

# Management of Internationalization in Japanese Universities: Towards the development of collaborative relationship between academic and administrative staff

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**Abstract.** This study investigates the national policy and institutional initiatives in Japan for improving university management from the viewpoint of internationalization. Special focus is given to the organizational notion of collaborative relationships between academic and administrative units, which is described as *kyōshoku kyōdō* in the context of Japanese higher education institutions. Through an examination of policy reports on university management and the design of the latest governmental project for university internationalization, called “Top Global University,” two arguments will be considered: First, capacity development of an organization, rather than that of individual university staff, is necessary for organizational change toward better management of internationalization. Second, deep deliberation on the meaning of *kyōshoku kyōdō* is needed in individual institutions to fully internalize the concept within their own contexts.

**Keywords:** academic and administrative staff, internationalization of higher education, inter-unit communication, Top Global University project, university management

## Introduction

Internationalization as a university reform has increasingly become a dominant discourse in Japanese higher education policy and practice. There are various external/internal and direct/indirect factors that affect strategies of internationalization in Japanese universities. These include, among others, world-wide fierce competition in recruiting international students, accelerating development of higher education systems in rising countries in Asia, unstable ranking of domestic universities among world-renowned universities, a national aim of producing internationally competitive human resources in this century of uncertainty, decreasing birthrate and aging population in Japan, continuing retrenchment of public investment in higher education, and diversifying student and researcher demographics in the domestic higher education system. All these factors surrounding universities in

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Japan make it critical that they become more effective, efficient, and internationalized as institutions to meet the demands of a globalized society. For this purpose, individual universities have been seriously struggling with optimizing their internationalization management systems.

Institutional efforts to maximize the effects of internationalization for more effective management of universities are not limited to Japan; they have been tackled in many higher education institutions around the world. The accumulated research on university management shows that since the beginning of the 21st century, various countries such as Australia (Conway & Dobson, 2003; Szekeres, 2004, 2006, 2011), the UK and the United States (Whitchurch, 2009), Norway (Gornitzka & Larsen, 2004), New Zealand (Wohlmuther, 2008), Germany (Brandenburg, 2016), and Korea (Jung & Shin, 2015) have seen significant changes in university management structure; in addition, university administration staff increasingly have a professional identity. Similarly in Japan, increasing attention has been paid to the improvement of administrative organizations in national and institutional policies since the mid-2000s. Furthermore, the discourse around restructuring university management is accompanied by restructuring of management of internationalization in a more comprehensive way, in which every function, from education, research, and social contributions to the basic systems of academic affairs, finance, personnel, information, and campus design, is being reformed from a global perspective in an orchestrated manner (Hudzik, 2015). In this situation, the internationalization of management systems has become a serious issue to be tackled by many universities and will have a significant impact on the life of their institutions.

This study aims to understand effective management of internationalization by investigating a characteristic organizational relationship in the Japanese context called *kyōshoku kyōdō*. *Kyōshoku kyōdō* is a norm of behavior referring to a collaborative relationship between academic and administrative units in a university in pursuit of institutional visions and goals. Many university people in Japan know the term and agree on its rough meaning to some extent. National policy papers have also promoted this organizational norm for reform of university governance and management systems. The concept is simple in the abstract; however, the practice is difficult because it requires not only structural reform but also cultural changes in organizational behaviors. Traditionally, most universities in Japan have taken a decentralized approach to governance structure, in which a “leader-follower” relationship between academic and administrative units has been dominant. In contrast, a *kyōshoku kyōdō* approach necessitates a shift in organizational relationships from vertical to horizontal under shared university-wide visions and values. In order to change organizational relationships to be collaborative, many Japanese universities need to strengthen organizational capacity on both the academic and administrative sides and facilitate inter-organization communication to support equal responsibilities. Previous discussions on university governance and management in the Japanese context have underestimated these cultural factors in organizational development.

Given that a *kyōshoku kyōdō*, or collaborative relationship between academic and administrative

staff, is regarded as an innovative measure for reform in university management, what is advocated in national policy papers to materialize the concept? How has the concept been applied to practical internationalization initiatives? In what ways has it been internalized at individual universities? This article explores these research questions through an examination of related national reports on university management and the governmental initiative for university internationalization entitled “Top Global University” (TGU) project (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science [JSPS], 2014a). The purpose of this study is to identify the gap between policy and practice in the promotion of organizational change in the internationalization initiative and discuss how to close this gap for better management of university internationalization.

This article is structured as follows. The next section describes the context of Japanese internationalization by looking at characteristics of recent flagship funding projects for university internationalization and categorizing university staff in both academic and administrative units who jointly enact these internationalization initiatives at individual institutions. The following section discusses *kyōshoku kyōdō* in an attempt to understand its conceptual meaning and its various important internal elements. The discussion will further explore Japanese national policy on university reform since the late 1990s, which has increasingly emphasized the concept of *kyōshoku kyōdō* in university management. Then, the design of the TGU project is explored to determine how the national promotion of organizational change has been transferred to a particular practice for university internationalization. The investigation will touch on the connection between capacity development of administrative staff and the organizational notion of *kyōshoku kyōdō*. The conclusion tackles the research questions above by summarizing the examinations of policies for university management and practice of the TGU project. It will finally provide a suggestion for institutions to internalize the concept of *kyōshoku kyōdō* within their own institutional context to promote the management of comprehensive internationalization.

## Context

### *Government-led projects for university internationalization in Japan*

Japan has been promoting university internationalization through powerful government intervention since the 1980s. In particular, since introducing the New Public Management approach to the higher education scene, governmental flagship funding projects supporting university internationalization have become increasingly competitive, inviting institutional proposals for strategic internationalization initiatives. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has thus implemented different types of funding projects, with terms ranging from five to ten years, for university internationalization since the early 2000s. The largest and most influential of these include the Strategic Fund for Establishing International Headquarters in University (SIH) (JSPS,

2005); Global 30 (JSPS, 2009); Go Global Japan (JSPS, 2013); and the Top Global University (TGU) project (JSPS, 2104a). While the purposes and directions of these projects vary (see Table 1), MEXT's implementation of these funding projects has mainly been to let the selected universities take a leading role for the remaining 700 plus institutions throughout the country by showcasing good practices for internationalization initiatives. As indicated in Table 1, a consistent point of emphasis by MEXT in these projects is the development of stronger systems for managing institution-wide internationalization. Holistic, systemic, and effective management has repeatedly been demanded from individual institutions to enable more comprehensive internationalization activities.

**Table 1. National funding projects of university internationalization since 2005**

Project	Period of support	Number of selected universities	Aims of the projects	Emphasized points in the development of internationalization management
SIH	2005-2009	20	To support the establishment and promotion of university-wide international strategies tailored the unique institutional character of each university, as well as to strengthen the infrastructure upon which to carry out the universities' internationalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing within their organizations international strategy headquarters, and strengthening the program planning and implementation functions of these headquarters</li> <li>• Securing and training university faculty and staff who can carry forward internationalization initiatives</li> </ul>
Global 30	2009-2013	13	To develop selected universities as Japan's leading internationalization hubs by providing a high quality of education and an environment that makes it easy for students from other countries to study in Japan.	Improving internationalization management through strategic planning of research and educational internationalization; reform of administrative offices; development of human resources in administrative staff units, etc.
Go Global Japan	2012-2016	42	To provide support for universities to develop an organized education system to comprehensively strengthen and promote the global capabilities of students, in order to foster human resources who can work internationally and positively take on global challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality improvement in education through internationalized educational management; e.g. course numbering system and internationalized syllabus</li> <li>• Developing administrative units by employing specialists for international exchange and capacity improvement of regular staff</li> <li>• Internationalization of educational environment in campus; e.g. multilingualization of internal documents</li> </ul>
TGU	2014-2023	37	To provide prioritized support to those universities that are leading the internationalization of Japan's education by launching new programs to encourage and deepen interactions and partnerships with the world's top universities, reforming personnel and educational systems, enhancing educational systems to help students develop the ability to act globally and accelerating other globalization initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging reform in personnel system of university staff; e.g. introduction of an annual salary system; tenure track system; personnel evaluation with international standards, staff development training opportunities</li> <li>• Encouraging reform of governance; e.g. capacity improvement of administrative staff members; planning of practical visions for internationalization; effective decision-making structure; diversity in decision-making structure; development of institutional research function</li> </ul>

Sources: SIH (JSPS, 2005), Global 30 (JSPS, 2009), Go Global Japan (JSPS, 2013), TGU (JSPS, 2014a)

Note: SIH and TGU are abbreviations for Strategic Fund for Establishing International Headquarters in University and Top Global University project, respectively.

*Actors of internationalization management and administration in Japanese universities*

In conjunction with these internationalization projects, Japanese universities have frequently brought in experts in the field of international education and university internationalization. While there are no particular job categories or personnel treatments for “internationalization experts,” there are different types of staff members who in practice can be identified as internationalization experts in both academic and administrative groups. Among academic staff, representative experts may include international student advisors; teaching staff for international education; special teaching staff for international students; faculty members at departments that include international education; and study-abroad advisors. International student advisors emerged in the late 1980s when the number of international students increased on Japanese university campuses after the “100,000 international students plan”<sup>1</sup> was announced. Teaching staff for international education provide classes for both international and domestic students. Traditionally, a special subject, “Japanese language and Japanese studies,” was created for international students at the undergraduate level in the 1960s in a few national universities. Academic subjects in international education have developed rapidly since the early 2000s. This tide arose from the Global 30 project, which urged universities to open subjects taught in English to international students, and the Go Global Japan project, which promoted internationalization of the curriculum to globalize the educational setting on campus. To achieve these objectives, more teaching staff who can teach classes in English have been appointed at many universities. Several special teaching staff for international students, who are called *ryūgakusei senmon kyōiku kyōin* in Japanese, have been appointed since 1984 in departments of national universities with large numbers of international students (Yokota & Shiratsuchi, 2004). Faculty members involved in internationalization are engaged with various research, teaching, and management activities at the department level. The last category, study-abroad advisors, consists of academics assisting students who wish to study abroad. They usually not only advise students but also cover other responsibilities, such as liaising with partner universities overseas for effective operation of official student exchange programs.

Experts in the category of administration can be seen from the top management level (e.g., vice-president for international relations), to the middle (e.g., directors of international offices and deans of departments), to the practical level (administrative staff at international offices, other internal units, and in departments). Most vice-presidents and senior administrators have academic backgrounds rather than managerial careers, and many directors of international offices hold a PhD or doctoral degree and teach international and domestic students in addition to taking managerial responsibilities. In administration, staff are distributed in various internal administrative units, such

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<sup>1</sup> The “100,000 international students plan” was a national aim to increase the number of international students studying at Japanese universities from about 10,000 in 1983 to more than 100,000 by 2000. The target was attained in 2003 and the succeeding idea of “300,000 international students by 2020” was launched in 2008.

as division of international affairs and global exchange. Although the organizational arrangement of divisions and sections varies at individual universities, in most cases these units cover administrative matters in international education and university internationalization. Administrative staff are allocated in departments with many international students. They also take charge of advising local students regarding studying abroad, primarily regarding administrative matters, such as providing outlines of study-abroad programs, information on partner universities, and a variety of application conditions and schedules. These administrative members typically transfer to other units in an institution in their third or fourth years, for the purpose of acquiring broad knowledge and experiences in various matters in university administration.

In reality, there is significant overlap between the duties of academic and administrative staff depending on the particular university. It also should be noted that the field of internationalization management in Japanese universities has gradually seen a blurring of boundaries between academic and administrative groups, and signs of blended professional identity (Whitchurch, 2009) have been perceived in staff members working in internationalization. However, for the foreseeable future, it does not seem that staff involved in an expert area of internationalization will soon be categorized and evaluated as professionals within a specialized personnel structure. Rather, in most Japanese universities, they will likely continue to belong to either the academic or the administrative organization. Therefore, what divides the two groups is clearly the traditional governance style of Japanese universities, namely a deliberative body of academic members and a management system of administrative staff, called *kyōjukai* and *jimukyoku*, respectively, in Japanese. Nevertheless, while academic and administrative staff have been clearly separated in these different organizational and personnel structures, in practice, they work interchangeably with regard to internationalization. As internationalization initiatives have become more complex, growing to cover a wider scope of university functions, they must necessarily work together for effective management. This trend highlights a characteristic organizational relationship in Japanese universities between academic and administrative units that has been traditionally recognized as the concept of *kyōshoku kyōdō*.<sup>2</sup>

### ***Kyōshoku kyōdō*: A collaborative relationship between academic and administrative staff**

The importance of collaborative relationships between academic and administrative staff is not a matter debated only in the context of Japanese higher education institutions. The literature shows an increasing focus on this issue in other countries, such as the United States (Kuo, 2009), the UK (Clegg & McAuley, 2005), and Australia (Szekeres, 2004, 2006, 2011; Sebalj et al., 2012). These studies stress a recent demand for cooperative partnership between academic and administrative staff, caused by the increasing complexity of contemporary university management. The fundamental difference

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<sup>2</sup> Literally in Japanese, *kyōshoku* is a shortened word that combines *kyōin* (academics) and *shokuin* (administrative staff), and *kyōdō* means cooperation of work.

between the Japanese practice and that of other countries resides in the firmly dual system of university governance, described above as the *jimukyoku* and *kyōjukai* structure. However, as investigated below, *kyōshoku kyōdō* is more than a simple structural matter.

*Kyōshoku kyōdō* is a norm of behavior seen not only in the management of internationalization but also more broadly across university management in Japan, including planning and operations of admissions, academic programs, student support, educational technology and ICT, professional development, and academic–industrial collaborations. The notion evolved in some private universities in the 1960s and has gradually attracted wider attention since the 1980s (Nishikawa, 2014). At the policy level, MEXT first used the term in its 2008 report on the development of undergraduate education (Central Council for Education [CCE], 2008), which paved the way for establishing the research area of *kyōshoku kyōdō* in the field of higher education governance and organizational management of universities (Magofuku, 2001; Hata, 2009; Oba, 2011, 2013, 2014).

The detail, degree, and manifestation of the *kyōshoku kyōdō* concept vary in different types of universities (Nishikawa, 2014). Additionally, the significance of the concept to institutional internationalization has not yet been fully examined. Several studies have tried to conceptualize the *kyōshoku kyōdō* practice and provide working definitions. Some representative conceptualizations include “a state in which academic and administrative staff work together as partners on an equal position for a common purpose” (Komuro, 2011, p. 129); “to conduct planning, designing and implementation with sharing aims on an equal footing” (Ogata, 2013, p. 19); or “cooperative actions between academic and administrative staff for the purpose of realizing institutional or departmental missions and goals” (Ishii, 2014, p. 6). Adding another possible definition is not the aim of this study; however, these conceptualizations highlight the two fundamental meanings contained in the *kyōshoku kyōdō* concept: value-sharing and equality in responsibility between academic and administrative groups.

First, *kyōshoku kyōdō* requires both the academic and the administrative sides to share values based on a university-wide vision. This necessitates joint ownership in terms of institutional policy, aims, purposes, and goals. The importance of value-sharing between internal units is demonstrated in several surveys on organizational management of university staff in Japanese universities. A research group of the Japan Association of University Administrative Management conducted a questionnaire survey among administrative staff in higher education institutions in 2005, inviting presidents of over 600 universities in Japan to respond. The results showed that a shared sense of urgency between academic and administrative staff towards the radical systematic changes in university management was recognized as the most important and challenging element in *kyōshoku kyōdō* in their universities (Japan Association of University Administrative Management, 2005). The Research Institute for Independent Higher Education also conducted a large-scale survey on the development of abilities in administrative staff among its 382 member private universities in Japan. The results demonstrated that over 70% of responding university managers recognized “mutual

understanding between academic and administrative staff” (78.4%) and “sharing policy and goals between them” (70.6%) as two of the most important elements to promote *kyōshoku kyōdō* (Research Institute for Independent Higher Education, 2010). Some other qualitative and quantitative surveys on similar issues with smaller samples also support these findings (Naito & Hara, 2009; Shimizu, 2011; Oda et al., 2014). The results of these surveys imply that purposeful communication among different internal units is essential to creating a good linkage between academic and administrative units, thus fostering *kyōshoku kyōdō* (Ogata, 2013).

Second, the *kyōshoku kyōdō* approach demands equality in the degree of engagement from both the academic and the administrative sides. Staff from both groups should engage with internationalization projects jointly from different working positions but with balanced degrees of responsibility. The reason for emphasizing equality of participation resides in the traditional power balance between academic and administrative units. In the context of Japanese higher education management, the faculty body *kyōjukai* and the administrative unit *jimukyoku* have long had a vertical “leader-follower” relationship.<sup>3</sup> Generally, many universities in Japan have controlled institutional management using a decentralized approach, organizing *kyōjukai* at each department for academic members to play a major role in discussing and deciding upon research, education, and managerial matters in their departments, while administrative staff supported them. However, this gap in the balance of management power was meant to be addressed by a revision of the School Education Law in April 2015 that clarified the scope of responsibilities of *kyōjukai*, softening its power and introducing a more centralized management style. To implement this shifted management approach, administrative units in many universities have been increasingly required to play a strengthened role as “co-actors” with academic staff.

The two elements in the *kyōshoku kyōdō* concept imply a fundamental shift in organizational relationship in terms not only of structure but also of culture. Particularly, it necessitates a change in organizational culture by creating a communicative climate between internal units and a sense of respectfulness toward the partner unit’s responsibility. It requires members of both groups to develop cognitive abilities and emotional sensitivity in the exchange of reasonable ideas based on the expertise of each and to imagine and value the partner unit’s conditions and resources. The demand for these abilities is supported in another survey investigating required competencies in administrative staff in private universities (Fukudome (Miyamura), 2004). The survey found that in the field of internationalization management, the most necessary competency of administrative staff was “to properly perceive the other person’s situation and feelings” (67.6%), ranking higher than the average of various management areas (31.8%), followed by “ability of aptly and clearly presenting own ideas” (49.6%, compared to the average of 34.2%), and “creativity to plan project proposals” (32.8%,

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<sup>3</sup> The vertical relationship between academic and administrative staff is not uncommon in other countries, as well. However, some countries have seen a gradual change, such as Australia (Conway & Dobson, 2003) and Norway (Gornitzka & Larsen 2004), with a rise of professional identity in managerial positions.

compared to the average of 32.3%). Given that these attributes are intrinsic to the effectiveness of *kyōshoku kyōdō*, how can these be fostered?

### **Advocating capacity development of university staff in policy papers supporting *kyōshoku kyōdō***

Planning human resources and organizational development requires a holistic design at both the national and the institutional level. To understand the national direction of capacity development planning in university management, it helps to look into national policies on university governance and management. From the late 1990s to the present, MEXT has discussed repeatedly the development of the administrative capacity of university staff. The four reports by the University Council and Central Council for Education (CCE), both of which have been council bodies to the Minister of Education during different periods, have dealt with the improvement of governance and management structure toward more systematic internationalization.

First, the 1998 report by the University Council dealt with the diversification and individualization of university functions to prepare for the complexity of higher education in the 21st century. It demanded self-sufficient management systems within individual universities (University Council, 1998), thus requiring clarification of the division of responsibilities between academic and administrative organizations, the establishment of cooperative relationships between the two groups, and transfer of authority from academic to administrative offices in some specialized areas, such as international exchange. The Council issued another report two years later focusing on the improvement of university education (University Council, 2000). The tone of argument in this report was the same as in the former one, again requesting role-sharing and harmonized relationships between academic and administrative units. These two earlier reports went no further in facilitating structural changes in academic and administrative units toward relative equality and building cooperative relationships. However, the two later reports, published in 2008 and 2014, stepped into practical measures for realization of the proposed organizational relationship.

The report by the CCE in 2008, which focused on restructuring the undergraduate education system, is the first policy paper to clearly mention the *kyōdō* (cooperation) relationship between academic and administrative staff (CCE, 2008). Taking the increasing complexity of university management into account, it enumerated some necessary elements to be fostered in members of the administrative group: communicative competence, strategic planning and management, and fundamental knowledge of diverse areas of university administration. The report demanded that universities develop these resources in administrative staff “for the purpose of strengthening the collaborative relationship between academic and administrative staff members” (CCE, 2008, p. 42; author’s emphasis). Moreover, the recent report on the reform of university governance (CCE, 2014) further evaluated the *kyōshoku kyōdō* practice, and it regarded improvement of the administrative staff

as a direct method of influencing the environment of collaboration:

Considering the current situation of a strong demand for further reform of individual universities, it is important to invite more administrative staff members to participate in the center of university management on an equal footing with academic staff, which is called *kyōshoku kyōdō*. Universities are needed to systematically perform various initiatives for this purpose, which may include the improvement of competencies in planning ability, internationally communicative skills, operation of foreign languages, and the establishment of appropriate personnel evaluation and the career-path design of administrative staff members. (CCE, 2014, p. 19)

The arguable points in the two recent reports by the CCE (2008 and 2014) are twofold. First, they discuss improving the resources of only administrative units. Is this pertinent? For the purpose of materializing *kyōshoku kyōdō*, organizational capacity development is naturally called for in both groups. The reports do not suggest any improvements or measures for academic units in terms of their management ability. Academics are typically trained to become quality researchers and educators and are evaluated by their performance in these fields; they are typically provided with very few opportunities to develop their management skills. With scarce knowledge and experience in management, how can they acquire deep understandings of and a respectful attitude toward administrative units and their tasks and responsibilities? Second, the reports assume that individual capacity development of university staff is directly linked to realizing the *kyōshoku kyōdō* approach. Is this true? As discussed in the previous section, *kyōshoku kyōdō* is a norm of behavior that demands changes to organizational culture. While skill development of individual staff members is a necessary basis for efficiency in their work, more emphasis should be put on the means of development as an organization and the measures for inter-unit communication for the purpose of collaboration between internal organizations.

The significance of internal communication is evidenced in previous research into the management of university internationalization. Schoorman (1999) examined a research university in the United States, investigating the impact of its university-wide mission statement calling for internationalization activities in different departments. The study found that in order to implement internationalization university-wide, the institution should evoke awareness and agreement among university members concerning the relevance of internationalization to the responsibilities of their individual departments through dialogues between university leaders and department members. Another study, by Bartell (2003), investigated two universities in Canada with regard to the relationship between the strength of organizational culture and the institution-wide commitment to internationalization activities. Bartell found that “increased social integration of the variety of subcultures of the different units ... convey[s] meanings and identification with the objectives and strategies of internationalization” (Bartell, 2003, p. 67). The study concludes that internal communication is critical to identifying cultural inconsistencies in internal units of a university and

finding solutions for integration towards institutional internationalization. While these studies targeted faculty units and senior administrators, the findings can be reasonably applied to relationships with other internal organizations, such as administrative units.

