

Inoue Plan 2007
(Revised for 2008)

On the Path to Becoming a World-Class University

Introducing Inoue Plan 2007 (Tohoku University Action Plans, revised for 2008)

The original “Inoue Plan 2007” was introduced in March 2007 and expressed my unshakeable commitment to the notion that the fundamental purpose of this university is to promote the advancement of human civilization. The plan outlined the key strategies I intend to focus on during my tenure as president, in order to achieve the goal of making Tohoku University one of the leading universities in the world, and consisted specifically of five different action plans covering the areas of education, research, social contribution, campus environment and organization / management.

A year has now passed since the plan was introduced, and during this period we have made steady progress toward achieving many of our goals. For example, in the field of education we moved quickly to introduce an overseas internship program. We are also making steady progress in developing a proprietary liberal arts curriculum for Tohoku University and a specialized system for implementing that curriculum.

In the area of research, we have established the Institute for International Advanced Research and Education, which is designed to be a center to train future generations of researchers who will have the superior knowledge and creative skills they will need to provide scientific leadership in the 21st century. In addition, the Institute for Molecular Materials Science was established as part of the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI).

In other areas, progress has been made in promoting the creation of new venture businesses through cooperation between the university and private businesses. Steps are being taken to ensure that our campuses are of world-class quality and are open to

students from around the world. Progress is being made in developing a personnel management system capable of sustaining an internationally competitive university. We have also established the Tohoku University Fund and are pursuing a number of other original strategies. All of these developments are helping to foster a sense of pride in the uniqueness of our institution, and are an indication of how our teaching and administrative staff, student body, and alumni are united in their efforts to advance the interests of the university. These accomplishments give me a great deal of satisfaction.

On the other hand, implementation of some of the action plans is progressing slightly less quickly than we had hoped. We are determined to work even harder than before in these areas, and we expect to generate a new level of creativity in the year ahead.

Our ultimate goal is to become one of the leading universities in the world, capable of addressing the challenges facing humanity; however this is not something that can be achieved overnight. The environment surrounding our university is changing very rapidly, so in addition to the steady implementation of the plans developed last year, it is also essential that we continually review and upgrade our goals in the light of changing circumstances. It is therefore very important that we take advantage of feedback from both within and outside the university during the process of implementation of this plan.

This revision of our action plans for the 2008 academic year represents an evolution that incorporates adjustments made in response to such internal and external suggestions, along with adjustments made as a result of changes in the environment surrounding university operations.

In 2008 Tohoku University has taken a firm step forward into the second century of its existence. At the same time, however, the pace of the various changes affecting our university is accelerating, and those of us who have been entrusted with the task of serving human society by making this university into a center for creating knowledge must steel our resolve, and work sincerely and tirelessly to create new results in the fields of research and education. We must continue to adapt and evolve.

We see that the activities of Tohoku University encompass not only the faculty, administrative staff, students and alumni, but also many members of the local and also the international community. I believe that by helping all our stakeholders to understand the mission and the activities of Tohoku University, and by actively seeking the cooperation of a wide variety of people as we face these challenges, we can become a university that is trusted, respected and loved by society, and one which is truly capable of serving the needs of humanity. It is therefore with a renewed sense of determination to achieve our goal of becoming recognized within the next ten years as one of the world's top 30 universities that we now introduce "Inoue Plan 2007, Tohoku University Action Plans (revised for 2008)".

March 2008

Akihisa Inoue

President, Tohoku University

1. Education

In our capacity as an “inheritor of knowledge,” we will restructure the system of instruction we use to pass along our store of accumulated wisdom, and to fulfill our role as a “creator of knowledge,” we will strive to produce future leaders with a strong liberal arts background, specialized expertise, and an international outlook.

1.1 Improve the quality of our liberal arts education, which is the heart of a university education

A. Formulate an original liberal arts curriculum for Tohoku University

Background

A sound education in the liberal arts is absolutely essential for our students because it helps them to become mature human beings with a world-embracing vision and establishes a solid foundation for further specialized training. It is also indispensable to our goal of promoting interdisciplinary research at graduate school level. After the university abolished its College of General Education, we transformed our approach to learning by developing an original liberal arts curriculum consisting of a system of basic seminars, and in 2008 we took a further step toward upgrading our curriculum by introducing lectures by Professor Extraordinary (retired professors appointed by the President of the University to carry out particular duties). Moreover, to produce large numbers of leaders capable of serving on the international stage, it will be necessary for us to significantly improve the quality of our liberal arts program and diversify its content, both at graduate (doctoral) and undergraduate level.

Plan

1. Develop a world-class curriculum that motivates students to learn, and imparts a high-level, broad-based education in the liberal arts.
2. Reinforce English language education with special emphasis on improving communication skills. Increase the number of hours of English lectures, and consider introducing third party proficiency tests (TOEFL).
3. Develop an advanced information-oriented learning system that takes full advantage of IT and multi-media technologies.
4. Promote internationalization of our undergraduate students by introducing an overseas internship program.
5. Implement a

liberal arts curriculum for graduate students. 6. Consider establishing a special scholarship program for students of especially high ability.

B. Improve the system of implementation of our liberal arts training

Background

After the College of General Education was abolished, the Center for the Advancement of Higher Education took on primary responsibility for overseeing our liberal arts program. However, if we are to raise the level of our undergraduate education in the liberal arts, this system will need to be upgraded. We will also need to acquire a liberal arts faculty with a wide range of knowledge and experience, especially in the area of international communication, and it is particularly urgent that we design our lectures so that undergraduate students develop a passion for research that will encourage them to undertake graduate studies. As a step towards consolidating an implementation structure to achieve these goals, in April 2008 the President announced the formation of a new “Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences” to be staffed by Professor Extraordinary (in the liberal arts) appointed by the President.

Plan

1. Take steps to significantly improve the quality of our faculty, and actively recruit enthusiastic teachers who are eager to promote liberal arts education. Review our incentive structures and evaluation systems for these teachers. 2. Establish a system to allow teaching staff involved in liberal arts education to serve concurrently in the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences as “Special Professors in the Liberal Arts” (provisional title). 3. Create an appropriate organizational structure to comprehensively manage liberal arts education, establish classes, hire faculty, and provide student support services.

1.2 Raise the level of our professional and graduate school training to promote knowledge creation

A. Restructure our graduate school curriculum

Background

As is the case with other national universities, ever since graduate education became a major function of the university, we have maintained a system comprised of a 4-year undergraduate course, a two-year master's course, and a 3-year doctoral course. In the future, however, if we are to develop into a world-class research-intensive university, it will be necessary for us to promote continuity between our undergraduate and graduate programs, and our research-intensive professional training programs will require a more diverse curriculum to allow students of various capacities to achieve high levels of proficiency and achievement. We must also establish an internationally diverse faculty organization so as to be able to attract students from around the world to our doctoral programs, and we must train graduate students capable of presenting and discussing their research internationally.

Plan

1. Once a sound foundation has been established in the liberal arts and in the various undergraduate majors, clear goals must be set for advanced education at each graduate school. Achievement of these goals will require an original curriculum that flexibly combines the undergraduate (4-year), graduate (2-year), and doctoral (3-year) programs. 2. Consider introducing an early graduation system for students with demonstrable proficiency and achievement. 3. Consider the introduction of a system of education in which English is used as the language of instruction all the way from matriculation through graduation. 4. Implement an overseas internship program for graduate students. 5. Attract talented foreign exchange students, and compete vigorously for faculty members from other countries. 6. Use the new faculty management system to improve the quality of education in the various areas of specialization. 7. Reallocate graduate student enrollment limits.

