

**Hitotsubashi University**  
**School of International and Public Policy**

**External Evaluation Report**

**December 2012**

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# **Introduction**

## **1. Background to This External Evaluation**

Hitotsubashi University's School of International and Public Policy ("the School" hereinafter) was established as a professional graduate school in April 2005. Universities creating professional graduate schools must be accredited every five years by law. The accreditation is conducted by an accreditation organization recognized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

Graduate schools focusing on public policy did not have a recognized accreditation organization until 2010; instead, they relied on self-evaluations or external evaluations verified by someone outside the university. The first evaluation organization, public policy entity, for universities was recognized in March 2010. Hitotsubashi University is to be evaluated by this organization during the fiscal year 2013.

The School has decided to undergo its 2013 certification evaluation based on the follow-up to the self-evaluations and external evaluations conducted in 2008.

It was this intent that led to conducting the current external evaluation.

## **2. Composition of the External Evaluation Report**

This external evaluation examined seven areas defined in the University Accreditation Association's "Standards for Professional Graduate Schools of Public Policy" (February 2010): 1) objectives; 2) educational content, methods, and results; 3) teaching staff organization; 4) admissions; 5) educational research environment and student life; 6) administration; and 7) disclosure.

The attached reference material "Hitotsubashi University Graduate School of International and Public Policy Self-Inspection and Self-Evaluation Report" (September 2012) used these same seven areas.

## **3. External Evaluation Committee (in no particular order)**

Committee Chair: Yoshitsugu Kanemoto, Professor, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies

Committee Members: Yoshihisa Ueda, Director, Inter-American Development Bank Asia Office  
Takashi Nishio, Dean of Liberal Arts, International Christian University  
Takuya Sasaki, Professor, Department of Politics, Rikkyo University

## **Evaluation Methods**

The external evaluation was conducted according to the following process.

First, external evaluation committee members received and carefully read the “Self-Inspection and Self-Evaluation Report” and other materials from the School in October 2012.

Next, the committee members visited the School on October 31, 2012 and conducted an on-site survey. At that time, they interviewed personnel at the School regarding items noted in the self-evaluation report. In addition, they interviewed students on the same day, with no teaching staff present. Committee members relayed a critique after deliberating on this information.

This report was created on the basis of summaries of the results of the above surveys made by each committee member and compiled in the course of the above process.

## **Overall Evaluation**

Hitotsubashi University’s School of International and Public Policy (hereinafter “the School”) has an objective of the “development of human resources with practical thinking skills and expertise in the field of international and public policy.” As specific principles, it holds high professionalism, complex views, multifaceted natures, practicality, and building its hubs in and extending influence through the Asia–Pacific region. To fulfill these objectives, it focuses on small classroom sizes and works to improve the teaching quality and impact by carefully considering innovative methods. The School is steadily moving forward as a unique professional school based on the heritage of Hitotsubashi University, with an aim of solving the problems of a new era across disciplines. While various fields were evaluated, the School is succeeding in three basic fields: filling limited slots through rigorous admissions process in the backdrop of a shrinking pool of candidates; appropriate curriculum design and teaching in line with its objectives; and application of professional knowledge in postgraduate careers.

In particular, the School has four programs for its maximum 55 students, and the students themselves rate highly the thoughtful education accorded to them.

In addition, the School earnestly works on the fields noted in the previous external evaluation. The School has bulked up common courses, created mandatory coursework groups, and established “Public Policy in Asia” as a common course across the four disciplines. The “Self-Inspection and Evaluation Report” also frankly pointed out various issues faced by the School, issues which the School is assiduously working toward improving. These unremitting efforts are highly commendable.

Of course, there is no end to efforts at improvement. In regards to interdisciplinary and practical professional education, the School has many efforts underway, such as interdisciplinary efforts within courses, joint research with professors and students, and curriculum innovations. Operating a sustainable

school with limited manpower requires the revision of programs and the reduction of the teaching staff workload. Further, funding efforts are anticipated to enable additional progress in interprogram exchanges and international exchanges such as exchange programs, as well as to improve the educational environment. In particular, committee members had strong opinions on reducing the teaching staff workload. High-quality education becomes possible through professional research by teaching staff. The employment of excellent full-time staff is the reason for high evaluation received by the School. In that regard, sufficient consideration must be given to reduce the teacher workload. Appropriate responses are expected in such areas as further progress on common subjects between programs, cooperation with other research departments, and utilization of teacher's assistants.

