

President's Position Statement for 2012

To All Faculty, Staff and Students at Nanzan University

I. Basic Position

Following the example of previous editions, the outline of the projects and activities planned for 2012 school year begins again with a statement about the basic position taken by the president. It proposes no radical departure from the tradition of Nanzan as a Catholic university as expressed by the key phrases my predecessor and I have used in the past. Maintaining and promoting the “Nanzan Difference” still depends on “unceasing self-reform” in order to ensure that we can “empower our students to become a power in and for the world,” to ensure that Nanzan University becomes a “learning place without borders” where – in the spirit of “Prophetic Dialogue,” which was mentioned here last year – openness to dialogue and active promotion of human values can be practiced in a creative tension.

Emphasizing the importance of continuity, however, is not the same as continuing on the same path as in the past and it is important to keep this in mind when reaffirming the basic position that provides the basis for the various activities of a Catholic university. It is not sufficient to reiterate that the old message is still valid for modern times. Rather, we have to ask ourselves how to re-formulate and promote what is really important when so many things are changing. We must also consider how to keep the core message of Christianity in general and how to keep two thousand years of the teaching tradition of the Catholic Church alive and relevant in the setting of a university in today's globalized society.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of opening of the Second Vatican Council, an event that has had a deep and lasting impact on the self-understanding of the Catholic Church. The official opening of the council, presided over by Pope John XXIII, was on October 11, 1962. To describe the program of the council, the Pope used a key phrase – “aggiornamento.” Subsequently, aggiornamento has become a technical term that describes how the Church defines her role in and her relation to the modern world.

I believe that John XXIII's “aggiornamento” provides valuable insights that help to articulate the mission and role of a Catholic university. On a superficial level,

“aggiornamento” is nothing more than a translation of the English phrase “bringing up to date.” But the continued use of this Italian key word, “aggiornamento” by the Catholic Church shows that the Italian term implies not just the adjusting of procedures but also implies self-understanding with a spirit of change and an open-mindedness as well as an ongoing critical appraisal of one’s own mission. Therefore, the thrust of “aggiornamento” is neither just the condemning of new views that disrupt traditional ways of acting and thinking nor merely “going with the flow” and adjusting to changing circumstances. The challenge of aggiornamento is to keep balance while moving forward in a rapidly changing environment.

One major aspect of the changing environment for higher education in Japan is the upcoming steep decline in the number of high school graduates, our traditional source of new students, in the very near future. Careful consideration of this inevitable development leads us to recognize the need for a radical review of all planning for the future of Nanzan University. Yet, new approaches to increase the number of applicants are in themselves not a sufficient basis for maintaining Nanzan’s educational mission as a Catholic university.

The Nanzan curriculum includes required courses across many disciplines for all students in all departments. What I would like to see is a broader scope of choices. I request that each Faculty consider adding more courses to the newly established International Course Category that would encourage interdisciplinary learning in English.

At the same time, we must challenge our students to actively put themselves in “a learning place without borders” where students from many countries and backgrounds are interacting in class. In the process we need to proceed with the discussion about moving the beginning of the academic year to the fall semester.

If there is one word that expresses my vision for this year’s Position Statement, it would be “choice.” Specifically, it includes providing both students and faculty with more choice as a university. More choice also entails more responsibility for those who offer the choice as well as those who make the choice, as expressed succinctly in the Nanzan motto “Homini Dignitati.” I request that each Faculty actively engage in preparing such choice. The final standard of success is not to follow whatever happens to be the prevailing trend at the moment but to succeed in accomplishing an academic version of

aggiornamento – to bring our education and academic structure up-to-date without losing the heart of the matter.

II. Top Priorities

1. Promoting Internationalization from the Viewpoint of Students

In an effort to realize the goal of “a learning place without borders,” which we set last year, the International Course Category and the Summer Japanese Program by the Center for Japanese Studies (CJS) will be implemented this year.

A total of 43 courses (32 courses at Nagoya Campus and 11 courses at Seto Campus) will be offered as the International Course Category (ICC) courses. Students who have acquired 24 or more ICC credits will receive the “Nanzan International Certificate.” We hope to expand ICC offerings. Unlike regular language courses, the ICC courses offer students opportunities to gain new understanding through learning in English. In addition to providing recognition of students’ high linguistic abilities, the inclusion and expansion of ICC courses of a high academic standard will make the “Nanzan International Certificate” truly valuable.

Along with the implementation of the Summer Japanese Program, a new curriculum that will be introduced at the Center for Japanese Studies (CJS) starting in September 2012 will allow students more flexibility in tailoring their studies. These initiatives will increase collaborative possibilities for CJS and the Faculties and Graduate Schools. These curriculum changes as well as the CJS courses included in the ICC are expected to offer more opportunities for CJS, undergraduate and graduate students to attend classes together.

In addition to the above, it is our responsibility to reconsider what internationalization means to students. Our efforts to create “a learning place without borders” should be aimed toward fostering the “power of the individual” who has a deep understanding of others and an international capability, as implied in the key phrase in the Grand Design: “empowering the individual to become a power in and for the world.” The ICC courses will serve as a choice toward achieving this goal. At the same time as providing a broader scope of choices such as these, we need to educate and advise students so that they can make their own choices responsibly. I request that each Faculty department and Graduate School major review their curriculum, keeping in mind internationalization

from the students' perspective. The General Education curricula should also be reviewed from the same standpoint.

2. Further Developing “a Learning Place without Borders”

Since last year, moving the beginning of the academic year to the fall has become a national topic. It is true that the impact of implementing the shift remains unknown and that there are a number of issues and challenges that need to be resolved, but I believe that the change is very likely to bring about more active exchange with overseas universities for both students and faculty. The Faculty of Policy Studies has always had a system of admitting international students in September. The advantages and disadvantages of this system will be reviewed in detail as we study the possibility of shifting the university-wide enrollment to the fall. This is not just a matter of replacing the cherry blossoms of the entrance ceremony with autumn leaves, or continuing the same activities under a different time schedule. As I see it, while this change may look simple, it may become something like what Clayton Christensen has called “disruptive innovation,” i.e., an opportunity to use the changing of the Japanese academic calendar as a way to think about how we can provide choices that are wider in scope and more challenging for all our students, both Japanese and non-Japanese, as well as for our faculty.

With or without the introduction of a modified academic calendar, we will continue our efforts for promoting international exchange. Although Nanzan University has overseas study programs that allow students to graduate in four years even when one of those years was spent studying abroad, only a limited number of students are utilizing the programs. I request that efforts in this regard be continued this year as well.

Realizing “a place of learning without borders” requires accepting more international students not only to the CJS program but also to undergraduate and graduate courses as well as increasing faculty member exchanges with overseas universities. We will consider a new system for graduate schools to promote international exchange of graduate students and faculty members. Housing is another important issue in accepting many students from abroad. Therefore, we will study comprehensively what types of housing facilities can be provided for international students, including private apartments. As for international exchange of faculty members, we are expecting to welcome one faculty member from the University of San Carlos in the Philippines this

year. Initiatives such as this will be expanded in the future. The University as a whole will promote internationalization in various ways, including participation in the United Nations Academic Impact Initiative. At the same time, I request each Faculty department and Graduate School major to make more active efforts toward promoting internationalization.

III. Future Planning

1. Nanzan University as an Appealing Institution

In order to establish Nanzan University as an appealing research institution, individual faculty members need to actively engage in research activities and academic and research standards at Faculties and Graduate Schools need to be urgently improved. To this end, the Graduate School of Mathematical Sciences and Information Engineering will be renamed and reorganized to be consistent with the Faculty of Information Science and Engineering. We will also be discussing how to establish more appealing social science Graduate Schools, including the possibility of reorganization and/or merger of the following Graduate Schools: Economics, Business Administration, and Policy Studies.

This year, Nanzan Junior College Faculty celebrates its second year and will see the inaugural class graduate. Its predecessor, Nanzan Junior College, practiced a variety of methods in English language education. We should be continuously discussing how to improve its appeal as a faculty, including the possibility of its collaboration with other Faculties and Graduate Schools.

