

I. INTRODUCTION

The Educational Ideals of Sophia University

Based on Christian principles of education, Sophia University attests to the four-hundred-year-old interest of the Jesuit Order in Japan. Its aim is to prepare men and women coming from different countries to recognize in the different cultural traditions of the world the fundamental unity of the human race and to work for the concrete achievement of that unity. The roots of the university go back to 1549, when St. Francis Xavier, a Jesuit, landed in Kagoshima with the hope of starting a Catholic university which would introduce Western culture to Japan. In 1908, nearly 360 years later, three members of the Society of Jesus—the German Father Joseph Dahlmann, the French Father Henri Boucher, and the English Father James Rockliff—came to Japan with the mission of fulfilling St. Francis Xavier’s aspiration. As a result of their efforts, Sophia University was established in 1913, when the Japanese Ministry of Education gave the Jesuits permission to found a new educational institution under the Japanese name of Jōchi Gakuin. Sixteen students enrolled in the first class. From this modest beginning Sophia University has grown to be one of the foremost of Japan’s private universities with a student body of over 12,000 undergraduate and graduate students and a teaching staff of more than one thousand. In the tradition of the international character of Sophia’s founders, the faculty members represent twenty different nationalities; they are committed to conveying to the next generation through their scholarship and teaching both humankind’s cultural and intellectual heritage and a concern for the problems facing the world today.

The Faculty of Liberal Arts

The Faculty of Liberal Arts continues in a new form the educational approach and goals established by its predecessor, the Faculty of Comparative Culture (FCC) and its two departments, the Department of Comparative Culture (DCC) and the Department of Japanese Language & Studies (DJLS).

The mission of the Faculty of Liberal Arts (FLA) and its Department of Liberal Arts (DLA) is to prepare students of diverse background to take the lead in bridging differences and promoting understanding in the complex world of the twenty-first century. Through its broad interdisciplinary curriculum, centered on courses in the humanities, economics and business, and the social sciences, the faculty seeks to enlarge students’ general knowledge, develop critical thinking, and nurture a broad, humanistic vision. All courses except language classes are

conducted in English, and different levels of courses in English composition, reading, and speaking equip students of divergent linguistic background to perform at an international academic level. A comprehensive Japanese-language program offers courses in advanced communication skills for native Japanese speakers as well as a full range of classes for non-native students. Courses on Japan distributed throughout the curriculum enable students to understand both present-day Japan and its traditions in a global context.

Graduates of the faculty will receive a Bachelor of Arts degree, 学士(国際教養), accredited by the Ministry of Education, Culture Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT).