. Apparently, it is difficult to design and implement evaluation and consulting without a faculty developer. Third, since the "Developing Future Faculty Program" is also not well-attended, some FD organizations target students as for these programs and services.

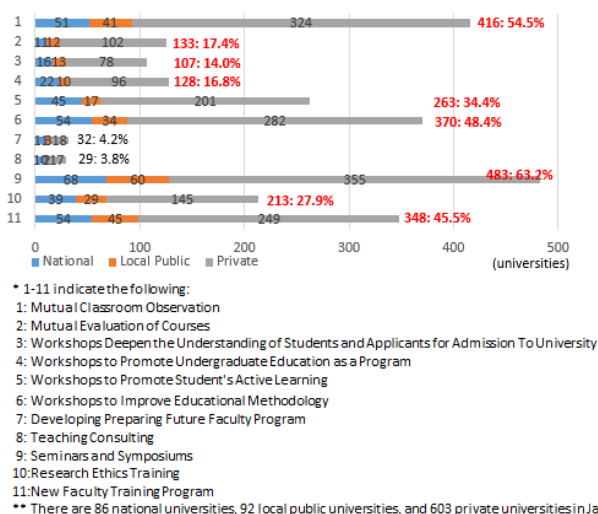


Figure 1. The current situation of faculty development in Japanese universities (FY 2014) [1].

To implement FD programs and services, 74.2% of Japanese universities (567 universities) have established an exclusive FD centers. These centers support the faculty members of the institute and foster their abilities to teach by conducting various activities and programs. Universities that lack an FD center usually have an FD Committee comprised of faculty members from each institute.

Universities that are located in one neighborhood organize a consortium and carry out FD programs through collaboration. There are more than 40 such consortiums in Japan. Their business contents include not only FD but also credit exchange, lifelong learning, international student support, and so on. Therefore, the main purpose of establishing these consortiums is to promote regional activation through various businesses, rather than merely focusing on FD.

Moreover, MEXT initiated the Joint Usage/Education Center System in 2010. As per this system, MEXT designates some universities as "Institution for Systematic Training of University Faculty," which implies that faculty and staff of other institutions can also avail themselves of FD and SD (Staff Development) resources. These designated universities are regarded as flagship FD centers.

In this study, I focus on these flagship FD centers. The primary reason for this focus is that a comprehensive study of these centers is limited to the few previous

studies that exist. Furthermore, it is expected that with the rapid growth of ICT contrivances, the use of FD resources will be sufficiently widened.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Target of the Survey

In this study, the targets of the survey were chosen from 12 FD centers (11 universities), each designated as an “Institution for Systematic Training of University Faculty” as of Fiscal Year 2016.

The profile of these universities as targets is shown in Table I. Ten of the 12 centers were established within national universities and designated as centers from three to 11 years. However, the designation was limited to five years per single application. Therefore, the centers that continued to be designated for more than five years have reapplied and been designated more than twice.

TABLE I. THE PROFILE OF THE TARGETED CENTERS

No.	Section	Number of Students		Number of Faculty	Designated Period	Faculty Attached to the Center
		Undergraduate	Graduate			
A	National	11,402	6,012	2,093	2015-2019	○
B	National	11,052	6,799	3,156	2010-2020	○
C	National	365	19	114	2010-2019	×
D	National	10,702	3,461	1,335	2010-2019	×
E					2015-2021	○
F	National	5,707	1,589	736	2010-2019	○
G	National	8,744	1,525	920	2015-2022	○
H	National	8,305	1,114	831	2010-2019	○
I	National	11,758	6,901	2,036	2016-2018	○
J	National	6,023	857	787	2016-2018	○
K	Private	7,386	997	302	2016-2018	×
L	Private	22,727	409	1,169	2015-2021	○

\* D and E centers are established within the same university.

\*\* As of May 1, 2016.

### B. Procedure

First, the survey items were designed for the participants to answer the following questions: (1) What are the FD programs and services provided? (2) Which are the related departments for FD? (3) What are the strategies planned and implemented using the FD resources provided by the center?

Second, the survey analyzed the contents of the publications issued from each center. These publications were available on each center's website. Each center disseminated information about its activities and was required to provide a report of the activities to the minister of MEXT every year. Therefore, each center published various reports and articles, which were available as booklets or website postings. However, it was difficult to get answers to the survey items from the information posted or published. Hence, guided by these items, semi-structured interviews were conducted of the person in charge of each center.

## III. RESULTS

### A. Providing FD Programs and Services

As Table II shows, the targeted centers offered various FD programs and services. Judging from the current

situation indicated in Table I, the centers are more active than other Japanese universities as per the overall trend. For instance, all the centers offered “Workshops to Improve Educational Methodology,” “Seminars and Symposiums,” “Research Ethics Training,” and “New Faculty Training Programs.” Moreover, they also seemed to implement the “Developing Preparing Future Faculty Program” and “Teaching Consulting” successfully, unlike other centers where these programs were unpopular.