2. Nanzan's Integrated Education

This year, the first Nanzan Primary School graduates entered Nanzan Junior High School. Nanzan Gakuen as a whole is starting to function under its Integrated Education system from elementary school through graduate school.

The University has played a leadership role in Nanzan Gakuen's integrated education and is responsible for sending into society students who have been educated under the integrated education system. We will seek an education system that enhances the strengths of students who have received the integrated education. Based on last year's change in admission procedure for students recommended by schools within Nanzan Gakuen, we will look for possibilities to collaborate more closely with the Gakuen

schools this year.

3. Campus Physical Property Management

As part of the large-scale property management project at Nagoya Campus, the University Hall was torn down in 2009 and R Building was completed on the site in March 2011. We will continue discussions about the following two issues from the viewpoint of student solicitation at the Future Planning Committee this year: the reorganization of faculties and departments including the Graduate Schools mentioned above and the two-campus system. At the same time, we will aim to create a new, greener campus that is both eco-friendly and full of greenery.

IV. Education and Research

1. University Assessment and Accreditation in 2013

Universities in Japan are required by law to undergo an assessment for accreditation by external organizations once every seven years or less (once every five years or less for professional graduate schools). Since last year we have been preparing ourselves for the accreditation assessment in 2013. This year we must complete our Self-Study Report and submit it to an external assessment and accreditation organization.

The accreditation assessment we will be subjected to in 2013 emphasizes the concept of an “internal quality assurance” system whereby a university assures its own quality. It also examines whether the university’s PDCA (Plan Do Check Action) cycle, required as a mechanism for self-assessment and improvement, is functioning organically. In other words, the Self-Study Report is required to serve not merely as a report that covers the university’s activities but more importantly as an action plan for improvements. That is, the university is expected to compare the goals and plans set by the University as a whole, and by Faculties, Departments, Graduate Schools, and administrative divisions, with actual outcomes to determine how much has been achieved and what efforts need to be made in order to continue to improve.

The university’s “internal quality assurance” system will be assessed in all aspects of educational content, research performance, and administration and management. While the University has already been actively promoting student course evaluations, faculty evaluations, and FD/SD (Faculty Development/Staff Development) activities, I request that each Faculty member deepen their understanding that these efforts are intended to

benefit the improvement of our “internal quality assurance” system in line with the PDCA cycle.

2. Improvement of Class Content

Last year saw the implementation of a new semester system with 15 class weeks and one final exam week per semester. Although we developed a new academic calendar for the system, there was insufficient discussion of class content. To make the most of the 15 classes, I request that each Faculty and Graduate School consider ways to improve class quality.

Ten years has passed since the major reorganization and restructuring of Faculties and Departments. Over these years, issues that cannot be solved within the existing curriculums have surfaced. The International Course Category implemented this year is an effective curriculum for promoting internationalization. I request that each Faculty develop curriculums such as this that reflect Nanzan’s uniqueness and improve their class quality.

3. Promotion of Student Support

With the completion of R Building, the Center for International Education, Nanzan English Education Center, and the World Plaza (Nagoya) moved into the building, strengthening language education and the study-abroad support system for students. While the Student Support GP (Good Practice) subsidies from the government received in 2009 concluded last year, Centrum Communitatis on Nagoya Campus and Aulularia on Seto Campus, set up under the program, will be maintained to continually provide student support.

It is also important to improve the information education environment for students. With the rapid development of book digitization technology in recent years, our library has greater possibilities to share access to digitized publications with other libraries by utilizing online networks. Meanwhile, the development of social media has added to the importance of information literacy. With these developments in mind, I would like discussions to be resumed for establishing an Academic Information Center. I expect the Center to be realized in the near future as an organization to accumulate digitized materials and to make possible university-wide information education and information sharing.

4. Acquisition of External Competitive Funds

In 2011, for two years in a row, none of our new proposals were accepted for grants and subsidies for research and education initiatives including the 21st Century COE Program offered by the Ministry of Education and Science. This serves as a tremendous alert. In recent years, the number of initiatives accepted for external competitive funds and the amount of monies received have been seen as critical indicators of a university's standing in terms of education and research. In that sense, it is imperative that we actively make efforts to be accepted for funds such as above as well as Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research, among others. Improving the University's support system to this end is also on my agenda.

