

President's Position Paper for 2023

To all staff at Nanzan University

I. Basic Position

This fiscal year (FY) 2023 marks the beginning of my second term as University President. Thus, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all who supported Nanzan University's various activities over the past three years, which were greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the next three years, I will, with the new executive team, do my utmost to meet the changing needs of society and fulfill the mission of our university.

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus said, "New wine is poured into fresh wineskins." It was common knowledge to those who heard Jesus' words, based on their lived experience that if "new wine," still fermenting, was put into an old wineskins, the wine would make the skins burst, and both the wine and the skins would be ruined. As I enter this new second term of office while we emerge into the post COVID-19 era, I cannot but particularly remember these words of Jesus.

Recently we have been increasingly faced with such challenges as the effective use of new technologies popularized during the pandemic and the care of those who are anxious because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Working together we must then address the various disparities, injustices, environmental destruction, and other global problems of the modern world that the pandemic has so far revealed. Entering a new era, it is incumbent upon us to strive to intelligibly create a "new status quo," rather than reverting to the old one.

The previous year was marked by two important events. One was the opening of the Janssen International Residence—which inherently reflects our roots as a Catholic university. The other striking event was the presentation of the first Nanzan University "Human Dignity Award." In this respect, I am most grateful to each and every member of our faculties and staff who supported our collective efforts to take these major steps forward in both promoting the university's characteristic of internationality and advancing its educational motto, "*Hominis Dignitati* [For Human Dignity]. In addition, on April 1, 2023, we accomplished the opening of the Nanzan University Reiniers Central Library, which best embodies the spirit of our educational motto. Standing on this solid foundation, I look forward to working with you in developing a vision for the future of Nanzan

University as we move toward the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of its founding in 2046.

I believe that the timeliness of the policy of “Global Concern and Our Contribution,” I laid out three years ago, when I first assumed the presidency, has been proven in the subsequent experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this process, we have realized together how important is our unique contribution in these crucial times, especially when the destinies of humankind are deeply interconnected. Let us together, therefore, work to discover new possibilities to create a university befitting of the “new status quo”, and contribute concretely to the creation of a new world.

II. Vision for the Future

1. *Developing Long-Term Goals and Revising Public Relation Strategies based on Branding*

On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Nanzan University, we looked back on its history and reaffirmed that it has been actively engaged and ever-evolving in educational and research activities based mainly on its internationality and its educational motto, *Hominis Dignitati*. In order for our university to continue to be an attractive and chosen university in a rapidly changing world, it is necessary to further increase the value of our university by responding to these changes and continuing to grow.

Our university has long been supported by its former students, alumni associations and friends, as well as many other people of good will, companies, and organizations. In this regard, I urge you to carry out efforts to strengthen the alumni system to strategically implement branding that reaffirms the value of the university to its supporters and further deepens its relationship with them.

To this end, I would like first to ask you to take pride in your part in this organization and to explicitly begin preparing for the formulation of new long-term goals in anticipation of the university’s 100th anniversary. Note in passing that the Nanzan University Grand Design—which was formulated in March 2007 as a vision for the future 20 years—will reach its completion in 2027. In addition to the issues that were not fully accomplished in the interim evaluation in 2020, I would encourage everyone to now consider various important ways in which the university can develop smoothly, taking into account that various factors have changed immensely, such as the social conditions that have changed drastically since the Corona virus outbreak and the development and rapid spread of ICT

technology.

The next important matter for consideration is your collective attempts to conduct more strategic public relations activities to effectively communicate the university's educational philosophy and initiatives, as well as its academic achievements and values, so that they can be more widely known by society. It is my contention that such an approach will not only allow us to increase the number of potential students (within Japan and from abroad) who want to study at Nanzan University, but also to expand the network of different people who are eagerly devoted to supporting its activities. Going forward, under the leadership of the President's Office, I ask that the existing institutions of the university work closely together to better enhance the effective public relation strategies set in motion.

2. Future Plans for Undergraduate and Graduate Schools

In April 2023, we opened the Master's Course in Data Science in the Graduate School of Sciences and Engineering. In order to both allow students to continue their studies in the newly established departments as a result of the reorganization in FY2021 and further develop their expertise, I would also encourage faculty members here to start working toward the opening of the Master's and Doctoral Programs of the Graduate School of Sciences and Engineering in April 2025, in conjunction with the completion year of the Faculty of Sciences and Engineering. In addition, I would like you to look again critically at the Faculty of Foreign Studies, which supports the internationality of the university. Please make any reforms and improvements from the perspective of how it should be further developed and strengthened in light of recent social needs.