B. Establish a new implementation structure for graduate school programs

Background

The new faculty management system that came into effect in April 2007 calls for a basic faculty structure consisting of professors, associate professors, senior assistant professors, assistant professors and research associates, and clarifies the job descriptions of each of these positions. Faculty members with a rank of associate professor or higher

are able to carry out independent research, and assistant professors are allowed to teach graduate level courses. This new system makes it possible for us to increase our areas of specialization, design more flexible curricula, revise our system of classes, and upgrade our educational and research systems.

Plan

1. Reform our present system of graduate education (fields, courses, majors, etc.) to make the graduate program of each research department more efficient and effective.
2. Devise strategic research programs in each graduate school, designed to promote research-based education and strengthen ties with the International Advanced Research and Education Organization.

C. Promote internationalization of education

Background

To become an open, international university, we must attract talented international students from all over the world and provide our own undergraduates with opportunities to study abroad. This will give our students a chance to interact closely with people from other countries, and will enable them to establish a network that will continue to bear fruit long after graduation.

Plan

1. Establish a global network of world-class universities and educational institutions, and promote effective exchange activities.
2. Invite enthusiastic and highly talented students from around the world to study at our university as exchange students, with the aim of developing human resources that can contribute to the progress of human society in various countries. To this end, we will need to upgrade and expand our own unique support system for exchange students, improve our Japanese-language training programs for exchange students, and consider implementation of educational systems which use English as the language of instruction.
3. Reinforce our overseas internship and other programs, to enable eager and capable students from this university to study at world-class universities in other countries.
4. Help our students to improve their ability to communicate internationally by encouraging them to attend international conferences and symposia.

D. Train high-level researchers capable of developing new interdisciplinary fields of research

Background

This university has now established two Institutes to support advanced international research and education. First to be created was the Institute for International Advanced Research and Education, where students interested in interdisciplinary studies can pursue an integrated 5-year program of study. This was followed in April 2008 by the establishment of a new Institute for International Advanced Interdisciplinary Research to train world-class researchers, and to provide further independent research opportunities for talented post-doctoral researchers.

Plan

1. Improve the functioning of the Tohoku University International Advanced Research and Educational Organization. Reinforce graduate level training at the Institute for International Advanced Research and Education, through cooperation with the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences. 2. Develop a new curriculum for training researchers in the field of interdisciplinary studies that is closely linked with Global COE programs.

E. Evaluate the results of our professional school programs, and implement improvements

Background

In order to fulfill our commitment to developing professional human resources capable of taking on leading roles in various fields in our society, we have established a Law School, a School of Public Policy and a Graduate School of Accounting. As regards the future development of these professional graduate schools, we will have to carefully monitor their activities in view of the changing needs for professionals in our society, and strive toward continual improvement in these programs.

Plan

1. Develop a practice-oriented course in which the respective roles and functions of the research staff and professional teaching staff are integrated and allocated

appropriately. 2. Consider the development of a curriculum in which undergraduate and professional graduate school training are closely linked. 3. Consider the establishment of professional graduate schools that meet social needs. 4. Consider establishing an effective system that would enable working adults to study at these professional graduate schools. 5. Work to improve the learning environment at these schools.

1.3 Development of a New Educational System

A. Expanding our education through e-learning

Background

Now that the world has been united through the Internet, it is necessary to take advantage of this global network to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of university level education. In addition, there is strong demand for the university's knowledge from many sources, including people from other countries who are seeking an advanced education, those studying at off-campus locations who require lectures that are delivered cost-effectively, and citizens in the local community and surrounding districts, who look to us to provide a diverse range of lifelong learning opportunities. It is important for us to develop a system for disseminating knowledge that utilizes the Internet.

Plan

1. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of classes by enabling liberal arts and other students to access educational materials, and to submit or to correct reports over the Internet. 2. Consider how to use the Internet School of Tohoku University (ISTU) and the Tohoku University Repository (TOUR), to promote e-learning. 3. In the field of interdisciplinary studies, to consider the feasibility of developing of an e-learning system linked to the Institute for International Advanced Research and Education. 4. Consider using the Internet to conduct joint lectures and courses with regional consortia and schools with which we have academic exchange agreements, and establish a credit transfer system. 5. Consider the establishment of a system to allow working adults to enroll in Internet-based educational programs.

B. Reinforce our links with private companies and other outside agencies through a system of “endowed chairs” (chairs funded by outside agencies)

Background

It is important for a university as an educational institution to open its doors to cooperation with private corporations and other outside agencies. During this present period of rapid social and economic transformation, the opportunity to learn about state-of-the-art practices from experts in industry or other outside institutions can be of significant benefit to our students.

Plan

Promote the holding of public lectures (donated lectures) sponsored by funds donated by companies or other outside agencies. Place particular emphasis on promoting the donation of lectures by companies which have relations with the university, such as those with facilities in the Science Park.

1.4 Improving student support systems

A. Encourage extracurricular activities

Background

In addition to their academic studies, it is important for students to participate in extracurricular athletic or cultural activities in order to establish friendships and learn to work with others in a social setting. These activities also help to give students a sense of identity with the university and are an important means of creating unity within the university as a whole. It will be important for the university to gain cooperation from parties both within and outside the university to enable it to successfully fulfill its responsibilities as one of the host schools for the 7 National Universities Athletic Meet to be held in 2008.

Plan

Use the Tohoku University Fund, which was established in April 2008, and the Tohoku University Foundation to (1) reorganize the Extra-curricular Activities Association to further reinforce its activities, and (2) promote the establishment of facilities for extracurricular activities to serve the interests of the university as a whole.

B. Promote the dissemination of information with regard to career planning options after graduation

Background

It is important for the university to be able to provide detailed career planning information to students graduating from undergraduate and graduate courses, and it will also be important to offer students opportunities to learn outside the university as they plan for their futures.

Plan

1. Make information available via the university's web site, using home pages that can be accessed by students. 2. Upgrade and improve the Career Support Center. 3. Offer internship programs both in Japan and overseas. 4. Secure positions at the university for post-doctoral researchers. Actively promote the use of the Advanced Technology Management Course to support career planning for doctoral course graduates with advanced technological skills (including post-doctoral students).

1.5 Develop an admissions strategy for highly motivated students

A. Improving student recruitment

Background

Tohoku University has a proud history as the third oldest national university in Japan. As one of the few research-intensive universities in the country, it has produced a significant amount of international level research and has educated many students for positions of leadership. We hope to recruit students who are attracted by our educational philosophy and who are eager to study at a research-oriented university. It is essential, therefore, for us to develop strategies to reach high school and university students and make them aware of our university's advantages, strengths, and history of achievements, so that they can appreciate the high level of education we offer.

Plan

1. Create a user friendly website aimed at high school students through which information about the university can be disseminated and PR activities can be conducted

(undergraduate school). Also, to develop another website to publicize the research activities and results of research conducted at the university (undergraduate / graduate schools). 2. Consider the feasibility of holding ‘extra-campus classes’ (classes in the community, particularly schools) with the cooperation and support of the Tohoku University Alumni Associations and local boards of education (graduate and undergraduate levels). 3. Reinforce ties between high schools and the university through the establishment of a trial enrollment system, and increase opportunities for potential students to learn about our research activities by supporting an integrated studies program at the high school level (undergraduate school). 4. Publicize our status as a research-intensive university by actively reporting the results of our research at academic conferences (graduate school). 5. Invite college students to attend admissions information sessions where they can learn about our graduate school programs (graduate school). 6. Improve the quality of our system for providing student scholarships.

B. Improve methods of admission

Background

Tohoku University is presently admitting highly motivated students through a general entrance examination, an Administration Office (AO) exam and a recommendation entrance examination. During the period between admission and actual matriculation, it is highly desirable to take steps to maintain or improve the academic level of students admitted through the AO exam and recommendation entrance examination. It is also desirable to establish a system sufficiently flexible to allow qualified students who wish to enter a specialized course of study to choose their specialized course of study after matriculation. Further, at the graduate level, as transfers from other universities become more common, we will need to develop an admissions system capable of evaluating the qualifications of applicants as researchers.

Plan

1. Consider implementation of an admissions system that takes into account not only academic knowledge, but also the research activities of high school applicants (undergraduate school). 2. Consider development of a system by which students admitted by AO exam or recommendation examination can be issued a ‘Pre-admission ID card’,

which will allow them to attend lectures at the university or visit research laboratories (undergraduate school). 3. Establish a worldwide recruiting network that incorporates Tohoku University alumni associations (undergraduate / graduate schools). 4. Consider introduction of an entrance examination system that transcends school or departmental boundaries to allow students to enter specialized courses of study based on their performance after matriculation. Improve the quality of our laboratory websites (undergraduate / graduate schools).

2. Research

As a “creator of knowledge” our goal must be to develop original, innovative research structures capable of producing world-class research results through strategic, original research as well as through basic research carried out with a long-term perspective.

2.1 Reinforce the research foundations of Tohoku University as a “research-intensive university”

A. Promote strategic research aimed at finding solutions to the challenges facing the world today

Background

The need for human resources capable of conducting strategic research in areas related to the various pressing challenges facing human society is increasing. Because of our special emphasis on practice-oriented research and education, Tohoku University has a special responsibility to respond to social needs by concentrating on this type of strategic research.

Plan

1. Create a support system for strategic research so that we are better able to apply Tohoku University’s diverse range of research “seeds” to existing “needs” in today’s world. Establish a robust database to facilitate the rapid organization of inter-departmental and interdisciplinary research teams, and, in addition to programs that allow researchers to conduct their own independent research, establish a system whereby the president of the university can take advantage of his institution-wide perspective to propose research programs. 2. Establish a system to reinforce Tohoku University’s ability to develop strategic research policy proposals. 3. Consider ways to promote research in fields where new approaches are called for (brain science, cultural anthropology, etc.)

B. Achieve world-class status rapidly by focusing on specific areas of research

Background

Tohoku University must continue to drive top-level research in the fields of nano-technology / materials, information / communications, physics, chemistry and others, and must also be capable of promoting innovative research and science, and of creating innovative technologies to meet the needs of humanity in the near term. The Japanese government's Council for Science and Technology has developed a "Science and Technology Basic Plan" (adopted as a Cabinet decision on March 28, 2006) that includes the life sciences among four basic areas deserving of particular research emphasis. These four areas are life sciences, information / communications, environmental science, and technology / materials. The Ministry of Education, Sports, Culture, Science and Technology has also established a program to promote translational research to help find practical applications for basic findings of life science research.

Plan

1. Take steps to reinforce the organization of the Institute for Molecular Materials Science, adopted and established as part of the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI), so that it may play a leading role as part of a top-class international research network.
2. Make the WPI Cooperative Research Center (provisional name) into a gathering place for eager and talented researchers from around the world.
3. Expand the number of Global COE programs and other competitive research projects.
4. Establish a system to attract top level researchers from around the world, as well as a system to nurture researchers within the university.
5. Reinforce the foundations of life science research, and establish a research system that will clarify the correlation and respective missions of the present life sciences (life science, agriculture, medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, etc.).

C. Improve the quality of basic research from a long-term perspective

Background

We know that social conditions and the types of scientific challenges facing humanity will change greatly over time. It is only by nurturing a diverse range of basic research that we will be able to respond to these changes through focused strategic research, or through the creation of entirely new fields of study opened up by basic

discoveries. As a top-level university, it is essential that we establish a solid long-term program supporting basic research.

Plan

1. Effectively reinforce the foundations of basic research by acquiring adequate research funding to allow our scientists to conduct their own original research. 2. Take advantage of the new faculty management system to allow young researchers to conduct original research, and promote the establishment of research teams whose membership is not limited to any particular field of study. 3. Specify clear, multi-year objectives for each faculty, department, research team, and teaching team. Make this information available in a public database. 4. Develop a clear system of evaluating the progress toward the goals outlined in (3), and publish the results of the evaluations. 5. Establish measures to support basic research and to promote and support original thinking and research among researchers in all departments. 6. Develop a vision for future research institutes at Tohoku University, and study how best to structure our academic and research organizations, while carefully monitoring government policy trends concerning the establishment of cooperative-use, cooperative research-type attached research institutes.

2.2 Meet the challenge of opening new key fields of research

A. Drive Innovative Research Through the Tohoku University International Advanced Research and Educational Organization and Others

Background

In order to create new fields of study, it is becoming increasingly necessary to conduct interdisciplinary research. Successful interdisciplinary research depends on the development of young researchers with a wide-ranging vision capable of looking at problems from many different perspectives. Tohoku University is ahead of other universities in this field, having already established an International Advanced Research and Educational Organization, consisting of an Institute for International Advanced Research and Education and an Institute for International Advanced Interdisciplinary Research. Moreover, in 2008 we will establish a new Graduate School of Biomedical Engineering.

Plan

1. Make use of the International Advanced Research and Educational Organization and the Graduate School of Biomedical Engineering to promote innovative research.
2. Promote research in new interdisciplinary research fields such as medical technology, using the talents of young full-time faculty (associate professors, professors), and post-doctoral students.
3. Appoint retired professors who combine deep and wide-ranging knowledge with rich practical experience and proven teaching ability as “Professor Extraordinary in Interdisciplinary Studies,” and establish a system by which they can teach young researchers and evaluate their research findings.

B. Promote translational research

Background

It is urgent that we take measures to promote a coherent program of translational research (TR) designed to find clinical applications for discoveries being made in the rapidly advancing field of life sciences and other basic medical research.

Plan

1. Establish a “Translational Research Center” that will specialize in finding clinical applications for the results of innovative medical research, with the aim of increasing our international competitiveness, raising medical standards, and helping to improve the health of the general population. Upgrade the Center for Innovative Biochemical Engineering and establish a system for training talent to work in the field of translational research.
2. Establish a Tohoku Regional TR Network, and use the Center for Innovative Biochemical Engineering, together with the Graduate School of Biomedical Engineering, as a foundation for the development of innovative medical treatments.

2.3 Cooperative research as part of an international research network

A. Promote cooperative research through the establishment of a global network

Background

In order for our institution to become a top-ranked university, we must improve the quality of our research by conducting top-level cooperative research with other internationally recognized universities and research institutes. We must establish and reinforce support structures to accomplish this goal.

Plan

1. Promote cooperative research with internationally recognized universities and research institutes through an international academic network, and promote cooperative research through academic exchange agreements with other schools. 2. Promote strategic academic exchange agreements with internationally recognized universities and research institutes. 3. Make a university-wide effort to develop functional overseas branch offices, either independently or in cooperation with other institutions, and liaison offices as a means of establishing a strategic global network linking Tohoku University with internationally recognized universities and research institutes.

B. Promote international research by front-line research staff from around the world

Background

To promote international research at Tohoku University, it will be important to gather top-level young international researchers in various disciplines and work together on cooperative research activities.

Plan

1. Actively recruit researchers and faculty members on an international scale. Vigorously recruit talented young researchers from around the world to work on WPI and Global COE research projects, as well as other projects. 2. Establish support systems for international researchers and faculty members.

3. Contribution to Society

As an institution "open to the community and open to the world", we will contribute to the progress of human society by applying our human and intellectual resources to the community.

3.1 Our basic contribution to society as a world-class university

A. Produce talented people who play active roles in international fields

Background

One of the greatest contributions that Tohoku University can make to human society is to produce highly skilled graduates in various fields who can work to ensure the survival of human beings and the improvement of their living standards at local, national and international levels. Our university's philosophy has been to regard "Research First," to maintain an "Open-Door" policy, and to respect "Practice-Oriented Research and Education", and as such we have a long record of producing talented graduates to serve the needs of our nation and of the world.

Plan

1. To develop human resources capable of thinking about problems from an international perspective, we will implement the following educational strategies: improvement of the quality of our liberal arts education, the reinforcement of our graduate school programs, and the promotion of interdisciplinary research and education.
2. To produce human resources capable of serving the needs of human society worldwide, we will welcome exchange students from other countries and develop a new globally oriented system of education at Tohoku University, where exchange students and Japanese students can work together.

3.2 Reinforce ties with the local community

A. Contribute to policy-making at the local and national levels

Background

A university is expected to serve the surrounding community in many ways. Our university is not the exception, and we have long had close ties with the local community.

Many of our faculty members have served on various policy-making councils, and others, at the local and national levels. In the future, while preserving our educational and research independence, we will strive to reinforce the connections between our educational and research activities and the needs of local and national government agencies in order to promote our mutual evolution.

Plan

1. Continue the services we have provided in the past and actively support policy-making activities at local and national levels by encouraging the participation of teaching and administrative staff in advisory panels, and others 2. Establish a group of experts to work with the local community on developing strategies to be implemented both before and after the expected Miyagi-oki earthquakes. 3. Reinforce ties between the university and the local community by establishing a system to identify and respond to the needs of the local community (medical, intellectual, technical skills, etc.).

B. Contribute to local education and culture

Background

Tohoku University has long had the practice of sharing its research and educational findings with the local community. In recent years, we have conducted “Science Café” and “Science Angel” activities in the community and have organized public lectures not only in Sendai, but also in many other venues nationwide. Our efforts to propagate our knowledge to the community are highly respected.

Plan

1. Continue our practice of organizing public lectures, and develop and implement plans for other activities in response to requests from the local community. For example, we will consider using Science Café gatherings to stimulate the public’s intellectual curiosity by sharing the achievements of our research in the humanities and social sciences, and we may also publish articles in various types of regional magazines. 2. Promote closer ties with municipal, prefectural, and national museums. 3. Study ways of improving the quality of, and promoting the more widespread use of, public facilities such as the University Library, Botanical Gardens, Tohoku University Museum, and Tohoku University Archives by organizing exhibitions and other activities.

C. Create a Consortium of Advanced Education and Research Institutions in Tohoku region

Background

The Sendai region has already established the formation of “The Academic Consortium of Sendai,” the purpose of which is to stimulate mutual advancement by pooling the intellectual resources of various advanced educational and research institutions in the area. Tohoku University has close ties with all the universities, other post-secondary institutions and public offices in the Tohoku region, and to further our mutual abilities to serve the public interest, it will be important to establish an organization to promote cooperation among these members.

Plan

1. Actively promote close ties with other national as well as private universities, and study the feasibility of stimulating exchange activities with universities and other post-secondary institutions in the Tohoku region by establishing a regional consortium.
2. Consider establishing a credit transfer system that would cover distance and e-learning arrangements, and a system to allow working adults to receive continuing education.
3. Promote cooperative inter-university research projects in association with our proposed Science Park concept.

3.3 Reinforce ties between industry, academia, and government

A. Promote research cooperation among industry, academia, and government

Background

Our university, with its commitment to practice-oriented research and education, has a long record of successful research cooperation with private companies trying to develop practical, commercial applications of research results. We will maintain this tradition in the future, recognizing the importance of conducting research that will produce practical results.

Plan

1. Organize our research “seeds” from an international perspective, and conduct cooperative research projects whenever we find a match between these “seeds” and corporate “needs.”
2. Organize a new Business Round Table for small and medium-sized enterprises in order to actively explore possibilities for connecting our research “seeds” with community “needs.”
3. Build a Science Park to nurture venture companies through practical (applied) research projects.
4. Review and evaluate the functions of the existing Tohoku University Office of Cooperative Research and Development, and the Center for Research Strategy and Support, and reorganize as required.
5. Consider new ways to promote cooperative research projects with private companies in order to establish stronger links between our university and private industry.

B. Take steps toward the realization of our Science Park concept

Background

Our university has a long history of producing results and applying them in service to the community. The existing Tohoku University Office of Cooperative Research and Development was established to facilitate the flow of development from basic to applied research projects, and then to commercial applications. But it would be highly desirable to take this a step further by establishing a central “gathering place” where researchers and research institutions could come together, combine their knowledge, and integrate their functions.

Plan

1. Establish a standing committee to oversee the creation of a Science Park with the above functions at the Tohoku University Aobayama New Campus.
2. Organize a New Round Table for discussions between the university and companies that have established cooperative organizational agreements with the university.
3. Invite companies and institutions capable of conducting cooperative research projects at the Science Park, and establish a system to promote cooperative research activities as a way of expanding the interchange of personnel between our university and industry.

C. Nurture venture businesses

Background

There are many small and medium-sized enterprises in the Tohoku region, and they are imbued with Tohoku's unique entrepreneurial spirit. However, because of the difficulties involved in conducting high-level research and in developing the required intellectual abilities, many valuable research "seeds" may become lost in the mix. It is hoped that by making our knowledge available to venture companies, we may succeed in creating innovative technologies on a world-class level.

Plan

1. Promote cooperative venture-oriented research projects while taking steps to clarify the status of intellectual property rights. 2. Organize a community of venture companies initiated by Tohoku University and consider establishing a Venture Business Department at the Science Park. 3. Consider ways to promote the establishment of venture businesses by devising strategies to increase public awareness of venture businesses, and to encourage the establishment of venture businesses by our university teaching staff.

3.4 Actively disseminate our research and educational achievements

A. Dissemination of research and educational achievements to researchers

Background

Top world-class universities have created archives accessible to the public where all the research and educational results generated within the university are stored. Following this trend, Tohoku University has established and is developing the Tohoku University Repository (TOUR).

Plan

1. Reorganize and upgrade the Tohoku University Repository (TOUR). 2. Link our university database to the Tohoku University Repository, and consider ways to establish a system to facilitate more widespread use of the stored data.

B. Dissemination of research and educational results to the general public

Background

One responsibility of our university is to serve the community by working to acquaint as many people as possible among the general public with our research and academic achievements. Especially from the point of view of accountability to our stakeholders, explaining our activities to the external community is an important function of Tohoku University as an institution that prides itself on being “Open to the community and to the world.”

Plan

1. Establish closer ties of cooperation with the four major media (newspapers, magazines, televisions, and radios) in the area. In addition, we will publish articles in magazines and newsletters published by local NPOs and other organizations. 2. Create a section on our university’s website to explain in an accessible manner the results obtained at our university. 3. Utilize the Science Café programs to satisfy the intelligence of the general public about the results of our basic research in both science and the humanities, and expand the Science Café programs nationwide. Consider the feasibility of organizing extra-campus lectures with the cooperation and support of Tohoku University alumni associations, boards of education, and others. 4. Improve the academic information database containing the research and educational results produced at the university.

C. International Strategic Public Relations

Background

Tohoku University has world-class research programs in a number of fields. However, in order to increase our reputation internationally, we will need not only to maintain and improve the quality of our work, but also to take steps to disseminate information about our university more effectively to the world at large.

Plan

1. Improve the quality of our English-language website to reinforce our ability to disseminate information internationally, and study the possibility of translating our website into other languages. 2. Actively recruit talented young researchers from both Japan and overseas. 3. Take full advantage of the ‘Distinguished Professor’ and ‘University Professor’ programs. 4. Promote more academic exchange agreements with

other institutions. 5. Promote more international research conferences and meetings. Periodically organize a “Global Summit” (provisional name) of world-class universities. 6. Promote the planning of public relations work utilizing overseas media. 7. Help to disseminate the results generated by academic exchange agreements by reinforcing the functions of the Internet School of Tohoku University (ISTU).

4. The Campus Environment

Establish a world-class campus environment to support the diverse research and educational activities that will need to be carried out by the university in its capacity as a “creator of knowledge” and as an “inheritor of knowledge.”

4.1 Creating a campus environment appropriate for a world-class university

A. Clarify the costs of campus improvement, and study the methods of implementing those improvements

Background

For our institution to be considered a truly world-class university it is essential that we upgrade our campus environment and other “hardware” assets. We presently have five main campuses, in Katahira, Kawauchi, Aobayama, Seiryō and Amamiya, and the Aobayama New Campus is now scheduled for construction (involving the sale of the Amamiya campus and the south section of the Katahira campus). In order to achieve steady progress in the planning and construction of world-class campus facilities, it will be necessary to obtain accurate estimates of the costs involved, based on a vision of the systematic relationships among the distinct campuses, while carefully monitoring the availability of government subsidies and exploring a wide range of other funding options. Based on this information, we must determine appropriate methods of implementation and draw up funding proposals.

Plan

1. Promote efficient and strategic improvement of the campus environment by selecting the most appropriate method(s) of implementation for each particular type of facility to be established, and by drawing up realistic funding proposals. Set up a regular conference to oversee the effective implementation of facilities from a university-wide perspective. 2. Promote implementation of a facility development plan that systematically links the different campuses, based on an overall vision that takes the unique features of each campus into account. Specifically, the Aobayama New Campus and the Aobayama Campus will be designated as “International Model Campuses,” the Katahira Campus will be the “Symbol of the University,” the Kawauchi Campus will be promoted as the

“Face of the University,” and the Seiryō campus will become a “Center for Advanced Medical Science.” 3. Concurrent with work to finalize details of the Aobayama New Campus Master Plan, we must determine the most appropriate construction methods for the Aobayama New Campus project and draw up and implement suitable funding proposals that are based on the results of a study of the most effective use of the present Amamiya campus property, including a careful reassessment of land price and location-related trends. 4. Inspect existing facilities, evaluate the needs for University dormitories, and draw up plans to repair or replace our aging facilities. Study and determine methods of implementing these repairs, and then draw up and implement the funding plans. 5. Determine appropriate methods of upgrading campus amenities, draw up funding plans, and execute these proposals.

B. The Aobayama New Campus: Create a model international campus, harboring a research center for Interdisciplinary Studies

Background

The Aobayama New Campus has the potential to become a model campus that meets the highest international standards in terms of the level of education and research conducted, the educational and research environment, the living environment, and harmony with the natural environment. Work on this campus must proceed, with special emphasis on finding a satisfactory location for the research facilities to specialize in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Plan

1. As regards the Aobayama New Campus, the required study on the environmental impact must be completed as soon as possible so that the land preparation and construction may commence. 2. Using the Aobayama New Campus Master Plan as a base, we must draw up concrete plans for establishing a world-class campus. In accordance with our vision for upgrading the campus to world-class status, the plans should include a full complement of sophisticated world-class experimental equipment, the establishment of a research group to conduct their top-level interdisciplinary researches, efficient methods for connecting the present Aobayama campus to the new campus, the establishment of transportation links, a University House, a Guest House, an International

School, day-care facilities, and so on. By their nature, many of these elements will require intimate cooperation with external agencies concerned for their realization, so it will be important to gain the understanding and cooperation of all parties concerned.

C. The Katahira Campus: Redevelop this campus, focusing on the enhancement of its functions as the administrative center of the university

Background

The Katahira Campus is not only the present administrative center of the university, it is also the cradle of the university. As such, it serves as the “Symbol of Tohoku University” and functions as the nerve center for our administration. Improvements in the professional schools and various research-related facilities at this campus are urgently needed. To meet this need, a Master Plan for facilities development was drawn up in 2007.

Plan

Redevelopment of the Katahira Campus will be carried out progressively based on the Master Plan, taking the significance of the Katahira Campus as the symbol of our school into consideration. We will study various approaches to establish an urban-type academic space with amenities open to the public, alumni associations, and others, exploiting its convenient location with easy access to Sendai Station, while at the same time being careful to make the most effective use of existing facilities and property.

D. The Kawauchi Campus: Improve amenities and security

Background

The Kawauchi campus is the “Face of the University,” insofar as this is where freshmen spend their first year as college students. However, the facilities at this campus are becoming cramped and are beginning to deteriorate, so improvement of the campus amenities is highly desirable. It is important that we give priority to beautification of the campus premises and to upgrading campus facilities in order to provide our students with a better environment for study and personal development, and to help us attract new students at a time when the birthrate is low and society is aging rapidly. Moreover, given

that our university consists of multiple separated campuses, the matter of securing safe and convenient means of transportation between campuses is another important challenge.

Plan

1. Beautify the Kawauchi Campus, based on the Kawauchi Campus Master Plan, in light of its role as the “Face of the University,” and upgrade the amenities related to student campus life. In addition to renovating the Kawauchi Kita Campus Student Center and constructing parking facilities, we will open a General Student Services Center, establish educational facilities, increase greenery on campus, and improve the layout of the library to make it easier to use. Also, we will consider ways to promote the “integration of learning and living” (i.e., establishing a University House for undergraduates, etc.) by drawing up plans for redevelopment of the areas immediately surrounding the campus.

2. Consider improving the amenities at other campuses as well. 3. Promote security of the campus environment by improving traffic safety and emphasizing crime prevention.

E. Systematic introduction of new fields of study related to our core research domains and enhancement of the use efficiency of our facilities

Background

At present, Tohoku University uses a dispersed campus system, and this is sometimes an impediment to travel within a given core research domain, as well as to interdisciplinary research. It is hoped that these issues will be addressed in the Technology Center for Research and Education Activities Master Plan, which is presently under development, and by more efficient use of the Technical Support Centers on the different campuses.

Plan

1. Consider the systematic introduction of new fields of study related to our core research domains, in order to create synergies and pursue innovative interdisciplinary research projects. 2. Take full advantage of the Technology Center for Research and Education Activities to promote more efficient utilization of our facilities. 3. Use the on-campus personnel search engine to create a data bank covering all technical staff and young (postdoctoral) researchers.