Sound internal communication requires organizational skills to perceive differences and commonalities between internal units and organizational behavior to integrate different resources from different sub-units on the basis of shared institutional values. A gap in the national policy reports can be seen herein that promoting the development of individual staff members does not lead to *kyōshoku kyōdō* until staff clearly understands the aim of organizational change for university reform through internationalization.<sup>4</sup>

In any event, despite the lack of deep discussion, national policy urges the introduction of the *kyōshoku kyōdō* approach to individual universities, and development of the competencies of administrative staff is regarded as a measure for the realization of that goal. How is this national intention applied to practical management of internationalization at the institutional level?

### **Institutional reactions: Cases in the Top Global University project**

To understand the extent to which the intentions of national policy are transferred to individual initiatives, it is appropriate to look at the links between national policy and related practices. In terms of internationalization management, the Top Global University (TGU) project is a reasonable case that clearly reflects a governmental aim for university reform and shows how the intention is perceived by the selected universities.

#### *Outline of TGU and the selected universities*

TGU was created as part of the “national growth strategy” platform by the Abe cabinet. The Council for the Implementation of Education Rebuilding at the Prime Minister’s Office discussed “university education and producing global human resources” three times at meetings from April to May 2013; the Cabinet regarded this issue as one of the core pillars for revitalizing national economic growth. The Council finalized the proposal called “University Education and Global Human Resource Development for the Future” in 2013, and via this proposal, TGU acquired the cabinet’s prioritized support (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 2013). With an initial budget of 7.7 billion yen (about US\$71 million), MEXT launched TGU in 2014 as a ten-year project. The purpose of TGU was to “prioritize support for universities that are thoroughgoing in their efforts to internationalize” (JSPS, 2014a, p. 1) via university reform in education systems and management schemes.

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<sup>4</sup> A member of the subcommittee on university education in the CCE expressed a similar view with this argument point in the 44th meeting held on December 2016. He remarked that “the idea of improvement of administrative staff and that of stabilizing the notion of *kyōshoku kyōdō* belong to a different category...they should be considered separately” (MEXT, 2016, p. 9).

Comprehensive internationalization as a university-wide initiative requires reform in governance and management structure as a core requirement for individual selected universities. It is clear that in this matter, TGU is also influenced by the CCE's 2014 report on the reform of university governance.

The final TGU selection list included 37 successful universities, divided into 13 Type A universities and 24 Type B institutions. According to the project guidelines, the Type A category includes leading universities conducting education and research at the global level, and Type B includes universities promoting internationalization of Japanese society through the launch of innovative programs (JSPS, 2014a). As indicated in Table 2, the Type A category includes all seven former imperial universities in Japan, large-scale<sup>5</sup> national<sup>6</sup> and private universities, and two specialized medical and engineering universities in Tokyo. They are frequent winners of a series of national funding projects for internationalization (Yonezawa & Shimmi, 2015), such as those described in Table 1. The Type B universities vary in terms of sector and institutional scale. Most private universities selected in this category are located in Tokyo or the Kansai area (the western part of Japan), where population is concentrated. National universities included in Type B are middle to small-scale, either specialized institutions or located in local areas. Two local public universities were also selected, both of which are well-known for their distinctive efforts toward intensive internationalization of liberal arts education. Looking at the results, the selection criteria seem to be reasonable in light of the intention of competitively funding selected universities that can act as role models for internationalization initiatives to the rest of the universities in Japan.

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<sup>5</sup> Institutional size is categorized by the author for this study as follows: *large* refers to institutions with more than 15,000 students, *middle* means institutions with 5,000 to 15,000 students, and *small* institutions have fewer than 5,000 students.

<sup>6</sup> To be precise, there are no “national” universities in Japan, as all former national universities were reformed as “national university corporations” by the 2004 Act. However, this study uses the term “national” because it is still commonly used in Japan.

**Table 2. Universities selected for the Top Global University project**

	University	Sector	Institutional Size
Type A			
1	Hokkaido University	National (Former Imperial)	Large
2	Tohoku University	National (Former Imperial)	Large
3	The University of Tokyo	National (Former Imperial)	Large
4	Nagoya University	National (Former Imperial)	Large
5	Kyoto University	National (Former Imperial)	Large
6	Osaka University	National (Former Imperial)	Large
7	Kyushu University	National (Former Imperial)	Large
8	Tsukuba University	National	Large
9	Hiroshima University	National	Large
10	Tokyo Medical and Dental University	National	Small
11	Tokyo Institute of Technology	National	Middle
12	Keio University	Private	Large
13	Waseda University	Private	Large
Type B			
1	Chiba University	National	Middle
2	Tokyo University of Foreign Studies	National	Small
3	Tokyo University of the Arts	National	Small
4	Nagaoka University of Technology	National	Small
5	Kanazawa University	National	Middle
6	Toyohashi University of Technology	National	Small
7	Kyoto Institute of Technology	National	Small
8	Nara Institute of Science and Technology	National	Small
9	Okayama University	National	Middle
10	Kumamoto University	National	Middle
11	Akita International University	Local Public	Small
12	The University of Aizu	Local Public	Small
13	International Christian University	Private	Small
14	Shibaura Institute of Technology	Private	Small
15	Sophia University	Private	Middle
16	Toyo University	Private	Large
17	Hosei University	Private	Large
18	Meiji University	Private	Large
19	Rikkyo University	Private	Large
20	Soka University	Private	Middle
21	International University of Japan	Private	Small
22	Ritsumeikan University	Private	Large
23	Kwansei Gakuin University	Private	Large
24	Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University	Private	Small