TABLE II. THE CURRENT PROVISION OF FD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
A	○	×	×	×	○	○	○	○	○	▲	○
B	○	×	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	○
C	△	×	×	×	△	○	×	×	○	▲	△
D	△	×	×	▲	×	▲	×	×	○	△	△
E	△	×	×	●	×	●	×	×	●	△	△
F	△	×	×	○	○	○	○	○	○	△	△
G	△	△	×	○	○	○	×	○	○	○	△
H	○	○	○	○	●	●	×	○	○	▲	○
I	×	×	×	○	○	○	○	×	○	▲	○
J	×	×	×	×	○	○	×	×	○	▲	○
K	×	×	×	○	○	○	×	○	○	○	○
L	△	×	○	○	○	○	×	○	●	▲	●

Total	9	2	3	9	10	12	4	7	12	12	12
%	75.0	16.7	25.0	75.0	83.3	100	33.3	58.3	100	100	100
○	3	1	2	6	7	8	4	7	9	2	6
●	0	0	1	2	2	3	0	0	3	1	1
△	6	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	5
▲	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	8	0

\*1-11 indicate the following: 1: Mutual Classroom Observation; 2: Mutual Evaluation of Courses; 3: Workshops to Deepen the Understanding of Students and Applicants for Admission to University; 4: Workshops to Promote Undergraduate Education as a Program; 5: Workshops to Promote Students' Active Learning; 6: Workshops to Improve Educational Methodology; 7: Developing Preparing Future Faculty Program; 8: Teaching Consulting; 9: Seminars and Symposiums; 10: Research Ethics Training; and 11: New Faculty Training Programs. \*\* “○,” “●,” “△,” “▲,” and “×” indicate as below: ○: Provided, ●: Provided using ICT, △: Provided by other departments, ▲: Provided using ICT by another department, ×: Not provided. \*\*\* The subject of FD programs and services was provided in FY 2016.

Another feature was that FD programs and services were also provided by centers other than FD centers, such as the department of general education, or the department that established the degree program, and so on. Notably, “Research Ethics Training” was often provided by the research support department.

### B. Using ICT for Activating FD

Some FD centers used ICT for activating FD. The programs using ICT had three main features.

First, a larger number of people could participate in the FD programs considering the available resources in the programs using ICT. Some workshops and seminars were

recorded and posted on the websites of the institute. For instance, the FD center in Tohoku University<sup>1</sup> posted 60 videos on their website for “Professional Development Program (PDP) Online” [2]. The contents of this program included ICT, Institutional Research, Active Learning, Teaching Methods, and so on. Ehime University distributed some of their FD seminars to other universities simultaneously through video conferencing [3].

Second, some centers adopted blended-learning in their FD programs. Chiba University<sup>1</sup> provided a “Certificate Program for Professional Educational and Learning Support.” The aim of such courses was to foster professionalism in education and learning support. The program comprised 15 courses,<sup>2</sup> each requiring eight hours to complete. Most of these courses included four to five hours of e-learning before the face-to-face session [4]. Teikyo University<sup>1</sup> also offered a training program for “Faculty Developers.” The program presented ten videos,<sup>3</sup> which the participants were required to watch over three days prior to the workshop [5], [6].

Third, some centers used e-learning programs developed by external organizations. Especially, the “CITI-Japan Program,” an e-learning program regarding responsible conduct of research offered by the Association for the Promotion of Research Integrity (APRIN) was adopted by most of the targeted universities as an opportunity for “Research Ethics Training.” “The Practical FD Programs” developed by Japan Private Universities FD Coalition Forum (JPFF) was used by Teikyo University and made available to member universities of JPFF. The program comprised 41 videos on demand [7].

### C. Pioneering FD Programs and Services

The 11 items indicated in Fig. 1 were designated by MEXT. Therefore, these items were representative FD programs and services in Japan. However, besides these, there were other, pioneering FD programs and services implemented as well. Especially, the ones implemented in more than one university are described below.

First, the Student Consulting on Teaching (SCOT) program was offered in Teikyo University and Shibaura Institute of Technology<sup>1</sup>. SCOTs leaders consisted of

trained student staff. Their main roles were observing teachers in their classrooms and providing feedback to the teachers. Teachers were made aware of areas in which they could improve their skills, such as by using slide presentations, altering their manner of speaking, and so on [8]. Moreover, this program provided opportunities for SCOTs to cultivate responsibility and autonomy in their own learning [8].

Second, the Ehime University<sup>1</sup> offered an FD program aimed at creating “Faculty Developers” who could supervise and lead FD programs with specialized knowledge. The Ehime University<sup>1</sup> offered the “Faculty Developer Training Course” every other year as shown in Table 3 [9]. The contents focused on planning and managing various FD programs, including organizational development, which were requirements for a faculty developer. Teikyo University<sup>1</sup> also offered a similar program. This program adopted blended-learning, which was described in the last section. It also required mentoring after the workshop in order to receive a certificate for completion of the program [6].

TABLE III. THE SESSION PLAN OF THE “FACULTY DEVELOPER TRAINING COURSE” OFFERED BY EHIME UNIVERSITY

Day 1: 13:00-17:00	
●	Opening Ceremony and Orientation
●	Understanding FD
●	Designing FD
●	Reflecting on FD Activities of One's Own University
●	Planning and Managing Training Programs
●	Welcome Party (Optional)
Day 2: 9:30-17:30	
●	Planning and Managing Instructional Consulting
●	Planning and Managing FD Involving Students
●	Adopting Teaching Portfolio
●	Reforming Curriculum
●	FD Q&A Seminar
●	Implementing FD Link to Organizational Development
●	Maturing as a Faculty Developer
Day 3: 9:30-13:10	
●	Planning and Managing New Faculty Training Program
●	Managing an FD program
●	Reflecting on the Learning
* The contents were revised every time the program was held.	

Third, some centers developed an FD program focusing on specific fields. The center in the Tsukuba University of Technology<sup>1</sup> focused on education with regard to disabilities. Although seminars providing an overview of disabilities and coping with students with disabilities have been held in several universities, these programs were different because they dealt with more specific topics as follows: 1) Equal access in specific subjects (linguistic education, physical education, etc.); 2) Supporting career development; 3) Guaranteeing information accessibility for the disabled; and so on [10]. The FD center in Chiba University<sup>1</sup> focused on nursing education [11]; the center in Gifu University<sup>1</sup> focused on medical education [12]; the one in Yamaguchi University<sup>1</sup> focused on intellectual property education

<sup>1</sup> Universities specifically named (e.g. Tohoku University) had one or two of the target FD centers: any one of A to L in Tables 1 and 2.

<sup>2</sup> The 15 topics in the contents of this program are as follows: 1) Policy of higher education and understanding of their own university; 2) Understanding university curriculum; 3) Understanding and supporting students with disabilities and other personal problems; 4) Communication and counseling; 5) Dealing with globalization; 6) Analyzing and utilizing educational data; 7) Development of course materials utilizing ICT; 8) Learning support and academic advising; 9) Teaching methods and educational evaluation; 10) Understanding students and their learning; 11) Management of learning commons; 12) Management of teaching and learning support (1); 13) Management of teaching and learning support (2); 14) Project study; and 15) Project practice.

<sup>3</sup> The contents dealt with in the ten videos are as follows: 1) History of FD in the United States; 2) Values and ethos of FD; 3) Types of FD; 4) Core services provided to FD centers; 5) Linking FD programs and our mission and priority; 6) Theories of course consulting; 7) Lifecycle of FD activity; 8) Backward/Integrated Design; 9) Goal setting of FD; and 10) Cycle of evaluating FD activity.

[13]; and the center in Saga University<sup>1</sup> focused on using ICT in higher education [14].

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The targeted centers offering FD programs and services were found to be more active than other Japanese universities. There are apparently two reasons for this. First, the faculty attached to the center in most of the targeted universities could concentrate wholly on the tasks related to FD. Second, there are departments that can deal with either wide or specific needs other than those dealt with by the FD center in such designated universities.

Some of these centers used ICT for widespread distribution of contents simultaneously or as on-demand learning materials. Some programs were offered as blended-learning so that there was more time for discussing and sharing ideas and experiences in the face-to-face session. However, not all centers used ICT. It was difficult to create digital content and complete the copyright processing of learning materials. Therefore, using e-learning programs developed by external organizations such as “CITI-Japan” and “The Practical FD Programs” was preferable.

It has been found that the subjects of FD programs and services are expanding beyond the 11 items indicated in Fig. 1 and designated by MEXT. These FD programs are not extensively common, and hence, the flagship universities, such as the centers targeted in the study, are required to implement these programs and services.

Moreover, there appears to be an overall expansion of the stakeholders of FD such as “Faculty Developers” and SCOT students. This growth has extended beyond the capability of a single department offering FD programs and services.

#### V. CONCLUSION

In this study, it is suggested that there were two features of Japanese universities’ FD programs and services.

First, there were some flagship FD centers, which provided not only representative FD programs and services but also pioneering ones such as the SCOT program and “Faculty Developer” training program. Moreover, they provided these programs for members of both their own and other universities.

Second, they used ICT for increasing the number of users and distributing learning materials in advance, and discussing and sharing ideas sufficiently in the face-to-face session. Further, they used e-learning programs provided by external organizations to provide the FD resources effectively.

However, these suggestions were based on analysis of a limited number of samples. Consequently, as a future challenge, it will be necessary to verify the reliability and validity of these suggestions by quantitative research.

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