## Evaluations by Criteria

### Criterion 1 Objectives

- **Items of Note**

The stated goal of the School, the “development of human resources with practical thinking skills and expertise in the field of international and public policy,” is truly topical and critical for Japan. Its purpose is clear. Further, it is rooted in Hitotsubashi University’s traditions and agrees with the society’s general image of the university. The principles of “expertise” and “practical thinking skills” are accurately reflected in admission policies and materials.

- **Areas of Expected Improvement**

The development of human resources referred to in the objective must be implemented broadly, across the private sector and not just in the public domain, which is the unambiguous territory of public policy. Movement between public and private domains is thought to be increasingly fluid, so perhaps this fact should be more clearly stated within Hitotsubashi University, as it produces the leaders of the industry.

An issue is how specifically the objectives and principles of the School are put into practice in the course of day-to-day education. One way of looking at this issue is to illustrate typical examples of how courses, classes, and the combination thereof exemplify the four pillars shown in the “Basic Principles” found on the third page of “School Information.”

### Criterion 2 Educational Content, Methods, Results

- **Items of Note**

The School arose out of two courses, “International Public Administration” and “Public Economy.” These two courses are used in the four programs, “Public Law and Politics,” “Global Governance,” “Public Economy,” and “Asian Public Policy.” These four programs are considered part of the five core areas: basic subjects, core subjects, applied subjects, case research, and workshops, and are used in Hitotsubashi University’s strong areas of finance, economics, law, and international relations.

In addition to being a foundation of law, political science, and economics, the School’s philosophy of providing practical and interdisciplinary education is appropriate and leveraged by unique programs such as visiting lectures by professionals, partnership with the Local Autonomy College, and consulting projects. To plan for partnering with each program, the School introduced “common subjects” in 2011, in addition to “interdisciplinary subjects.” In an effort to further strengthen partnerships with these four programs, the School launched “common mandatory subjects” this year. While the impact of these subjects remains to be seen, a positive result is expected.

In the past few years, development of a new educational program has moved forward in cooperation with external organizations. “Public Law and Politics” has been the primary focus in a 2010 agreement

with the Local Autonomy College to cooperate on human resource development. The School began accepting foreign students from various Asian countries under the auspices of JICA and JDS and started a program allowing students to receive a master's degree with all courses taught in English. "Public Economics" as a "Public Policy Seminar I" began in 2011 in collaboration with Daiwa Research Institute. Also in 2011, the School entered into an academic exchange agreement with China's Public Economics and Management School, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, and a student exchange agreement with Italy's Bocconi University, steadily making progress on foreign academic exchanges. The "Asian Public Policy" program began to accept foreign students via a scholarship program from the Asia Development Bank in 2010.

- **Areas of Expected Improvement**

One characteristic of the School is the small groups of students with various backgrounds and differing knowledge and experiences. This is a burden for the teaching staff, but on the other hand, the small classroom sizes are not an impediment to education quality; rather, they enable an interdisciplinary educational program. A merit of this diversity is that students' expertise and actual experiences act as mutually complementary teaching devices. In addition to this interdisciplinary aspect, it is hoped that there will be increased opportunities for interactions in "common subjects" among students in different courses, such as application and case study research. Further, the School may wish to consider courses covering environmental issues and natural sciences, as these are required for public policy in today's world.

From that perspective, the School can move the bulk of the "Asian Public Policy" to the Kunitachi campus to stimulate daily interaction between Japanese and foreign students (particularly those sent by foreign governments). Many students in the "Asian Public Policy" program live in the Kodaira dormitories for foreign students; considering their commute and the few interactions with their Japanese counterparts, it would be good to ascertain revisions, such as conducting a few more courses for them in Kunitachi. These foreign students are young elite, who will take up important jobs in their governments after they return to home countries. In terms of developing future pro-Japan foreign professionals, it is important to increase opportunities for these students to interact with Japanese students and to provide ways for them to improve their understanding of Japan.

Revisions of these four programs have, for the most part, been appropriate, though a somewhat lax impression was received of the Asia-Pacific Relations subject within the "Global Governance" program. Considering the political and foreign relations issues faced by this region, "Peace Studies," "East Asian International Relations," and "International Political Economy of Asia-Pacific" are important, and "Gender and International Relations" is also of interest. However, no course deals specifically with, for example, China, Southeast Asia, or ASEAN. With limited resources, it is impossible to allocate subjects such that they comprehensively encompass all regions and issues. However, an idea is to carefully refine the current curriculum to create a course covering China and Southeast Asia. Many foreign students come from these regions and, as pointed out multiple times in the "Self-Inspection and Evaluation Report" of September 2012, if the School intends to differentiate

itself by emphasizing the Asia–Pacific region, then reviewing the existing courses in “Global Governance” and creating a new course is at least worth consideration.