3. Stable Financial Management

In order to maintain and improve the attractiveness of our university, it is essential for us to establish a stable financial base. However, our attempts to achieve certain mid-term targets for finances indicated by the school and to enhance education and research ultimately requires now that special attention be paid to the capacity-filling rate, which is directly related to the foundation of the financial base. In addition, I would encourage you to continually share ideas and strengthen your efforts to secure new financial resources, such as obtaining subsidies and diversifying endowment funds. Unexpected expenses, such as the recent sharp rise in utility costs, have had an impact on our financial operations.

It is in this context that I ask for your continued cooperation in saving energy and electricity.

III. Promotion of Internationalization

1. *New Step of Internationalization: Promotion of University-Wide Internationalization and Development of NU-COIL*

In order to take up the next stage of the internationalization (including international exchange, expansion of the network of partner universities, and COIL-type classes) that Nanzan University has so far promoted, each Faculty, Graduate School, and Administrative Division should work together with the International Center to further promote internationalization in research exchange, curriculum organization, and other educational activities. The MEXT's program—"Project for Strengthening the Global Development Capabilities of Universities (U.S.A.)"—adopted in FY2018, came to an end in FY2022. Throughout this year, I would nevertheless invite you to review the results of this program and strive to establish a framework for future continuation of the program so that it can become self-sustaining. Since NU-COIL, established through this program, is highly regarded as being effective not only in terms of educational effects, but also as a public relations tool for admissions, and can be used as SD for faculty members, I think it is appropriate that each faculty and graduate school consider further increasing the number of COIL-type classes in cooperation with the NU-COIL office.

2. *Preparation for the 50th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Center for Japanese Studies*

In 2024, the Center for Japanese Studies, which symbolizes the internationality of our university, will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Please prepare yourselves for events to commemorate this milestone. I would also ask you to take this opportunity to consider various ways to make more effective use of the Japanese language education achievements of the Center for Japanese Studies for International Students and its global network to promote the internationalization of the university as a whole.

3. *Expansion of New Programs for accepting International Students*

The Nanzan Anime Study Tour Program sponsored by the Center for International Affairs will begin soon as a new program for accepting international

students. This is a striking program that combines academic theme classes with field trips. As matters stand today, this program is quite unique to our university in terms of its commitment to regional cooperation and internationality. In addition to the benefits of our students learning together, this appears to be a financially sustainable initiative. Meanwhile, please continue to focus particularly on further program development for our international students.

4. *Securing Study Abroad Opportunities and Support*

Since some students have lost the opportunity to study abroad due to the COVID-19 crisis, I encourage everyone to put intensive effort into securing long-term study abroad opportunities for our students. In addition, much commitment is needed to devise support for more students to participate in short-term study abroad programs that will motivate them to learn foreign languages and study abroad for longer periods.

5. *Further Revitalization of International Exchange on Campus*

The Janssen International Residence, which opened at the beginning of the last fiscal year, has been able to accommodate a large number of international students from September 2022, creating an inclusive environment where students with diverse cultural backgrounds and values can live together. I ask that you make further efforts aimed at developing the Diversity and Inclusion Practical Skills Development Program. In addition, I would invite you to consider various effective means to encourage students to actively use the on-campus Multicultural Exchange Lounge (Stella), the World Plaza, the Japan Plaza, and other international exchange venues.

IV. Education and Research

1. *Improvements based on the Results of Accreditation Evaluation*

Based on the results of the FY 2020 accreditation evaluation by the Japan University Accreditation Association for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (JUAA), our university is now working to improve the existing methods for understanding learning outcomes in the faculties. In order to formulate a Draft University-wide Policy for Developing the Three Policies as the basis for the improvement, we are considering the definition and content of Nanzan's Bachelor Degrees, which will serve as a framework to connect the University Diploma Policy and the Undergraduate and Departmental Diploma Policies. The Internal

Quality Assurance Committee should take the lead in formulating improvement plans toward FY2024, when an interim improvement report will be submitted to the JUAA. It is necessary that you continue to work intensively on progress in these areas.

