

Graduation Research in Japanese Undergraduate Education: case of social sciences

-Graduation Research (GR) is the culminating experience of undergraduate study.

Definitions -GR is done during the senior year with various types of faculty support.

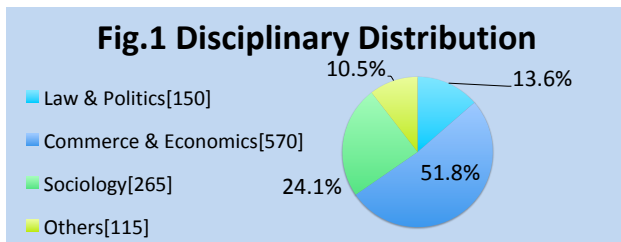
-GR takes place in courses named *seminar, graduation thesis, graduation research...*

Social Sciences in Japanese Universities

-780 universities (86 national, 90 public, 604 private) in AY2017

-More than 5,000 departments in total

-1,100 departments of social sciences (Law & Politics, Commerce & Economics, Sociology, and Others) [Fig.1]

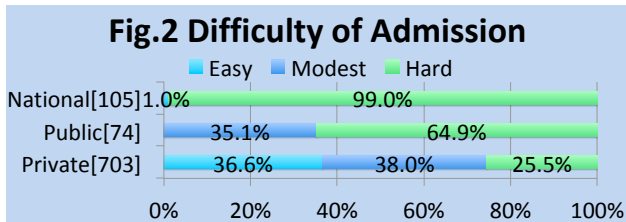


-2.89 million undergraduates in total

-32.3% of them enrolled in social sciences

-On average, 714 students in a department (national 531, public 415, private 760)

-Wide range of difficulty of admission, esp. in private universities [Fig.2]



% of Departments Requiring GR

-In the post-war educational reform, GR became part of undergraduate curriculum

-A slim majority (50.6%) require GR

-40.0% of social sciences departments offer optional courses for GR

-Departmental traits make a difference in the % of departments requiring GR [Table1]

Sector: national & public > private

Enrollment limit: small > large

Discipline: others > law & politics

Difficulty of admission: easy > hard

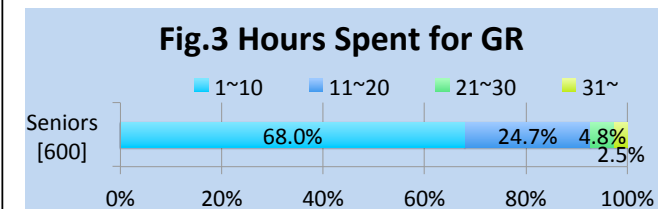
Table1 Result of Logistic Regression

	B	SE	Wald	p	Exp(B)
Sector			64.402	.000	
national	2.136	.318	45.179	.000	8.468
public	2.384	.417	32.649	.000	10.853
Enrollment limit	-.002	.001	10.773	.001	.998
Discipline			34.606	.000	
law and politics	-1.409	.369	14.603	.000	.244
commerce & economics	-.031	.283	.012	.913	.969
sociology	.455	.309	2.161	.142	1.576
Difficulty of admission	-.056	.012	23.097	.000	.945

N=817, Nagelkerke R²=.284, Correct prediction 68.1%

Workload for GR

-In general, undergraduates in Japanese universities devote their senior year to GR
-A 2014 national survey revealed that a typical senior spent 9.2 hours/week for GR [Fig. 3 for the distribution]



-Japanese University Law mandates that...

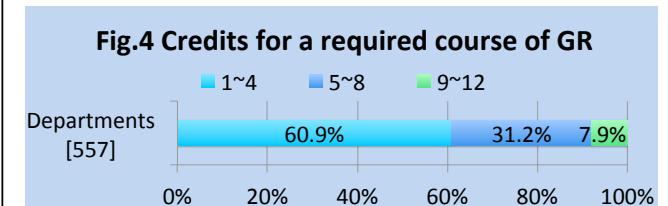
One academic year = 35 weeks

One academic credit = 45 hours study

=>9.2 hours of work per week = 7.2 credits

-Average # of credits for GR is 5.3 credits

[Fig. 4 for the distribution]



-Students' work for GR is undervalued in terms of academic credits