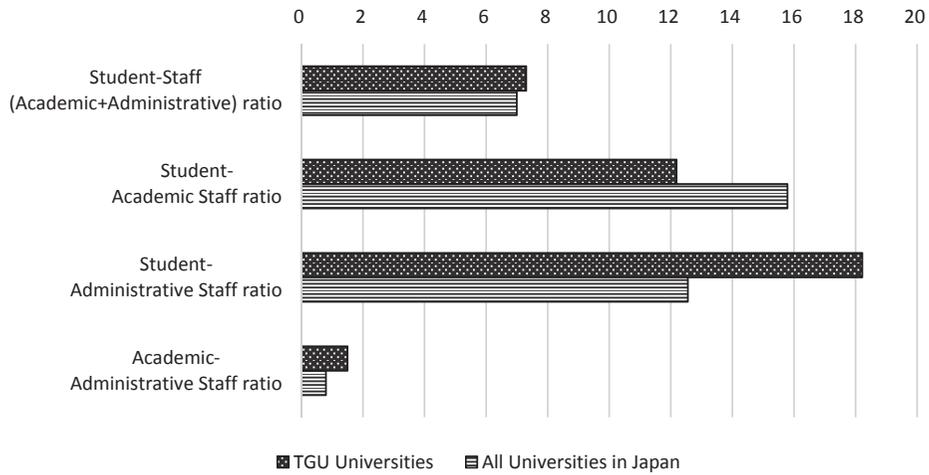
Source: JSPS (2014c)

Note: Institutional size is categorized by the author for this study as follows: *large* refers to institutions with more than 15,000 students, *middle* means institutions with 5,000 to 15,000 students, and *small* institutions have fewer than 5,000 students.

Figures 1 and 2 show the student–staff ratios in TGU universities. In general, student–teacher ratio is used as a primary indicator of teaching quality. This study applies it to characterize TGU universities in terms of their management quality. Figure 1 shows that there is little difference in the student–staff (both academic and administrative) ratio between the TGU universities and all universities in Japan (7.3 and 7.0, respectively). However, when staff is divided into academic and administrative, the data indicate different results. While the TGU universities have a lower ratio of students to academic staff (12.2) than the average across all universities in Japan (15.8), they struggle with a higher ratio (18.2) of students to administrative staff compared to the national average (12.6). The difference intensifies if we examine the ratios separately by sector. Figure 2 shows the student–staff ratio of the TGU universities by national and private sectors.<sup>7</sup> It indicates that private universities have higher ratios in all configurations than their national counterparts and the average across all universities in Japan. In particular, while the student–administrative staff ratio in national TGU universities is not much different than that of all universities in Japan (10.8 and 12.6, respectively), the ratio in the private TGU universities is very high (43.5). This proportion reflects the profiles of large-scale private universities included in TGU, where a large number of students meets a small number of staff members. There are six private universities in the TGU group that are categorized as large, with more than 20,000 students (Keio, Waseda, Toyo, Hosei, Meiji, Rikkyo, Ritsumeikan, and Kwansei Gakuin). The combined student–administrative staff ratio of these six universities is 44.7, which shows a great contrast to the corresponding ratio of 8.6, the average ratio in the three national TGU universities—Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka—which each accommodate more than 20,000 students. These data imply that in the TGU universities, national institutions have a richer human resources environment in terms of university management, while the “principle of efficiency” is intensively applied to most large-scale private universities in Japan. Naturally, this situation in private universities seems to invite the introduction of more innovative and effective management systems such as the *kyōshoku kyōdō* approach.

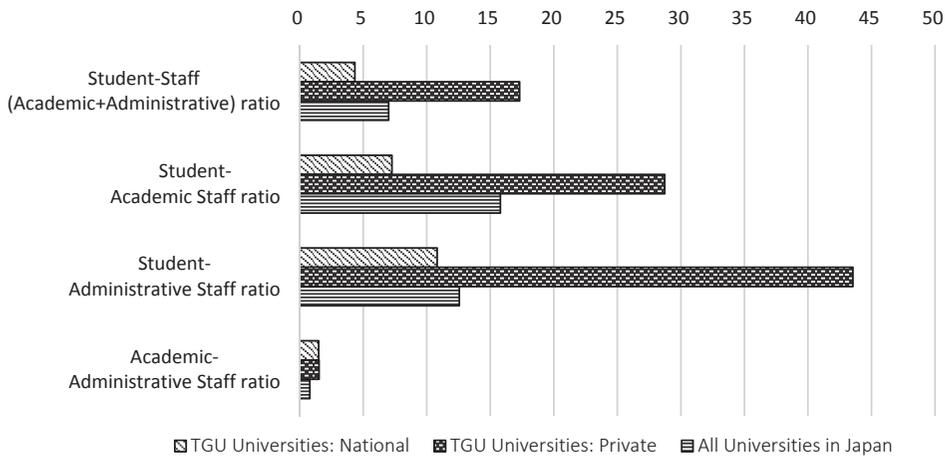
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<sup>7</sup> Local public sector is excluded from discussion here because there are only two local public universities (see Table 2), which is too small for a meaningful comparison.



**Figure 1. Student-staff ratio of TGU universities**

Sources: TGU universities: JSPS (2014c)  
All universities in Japan: MEXT (2014)



**Figure 2. Student-staff ratio of TGU universities by sector type**

Sources: TGU universities: JSPS (2014c)  
All universities in Japan: MEXT (2014)  
Note: Local public institutions included in TGU are excluded because of the small sample set (2).

