

February 19, 2019

Materials for the General Strategy Council

In 2010, Soka University announced its “Soka University Grand Design,” which describes the vision of our university at its 50th anniversary (in 2021) and strategically sets forth the goals and plans for that vision.ⁱ Since the launch of this initiative, our university has executed a number of reforms, including the establishment of the Faculty of International Liberal Arts and the Faculty of Nursing, improvements to the research capability centered on the Research Promotion Center, the globalization of the campus as symbolized by being selected for the Top Global University Project,ⁱⁱ and the enhancement of the education environment, such as in the construction of the Central Education Tower “Global Square.” The growth of students has been remarkable; our students have accomplished achievements in a variety of fields, such as in winning business contests and participating in international exchange programs, with more students studying abroad and with higher language test scores. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our instructors, staff, and students for their hard work.

In order to seamlessly carry on the reforms from the 50th anniversary in 2021, we have decided to formulate a mid-to long-term plan looking toward the next milestone, which is the 100th anniversary of Soka education (November 18, 2030). We would appreciate it if everyone that supports our university, including our instructors, staff, students, and alumni, would read the draft of the Soka University Grand Design 2021–2030 (hereinafter referred to as “New Grand Design”) and give us your feedback about our university’s new path.

○Period

• **April 1, 2021–March 31, 2031 (10-year plan)**

○Objectives of the formulation

1. Establish an education and research system that responds to the changes in the environment surrounding our university, such as the declining birthrate and the aging population, Society 5.0ⁱⁱⁱ (a super-smart society), and the singularity,^{iv} and in order to graduate “global citizens that can create value.”
2. While continuing the various projects under the Top Global University Projects, lead globalization and build a “hub for global citizenship education.”
3. Share the goals for 2030 with all stakeholders, including instructors, staff, students, and alumni, and carry out the various initiatives in coordination and cooperation with them.

○Formulation process

About the draft (January 2018–May 2019)

- For the formulation of the plan, the “Soka University Mid- to Long-term Plan Examination Committee” was established under the “Soka University General Strategy Council.”
- The Soka University Mid- to Long-term Plan Examination Committee confirmed the direction of the future changes in the social environment surrounding the field of higher education, which includes our university, and, while referencing the Grand Design for Higher Education toward 2040 announced by the Central Council for Education in November 2018,^v the committee listed the issues facing our university that should be addressed from a mid- to long-term perspective for the five key words of “SDGs,” “Society 5.0/fourth industrial revolution,” “the era of 100-year life expectancy,” “globalization,” and “regional revitalization.”
- Then, based on the direction of the changes in society through to around 2040, the committee confirmed the founder Dr. Daisaku Ikeda’s ideas concerning the vision of Soka University at the 100th anniversary of Soka education, which is the basis of the New Grand Design, and examined what kind of people our university should graduate into society. The committee confirmed that, toward 2030, which marks the 100th anniversary of Soka education, our university should aim to become a “university that fosters ‘global citizens’ that can create value.”
- Furthermore, the committee advanced the preparation of the draft of the New Grand Design in the five strategic fields of “education,” “research,” “globalization,” “contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders,” and “organizational management.”

Plans towards formulation (June 2019–April 2020)

- Present the draft of the New Grand Design to instructors, staff, students, and alumni, and solicit feedback (June–August 2019).
- Examine the feedback collected and prepare the basic plan for the New Grand Design (September–October 2019).
- In order to convert the basic plan into detailed plans, subcommittees will be established for each strategic field, and they will prepare plans that include numerical targets and budgets (October–December 2019).
- The final examination/coordination will be made at the Soka University General Strategy Council, and the New Grand Design will be presented to the Board of Trustees meeting in January 2020 (January –February 2020).
- The outline of the New Grand Design will be announced in April 2020.

Note: Under the New Grand Design, in addition to definitely executing the initiatives set forth, attention will be paid to various changes and issues regarding the environment, and necessary reviews and revisions will be considered in a flexible manner.