4.2 Campus environment: Environmental and safety issues

A. Establish a system of accountability for environmental protection and safety management and social contribution

Background

Environmental pollution and energy consumption are important issues for the university to deal with. Moreover, establishing a safe and healthy working environment is a fundamental precondition for the improvement of our university's research and educational activities, and for raising the level of medical care at the university hospital. The more advanced and innovative scientific and medical technologies become, the more important it is to ensure the safety of our research and educational activities.

Plan

1. Considering the imperative need of mankind to protect the earth's environment, the university will make efforts, not only through research and education, but also through all of its various activities, to reduce its environmental footprint and contribute to the realization of a recycling-based society. We will consider developing an appropriate environmental management system for the university, with the goal of creating an environmentally friendly eco-campus. 2. Establish a single, integrated organization to oversee environmental protection on a comprehensive basis, including sewage treatment and waste management, and to oversee safety management in order to reduce the risk of accidents and injuries during research and educational activities. Set up a single contact point for communication between the university and government agencies, to enable us to respond more quickly and efficiently to any issues that may arise. Consolidate management of all information relating to these environmental and safety issues, and ensure that all environmental and safety management policies are consistent.

B. Reinforce our strategies for coping with the predicted Miyagi-oki earthquake

Background

Maintaining campus safety involves the development of appropriate crime and disaster prevention strategies. Of these, the implementation of effective strategies to cope

with the risk of uncontrollable natural disasters (event risk) is important if we are to be able to maintain university functions and respond to the needs of the community in the aftermath of such events. This is particularly important in view of the predicted likelihood of major earthquakes in the Miyagi-oki region. Such events would be associated with a number of risks, including the destruction of our educational, research, and administrative assets, as well as incidental damage to surrounding property.

Plan

Implement a “Tohoku University Earthquake Countermeasures Project” with the aim of making our campuses more disaster-proof. Establish closer ties of cooperation in the area of disaster countermeasure strategy with Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, and national government agencies, conduct comprehensive inspections and upgrades of university systems, and carry out realistic emergency drills on the basis of disaster simulations.

4.3 Install the basic information / communications and media infrastructure needed for university administration

A. Establish a systematic, university-wide information infrastructure and carry out administrative process reforms

Background

Recent advances in information technology have made the establishment of information infrastructure an indispensable element of any organizational infrastructure. The digitization and effective use of electronic information have significant advantages. Information can be disseminated more easily, and management costs are reduced. At the same time, the enactment of stricter laws designed to protect personal information and prevent unauthorized access to information have placed a heavier responsibility on the organizations in charge of managing this information. The university faces many challenges in this regard, including the establishment of an integrated university-wide information infrastructure, the implementation of strategies to ensure information security, ensuring compliance with legal requirements, and the development of human resources with specialized expertise in information management. It is essential that we provide

those faculty members and administrative staff who have expertise in this field with adequate funding to systematically develop a university-wide information infrastructure.

Plan

1. In order to rationalize and increase the efficiency of overall office operations, reduce costs across the board, improve the quality of services provided to students and faculties, reinforce security measures, reduce the risk of liability, promote improved communication, reinforce our ability to disseminate information, strengthen ties with alumni organizations, and improve the university brand, we will reorganize our system of accountability for the promotion of an information infrastructure, and ensure the uninterrupted implementation of the Tohoku University Information Infrastructure Action Plan. 2. Make effective use of the ‘university-wide information infrastructure development budget’ that became part of the university’s base improvements budget from tax year 2008, to establish an integrated university-wide information infrastructure capable of supporting our increasingly sophisticated educational and research activities, and of carrying out fundamental reforms of our administrative processes.

B. Improve functions of the library as a source of academic information

Background

The environment surrounding the use of libraries has changed rapidly in recent years. In addition to traditional print media, increasing emphasis has come to be placed on collecting a more diverse range of information, especially digital information. It is also important to improve student services and to provide an environment in which students have the materials and resources they need to study independently. The university is actively working to promote digitalization; for example, beginning in tax year 2008, part of the cost of acquiring electronic journals has been shifted to the base improvements budget. When the New Annex is completed at the Aobayama New Campus (Science Library), the present plans call for our university’s library facilities to be reorganized and integrated into three libraries: the Main library, the Medical School Library, and the New Annex Library.

Plan

1. Libraries are recognized as the central sources of academic information at this university. Library functions will be upgraded as appropriate to fulfill this function. 2. Work to establish a stable financial base for library operations and to improve student services. 3. Consider ways to reorganize the library management structure to increase the efficiency of office operations at the main and annex library facilities.

5. Organization / Management

Establish a management infrastructure with a sound financial base capable of transforming our university into an “enterprise of knowledge”, which can adapt to changes in the environment surrounding the university and better respond to the needs of the times.

5.1 Reinforce university-wide administrative management

A. Clarify administrative and operational structures, and improve communication with departments

Background

A new system of governance is required, one which allows the president of the university to exercise leadership, gives the trustees and vice-president supervisory and executive functions as regards management of the various administrative offices, and calls for a close working relationship among all parties to facilitate rapid strategic development. Facilitating the flow of communications between the administration and the various departments is an essential prerequisite to achieving a responsive and efficient administrative structure.

Plan

To increase the speed and improve the quality of strategic planning, we must upgrade our agenda setting system. For more rapid and efficient strategic deployment, we will need to clearly and appropriately allocate the administrative functions of the offices of the trustees and of the vice-president, respectively, and evaluate the trustees, vice-president and department heads based on clearly defined mission statements, in line with international standards of administrative governance. We will also conduct a study to determine the most appropriate governance structure for the trustees, vice-president, and department heads. We will establish a Department Chair Meeting to facilitate communication with the president, trustees, and vice-presidents on various issues.

B. Disseminate information regarding the activities of the Office of the President

Background

To function effectively, the Office of the President must work closely with the trustees and vice-presidents on strategic development. Matters pertaining to education are sent to the Education and Research Council, and matters pertaining to administration are referred to the Management Committee for further consultation. Final approval is then obtained from the Board of Directors. Concomitant with this process, it is also important for the Office of the President to inform the members of the university about its activities, to give people an opportunity to offer their opinions and suggestions, and to then incorporate these ideas into its activities.

Plan

The Office of the President will make timely disclosures of its diverse and varied activities at meetings with the trustees and vice-presidents, and at Department Chair Meetings. The Office of the President will also use its website and other digital media to fully share the contents of its activities with all the members of the university community. The president will also promote bilateral communication with the various media.

C. Create a more efficient and effective system of administration

Background

When we consider the internationally competitive environment surrounding universities today, it is clear that we must bring our administrative office structures and staff up to international standards. We will need to transform our management culture, and create an administrative structure that will energize our workplace, and enable us to break away from old, long-standing patterns that date back to the days when our personnel were government employees. We need to be able to manage the university in an independent, disciplined manner, and we must acquire the capacity to make decisions rapidly and flexibly to cope with changing circumstances. We must be able to support the educational and research needs of a university that is aiming to become one of the leading schools in the world, and our office management system must incorporate an effective set of internal controls so that we can take full advantage of the power of our organization and of the people in it.

Plan

1. Take steps to rapidly implement the recommendations of the task force studying the reorganization of the Office Management Department. 2. Considering our need to establish an administrative structure commensurate with the needs of a world-class university, we will need to revise our organizational structure and our personnel management systems. Free of attachment to conventional patterns, we must be open to ideas based on innovative models that have been successful elsewhere. We must redesign our office operations to improve operational efficiency and upgrade our capacity. We must streamline our office management system, even considering the option of abolishing some departments. We must clearly allocate responsibilities to the trustees and vice-presidents, and clarify the chain of command within the administrative system. We must recruit and train human resources capable of supporting the operations of a world-class university.

D. Establish a university-wide risk management system, and ensure strict compliance

Background

At any university there is a daily risk of the occurrence of a variety of incidents and accidents. A university must be able to manage such events and deal with them quickly if it is to operate smoothly and gain the trust of the general public.

Plan

1. Set up a university-wide risk management system to make an accurate inventory of potential risks (office risks, information security risks, compliance risks, event risks), respond to these risks appropriately and swiftly, provide explanations to stakeholders, and ensure a level of social responsibility commensurate with our status as a world-class university. 2. Establish a compliance promotion system, and conduct thorough compliance activities.

E. Increase our international competitiveness by revising the strategic management of our human and material assets

Background

For our institution to be able to compete on the same level as other world-class universities, it is important that we optimize the capacity of our organizational structures and develop a system to strategically allocate a limited personnel budget. Furthermore, beginning in 2008, a nationwide university evaluation system will be implemented under which the level of performance of each field of study at each university in Japan will be evaluated and the results published. These evaluations will be taken into account by the national government when allocating operating subsidies. At present, the assets of each department are, in principle, managed by that department, so it will be necessary for us to institute a system to allow a more efficient use of resources across sectors.

Plan

Aim to establish a system of university administration capable of sustaining the type of strategic deployment needed for us to become a world-class university.

1. Consider the introduction of a system that will allow us to allocate labor costs and distribute personnel more flexibly and strategically, while keeping in mind the importance of basic research and the need to maintain a diversity of academic domains and values. 2. In order to use the facilities of our university more flexibly and efficiently, consider ways of increasing their utilization efficiency by means of an interdepartmental facility management system.

5.2 Reinforce our financial foundation

A. Establish a stable, independent financial foundation

Background

The Japanese government's "Key Policies for Administrative Reform (Cabinet decision, December 24, 2006)" calls for a 5% reduction in personnel costs for national universities in 5 years. Operating subsidies are subject to an annual 1% coefficient-of-efficiency reduction (hospital departments are subject to a 2% coefficient of management improvement). To quickly establish a solid financial foundation to support our research and educational activities we must urgently develop financial strategies, budgets, and faculty manpower plans to cope with the severe financial situation we face today. In recent years the influx of large amounts of outside funds for various projects has come to

require payment by the university of certain expenses, but without a system in place to rapidly procure funds for such payments, it will be difficult to remain competitive. As regards the investment of endowment funds, article 47 of the law governing independent administrative institutions prevents us from investing our endowments in anything other than local or national government bonds, or government guaranteed bonds. In order for the university to independently carry out the strategies central to the Inoue Plan, it will be necessary for it to establish a stable, independent financial base, and to steadily expand that base.

Plan

In order to establish a stable independent financial foundation for our university, we will take the following steps. 1. Allocate basic expenses and strategic expenses through budgets based on our long-term financial plan. 2. Draw up a medium-term faculty manpower plan. 3. Draw up plans to establish a system whereby we can gain the cooperation of the entire university to cover any expenses or extra manpower requirements incurred when accepting large amounts of outside funds for major projects, etc. 4. Establish rules to govern the discretionary use by the Office of the President of any funds that may be donated through the creation of a “Fellows Association” designed to reinforce our ties to businesses (income from membership fees to be used to support education and research, with certain incentives offered to cooperating businesses). 5. Lobby for easing of the various regulations which limit our ability to generate income by investing our endowment funds or managing our various other assets. Meanwhile, make efforts to optimize the return on our investments and the return from asset management under the present restrictions. 6. Reinforce our efforts to steadily expand the Tohoku University Fund and study the strategic use of this fund. 7. Review operation content and methods, and make thorough efforts to reduce administrative costs through combined purchasing, etc. Strive to optimize our systems to be in line with our financial structure. 8. Consider introducing an incentive system to reward those who bring in funds and those who find ways to reduce costs.

B. Establish rules to govern the President’s discretionary spending and focused investment budget

Background

The president has a discretionary budget which may be used to stimulate educational and research activities, facilitate administrative work, and undertake any other type of strategic investment that would contribute to the development of the university as a whole. If these discretionary funds end up being used to cover various types of basic expenses, the original purpose is not achieved. Moreover, if certain expenses continue to be covered out of this budget, the amount of funds available for truly discretionary use will decline year after year. The system devised in tax year 2007 for allocating some of these expenses to the base improvements budget will begin to be implemented in tax year 2008.

Plan

The allocations of the discretionary budget of the Office of the President shall be reviewed, and the allocation criteria clarified to facilitate strategic, focused investment.

C. Distribute discretionary incentives from the President to departments to reward management improvements

Background

Until now there have been inadequate rewards to each department for management improvements, such as generating overhead income by acquiring competitively awarded funding. To strengthen and expand our educational and research foundations at departmental level, it will be necessary to provide incentives in the form of discretionary funds allocated according to the results of evaluations of department management.

Plan

To reinforce the educational and research foundations of the university and to promote its further development, establish a discretionary fund for the use of department heads to be allocated on a sliding scale based on the department-level evaluations initiated in tax year 2006. Moreover, consider establishing a matching fund system to support departmental efforts to improve their operations, as well as the introduction of an internal loan system.

D. Increase head office and departmental endowments

Background

We need to improve our system of recruiting donations from private companies, alumni and others who appreciate the social contributions made by the university.

Plan

Establish a Tohoku University Fund with monies collected in the Centennial Fund Raising Campaign, to be used to fund overseas internships and other overall improvements in the university. Set up and put into concrete operation a system to promote the steady growth of this fund by establishing cooperative ties with our various alumni associations, which are presently centered on the respective departments. Consider the possibility of transferring the research funds for retired faculty members to this new fund.

E. Reinforce the financial foundations of the University Hospital

Background

The University Hospital is a place where the university is able to serve the local community by developing and introducing medical treatments that preserve and extend human life. However, the Hospital Department is facing a 2% budget reduction (due to the application of a 2% coefficient of management efficiency), on top of which a downward revision of medical fee reimbursements has been enacted to reduce medical costs. To fully accomplish its mission, the University Hospital must urgently establish a sound financial base so that it can secure talented human resources to serve in various different capacities and acquire the latest medical equipment.

Plan

As initial steps, 1) Increase hospital income (raise the utilization rate of hospital beds, make appropriate changes in the number of days per hospital stay, etc.) and reduce costs. 2) Promote sophisticated, innovative medical treatments. 3) Develop strategies to recruit doctors and nurses and improve the quality of treatment and patient services by maintaining a patient / nurse ratio of 7:1. In return, raise the prices charged for medical treatment. In the medium term, 4) focus special emphasis on making progress in the field of medical technology so that Tohoku University may develop a reputation as one of the best hospitals in the world.

5.3 Establish a personnel system capable of acquiring and utilizing the human resources needed to support the activities of the university

A. Securing the human resources needed to support international competitiveness

Background

The environment surrounding our university is changing in many ways. Against this background, it has become more important than ever for us to devise a variety of ways and means to attract the diverse range of high-quality faculty that we will need to achieve our goal of becoming a world-class university. Tohoku University introduced a ‘Distinguished Professor’ system in tax year 2007. These professors will provide leadership in the areas of education, research, and social contributions.