V. Contributing to Society and Collaborating with Businesses

Last year Japan was hit by a number of natural disasters, including the Great East Japan Earthquake and the flooding of the Shonai River. Determining the roles the University should play in the community in an emergency is an important matter, particularly as a comprehensive university rooted in the local community, since we can serve them in significant ways. Risk management efforts such as this are also an issue that needs to be dealt with by the Gakuen as a whole. The University, in addition, will seek further ways to strengthen collaboration with the community.

As part of the collaboration project between Nanzan University's Anthropological Museum and the Meiji University Museum that started in March 2010, we have continued to offer joint workshops and symposiums. In January 2012, a project was implemented to exhibit materials of the University's Anthropological Museum at the Meiji University Museum. A joint exhibition at Nagoya City Museum is scheduled for this academic year, starting from the end of February 2013. Through these initiatives, we will contribute to the community by showing our University assets to the public and continue to enhance public recognition of the Anthropological Museum, which will be moved to R Building and expanded in 2013.

The University has been encouraging collaboration with other universities, including the National University Corporations, and the business world. In our collaboration efforts with businesses, a business-academia collaboration agreement was signed last year between the Bank of Nagoya and the Graduate School of Mathematical Sciences and Information Engineering, Nanzan School of Law, and the Graduate School of Business

Administration, with the prospect of joint research and product development by the bank's clients and our Graduate Schools. I request that each Graduate School make efforts to further strengthen collaboration this year.

VI. Entrance Exams and Post-Graduation Employment

1. Entrance Exams

This year, the total number of applications, combining the General, Center 50 and Center 100 Entrance Examinations (first application term A & B and second application term) was 20,157, a decrease of 172 compared to last year's 20,329. Compared to last year, the decrease was smaller thanks to the introduction of Center 100 Entrance Examination (first application term B), but the number of applications dropped for two consecutive years. The decline in the 18-year-old population and the economic situation in Japanese society indicate that student solicitation will continue to be a challenge. To attract more applicants, we will diversify our Entrance Examination systems, including the introduction of a unified examination covering multiple faculties, and review the quotas for recommendation-based admissions.

2. Post-Graduation Employment

We expect that the employment situation will continue to be very severe this year. Under the circumstances, we are receiving increasing requests from not only students but also parents to improve our job placement support, which is becoming more and more important every year.

The Japan Economic Federation has issued an advisory to corporations to move back the starting date of their publicity activities and of their selection processes by two months compared to previous years, i.e., as of 2011, job-hunting has started in December of the third (or junior) year.

This change will necessitate the reorganization and restructuring of the job placement support programs and career support programs, which may in turn lead to the merger of the Job Placement Committee and the Career Support Committee. I request the Career Support Office to ascertain the job placement situation in greater detail in order to offer even more thorough placement support to students. At the same time, I request individual faculty members and Faculties to actively cooperate in career and placement support efforts and also to help students develop abilities to take initiatives,

communicate competently, and think critically, i.e. qualities expected of college graduates.

VII. Publicity

The role of University publicity becomes increasingly important particularly when application numbers are falling. Last year, as a new initiative, “Nanzan Web Live,” an online University explanation session for high school students, was carried out. The continued projects, including joint University explanation sessions with Sophia University, were also held as planned and yielded some positive results. This year we will develop a smartphone application for University publicity, using our past entrance exam questions of foreign languages. In addition, we will publicize programs that may be appealing to our potential applicants, such as the Disney International College Program.

We will consider more effective publicity measures and strategies including the reform of the Entrance Examination systems and the development of new Nanzan merchandise items. It is also necessary to cleverly include job placement capabilities in our publicity efforts. The Working Group for publicizing our job placement capabilities organized last year comprised of the chairpersons of the Job Placement, Career, and Public Relations Committees among others will be expanded in order to consider more active publicity. Furthermore, from the perspective of international publicity, our English web pages will be expanded and improved to match our Japanese web pages.

I request individual faculty and staff members to recognize that their respective research and education activities play an important role in the University’s publicity efforts and to help enhance Nanzan University’s appeal.



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