■Theme:

A university that fosters “global citizens” that can create value

Since its founding in 1971, Soka University has continued unending reforms and achieved growth directed toward the realization of the “founding principles” indicated by founder Dr. Daisaku Ikeda. In 2014, our initiatives for globalization over the years were recognized, and our university was selected for the Top Global University Project of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Directed toward 2023, which is the final year of the project, our university is aiming to create a campus where diverse values can gather by accepting foreign students and promoting studying abroad for Japanese students.

On the other hand, regarding the social environment surrounding our university, the population of 18 year-old people in Japan has been declining over a long period of time and is expected to fall below 1 million in 2031. In addition, as a result of the advancements in AI and IoT, industrial structure will drastically change, and institutions of higher education are now required to develop creativity, cooperativity with others, and advanced expertise in their students. Moreover, in a highly informed society, we are entering into an era in which the boundaries between nations and regions are easily passed, and issues in economics, education, and the environment are expanding on a global scale.

In 2015, the United Nations adopted the “SDGs,”^{vi} which are targets for achieving sustainable development aimed at 2030, and is working under the principle of “no one will be left behind,” so as to end poverty, protect the environment, and establish a society in which all people can enjoy peace and prosperity. Our university, which sets “peace” as one of its founding principles, joined in 2014 the United Nations Academic Impact, which connects the United Nations and universities around the world, and while working together with the United Nations, our university is conducting activities related to education, research, and contributions to society, in order to help create the society aimed for in the SDGs.

Behind these activities at our university is the vision of “Be a creative individual” as called for by the founder. Creative individuals are persons that can “create the value needed by society, and that can provide or return sound value,” and in the present day, we believe that such persons are “global citizens that can create value.” Specifically, we intend to confirm that it is our mission to graduate “global citizens” that can sincerely face the global issues espoused in the SDGs and that can create new value toward realizing the goal of “peace.”

The “global citizens that can create value,” which forms the basis of the “New Grand Design” directed toward the 100th anniversary of Soka education in 2030, are persons that start from the hope that “any difficult issue can be solved as long as it is caused by people”^{vii} in regard to global issues, including poverty, the environment, education, or conflict, and that are equipped with the ability to open the way forward to the future in cooperation with others.

The following are three pillars of the plan.

1. Including the enhancement of programs related to “global citizenship education” centered on the fields of peace, the environment, development, and human rights, improve the education and research environment for fostering the ability to create a sustainable society, and aim to become a hub for educating global citizens that can create value.
2. Promote, as a university, research that will contribute to the realization of “peace,” as well as form a network with universities and researchers so as to play a leading role in the achievement of the SDGs.
3. Create a campus where people with diverse values, such as foreign students and adult students, can gather and coexist.

Based on the above three points, strategies will be formulated for “education,” “research,” “globalization,” “contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders,” and “organizational management.”

○Pillars of the initiatives

■I. Education strategies

Policy: Establish an education system that fosters “global citizens” that can will support a changing society

(1) Evolve and deepen global citizenship education.
Related fields: Research and globalization
1) In the GCP (Global Citizenship Program) and undergraduate/graduate programs, work to embody and advance global citizenship education centered on the fields of peace/the environment/development/human rights, and graduate many capable persons that have the ability to develop a sustainable society. 2) Starting from the international symposium held at Peking University in 2004, the attempts to foster global citizens through value creation education have been advancing in recent years in countries and regions including China, Taiwan, Philippines, and the United States. By deepening global citizenship education, establish our university’s role as a main hub that leads the global network of education and research on peace.
(2) Visualize and expand the results of value creation education.
Related fields: Research and contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders
1) In addition to measuring the results of classroom learning through the assessment policy, introduce an analysis of learning results through study abroad (BEVI-J) and other measures and assess the growth of students and the results of their extracurricular activities. Based on these measurement results, validate the education/experience program and promote the development of more effective programs for the growth of students. 2) By collecting actual education records based on the philosophy of Soka education, seek the essence thereof, and, at the same time, utilize the results to further enhance value creation education and expand it outside our university.
(3) Nurture people that are able to meet the new occupational needs arising from Society 5.0.
Related fields:
1) Provide opportunities to acquire the basic skills and learning about data sciences in the form of required courses. 2) Establish seminar courses in which students learn skills that cannot be replaced by AI (such as problem-solving and creativity). 3) Introduce classes that combine data science and problem-solving.