*Indicators for improvement of administrative staff in the TGU universities*

One of the characteristics in the design of the TGU project is that it requires the selected universities to build institutional goals by setting common performance indicators. The selected universities are required to decide upon their institutional numerical targets for each indicator every three or four years

until the final year of the project, 2023. In total, 44 indicators were set to assess performance in three categories: degree of internationalization, governance reform, and educational reform. Institutional performance is collected annually by MEXT and publicized on the project's website. In general, numerical performance goals are effective when they are well thought out and clearly articulate the project's purposes and aims. However, when this is not so, setting indicators can lead initiatives in an undesired direction and may deteriorate overall performance, resulting in an increase in clerical paperwork that has little importance. The following discusses the design of indicators in the TGU project.

Among the 44 assessment points, this article focuses on those regarding the improvement of administrative staff in the governance section. This is because the TGU application guidelines clearly identify this indicator as showing institutional effort toward the realization of *kyōshoku kyōdō*. This guideline assesses “whether an applicant university makes an effort for the stable employment and development of high-caliber administrative staff *for the purpose of* initiation of *kyōshoku kyōdō*” (JSPS, 2014a, p. 8; author's emphasis). Toward this aim, applicant universities should clearly describe the following points:

- Conceptualization of specialized administrative staff and their skills;
- Assessment methods to evaluate individual staff members' training records;
- Standards of proficiency in foreign languages that administrative staff should aim to achieve; and
- Proportion of administrative staff members who meet the standards of proficiency in foreign languages.

The TGU application form provides a table in the staff development section for applicant universities to fill in for the third and fourth points above, namely, foreign language ability standards set by each applicant university, the number of full-time administrative staff who meet the standard, and the proportion of those staff among all full-time administrative staff (JSPS, 2014b, p. 39). Based on this application design, the selected universities understandably seemed to make a strong effort to tackle language ability among staff. The planned targets in the selected universities are shown in Table 3. All selected universities chose English as the main foreign language to be developed, describing various initiatives designed to meet the goals by 2023, such as providing language learning programs, short-term overseas training programs, and employment of staff who are proficient in English. However, few universities touched on the relevance of staff language proficiency to promoting a *kyōshoku kyōdō* climate in the management of internationalization.

Only five among the 37 universities state a clear intention to enhance *kyōshoku kyōdō* by developing the capacities of administrative staff members. Hokkaido University, a Type A national university, mentions that the university tries to foster the planning and analysis abilities of more

administrative staff members, so that they can collaborate on projects with academic staff. The other four universities, Hosei, Ritsumeikan, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific, and Sophia University, are all private institutions, categorized as Type B. These universities recognize *kyōshoku kyōdō* as having been internalized to some extent as an institutional culture, which implies that an efficient management style was introduced in these universities earlier than in national universities. These universities provide practical plans to facilitate the culture to enhance internationalization initiatives. Hosei University focuses on problem discovery and analysis skills and abilities for project planning and implementation among administrative staff to enable collaborations with academics and students. To attain these abilities, it intends to provide administrative staff with more leadership training programs and highly professional human resources. Ritsumeikan University and Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University are owned by the same private academy, and *kyōshoku kyōdō* has been developed in both institutions as a traditional identity (Ishii, 2014). The two universities plan to extend their proven training programs for administrators to the field of internationalization to enable them to conduct various educational and research projects in collaborative relationships with academic staff members, both internally and externally, and with overseas partner universities. Sophia University evaluates *kyōshoku kyōdō* as an intrinsic measure for university reform in the global era. The university intends to provide more “*kyōshoku kyōdō* project” training opportunities to invite both administrative and academic staff members to collaborate on a study on university administration and reform of educational and research governance. Sophia University was the only institution among the 37 selected universities to describe a purposeful design for collaborative working between academic and administrative staff through human resources development. However, for the most part, the TGU plans of the selected universities indicate a lack of careful discussion on the meaning of *kyōshoku kyōdō* to their institutional internationalization and their initiatives to develop that organizational culture in their institutional contexts.

**Table 3. Institutional targets for the development of administrative staff set by the TGU universities: Proficiency in foreign languages**

	University	Institutional standards of proficiency in foreign languages for administrative staff	Proportion of full-time administrative staff who meet the standards (%)	
			At the start of TGU in 2013	Aimed goals in 2023
Type A				
1	Hokkaido University	TOEIC score 700 and above	5.3	13.8
2	Tohoku University	TOEIC score 700 and above	3.1	15.1
3	The University of Tokyo	TOEIC score 800 and above or equivalent criteria of TOEFL and IELTS	5.2	25.0
4	Nagoya University	TOEIC score 600 and above	13.9	30.1
5	Kyoto University	TOEIC score 800 and above	3.7	7.9
6	Osaka University	TOEIC score 700, Eiken* Grade Pre-1 or IELTS 6.0 and above	13.2	37.5
7	Kyushu University	TOEIC score 600 and above	6.4	50.0
8	Tsukuba University	TOEIC score 500 and above	9.0	37.7
9	Hiroshima University	TOEIC score 800 and above	3.4	20.0
10	Tokyo Medical and Dental University	TOEIC score 730 and above	4.7	12.2
11	Tokyo Institute of Technology	TOEIC score 800 and above	5.1	7.8
12	Keio University	TOEIC score 800 and above	5.1	10.0
13	Waseda University	1. English: TOEIC score 800 and above, Chinese: HSK** Level 7 and above, and the equivalent level of Korean 2. Having current or past working experiences in foreign languages 3. Holding academic degrees overseas	15.6	28.9
Type B				
1	Chiba University	TOEIC score 730 and above	6.5	40.0
2	Tokyo University of Foreign Studies	TOEFL iBT score 65, TOEIC 600, IELTS 5.5 or Eiken Grade Pre-1 and above	25.4	35.7
3	Tokyo University of the Arts	Eiken Grade Pre-1, TOEIC score 700 or TOEFL iBT score 64 and above	17.3	87.5
4	Nagaoka University of Technology	TOEIC score 550 and above	8.8	20.6
5	Kanazawa University	Eiken Grade 2 or TOEIC score 600 and above	12.7	75.0
6	Toyoashi University of Technology	TOEIC score 600 and above	8.8	27.1
7	Kyoto Institute of Technology	TOEIC score 730 and above and equivalent proficiency	5.5	30.2
8	Nara Institute of Science and Technology	TOEIC score 750 and above	14.2	26.9
9	Okayama University	TOEIC score 600 and above	6.5	20.0
10	Kumamoto University	TOEFL iBT score 80, TOEFL-PBT score 550 or IELTS 6.0 and above	4.3	11.3
11	Akita International University	TOEIC score 750, or TOEFL-PBT score 530 and above	72.3	76.5
12	The University of Aizu	TOEIC score 580 and above	26.8	37.5
13	International Christian University	TOEIC score 800 and above	38.4	58.7
14	Shibaura Institute of Technology	TOEIC score 800, TOEFL score 500 and above Studying or working abroad experience of over one year	11.8	33.3
15	Sophia University	TOEIC score 750 and above	37.9	51.2
16	Toyo University	TOEIC score 800 or TOEFL score 570 and above	4.2	12.2
17	Hosei University	TOEIC score 730, Diplom Deutsch in Japan Grade 2, DAPF*** Grade 2, Eiken Grade 2 or Chinese language test Grade 2 and above	11.4	49.9
18	Meiji University	TOEIC score 800 and above	9.3	50.0
19	Rikkyo University	TOEIC score 730, TOEFL iBT score 79, IELTS 6.0 and above or equivalent levels of foreign languages, e.g. English, Chinese, Korean, German and French	10.1	40.0
20	Soka University	TOEIC score 730 and above	11.5	28.8
21	International University of Japan	TOEIC score 600 at employment, 650 at the acting managerial positions level, and 700 and above at the management position level	82.1	100.0
22	Ritsumeikan University	TOEIC score 700 and above	7.9	20.3
23	Kwansei Gakuin University	TOEIC score 800 and above	8.0	20.6
24	Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University	TOEIC score 800 and above	35.8	44.8

