

U n i v e r s i t y	Kokugakuin University	Field of study	Humanities
Courses to form the Program	Graduate School of Letters, majors in Shinto Studies, Japanese Literature, Japanese History, and The Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics(IJCC)		
Program Title	Establishment of a National Learning Institute for the Dissemination of Research on Shinto and Japanese Culture		
Program Leader	Kobayashi Tatsuo	Department/Position	Professor, Graduate School of Letters
Program Summary	The establishment of a National Learning institute for the study of the origins and historical development of the Shinto religion which has formed a base for Japanese culture from the Jomon period to the present, and Shinto's relationship to Japanese culture, and to disseminate that research both in Japan and abroad.		
Needs and Objectives for the Program	The purposes of the center's establishment are in line with the founding spirit of Kokugakuin University, namely (1) to undertake systematic research on Shinto, thereby raising the qualitative level of research and education at the university, and (2) to undertake state-of-the art research on the origins and historical function of the Shinto tradition, which is currently at the focus of international attention. In these ways, we hope to give further impetus to studies that aim to uncover both Shinto's particularity and its universality. Since cultural and historical interest in Shinto is rising, not only within the long-established traditions of Shinto research found in Europe and America, but also in Asia, we are confident that the time is ripe both domestically and internationally for the establishment of a center focusing on Shinto studies.		
Plan for Formation of Research Center	<p>The research plan undertaken in concert with the establishment of this center will be broadly composed of two projects. One will be to widely disseminate domestic and overseas research related to Shinto-oriented Japanese culture, thus promoting its use, and stimulating further research. The information to be disseminated in this way will include that already existing and other work currently being undertaken at the proposed Center.</p> <p>In concrete, this project will represent an extremely up-to-date promotion of research that will simultaneously enhance the systematic translation and electronic online access to English translations of Shinto-related materials, together with surveys and research on the modern significance of Shinto and the other traditional religious elements forming crucial elements of Japanese culture. Second is a project that will borrow apply interdisciplinary methodologies from Shinto studies, history of religions, and archeology to clarify the origins, essence, particularity and universality, and cultural role of Shinto. In this way, it is hoped that light will be shed on the ways Shinto has influenced and functioned in the formation, development, and maintenance of the broad diversity and complexity of Japanese culture.</p>		
Education Implementation Plan	<p>Establishment of the proposed center will be impossible without the implementation of an educational system that trains young scholars with a broad academic perspective as specialist researchers in Shinto and Japanese culture. To that end, reforms are currently being designed that involve the creation of an organic and interdisciplinary curriculum coupled to optimum faculty assignment for the study of "Shinto and Japanese Culture," thus facilitating linkage and cooperation between the three graduate fields of specialization (Shinto Studies, Japanese Literature, and Japanese History).</p> <p>For example, systematically designed areas of study will be established as "minor fields," allowing students to freely select courses within a range possessing "common relevance" to their majors. In this way, interdisciplinary "cross-pollination" will be stimulated, leading to academic feedback that promotes more and deeper research in each student's major field of study. Further, the graduate school's program of education will be organically integrated with the programs of joint research undertaken by the Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics.</p> <p>As faculty and students carry out projects of joint research over a diverse range of fields at the Institute, the growth of a practice-oriented educational system will be promoted that develops and stimulates students' ability to recognize issues and respond flexibly (critical thinking), introducing new measures such as granting credits for participation in joint research, and encouraging students to obtain their doctorate while in graduate school. In these and other ways, the educational system linking graduate school and research institute will be refined and strengthened, thus enhancing the education and training of younger scholars who will bear the central role in the Center's formation.</p>		