(4) Enhance correspondence education and realize learning beyond generations.

Related fields: Contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders

- 1) Strengthen the structure for supporting various learning styles through ICT.
- 2) As learning beyond generations, provide opportunities for undergraduate students and correspondence-course students to learn together. In addition, as part of advanced placement, allow high school students to participate (offer online classes, hold combined lectures on the SDGs, peace/environmental education using the summer/fall schooling).

(5) Establish a Japanese Language Instructor Staffing Center (tentative name) and expand the diverse Japanese language education programs.

Related fields: Globalization and contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders

In response to the increased demand for Japanese language education following the increased number of people from overseas, our university will expand its traditional Japanese language education so as to fulfill the following initiatives.

- 1) Establish a Japanese Language Instructor Staffing Center (tentative name), register the persons that have completed Japanese language education at our university, and respond to the increasing requests for Japanese language teachers or student interns received from overseas universities with which Soka University conducts exchanges.
- 2) Open a new course for the master's programs, and promote the acceptance of adult students that want to learn skills so as to start over as a Japanese language teacher, live in a foreign country, work at a Japanese language school in Japan, or work as volunteer as a secondary endeavor.
- 3) While utilizing the Japanese language education curriculum in the Faculty of Letters of the Correspondence Education Division, offer course registration programs aimed at fostering people that will teach the Japanese language to people from overseas living in the local community.

(6) Expand service learning in cooperation with industry.

Related fields: Contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders

In recent years, service learning (education through volunteer activities in the local community) and internships (experience-based education at companies) as real experience-based education have been increasingly viewed as important in addition to classroom learning. Through service learning that matches local needs and in cooperation with the industrial world, develop multi-talents such as the ability to understand and cooperate with others, the problem-solving ability to actively address actual issues, and the ability to act independently based on new ideas, and develop qualities as global citizens.

■II. Research

Policy: Utilize our strengths as a comprehensive university, conduct interdisciplinary research, and create new values for society.

(1) Form a foundation for research into the founder and establish networks.
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Related fields: Education and globalization

Centered on the Soka Education Research Institute, proceed with the construction of a theoretical foundation for developing the international academic discussion on our university founder's ideas and Soka education research. In addition, our university will work to form networks with universities and researchers in the United States, China, and other countries and to conduct joint research.

(2) Establish the Soka University Fellow program: Promote interdisciplinary study through human exchange.
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Related field: Globalization

The network of academic researchers that agree with the “founding principles of Soka University” is steadily expanding. In order for such researchers to widely interact and contribute to each academic field, create a program to register such researchers as Soka University Fellows (academic researchers that will contribute to the research and education of Soka University) with the faculties/research institutes. Utilize, to the maximum extent, the information regarding the domestic/international networks of the overseas universities and their instructors with which Soka University conducts exchanges. In addition, the information will be turned into a database and used for matching joint research by introducing associated researchers to each other.

(3) Promote internationally recognized priority research.
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Related fields: Globalization

Our university has many instructors that have accomplished many excellent things. In addition, some graduate students have been internationally recognized. Given this, a system will be formed in which multiple instructors provide instruction particularly to graduate students that want to become researchers, as well as support them to definitely produce results. In addition, set the priority issues that are particular to each faculty or cross-faculty, and by increasing the number of published papers while maintaining the quality of the research, enhance the international competitiveness of our university.

(4) Promote research for achieving the SDGs targets.

Related fields: Globalization and contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders

1) In addition to the branding projects that are currently being implemented, promote research & development into the environmental technologies suited for developing countries, and contribute to environmental protection and eliminating starvation.
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2) Collect reports on the practices of educators that agree with Soka philosophy, turn them into a database, and
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contribute to the development of education methods in developing countries by systematizing the methodologies of Soka education.

3) For the specific real-world issues that will contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, create integrated research themes combining the humanities and the sciences that can enable the creation of new value.

