

## 5.2 Intra-institutional Arrangements

Members of Japanese academia who are involved in education are ever aware that the primary aim in designing a university program is to provide students with an opportunity for intellectual development in the three essential areas, which had been articulated by Stockwin (Stockwin 1997: 14). Few disputed the concept. The issue was how to translate the concept into practice, given the chronic shortage of resources suffered by the Japanese studies department of each university.

In 1989, in the *Japanese Studies in Australia* (AJRC 1989), Drysdale recommended more intra- and inter-institutional collaborations as a measure towards solving this difficult issue. Ten years later, in the *Directory of Japanese Studies in Australia and New Zealand* (The Japan Foundation and AJRC 1997), Drysdale reported that this was finally happening in many Japanese studies departments/centres in Australia.

*Increasing pressure on resources has led to greater collaboration between universities in an attempt to utilise scattered teaching resources more fully.* (Drysdale 1997:6)

During the 1990s, many Japanese programs went through re-structuring processes. In the majority of cases, the objective of restructuring was to organise the Japanese program to be more effective in all three criteria of intellectual development. In other words, they aimed at a holistic approach in Japanese and Japan-related education.

The emerging trend seemed to be that Japanese departments were no longer carrying the sole responsibility of all the Japan-related subjects, but had begun to share some of the teaching responsibilities with other faculties/departments located outside Japanese studies.

The most popular arrangement seemed to be that the Japanese studies department looked after the requirements in the first and part of the second criteria, the teaching of the language; and the development of students' knowledge and general understanding about Japan. In the third

criterion, the training of students' analytical skills in a specific area of Japan, an increasing number of universities relied on inter-faculty/department arrangements.

These arrangements generally worked in two ways. The students majoring in a discipline other than Japanese studies would have access to the Japanese language and studies program offered in the Japanese studies department, whereas the students of Japanese studies would have access to Japan-specific subjects offered by other faculties. The Japan-specific subjects referred to here include such subjects as Japanese law, Japanese economy, Japanese finance and banking systems, and so forth. In some universities, a part of the second criterion was also covered by faculties/departments outside the Japanese department. The teaching of Japanese history undertaken by the History department is an example.

Back in 1980, when the first National Conference of the Japanese Studies Association of Australia (JSAA) was held, Bolitho and Rix looked into the future of Japanese studies in Australia and declared that 'the next generation of children must be taught to accept Japan as a fact'. They further stated that efforts towards this direction will 'involve freeing Japan from special "Japanese studies" ghettos' (Bolitho and Rix 1981:v).

Ten years later in 1991, Rix repeated the message with more urgency. Foreseeing that the special funding available in Australia for expansion of Asia-related education would eventually come to an end, he argued that there was 'a need to build Japanese studies into [the mainstream of] school and university structures, so that they will be entrenched in the infrastructure when the extraordinary funding and support are finished' (Low 1997:43). The concept was termed as 'mainstreaming' and has been the subject of much discussion amongst Japan specialists over the years.

'Mainstreaming' seems to be finally happening, at least in some of the Australian universities, although the extent of 'mainstreaming' is very limited in each university. The prominence gained by Japanese studies due to the *Tsunami* phenomenon resulted in an awakening interest in Japan throughout other disciplines. Other faculties/departments, outside the

Japanese studies department, that housed, amongst its staff, scholars with Japan-related expertise were encouraged to offer Japan-specific courses. These faculties were also encouraged to make inter-faculty/department collaboration with the Japanese studies department. Many universities now allow students to count the credit points gained in Japan-specific subjects towards their major in Japanese studies, or in any other discipline, such as economics, law and so forth.

'Mainstreaming', however, is not progressing evenly across disciplines. In the disciplines of economics, commerce and financial studies, most Australian universities now offer Japan-specific subjects. On the other hand, in the field of political science, for example, very few Japan-specific courses are available in any of the Australian universities. The uneven spread of 'mainstreaming' is mostly caused by the shortage of, sometimes a total absence of Japan expertise in the specific disciplines in Australian universities. Even if a Japan expert does exist in a discipline and a Japan-specific course is offered by that discipline, the situation will not always continue. When the particular scholar retires or moves to another university, the position is often filled by a scholar with expertise other than Japan. In such cases the Japan-specific study in that discipline is lost.

Many Japanese studies departments are, however, developing collaborative arrangements with other faculties/departments, so that students will be offered Japanese education in a broader spectrum. A significant number of combined degrees or parallel degrees involving Japanese studies have been introduced in recent years.

### 5.3 Inter-institutional Collaborations

In addition to intra-institutional arrangements, inter-institutional collaboration between Australian universities has been progressing across the country. It appears that these inter-institutional collaborations can be roughly divided into two major categories. The first is a smaller scale collaboration, perhaps two universities in relatively close locations. They collaborate to fill the gap of expertise which exists in each university and, as a result, make the academic offering more comprehensive. The