2. Examination and Evaluation of Educational Methods

The Standards for the Establishment of Universities and other relevant standards were revised in FY 2022. The revised standards call for “realization of learner-oriented university education” and “realization of quality assurance open to society.” In line with these requirements, I encourage each faculty to take concrete and visionary action on the curriculum, core faculty members, and positioning of major courses, etc., so that the university’s educational activities can be enhanced and the quality of student-centered education can be guaranteed. In doing so, I invite everyone to begin substantive discussions on how to improve educational management based on Institutional Research (IR) and other relevant initiatives.

Nanzan introduced 100-minute classes in FY2021. Throughout this FY 2023, however, there is clearly a need for collaborative work at different faculties to examine and evaluate 100-minute classes. University education is also required to promote students’ independent learning. From this perspective, too, please consider the effective use of various online tools in education, including the effective use of online tools.

3. Further Development of Education and Research Activities

To further enhance education and research activities at the university, it is necessary for each institution and department to collaborate across organizational borders while simultaneously taking advantage of their respective characteristics. In order to achieve expected educational results that can make a unique contribution in this new era, it is also necessary for faculty members and students belonging to faculties and graduate schools to continue bringing their own expertise and having opportunities for research exchange across disciplines. To ensure such opportunities, the university’s three distinctive research institutes (Anthropological Institute, Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, and Institute for Social Ethics), research centers, and the Nanzan University Museum of Anthropology should play a central role in developing concrete plans aimed at creating opportunities for intellectual exchange at the university.

Along with such a move, efforts should be made to transform the Nanzan

University Reiners Central Library into an attractive venue, where many students and faculty can gather and engage in intellectual exchange by realizing and publicizing its key concepts of “encounter,” “connect,” and “change.” The basic objective is to make it an essential center for education and research at the university. In addition, I encourage you to further promote its open access to everyone by exhibiting your own research results and other valuable academic information.

V. Student Support

1. Care for Students

During the COVID-19 crisis, the university has made significant efforts to ensure educational opportunities by offering online classes, and resuming in-person or face-to-face classes and various events in stages while simultaneously monitoring the number of infected students. Despite this, however, some students may feel that they have not been able to enjoy a fulfilling campus life. Notable among them are new fourth-year students, who encountered the spread of the infection upon entering the university. For this reason and many others, I invite everyone to provide such students, including new fourth-year students, with even greater care than before, such as ensuring opportunities for dialogue and interaction among students and with faculty members and staff.

In FY2022, the university also established a support system for students who need reasonable accommodation. In accepting and implementing interventions for students who require such social assistance, please continue to ensure that all members of the university deepen their understanding of the issue and take appropriate measures.

2. Extracurricular Activities that allow Students to be Dynamic

Regarding the extracurricular activities of students, which have stagnated during the COVID-19 crisis, I encourage everyone to create an environment and system that allows students to be more active on campus. In doing so, please incorporate students' opinions and ideas, and also take advantage of opportunities such as the Sophia-Nanzan Sports Festival and the University Festival. In realizing student ideas, please continue to support creative initiatives by diverse students through the Nanzan Challenge Project, the Student Exchange Center (*Centrum*), the Multicultural Exchange Lounge (*Stella*), and other activities. In addition, there is a deep-felt need to support new students so

that they can continue to engage in extracurricular activities, making use of their experiences from high school.

3. *Enhancing Career Support and Career Education*

On account of the Corona virus pandemic, the methods of job interviewing and the timing and methods of selection for job hunting have become remarkably more diverse, and students have been adapting to these changes. In addition, students' attitudes and behaviors toward job hunting have also been changing. Under these circumstances, I encourage everyone in this area to start initiating constructive discussions to reexamine how to support job-hunting activities, including those of international students. Special effort should be given to providing students with information on career events, etc., and career education from the first and second years. It is equally essential to continue to develop initiatives to support entrepreneurship.

Regarding career support, it is important to become acutely aware of the necessity to make effective use of the intellectual resources of the Nanzan Extension College, which has courses that contribute to students' careers, such as certification acquisition and civil service examinations. Moreover, I propose that the Career Support Division make further efforts to consider career support for international students and graduate students and simultaneously develop internship (or externship) programs at companies and programs in collaboration with other graduate schools for international students to broaden the range of options for students.