Source: JSPS (2014c)

Note: \*Eiken is the English-language testing program offered in Japan.

\*\*HSK is an international standardized test of Chinese language proficiency.

\*\*\*DAPF is the French testing program offered in Japan.

## Conclusion

In response to the research questions that were posed in the introduction of this study, the conclusions drawn are as follows:

- At the policy level, the concept of inter-unit collaboration between academic and administrative staff called *kyōshoku kyōdō* has been increasingly advocated since the late 1990s in the debates on university reform as an innovative remedy to improve university management systems. The discourse in national policy papers relates the capacity development of administrative staff to the realization of the *kyōshoku kyōdō* climate, therefore recommending the development of professional training and personnel systems for administrative staff. However, none of the series of reports discusses facilitation of management capacities of academic staff as a partner unit for promoting *kyōshoku kyōdō*. Discussion was also lacking concerning the connection between development of individual capacity and the facilitation of organizational capacity.
- At the level of practice, *kyōshoku kyōdō* was recognized as significant in policy papers, as manifested by the introduction of the Top Global University project, in which applicant universities were required to develop initiatives to foster such collaborative inter-unit relationships in the area of internationalization management. Based on the design of the application, the selected universities primarily emphasized the foreign language abilities of administrative staff, though other more important cognitive abilities such as communicative skills and planning abilities were also, though less frequently, stressed. In addition, few universities clearly provided their original interpretation of the *kyōshoku kyōdō* approach and its significance to internationalization initiatives within their institutional contexts.

It is clear that in the process of actualizing the national plans, the intention to introduce the *kyōshoku kyōdō* mode to internationalization management was diminished, distorted, and trivialized. While English proficiency is arguably a basic technical ability needed for administration of internationalization, it is apparently not the core improvement needed for internationalization management. Moreover, the biggest gap in the nexus between national policy and institutional practice can be seen in the fact that none of the selected universities clearly showed an internalized concept of *kyōshoku kyōdō* in their institutional contexts. At the planning stage of the TGU project, there should have been more discussion at the institutional level in terms of what *kyōshoku kyōdō* means to *your* university, why it is important for internationalization management in *your* university, and what points should be reinforced in internal organizations to create and maintain proactive collaborations between academic and administrative staff in *your* university. All in all, the starting point of the TGU project shows that the national intention to internalize the concept of *kyōshoku kyōdō*

in individual selected universities seems far from a desirable state. It is too soon for this study to examine actual institutional practices among TGU project universities. An empirical study on the practice of organizational changes in the TGU universities will be needed in a few years.

The point of emphasis throughout this study is the development of organizational, rather than individual, capacity to enable inter-unit cooperation in the management of internationalization. Healthy organizational relationships are built on appropriately balanced capacity in different units. In fact, creating a cooperative relationship between different internal units in an institution is taken for granted in other organizational settings, such as in corporate culture, and its critical role in effective management seems self-evident. In contrast, the necessity of providing a specific directive regarding inter-unit cooperation implies the difficulty of realizing *kyōshoku kyōdō* in the culture of higher education institutions. While the term originated in the 1960s in private universities, many universities in Japan are still struggling with its institutional internalization even five decades after its birth. This is mainly because “universities have high differentiation and low integration” (Kuo, 2009, p. 52). In the contemporary world of higher education, the majority of university staff, both academic and administrative, acknowledge the impact and importance of internationalization to their institutions. However, very different rationales for such internationalization are held by different staff members in different units. This is because universities are organizations that value differentiation of members by which intellectual innovation is expected. In this term, inter-unit dialogue is paramount to imagining, perceiving, and understanding differences and similarities between “them and us,” respecting the visions of partner units, and finding common values for internationalization as a whole institution. Whatever the repeated stress on capacity development of university staff members at the national and institutional levels, higher priority should be given to how it enables sound organizational communication.

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