■III. Globalization

Policy: Based on the initiatives taken by the Top Global University Project, realize a campus where diverse values can gather as a university that is leading globalization.

(1) Based on the initiatives taken by the Top Global University Project, construct an educational environment with diversity.

Related fields: Education and organizational management

1) Based on the globalization initiatives that have been significantly advanced through the Top Global University Project, reset the numerical targets for the number of Japanese students sent overseas, number of foreign students accepted, and other goals in five- and 10-year increments. In addition, improve the contents and quality of the programs. Aim to advance from the existing study-abroad programs for learning languages toward acquiring credits in specialized courses at overseas universities or studying at overseas graduate schools. In relation to accepting foreign students, give consideration to the scholarship programs and seek out new overseas universities to establish exchanges with, in order to ensure furthering diversity.

2) Effectively utilize the Soka University offices located in China, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines so as to strengthen publications, student support, and cooperation with overseas universities with which Soka University conducts exchanges. In addition, aim to establish offices in Africa and Latin America, etc.

(2) Expand foreign student support (career support, support for alumni, acquisition of external funds).

Related fields: Contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders and organizational management

1) Enhance career education for foreign students that want to work in Japan and improve the results for finding employment.

2) Aim to enhance the support center system for foreign students and deepen cooperation and friendships with alumni.

3) Aim to enhance the acquisition of external funding, such as the scholarship program from the Japanese government (MEXT), the JASSO scholarship program, and the Tobitate! (Leap for Tomorrow) Study Abroad Japan scholarship program.

4) Given that exchanges between Japanese students and foreign students have advanced as a result of building international student dormitories, such as the Takiyama International Dormitory and the Manyo International Dormitory, work to bring further diversity to the campus and improve the environment.

(3) Strengthen cooperation with overseas universities.

Related fields: Education and research

Our university has already concluded academic exchange agreements with 210 universities in 60 countries and regions around the world (as of January 2019). Against this backdrop, further strengthen research exchanges and student exchanges that involve acquiring credits in undergraduate and graduate school programs, such as the joint-degree and double-degree programs, with those overseas universities with which Soka University conducts exchanges, and enhance the quality of the cooperation.

■IV. Contributions to society/coordination with stakeholders

Policy: In order to respond to increasingly diversified needs, strengthen cooperation with various institutions in industry, government, and academia, and contribute to social development.

(1) Expand “recurrent education” that responds to the needs of society.
Related field: Education
<p>There are increasing needs for recurrent education in which persons that lived a normal life after finishing college and working until retirement alternately receive education and work in a recurring way. Given this, new recurrent education will be offered under the following themes.</p> <p>1) Offer “online learning course for adult students” targeting working people that want to study at a time and place of their choice, and provide online business skill-related subjects, such as statistics and marketing, as paid content.</p> <p>2) Offer a place for alumni that share passion toward realizing the founding principles of Soka University to mutually inspire and learn with each other. Offer courses at our university mainly on weekends with the aim of deepening the skills required in society under one theme.</p>

(2) Strengthen the collaboration with government, industry, and educational institutions, and promote diverse education and research.
Related field: Education and research
<p>1) Centered on our university’s community/academic-industrial collaboration center, strengthen collaboration with the government and industry, including the “hub for industry exchanges” planned to be completed in 2021 in Hachioji City, and expand multifaceted regional contribution activities.</p> <p>2) In order to graduate “global citizens that can create value,” provide systems to support the commercialization of business plans that will solve social issues and provide entrepreneur programs unique to our university in collaboration with related institutions.</p>

(3) Expand education and contributions to society focused on the SDGs.
Related fields: Education and globalization
<p>1) Consolidate and make public on the website and by other means the various SDGs-related activities conducted by students, instructors, and staff, and provide experience-based learning opportunities under the themes of various social issues. In addition, establish various systems to support SDGs-related activities.</p> <p>2) Through the activities of the UNESCO Associated Schools support project, promote local SDGs activities in cooperation with elementary schools and junior high schools located mainly in Hachioji City.</p> <p>3) Promote collaboration/cooperation with the United Nations agencies with which our university has concluded an agreement, and hold lectures and symposiums on the theme of the SDGs. Also, in order to contribute to “4. Equitable quality education for all,” which is one of the 17 SDGs goals, offer learning opportunities at refugee camps.</p>

■V. Organizational management

Policy: In order to achieve unending development, establish quick and flexible organizational management and a stable financial foundation.