Students would like to see new partnerships with foreign universities, a system of short-term exchanges, EU courses (limited to summer term), opportunities to interact with foreign students, and an increase in courses taught in English. In addition, the common course “Public Policy in Asia” was for the most part given high marks, though there was criticism that it was too basic, with not sufficient information on individual countries, and somewhat disappointing. These points should also be considered.

### **Criterion 3 Teaching Staff Organization**

- **Items of Note**

Ten fulltime faculties are required according to set levels, though the School, currently with twenty staff, is not facing a shortage. In addition, the small number of teaching staff (each program has an average of five faculty members) teaches a diverse array of courses and provides careful guidance to students. Small classroom instruction is a feature of the School, which should be proud of the enthusiasm of its excellent faculty.

- **Areas of Expected Improvement**

The proportion of researchers to administration is reasonable at 16:4, with many teaching staff bridging research and administrative responsibilities.

From the perspective of small classroom education, the teaching staff workload is not light. The fulltime faculties teach both undergraduate and graduate courses; in light of the increased administrative workload in recent years, there is concern about the rigorous load. The administrative structure is not thought to be sufficient, and teaching staff must consider the use of teaching assistants in their teaching to devote sufficient time for research.

The so-called double count preferential measure will be abolished at the end of 2013. A new operating structure must be considered, preferably one that considers teaching staff workload issues.

### **Criteria 4 Admissions**

- **Items of Note**

Despite the fact that no special considerations are given to civil service exam credentials, also with a stricter environment in public policy graduate schools, the School fills its limited seats to capacity every year with quality students. In addition, very few students turn down admission. Students come from various educational and professional backgrounds, and 40% are international students. The School is not only showing results with regard to broad public relations and recruitment efforts but



also garnering respect both inside and out in its seventh year.

- **Areas of Expected Improvement**

The School attracts various students via three routes: general admissions, special admissions of working adults, and foreign student special admissions. Increasing the number of foreign students is critical to further strengthen student diversity. In addition, few Japanese students of the School matriculate as undergraduates from Hitotsubashi University, suggesting the need to develop an integrated education between undergraduate and graduate schools. The implementation of a five-year integrated program should be considered. Furthermore, practically all dispatched working students are from public office. Even in the private sector, a broad range of fields requiring a public policy viewpoint, and not merely limited to corporate social responsibility, are expanding participation in the School; a shift in opinion can be seen within the corporate management. The School is using its traditional strengths in private business to increase the satisfaction of corporate needs and showing its merits; it is hoped that the School will also make efforts to increase the number of students from the private sector.

## **Criteria 5 Educational Research Environment & Student Life**

- **Items of Note**

Interviews with current students show that they think highly of the School and are mostly satisfied with the current educational programs. Students uniformly emphasize the closeness between students and faculty, small classrooms, and the good learning environment. This is also a major factor in attracting promising new students. In addition, the Kunitachi campus has a peaceful educational environment and a comfortable living environment, with no issues of note.

- **Areas of Expected Improvement**

Regarding facilities and equipment, new needs are constantly arising with advances in IT. Current students are asking for the latest PCs and enhancement to the library (particularly Western books and foreign language materials). There are constant opportunities to incorporate the wishes of students through dialog; it is hoped that these opportunities will be utilized and responded to as appropriate.

## **Criteria 6 Administration**

- **Items of Note**

Nothing in particular.

- **Areas of Expected Improvement**

Increases in office administration accompanying daily operations are thought to be causing an increase in workload among teachers and office staff. This tends to become excessive as the practicality and interdisciplinary ideals of the “objective” are to be realized and must clearly be given priority as an issue. In addition, the two Kunitachi and Chiyoda campuses create a huge workload for office administration. As partnerships with external organizations and overseas universities expand in the future, office work will also increase. It is hoped that certain measures will be put in place for the teaching as well as office staff. In addition, the teaching staff must be deployed in a flexible manner across the entire university. It is expected that School leadership will prioritize and solve these issues faced by the School.

## **Criteria 7 Disclosure**

- **Items of Note**

Organized inspections and evaluations have been implemented in the form of self-evaluation reports and external evaluation reports. A responsibility for disclosure is being institutionalized.

- **Areas of Expected Improvement**

In the future, the objectives of evaluations must be clear, with flexible and efficient evaluations being conducted in line with the objectives. Programs and courses will need to be scrapped after a certain period; therefore, it is expected that periodic evaluations and reviews of programs and courses will be put in place.

## **Other Important Findings**

Nothing in particular.