

## The Introduction of “General Education” in Postwar Japanese Universities

GARY H. TSUCHIMOCCHI

This article continues my discussion in the last issue of the *Nanzan Review of American Studies* regarding the emergence of the new four-year university and the introduction of “general education” within it in postwar Japan.<sup>1</sup> In doing so I have made extensive use of the following sources: from the American side, the Report of the United States Education Mission to Japan (USEMJ) and documents of the General Headquarters/Civil Information and Education Section (CIE); and from the Japanese side, reports and documents of the Research Committee on the Education System at Tokyo Imperial University, the Council for Standards for Establishing Universities—the predecessor of the Japanese University Accreditation Association (JUAA)—the Japan Education Committee (JEC), the Japan Education Reform Committee (JERC) (later Council), and the National Institute for Educational Research of Japan. In this article I examine why “general education” was not carried out effectively in the new four-year university. In particular, I focus on the differences in the way Occupation Forces and the Japanese understood “general education.”<sup>2</sup> In my view, this discrepancy interfered with the successful implementation, reputation, and perpetuation of “general education” in postwar Japanese universities.

In the preceding article I made the following points regarding the initial stages of implementation of the school system:

1. The USEMJ recommended a 6-3-3 school ladder system but did not recommend a specific number of years of higher education.
2. The USEMJ was strongly influenced by the JEC, particularly Nambara Shigeru, chairman of the JEC and president of Tokyo Imperial University.
3. Nambara met secretly with the chairman of the Mission, George D. Stoddard. Nambara suggested to Stoddard that the USEMJ recommend a school reform that would “model the whole scheme after the American plan, building up elementary schools, high schools, colleges, and uni-

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The author, former professor at Toyo Eiwa Women’s University, received the Ed.D. from Columbia and Ph.D. from Tokyo University <himawari@mb.infoweb.or.jp>. He has written and translated extensively on Japanese and German education reforms during the U.S. Occupation. he is the author of *Education Reform in Postwar Japan: The 1946 U.S. Education Mission* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1993).

versities in a natural sequence with wide opportunities at all levels” (English as in original). He was implying that the 6-3-3 system be complemented with a four-year university system.

4. The four-year university system was finally proposed by the JERC in December 1946 and implemented as such in the School Education Law in March 1947.

The main characteristics of curricula in the new four-year university, “general education” and a “credit system,” were mandated on 8 July 1947 by the Standards for Universities, also called the Standards for Accreditation of Universities by the JUAA. In 1950, a year after the emergence of the new four-year university, the Ministry of Education published the Report of the JERC, *Progress of Educational Reform in Japan*, as a reference for the forthcoming Second United States Education Mission to Japan. Chapter 4, “The Reform of Higher Education,” stated that “the new university emphasizes the importance of general culture” as a characteristic of the new university system.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of these efforts to promote “general education,” it proved difficult to establish it effectively. There are many reasons why general education was not as effective as it should have been. One reason was that the Japanese lacked an understanding of the necessity of combining general education and specialized education within a four-year undergraduate program, similar to American universities. In fact, in 1991, after more than 40 years of debate on the issue of general education, the Ministry of Education drastically revised the Standards for Universities and temporarily dismantled the general education system. However, the essence of general education was not lost completely. In October 1998, the University Council, under the Ministry of Education, again stressed the importance of general education, changing its name to “liberal education.”

An April 1946 JEC report contained two plans that recommended either a four- or five-year university system, although the USEMJ had mentioned only a four-year normal school. This is the first document in which we can see mention of a four-year university in postwar Japan, other than a March 1946 report issued by the Research Committee on the Education System at Tokyo Imperial University. It should be mentioned that this JEC Report was kept secret for a while by the Ministry of Education. (Although the JEC was to supply its report both to the Ministry and the CIE, it passed it on only to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry buried it until the CIE complained to Nambara and pressured the former for its release.) Examining the JEC Report, the CIE was greatly pleased to notice that the JEC was willing to substitute a four-year university system for the existing three-year system. However, because initially some Japanese were not convinced of the appropriateness of a four-year system, the CIE decided to push ahead with a four-year university system immediately, with the rationale that the USEMJ Report implied its desirability.

## Higher Education Reform and “General Education”

### THE REPORT OF THE U.S. EDUCATION MISSION AND “GENERAL EDUCATION”

In the “Curriculum of Colleges and Universities” section of Chapter VI, on “Higher Education,” the Mission recommended “general education” specifically by criticizing the curriculum of the prewar higher schools, at which

for the most part there is too little opportunity for general education, too early and too narrow a specialization, and too great a vocational or professional emphasis. A broader humanistic attitude should be cultivated to provide more background for free thought and a better foundation on which professional training may be based.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of introducing the kind of general education provided in American universities was suggested by Nambara, who told Chairman Stoddard about the lack of general or liberal education in prewar Japan:

I believe that education in special fields is well done, but that general or liberal education is weak. We can improve this by better general teaching, by more synthetic study for both teachers and students. In this way we could achieve a harmony between the cultural courses and the scientific courses.<sup>5</sup>

Nambara’s idea of general education was reflected in discussions of the Research Committee on the Education System at Tokyo Imperial University. According to the report, they also discussed curriculum problems at a third meeting of 13 March 1946. The report pointed out the lack of cultural depth in the humanities and in the field of natural science. In fact, Kakimuma Kosaku, a member of the JEC and a professor at Tokyo Imperial University, discussed this matter at the meeting with the Mission. Kakimuma told them that in the field of medicine, also, graduates had a poor understanding of history, philosophy, literature, and arts. For this reason he felt the curriculum should provide more cultural courses. There was also a regrettable tendency for engineering students to neglect cultural subjects, while humanities and social science students lacked familiarity with natural sciences.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, the “Structure of Higher Education” section in Chapter VI of the USEMJ Report noted that “increasing the number of *senmon gakko*, *koto gakko*, and universities alone will probably not meet the demand for more general education. . . . To accomplish this it is recommended that their curricula also should be liberalized. . . . In professional and technological programs, subjects of general education should be more freely introduced wherever feasible.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, the Mission stressed the importance of having a broad humanistic attitude. The “Variety of Opportunity” section of the Report briefly mentioned that “the social sciences, the physical sciences and the humanities simultaneously offer new vistas to the scholar and scientist,” but this point was not directly related to the Report’s treatment of general education.<sup>8</sup> However, in Chapter IV, “Teaching

and the Education of Teachers,” the USEMJ recommended the importance of general education as follows:

Since the curriculum should be designed to educate the prospective teacher as an individual and as a citizen, emphasis is needed on the liberal aspects, as in the natural sciences, social studies, humanities, and arts.<sup>9</sup>

We find that the USEMJ emphasized the importance of general education for teachers’ education and thus recommended a four-year normal school.

#### **THE REPORT OF THE JAPANESE EDUCATION COMMITTEE AND GENERAL EDUCATION**

The reports of the JEC and the USEMJ in general were significant because they were interrelated and mutually supportive. For examples, American progressive educators preferred a 6-3-3 school system because they thought it corresponded with students’ physical and psychological development in the United States at the time. However, surprisingly, the Mission Report mentioned nothing about students’ physical and psychological development. Instead, it only recommended the single-track 6-3-3 school system as a reformation of the complex and elitist multitrack prewar system for higher elementary education, middle schools, girls’ higher schools, vocational and youth schools, as well as the preparatory and normal schools. Ironically, it was the JEC that mentioned the 6-3-3 school system as preferable: “The reason for this is that physically and psychologically a student will change greatly during this period and to retain a student in a one-level system for this period of time will result in difficulties.”<sup>10</sup>

Although the JEC specifically proposed a four or five-year university, they did not place general education in their proposed plan. The JEC Report suggested that “after three years of higher secondary school there should be a four- or five-year university, and all graduates of the higher secondary school regardless of the type are to be admitted to the university,” and added that “in the first year of college a general course [should be] given.” Though the JEC briefly touched upon the subject of a “general course,” its report never mentioned “general education” or “liberal education.” It seems that the JEC did not have an idea of the role of general education in their proposed university plan.

#### **CURRICULUM IN PREWAR HIGHER SCHOOLS**

Why did the JEC not propose general education at the university level? Their report seems to have been affected by their ideas about higher education in the prewar period. A general or liberal education had been provided only at the elitist prewar higher schools, not at universities. In the prewar period, fewer than ten percent of middle school graduates were admitted to higher schools.<sup>11</sup> As the universities assumed that general education was provided at the higher schools, they focused only on specialized subjects. The Japanese were not experienced in teaching general and specialized subjects together at the same level. “Higher

ordinary education" at the prewar higher schools was inevitably preparation for university education. The Regulation of Higher Schools of 1919 (Ministry of Education Order No. 8) required physical education and emphasized morals but also prescribed a broad curriculum: Japanese language, Chinese classics, and foreign languages (as language subjects); philosophy, psychology, and ethics (as human science subjects); history, geography, economics, and law (as social science subjects); and mathematics, physics, chemistry, zoology, mineralogy, and geology (as natural science subjects). Foreign languages were among the most important subjects, accounting for more than one-third of a student's curriculum.<sup>12</sup> In 1939, in Imperial Order 711, the Education Council stressed the importance of a broad "general or liberal education" as a prerequisite to university education.<sup>13</sup> They prescribed a course of "higher ordinary education," which was equivalent to "general education" at the higher school or university preparatory schools. However, this curriculum of general education was different from the "general education" that was newly introduced in the postwar period. "Higher ordinary education" was stressed as a prerequisite to university education.

Here two points can be made. First, as we have seen, the USEMJ was not impressed with general education at the old higher schools. Second, the Mission focused on the desirability of a comprehensive general education at the university level.

#### CRITICISM OF PREWAR UNIVERSITIES

Prewar Japanese universities were basically modeled on the modern European university system. Thus, the university was an institute for specialized education, while students at preparatory institutions, such as prewar higher schools and university preparatory schools, were given a general education as a prerequisite for university education. Article 1 of the 1918 University Order indicated that the purposes of a university education were the teaching of academic theories and applications as well as the pursuit of basic research, necessary for the state, and the realization of perfection in humanity and national sentiment. However, the curriculum actually emphasized subjects related to specialized education, seminars, and laboratories and minimized study in the humanities. As a result, the university was a center for specialized education in both theory and practice.

Why did university education overemphasize specialized education? According to the 1951 report *General Education in the University* (in Japanese), edited by the JUAA, Japanese thought they needed to catch up with the advanced Western cultures by emphasizing specialized knowledge and techniques. Thus, they thought that graduates were well educated if they had specialized knowledge and techniques. They underestimated the value of a liberal education. The JUAA report criticized the prewar university education system for overemphasizing specialized education.<sup>14</sup>

In his article "General Education," Robert H. Grant reviewed general educa-

tion in prewar Japan by quoting a Japanese scholar, Ono Takeo, who wrote in the journal *Zaisei* (*Public Finance*) in February 1946. Ono criticized the absence of general education:

Generally speaking, the evils of our university education lie in the fact that it gives out education without teaching culture, and pours in knowledge without cultivating intelligence. If there had not been before the outbreak of the Pacific War certain Imperial University graduates around the Emperor, the unfortunate Pacific War would not have broken out. It is also true that if there had been more cultured and intelligent liberals in (government and business) positions, the wartime economy would not have become so corrupt and confused. . . . The loss [sic] of the Pacific War is attributable to old and middle-aged . . . university graduates in official positions who slept all the time in the warm nursery of *gakubatsu* in ignorance, dullness, and timidity.<sup>15</sup>

### **Introduction of General Education Subjects**

#### **ORGANIZATION OF THE JAPANESE UNIVERSITY ACCREDITATION ASSOCIATION**

The JUAA was initially organized at the behest of the Higher Education Branch of the CIE in order to shape the postwar higher education, while the 6-3-3 school system was completely controlled by the JERC. Edwin F. Wigglesworth, coordinator of the CIE's Higher Education Branch, was the most important figure in establishing the JUAA.

General education subjects in the new four-year university were regulated by the Standards for Universities that was also adopted under the Standards for Accreditation of Universities by the JUAA on 8 July 1947 (revised 15 December 1947). The JUAA was formally organized on the same day, but it had originated at a meeting held on 29 October 1946 at which the Ministry of Education assembled ten university presidents and professors, including Wada Koroku, Uehara Senroku, and Mutai Risaku.<sup>16</sup>

According to the ten-year history of the JUAA (in Japanese), in October 1946 Hidaka Daishiro, Chief of the School Education Bureau, Ministry of Education, was asked about standards for universities by the CIE. He presented a set of bylaws that was the standard of the Ministry of Education for approving the establishment of universities. The CIE pointed out a great deal of ambiguous terminology in the document and suggested that a new standard be prepared. In response, the Ministry of Education formed a council for discussing a desirable standard for universities called the *Daigaku Setsuritsu Kijun Settei ni Kansuru Shingikai* (Council for Standards for Establishing Universities). Under CIE leadership, the Council, predecessor of the JUAA, began revising the prewar Ministry of Education guidelines to create standards for approving the establishment

of universities.<sup>17</sup> However, when the JERC submitted a report recommending four-year universities on 27 December 1946, the Council suddenly shifted to drafting a new standard for approving the establishment of universities, the Standards for Universities, using the JERC report.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, the Standards for Universities originated in the bylaws governing the prewar university. As mentioned in my previous *Nanzan Review* article, the JERC was responsible for making educational policy for the entire Japanese educational system and was under the Cabinet, while the JUAA was only concerned with higher education, particularly the establishment of general education and a credit system. Thus, the JUAA, like the JERC, did not discuss the ideas of the university in precise detail.<sup>19</sup> A “Proposed Rough Plan Concerning Standards for Approving the Establishment of Universities (tentative)” (undated) was probably drawn up in late December 1946 by the Council (later JUAA). It was the origin of the Standards for Universities that were enacted and adopted in July 1947. However, the rough plan included only broad standards, not specific regulations for a system of academic units, division of subjects between general education and specialized education, and requirements for the bachelor’s degree under a basic curriculum system.<sup>20</sup> Concerning the basic curriculum for new universities, a February 1947 discussion at the Subcommittee for Cultural Courses under the Council for Standards for Establishing Universities was more significant. The Subcommittee, at a meeting in early March, confirmed the items for the basic curriculum of general education for the bachelor’s degree that had already been discussed in February.<sup>21</sup> Here we can see general education subjects and specialized education subjects defined in the new university curriculum for the first time. The general education subjects were divided into three groups: humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. They were called “general cultural subjects” until the revision of the Standards for Universities in June 1950.

It was at the last minute that the Council confirmed the curriculum of general education prior to the implementation of a four-year university system in the School Education Law in March 1947.

#### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE JUAA AND THE JERC**

The Council was officially reorganized as the Japanese University Accreditation Association on 8 July 1947 and was given authority by the CIE to approve the establishment of universities. On the other hand, the Japan Education Reform Committee was designated by the CIE as an education policymaker whose objective was to promote postwar university education reform. What was the relationship between the JUAA and the JERC, particularly where postwar higher education reform was concerned? And what was the role of CIE involvement in this process?

The JERC was established earlier than the JUAA. In theory, the CIE autho-

rized the JERC to discuss plans and to make policy independently of the CIE and the Ministry of Education. Nambara Shigeru, a key person within the JERC, often took positions that were independent of the CIE.<sup>22</sup> Representatives of the CIE did not attend general and special meetings of the JERC in an official capacity, and could only advise and restrict the JERC indirectly through the Steering Committee—and a general understanding that its autonomy was limited to staying within the general guidelines of the Report of the USEMJ.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, the CIE played an instrumental role in directing the JUAA to initiate a curriculum for new universities.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, there was little discussion of general education by the JERC.<sup>25</sup> As a result, the development of general education in postwar universities was inconsistent.

#### THE JUAA AND GENERAL AND LIBERAL EDUCATION SUBJECTS

Why was the approved term “general-liberal education,” rather than “general education”? It was because the CIE urged the Japanese to adopt a “general education” system based on the Report of the USEMJ, which particularly emphasized “liberalized curricula.” It should be noted that the CIE used the terms “general education” and “liberal education” interchangeably. Orr explained: “We thought Japanese needed liberal education. For example, we hoped that the Japanese citizens should have critical minds, not blindly follow the government authorities as they did in the prewar period, through subjects such as broad liberal courses in history, politics, economics, literature, anthropology, psychology, and philosophy.”<sup>26</sup>

The preface of the Standards for Universities read:

The university has the important responsibility of providing the highest level of education and encouraging the advancement of knowledge. It is, therefore, necessary to set up definite standards governing its establishment, and the organization of its departments and facilities so that there will be general agreement as to the nature and quality of its service to society.

What was the meaning of general education in the Standards for Universities? According to Article 7,

a university or division thereof specializing in the cultural sciences must offer courses in general education consisting of at least three subjects from among those enumerated in each group mentioned hereunder and a minimum total of fifteen such subjects. A university or division thereof specializing in one or more of the natural sciences must establish courses in general education by offering at least two subjects from among those enumerated in each group mentioned hereunder, and a minimum total of twelve such subjects.

The original subjects included in general education under the Standards for Universities adopted by the JUAA on 8 July 1947 were as follows:

The Humanities Group: Philosophy (including Ethics), Psychology, Pedagogy, History, Descriptive Geography, Literature, Foreign Languages.



The Social Science Group: Law, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Statistics, Domestic Science.<sup>27</sup>

The Natural Science Group: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Geography, Physiology, Anthropology, Astronomy.

It is possible to increase subjects other than those mentioned above in case of necessity.

As seen from the above, the Humanities Group included foreign languages. At a Joint Meeting of the Board of Trustees (5th) and Board of Directors (11th) of Nippon University on 25 November 1947, Lulu Holmes, a CIE advisor on higher education, modified the general education subjects as follows:

Humanities: Philosophy, Psychology, Logic, Education, Sociology, Religion, History, Descriptive Geography, Anthropology, Literature, Foreign Languages.  
Social Science: Law, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Anthropology, Education, History, Statistics, Domestic Science.

Natural Science: Mathematics, Statistics, Physics, Astronomy, Chemistry, Physical Geography, Biology, Psychology, Anthropology, Domestic Science.

Add a clause "particularly music and art are desired to be added" after the clause "it is possible to increase subjects other than those mentioned above in case of necessity" mentioned above.<sup>28</sup>

It was obvious that Holmes had placed some of the same subjects in different groups and had increased the number of subjects to broaden all three categories. Holmes's emphasis on the cultivation of artistic skills such as music and art demonstrated that the CIE aimed to broaden the subjects of liberal arts. It is interesting to note that she placed "domestic science" in both the social science and the natural science groups in order to emphasize coeducation. In this manner, the CIE made general education subjects more flexible and diversified. Accordingly, the Standards for Universities were revised as follows:

The Humanities Group: Philosophy, Ethics, Psychology, Pedagogy, Sociology, Theology, History, Descriptive Geography, Anthropology, Literature, Foreign Languages.

The Social Science Group: Law, Political Science, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Pedagogy, History, Statistics, Home Economics.

The Natural Science Group: Mathematics, Statistics, Physics, Astronomy, Chemistry, Geology, Biology, Psychology, Anthropology, Home Economics.

Subjects other than those stated above may be added to one or more appropriate groups. Courses of cultural value are especially desirable.<sup>29</sup>

"Domestic science" was changed to "home economics," the terminology used in American universities.

#### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENERAL EDUCATION AND SPECIALIZED EDUCATION**

Unlike the curriculum of prewar universities, Article LII of the 1947 School

Education Law stated: "The university, as a center of learning, shall aim at teaching and studying higher learning and technical arts as well as *giving [instruction in] broad general culture and developing intellectual, moral, and practical abilities*" (emphasis added). This text was drafted by Wigglesworth.<sup>30</sup> Although he did not use the term "general education," the twin elements of general education and specialized education were both considered essential for the postwar university curriculum. However, Article XLI stated: "The high school shall aim at giving the students higher *general education* and technical education according to the development of their minds and bodies on the basis of the education given at the secondary school" (emphasis added). This shows that the term "general education" was applied to education at the high school level.

It was important that the relationship of the twin elements, "general education" and "specialized education," be understood in order to promote the postwar university system effectively. However, contemporary Japanese did not understand the real meaning of general education. They only set up these courses as prerequisite subjects for specialized education. The Japanese thought that the general education introduced in postwar universities was the same as what had been offered at the old higher schools. However, the subjects offered at the higher schools were simply prerequisite courses for university education, while general education in the new postwar universities was supposed to be comprehensive, not preparatory. General education and specialized education were not intended to conflict; instead they were supposed to complement each other in order to develop a liberally educated population, contribute to all mankind, facilitate changes in society, promote flexibility, develop critical thinking, and foster active citizenship.<sup>31</sup>

Uehara Senroku, one of the pioneers in cultivating general education in postwar Japan, criticized the general education of the prewar period as being no more than prerequisite courses for specialized courses. However, in the postwar period the two were supposed to be integrated and general education to be taught all four years, not just as introductory courses in the first two years. Uehara's understanding of general education was influenced by the Report of the USEMJ. Regarding this point, Grant pointed out the important relationship between general education and specialized education. He warned that it was "general education and specialized education," not "either general education or specialized education." Furthermore, he explained that "'liberal' arts refers to those bodies of knowledge that *free the mind*," and "'liberal' arts frees men's minds from ignorance and prejudice and superstition" (emphasis in original).<sup>32</sup>

However, it cannot be denied that general education courses at the new universities were more or less treated as introductory courses. Thus, textbooks on general education were structured as preparatory courses for specialized education. Furthermore, professors who taught general education subjects at the new universities were replaced by former faculty who had taught general education subjects at the prewar higher schools or university preparatory schools, and thus

it was only the name that changed, not the quality, objective, or thrust.<sup>33</sup> Regarding this point, the 1951 report *General Education in the University* (in Japanese) criticized former university professors for not paying much attention to teaching methods. Instead, they relied on methods used at the earlier middle school levels. The report also criticized professors of the old university system for being mainly interested in research, not teaching. Thus, genuine general education could be seen only in the ideas and practices of the new universities that were most effective in adopting appropriate teaching methods.<sup>34</sup>

#### THE DISTRIBUTION OF GENERAL EDUCATION SUBJECTS

“The Reorganization of Higher Education” published by the Ministry of Education in May 1948 stated:

Each curriculum should be so organized as to provide logical progress from general to specialized study, and hence the transition to professional competence upon graduation or to further study in the graduate school. Each university should arrange its offerings in the basic or general education courses under at least three general headings: the social sciences, the humanistic sciences, and the natural sciences.

In a lecture entitled “The Concept of the New University,” Wigglesworth explained the integration of general education and specialized education. According to him, there were two methods of providing general education subjects. The first method was a “Ladder System” that offered general education subjects through the entire four years. The second method was an “Accumulation System” that offered general education in the first two years exclusively. He compared the two and analyzed their main advantages respectively as follows:

The advantages of the [first method] (Ladder System) are (1) specialized subjects can be developed gradually from simple to advanced; (2) more difficult subjects in general education can be comprehended at a more mature age. This method is valuable in many cases to universities that will establish some system of affiliation on the basis of either distance or allotment of teaching subjects. The [second method] (Accumulation System) enables the student (1) to delay his choice of vocation until a mature age, and (2) to inquire more profoundly into his field of specialization. If a student desires to enter such professional fields as medicine or dentistry, [the second method] will be especially suitable for preparatory courses. Nevertheless, the adoption of either of these two methods is to be left to the individual university.<sup>35</sup>

As shown above, the CIE gave two systems for offering general education. However, it suggested that the method should be decided by the individual university as needed, not by the Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, the Ministry suggested using the second method, the “Accumulation System,” which treated general education as a prerequisite course for specialized education, as it had been treated in prewar higher schools.

Furthermore, the Ministry published a handbook, "The Reorganization of Higher Education," in January 1948. The handbook was identical to Wigglesworth's lecture on "The Concept of the New University" and seems to have been primarily a translation of his lecture. However, there was an important difference between the two. The handbook mentioned that the Accumulation System had an advantage: "[W]hen a university offers courses in liberal arts through absorption of an old-type *koto gakko*, this method of integration will likewise be found useful."<sup>36</sup> This was a remark added by the Ministry of Education; Wigglesworth never mentioned such a point in his lecture. The idea of the Ministry of Education was not based on the "broader humanistic attitude" advocated by the USEMJ. The Ministry placed its emphasis on reorganization of the prewar higher education system without understanding the democratic ideas and goals of general education, and adopted a concept that served the Ministry's own interests. This idea was also reflected in JERC proceedings. According to the minutes of Special Committee V of the JERC, which discussed the higher-level school system, the Committee often discussed dividing universities into a first two years and a second two years for a smooth transition from the former higher schools to the new universities.<sup>37</sup>

Regarding the distribution of general education subjects, the report of the JUAA warned against the Accumulation System that had been suggested by the Ministry of Education.<sup>38</sup> Although Wigglesworth acknowledged that the system had advantages, with students choosing their own vocations or specializations at a more mature age, the Ministry of Education had institutionalized a discontinuity between general education and specialized education. As a result, the Ministry made the field of general education an area of preparatory courses prior to specialized education.

It is also important to note the Ministry's reorganization of general education after the Occupation. On 22 October 1956 the changes in the Standards for Universities were enforced by Ordinance 28 of the Ministry of Education. As a result, the main composition of general education was changed, and "basic education courses" were also added as a supplement. Under Article 19 of the Standards for Universities, courses taught were divided into four categories: general education, foreign languages, physical education, and specialized education, similar to the former Standards for Universities introduced by the JUAA. However, this Article was amended by the new law to add the new category of "basic education courses" to the above four. The new category was defined as "subjects of general education related to specialized subjects in a faculty [*gakubu*]."

The new general education system required by the Standards for Universities of the Ministry of Education Ordinance tended to place more stress on specialized education than did the regulations of the Standards for Universities of the JUAA. When these Standards were revised by the Ministry of Education's 1956 ordinance, it produced a remarkable turning point in the history of general education in the postwar period.<sup>39</sup>

The 1956 changes were coincident with growth in the Japanese economy. The business world had pressured the universities into emphasizing specialized education to meet their demands for developing the economy. The enactment of the 1956 Standards introducing “basic education courses” was of great significance. There is no doubt that the changes resulted from pressure by the business world, not from the academic world. Their demand was echoed by the Ministry of Education, which wanted to strengthen specialized education at the university level. The “basic education courses” with an emphasis on specialized education came under the category of general education, and the change was partly responsible for the consequent turmoil in general education.<sup>40</sup>

### Conclusion

I have examined how difficult it was for general education to be implemented in postwar Japanese universities. The causes varied. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the Report of the USEMJ in 1946, the Bible of postwar education reform, did not recommend a four-year university and relied on Japanese initiative, as mentioned in the Report of the Second U. S. Education Mission, 1950. The 1946 Report did, however, emphasize a liberalized curriculum as the ideal for general education.

There was a discrepancy between the CIE and the Ministry of Education in terms of interpretation of general education. During the Occupation the JUAA, supported by the CIE, had the greatest influence, but power gradually shifted to the Ministry of Education after the Occupation. It should be emphasized that the Standards for Universities embodied in the Ministry of Education’s 1956 ordinance were not influenced by academic professionals.

The Japanese adopted the same three categories of general education—humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences—in the Standards for Universities as it had in the prewar higher schools. The Standards were not aimed at upgrading the quality of the general education curriculum; instead they were mechanically used as a yardstick to be applied in approving the establishment of new universities. Thus, the Standards were more unified.

From the start, the new universities did not embody the real ideas of general education as practiced in American universities or as espoused in a general way throughout the USEMJ Report. The Standards were only adopted after the four-year university system had been enacted by the School Education Law of March 1947.

The confusion over general education can also be seen in the evolution of its name. The Ministry of Education translated “liberal education” into “general education” and treated it in the same way as the categories of the prewar higher school curriculum. This was a step backwards for general education. On the other hand, the CIE emphasized the liberalized curriculum referred to by the Mission and gave it the name “liberal education.” This discrepancy impeded

understanding of general education and eventually, in 1991, resulted in the termination of general education courses.

However, the University Council of 1998 changed “general education” to “liberal education,” thereby strengthening the importance of a liberalized curriculum. According to their report, the philosophies and objectives of liberal education are

to help students obtain good knowledge in various fields of study, to help them cultivate the ability to view things from different angles and to think independently and comprehensively and judge properly, to help them obtain an abundance of human qualities, and to develop human resources who can see how their knowledge and lives relate to society.

Furthermore, this report recommended that it is essential to improve further teaching methods and curricula, enlighten all faculty members, and improve the administrative structure of a whole university in order to actualize these philosophies and objectives. The University Council emphasized a liberalized curriculum based on the needs of individual universities, not one decided by directives from the Ministry of Education.

According to Nambara, the Japanese, guided by their own purposes, initiated the postwar university system—and not the USEMJ. Therefore, they did not reform the prewar higher school system but simply reorganized it, carrying over the ideas of the prewar higher schools. Although the Japanese adopted the general education system forced upon them by the American Occupation, they thought that general education was the same as the ordinary education they had in the curriculum of the prewar higher schools. As a result, they treated it as a prerequisite to specialized education, as in the prewar period.

In 1991, after more than forty years of debate on the issue, the Ministry of Education drastically revised the Standards for Universities and dismantled the general education system. The Japanese eventually realized the importance of having general education in their curriculum, after losing it. Since 1998 the Japanese have been searching for their own form of liberal education to replace general education. Thus, it has taken fifty years for the Japanese to truly realize the importance of the general education referred to by the Mission.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Gary H. Tsuchimochi, “The Emergence of the New Four-Year University System in Postwar Japan,” *Nanzan Review of American Studies* 21 (1999): 41–60.

<sup>2</sup> There are not many studies on this topic. Some relevant sources are Kaigo Tokiomi and Terasaki Masao, *Sengo Nihon no kyoiku kaikaku 9—daigaku kyoiku* [Postwar Japa-

nese education reform, vol. 9: University education] (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1976); Terasaki Masao, "Sengo Nihon ni okeru ippan kyoiku rikai—sono hensen to mondai" [Understanding general education in postwar Japan: Its transition and problems], *Ippan Kyoiku Gakkai Shi (Journal of the Liberal and General Education Society of Japan)*, 2, nos. 1 & 2 (Nov. 1980); Yasukawa Junnosuke, "Sengo shinsei daigakuron—Ippankyoiku no shiza yori mita" [A study of the postwar new university from the viewpoint of general education], *Nagoya Daigaku Shi Kiyo (Journal of History of Nagoya University)* (Sept. 1989); Tanaka Masao, *Sengo kaikaku to Daigaku Kijun Kyokai no keisei* [Formation of postwar reforms and the Japanese University Accreditation Association] (Tokyo: Japanese University Accreditation Association, 1995); and Gary H. Tsuchimochi, "Shinsei daigaku ni okeru 'ippan kyoiku' no donyu to tenkai no katei" [A study of the development of "general education" in postwar Japanese universities], *Nihon no Kyoiku Shigaku (Journal of the Society for Educational History)*, 40 (1997).

<sup>3</sup> *Progress of Educational Reform in Japan—Report by the Ministry of Education, Aug. 1950* (trans. of *Nihon ni Okeru Kyoiku Kaikaku no Shinten* [Tokyo: Ministry of Education, 1950]), p. 72. It refers to the *Report of the U.S. Educational Mission to Japan*, March 1946. Thus, the abuses of prewar higher education institutions, especially *senmon gakko* (vocational schools) and normal schools (teacher training institutions) were reformed accordingly. However, the Ministry of Education translated "general education" first as "ordinary education," a term that designated courses offered at prewar higher schools.

<sup>4</sup> As mentioned in note 3, the Ministry of Education translated "general education" as "ordinary education," an equivalent that can be confused with the prewar term "higher ordinary education." This confusion led to a misunderstanding of "general education." According to the report of the JUAA, general education, along with specialized education, aims at the achievement of human education and cultivates citizens as well as professionals. In contrast to prewar university education, it was a general education for all mankind and thus was named accordingly. The criticism has been made that general education was a disruption of the postwar higher education reforms. See Tachi Akira, "Koto futsuu kyoiku to shite no 'ippan kyoiku'" ["General education" as higher ordinary education], *Ippan Kyoiku Gakkai Shi (Journal of the Liberal and General Education Society of Japan)*, 15, no. 2 (1993): 11–12.

<sup>5</sup> "Special Report by Shigeru Nambara, President, Tokyo Imperial University and Chairman of the Japanese Education Committee, to G. D. Stoddard, March 21, 1946," *Wanamaker Papers*, Box No. 36/17. The Wanamaker Papers, held at the Henry Suzzallo Library, University of Washington, are those of Pearl A. Wanamaker, who visited Japan twice as a member of the U.S. Education Missions of 1946 and 1950. They include valuable original materials concerning postwar Japanese education reforms, such as the draft manuscripts of the reports of both the 1946 and 1950 U.S. Education Missions.

<sup>6</sup> Terasaki Masao, "Tokyo Daigaku Kyoiku Seido Kenkyu Iinkai kiroku" [Sources: Minutes of the Research Committee on the education system at Tokyo Imperial University], *Shiryō* [Materials], *Tokyo Daigaku Shi Kiyo dai 7 go* [Bulletin of History of Tokyo University, no. 7] (March 1989): 62.

<sup>7</sup> *The Report of the United States Education Mission to Japan, Submitted to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Tokyo, March 30, 1946* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1946), p. 48.

<sup>8</sup> This point refers to German education reform. A U.S. education mission was sent to Germany in August 1946. In the field of higher education, Earl J. McGrath, one of the foremost men in the general education field, was added as a member of the Mission. He contributed to German higher education by writing the “Universities and Higher Schools” section of Chapter III, “German Education,” of the Report of the U.S. Education Mission to Germany. He recommended that “all universities and higher schools include within each curriculum the essential elements of *general education* for responsible citizenship and for an understanding of the contemporary world” (emphasis added). See Gary H. Tsuchimochi, *Senryoka doitsu no kyoiku kaikaku: Amerika Taidoku Kyoiku Shisetsudan to Amerika Taidoku Shakaika Iinkai* [Educational reforms under the American Occupation in Germany: The U.S. Education Mission to Germany and the U.S. Social Studies Committee to Germany] (Tokyo: Meisei University Press, 1989), p. 36.

<sup>9</sup> *The Report of the United States Education Mission to Japan*, pp. 42–43.

<sup>10</sup> Gary H. Tsuchimochi, *Education Reform in Postwar Japan: The 1946 U.S. Education Mission* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1993), p. 291; see also Gary H. Tsuchimochi, *6–3 sei kyoiku no tanjou: Sengo kyoiku no genten* [The emergence of the 6-3 school system: The origin of postwar education] (Tokyo: Yuushisha, 1992), p. 123.

<sup>11</sup> GHQ/SCAP, *History of the Non-Military Activities of the Occupation of Japan, 1945–1951*, vol. 20 (Education), pp. 25–26.

<sup>12</sup> Kaigo and Terasaki, *Daigaku kyoiku*, p. 389.

<sup>13</sup> “Kyoiku Shingikai dai 11-kai sokai gijiroku” [Education Council: Eleventh general meeting records] (14 Sept. 1939) in *Kindai Nihon kyoiku seido shiryō* (Historical sources of the modern Japanese education system) 15 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1957), p. 377.

<sup>14</sup> The JUAA, ed., *Daigaku ni okeru ippan kyoiku—Ippan Kyoiku Kenkyū Iinkai hokoku (saishu)* [General education in the university: Final report of the General Education Research Committee] *Materials of the Japanese University Accreditation Association*, 10 (1951): 7.

<sup>15</sup> Robert H. Grant, “General Education, written from notes of a lecture given to the Committee on General Education for the Kansai Area at Kyoto University, March 22, 1949,” in Gary H. Tsuchimochi, ed., *Educational Reform in Japan, 1945–1952, Part 2, 3-A-5* (microfiche number) (Congressional Information Service and Maruzen, 1996), p. 31. The Association of Private Universities also criticized the “*teidai* [imperial universities] as being responsible for the nurturing of bureaucrats and also for the outbreak of the present war, having ‘conspired with the militarists.’ . . . [I]n order to destroy militarism completely, it is therefore necessary to overthrow the ‘*teidaibatsu*’ [the clique of the imperial universities]” (Tsuchimochi, *Education Reform in Postwar Japan*, p. 148).

<sup>16</sup> The formation of the Japanese University Accreditation Association is detailed in Tanaka, *Sengo kaikaku to Daigaku Kijun Kyokai no keisei*.

<sup>17</sup> The JUAA, ed., *Daigaku Kijun Kyokai juunen shi* [Ten-year history of the Japanese University Accreditation Association] (Tokyo: Japanese University Accreditation Association, 1957), p. 81.

<sup>18</sup> Tanaka, *Sengo kaikaku to Daigaku Kijun Kyokai no keisei*, p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>20</sup> “Daigaku setsuritsu kijun ni kansuru yoko (An)” [The gist of the university establishment standards (draft)], in *Daigaku Setsuritsu Kijun Settei Kyogikai haifu shiryō* (1–1), 1947, in the collection of the Japanese University Accreditation Association Archives.



<sup>21</sup> “Daigaku Setsuritsu Kijun Settei Kyogikai bunka kei bunkakai sokketsu jiko” [A summary decision of the literature group subcommittee of the University Establishment Standards Council], in *Sengo kyoiku shiryō* (Sources of postwar education), compiled by Sengo Kyoiku Shiryō Shushu Iinkai (The committee of collection of sources of postwar education), 1965, microfilm no. 25, held by the National Institute for Educational Research.

<sup>22</sup> Suzuki Eiichi, *Nihon senryō to kyoiku kaikaku* [The occupation of Japan and education reform] (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1983), p. 206.

<sup>23</sup> Harry Wray, “The Trilateral Relationship of the Ministry of Education, the Japan Education Reform Committee, and the Education Division of the Civil Information and Education Section, Supreme Commander for Allied Powers: Its Significance for Educational Reform during the Allied Occupation of Japan,” (unpublished manuscript in the possession of Gordon T. Bowles), p. 27.

<sup>24</sup> Tanaka, *Sengo kaikaku to Daigaku Kijun Kyokai no keisei*, p. 75.

<sup>25</sup> Kaigo and Terasaki, *Daigaku kyoiku*, p. 397.

<sup>26</sup> This is a brief summarization of statements made by Mark T. Orr in interviews held at the University of South Florida 1–9 September 1994. I wish to thank Dr. Orr for his most generous assistance in this study. Errors of fact or interpretation are my responsibility.

<sup>27</sup> Until 1 July 1947, the Standards for Universities (tentative) noted that “domestic science” can be added as a general education subject, particularly by an institution with women students.

<sup>28</sup> Gary H. Tsuchimochi, “Shinsei daigaku seiritsu shi—senryō monjo wo chushin ni” [History of the emergence of the new university as seen in Occupation documents], *Nihon Daigaku Shi Kiyo (Journal of History of Nihon University)* 5 (1998): 83. “Joint Meeting of Board of Trustees (5th) and Board of Directors (11th), Nippon University, Meeting Agenda and Minutes by Holmes” (11/25/47), *Educational Reform in Japan, 1945–1952, Part 2, 2-B-31* (microfiche number) (Congressional Information Service and Maruzen, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> “Standards for Universities,” *Trainor Papers*, microfilm no. 31, box no. 36. The *Trainor Papers* are those of Joseph C. Trainor, deputy chief of the Education Division of the CIE. Held at the Hoover Institute, Stanford University, the 66 reels of microfilm include valuable materials concerning postwar Japanese education reforms.

<sup>30</sup> Yasujima Hisashi, *Sengo kyoiku rippo oboegaki* [Memorandum of legislation on postwar education] (Tokyo: Daiichi Hoki, 1986), p. 33.

<sup>31</sup> The JUAA, ed., *Daigaku ni okeru ippan kyoiku*, pp. 20–24.

<sup>32</sup> Grant, “General Education,” p. 5. He also noted: “Soon after the completion of the invention of the atomic bomb, a group of the scientists in Chicago who worked on the part of the project there called a meeting where they might discuss the matter with clergymen of the city. In short, this is what they told the clergymen, ‘We have created the bomb. Now it is up to you to create the ethics for its use.’ Such ethical irresponsibility is the product of exclusively specialized education.” Grant, “General Education,” p. 8.

<sup>33</sup> Yamamoto Toshio, “Ippan kyoiku no honshitsu to mondaiten—shinsei daigaku no kariyuramu to hoho” [The essence and problems of general education: Curriculum and methods in the new university], *Kyoiku Koron*, 4, no. 8, (1949): 26.

<sup>34</sup> The JUAA, ed., *Daigaku ni okeru ippan kyoiku*, p. 63.

<sup>35</sup> Edwin F. Wigglesworth, “Shinsei daigaku no gainen” [The concept of the new uni-

versity], *Kaiho* (published by the Japanese University Accreditation Association) 1 (1947): 11.

<sup>36</sup> “The Reorganization of Higher Education” (A translation of a handbook prepared by the Japanese Ministry of Education), Tokyo, May 1948, *Trainor Papers*, microfilm no. 26, box no. 29, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> See Nihon Kindai Kyoiku Shiryo Kenkyu Kai, ed., *Kyoiku Sasshin Iinkai (Shingikai) kaigiroku* [Meeting records of the Japan Education Reform Committee (Council)] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997), vol. 8.

<sup>38</sup> The JUAA, ed., *Daigaku ni okeru ippan kyoiku*, p. 18.

<sup>39</sup> Kaigo and Terasaki, *Daigaku kyoiku*, pp. 452–53.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.