(1) Scale of our university and the structure of faculties/graduate schools.

Related fields: Education

Although the population of 18-year-old people will definitely decline in the future, the roles of our university will possibly increase due to an increase of foreign students and recurrent education for adult students.

The scale of universities is expected to remain unchanged or could contract. However, in the near future, it is expected that universities will create learning opportunities beyond barriers between the humanities and the sciences, such as in data science, and our university will flexibly organize a structure for the faculties/departments and graduate schools.

(2) Mid- to long-term financial plan and campus improvement plan.

Related fields:

In accordance with the report issued by the Central Council for Education, each educational corporation must formulate a mid- to long-term financial plan, and in particular, the items of “finance” and “facilities” have been specified.

As supporting materials for the plan, our “2021–2030 Mid- to Long-term Financial Plan” and our “2021–2030 Facilities and Equipment Improvement Plan” will be formulated and made public in April 2020.

A plan for increased revenue and reduced costs that will support the financial aspects of each mid- to long-term business plan will be formulated, and the sustainable operation of our educational corporation will be promoted. Consideration will be given to the revision of tuitions, promotion of donation projects, cost reductions, and project cancellations.

Numerical targets will be set for every five years, the status of implementation of the core plan will be inspected every year, and flexible revisions will be made as necessary.

(3) Activation and enhancement of organizational governance.

Related fields: Globalization

In order to realize a campus where diverse values can gather, the following matters will be addressed.

- 1) Appoint instructors and staff with various nationalities and cultural backgrounds.
- 2) Appoint bilingual persons that will prepare documents and act as a point of contact in English.
- 3) Further promote gender equality.

(4) Improve our brand through strengthened communication with internal and external parties and through information disclosure.

Related fields:

1) Identify the strengths of our university and work to disseminate how our university should be understood through communication activities both inside and outside our university, so as to improve our brand. In addition, improve quality and increase the quantity of communication about our university's initiatives centered on education, research, and contributions to society, and, at the same time, implement public relations activities through the media that respond to current needs.

2) Actively disclose information about the quality of our university's education, such as education results and initiatives concerning education and learning, along with the progress of New Grand Design and management information, through our website and other means.

(5) Development into an internal quality assurance system focused on outcomes.

Related fields: Education

Our university formulated an assessment policy and an assessment plan in 2017, and developed an internal quality assurance system. In addition, our university has worked to visualize outcomes through the measurement of learning results, etc., and to improve the student participation type internal quality assurance system.

Going forward, while effectively utilizing opportunities for the certification evaluations and accreditations conducted every seven years, further enhance the internal quality assurance system and visualize the outcome.

■ Notes:

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- i “Soka University Grand Design” directed toward the 50th anniversary of the university’s founding
<http://gdreport.soka.ac.jp/>
- ii The project focuses on assistance to universities that thoroughly promote globalization, such as new initiatives for realizing and accelerating exchanges/collaboration with top universities around the world, human resources/academic affairs system reforms, and strengthening the systems for cultivating student capabilities for global activities.
- iii Human-centric society that simultaneously realizes economic development and solves social issues via a system that combines virtual space and real space; this was advocated in the 5th Science and Technology Basic Plan as a vision of a future society that Japan should aim for.
- iv Refers to a turning point where artificial intelligence (AI) exceeds human intelligence, resulting in major worldwide changes
- v Grand Design for Higher Education toward 2040 (Report by the Central Council for Education issued on November 26, 2018)
http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyo0/toushin/1411360.htm
- vi International goals through 2030 as stated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at the United Nations summit in 2015; the agenda consists of 17 goals and 169 targets for realizing a sustainable society.
- vii Peace proposal on the 44th SGI Day: “Toward a New Era of Peace and Disarmament” (January 26, 2019)