Plan

Devise a faculty recruiting system that incorporates a variety of ways and means to attract the diverse range of high-quality faculty needed to raise the level of our education and research to compete on a world-class level, and apply this system in an appropriate manner during the course of each faculty member’s career path. 1. Utilize the ‘Distinguished Professor’ system to attract and nurture talented young faculty members from around the world. 2. Establish the position of “University Professor” to recognize professors who during the course of their careers have achieved international recognition for their achievements and exempt them from the present pay scale limitations and from mandatory retirement at the age of 63. 3. Take comprehensive, systematic steps to increase the number of female faculty members at the university by setting and implementing positive, practical hiring goals for female faculty, and introduce measures to support women so that they are able to balance their maternal and research responsibilities. 4. Utilize the system of “Professor Extraordinary” initiated in tax year 2007 to strengthen our faculty organization and help to ensure that there is a proper system of implementation of our university-wide (liberal arts) education program. 5. As regards the simultaneous appointment of faculty to two different departments, for the time being, we will maintain our present in-house arrangement as outlined in the “Agreement regarding promotion of flexibility in inter-departmental cooperation,” but

even as we continue with our good-faith efforts to work within this arrangement, we will continue to lobby the appropriate authorities for a relaxation of these regulations.

B. Study adoption of an original Tohoku University personnel affairs system

Background

For the time being, our present personnel affairs system will generally follow the same pattern as that of national government employees, with adjustments as required for compliance with labor laws. To reinforce the activities of Tohoku University, despite our financial limitations, it is important that we nurture an environment in which our faculty members are motivated to devote themselves enthusiastically to their work. To this end, it is important to raise faculty motivation and provide appropriate incentives, and it is therefore important that we develop an original system of personnel rewards suitable for our particular institution.

Plan

Consider establishing an original personnel affairs system for Tohoku University that will sustain a strategic, flexible system of administration, and dramatically boost the ranking of our university by helping to raise our educational and research standards. 1. Work to establish an appropriate performance-based compensation and benefits system for department heads. 2. Move rapidly to develop and implement proposals to enable us to attract and nurture international-standard staff. 3. Review the system of special adjustment payments that are currently being remitted on a uniform basis to graduate school teaching staff, and devise a compensation system that takes into account the degree of contribution to education made by the teacher. 4. In addition to the above measures, consider the development of a proprietary compensation system for Tohoku University.

C. Develop and implement an evaluation system that rewards a diverse range of efforts

Background

For us to become a world-class institution, it is important that everyone who works at the university understands our goals and is able to work with a firm commitment to

them. To stimulate and encourage independent initiative among our faculty, it is urgent that we come up with and adopt an employee evaluation system that is effective in increasing our capacity and improving our performance.

Plan

Establish a sound and equitable environment for educational and research activities, and institute a fair and objective evaluation system, the purpose of which is to appropriately reward a diverse range of efforts. 1. As regards faculty evaluations, every department should establish a concrete method of implementing evaluations as quickly as possible. 2. As regards evaluation of administrative staff, the results of an initial trial evaluation should be reviewed, and this should be followed by a second trial evaluation, after which full implementation should begin. 3. Efforts will be made to improve operations by conducting performance evaluations for trustees, vice-presidents, and department heads, based on clearly defined mission statements. 4. Consider the possibility of sharing information with teaching and administrative staff about best practice results achieved through a variety of efforts.

5.4 Create a Tohoku University network

A. Use information to effectively increase the overall value of Tohoku University

Background

For us to truly become a leading international university it is essential for us to develop a strong “university identity,” expand the influence of the Tohoku University “brand,” and increase our presence and name recognition around the world. Our faculty members already work actively to disseminate the results of their work by publishing papers in a wide range of academic journals, but in future it will also become important for us to appeal more positively to society at large so that the general public can become more aware of the social contributions being made by our university. In order to enhance our reputation both inside Japan and internationally, it is essential that we have the ability to effectively disseminate information in English. Various guests visit our university on a daily basis, and it is necessary for us to arrange exhibition / display areas where visitors can learn about the results of our educational and research activities.

Plan

1. Appeal to our stakeholders by means of a strategic, ongoing program to disseminate information in English to the outside world about the results of our educational and research activities and our contributions to human society. 2. Establish public exhibition spaces on campus and in the surrounding community to share the results of our educational and research activities.

B. Foster a sense of unity among Tohoku University faculty and staff, students, and the local community

Background

Tohoku University consists of several dispersed campuses, so it is not easy to create an overall sense of university identity. To remedy this, in future it will be important for the advancement of the university to develop mechanisms to improve the quality of communication between university faculty and staff, students, and the local community.

Plan

Take advantage of a wide variety of places and opportunities to foster a greater sense of unity among university faculty and staff, students, and the local community.

1. Raise the level of “on-campus communication” through effective use of our information infrastructure. 2. With the goal of becoming a “university that competes internationally but cooperates locally,” work more actively to assist Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, and other communities in the region in a variety of areas such as education and culture, city planning, environmental problems, transportation issues, etc. 3. Foster a sense of identity with the university among members of the local community through concerts and various other types of events to be held at the proposed “Tohoku University Centennial Hall” (provisional name). 4. Allow the public to access the university library as an “Open Campus” facility.

C. Strengthen our alumni associations

Background

Alumni are one of a university’s most valuable assets, and we want our graduates to be able to take great pride in the university that nurtured them. For the future

development of our institution, it is important to establish closer ties with our alumni associations. The alumni can play important roles in providing support to our students in various ways, such as material and moral support for our educational and research activities, enrichment of our scholarship funds, and so on.

Plan

Take advantage of the Tohoku University Alumni Association to foster closer ties of unity among our alumni associations, present and former faculty and staff, current students, graduates and others who have completed certificate programs, and the families of our students. Provide various services to association members as a practical means of fostering closer ties with alumni. Find ways to incorporate the views of the alumni in university management, for example, by creating direct and indirect ways for the alumni associations to communicate with the Management Committee, the President Selection Committee, etc.

5.5 Take further steps to meet the midterm goals and plans

A. Achieve the midterm goals and plans, and report them appropriately

Background

In 2008 the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation will conduct its first midterm evaluations of the progress made toward the achievement of each university's medium-term plans and objectives, and will rank the educational level of each undergraduate and graduate department, as well as the level of research carried out at each undergraduate and graduate department or research institute. It is important that we try to meet the goals set out in our plans, as well as to report them appropriately.

Plan

Strive to implement measures to achieve our medium-term goals that have the full understanding and support of all teaching and administrative employees of the university. Establish a system for centrally overseeing the work involved in carrying out these medium-term evaluations, and carry out all operations required to enable the university to submit a report on the results of our performance to the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation by the end of June 2008.

B. Draw up second medium-term goals and plans based on the Inoue Plan

Background

All National Universities are required to draw up medium-term goals and plans every six years. 2009 will mark the end of our first medium-term plan, so it is now necessary to draw up plans and goals for our second medium-term plan, which will begin in 2009.

Plan

The Inoue Plan will form the basic framework for the development of our second medium-term plan. After establishing a structure to be centrally responsible for drawing up the plan, the work will be carried out with the cooperation of the various departments within the university according to appropriate processes at each stage of the plan's development. The second medium-term plan will incorporate measures to evaluate the strategies put in place as part of plans implemented at the departmental level, as well as a monitoring system to evaluate the ongoing progress of the medium-term plan.