VI. Entrance Examinations

1. *Implementation of New Entrance Examinations and continued consideration of the Entrance Examination System*

A total of 17,530 students applied for the general and the university-wide standardized entrance examinations (individual achievement and common test types) in 2023, a decrease of 985 compared to 18,515 in the previous year. In addition, the total number of applicants for the three main entrance examinations, including the one using the Common Achievement Test (with the first part involving three subjects and the second five subjects), was 22,248, a decrease of 1,196 students from 23,444 in the previous year. The new entrance examinations, initiated after the introduction of the new curriculum, will be

implemented next year. Please continue to closely analyze the trend of applicants and consider appropriate measures.

Specifically, the new entrance examinations include (1) the “International Student Admissions by Recommendation [Designated Senior High School]” as a recommendation system with designated overseas educational institutions, (2) the “School Recommendation Type Selection (for students with long-term study abroad experience),” and (3) the “Admission Screening by Recommendation (Special Partner Schools)” for Catholic high schools that have concluded an agreement on high school-university cooperation. Given that each of these entrance examinations is quite unique and unprecedented at our university, I encourage everyone to take all possible measures to ensure that they are run smoothly. In particular, the “Admission Screening by Recommendation (Special Partner Schools)” requires close cooperation with each partner school, as classes called “modules” are systematically given to second and third year high school students in order to deepen their understanding of the university’s educational content. To facilitate this, a close relationship with each partner school is ultimately required. In implementing this program, I invite everyone to continue to be well-prepared to convey the appeal of our university to high school students.

In recent years, however, the situation surrounding entrance examinations has changed dramatically with the introduction of the Common University Entrance Test and the implementation of new upper secondary school courses. The latter courses test comprehension abilities and emphasize various activities that are not limited to academic skills. In addition, I invite everyone to now contextually create an environment in which students can utilize and develop the comprehensive abilities they have cultivated at high school level after entering the university. It is not possible to deal with this issue by focusing only on entrance examinations. It will, rather, require more collaboration among institutions and faculties, including extracurricular activities after admission and follow-up in the undergraduate departments. As the population of 18-year-olds continues to decline drastically, I encourage everyone to continue to examine the admissions system from a medium to long-term perspective so that it can respond to various social changes.

2. Strengthening Effective Admissions Publicity

In FY 2022 many high school students had the opportunity to visit our campus through Open Campus Events and University Tours. At the same time, we have

continued to disseminate information through our webpage and SNS. With regard to admissions publicity, taking into consideration the trend of information acquisition by high school students, please continue to examine medium is effective media in providing what kind of information, and put it into practice. In addition, I encourage you to return to our founding philosophy and reexamine how you can convey to high school students the appeal of the university's educational motto—*Hominis Dignitati* and the curriculum based on it.

VII. Role of the University in the Community and Strengthening of Various Alliances

1. 70th Anniversary of the Nanzan University Alumni Association and Strengthening Cooperation

The Nanzan University Alumni Association has supported the university by providing scholarships to students. In addition, this year they have provided support for the establishment of the Alumni Garden in front of the Nanzan University Reiners Central Library.

The Nanzan University Alumni Association was founded in 1952, and celebrated its 70th anniversary last year. This year, a special event will be held to commemorate that 70th anniversary. I would like to take this opportunity to once again express my gratitude for the support of the alumni and ask you to strengthen our ties so that we can further deepen our relationship between the university and the Alumni Association. This is significant, given that the activities of our alumni around the world and in various fields are the hope of current students and applicants who wish to study at the university.

2. Environmental Initiatives

Environmental issues can be positioned as a global concern to be addressed at the intersection of the university's identity of internationality and its educational motto. In FY 2021, as part of the Nanzan Gakuen Environmental Declaration, we actively participated in the Coalition of Universities and Colleges Contributing to Achieving Carbon Neutrality. This year, we will continue to be involved in the process of formulating concrete plans to operate energy-saving measures for electricity, air conditioning, and other facilities with the aim of reducing CO₂ emissions.

Along with such day-to-day efforts, please promote active support for projects related to environmental issues by students, and research and education led by the university's researchers related to environmental issues that lead to social

implementation. Through these efforts, let us actively and insightfully send a strong message of “Global Concern and Our Contribution” to society.

3. *Promote Intellectual Exchange with Local Communities*

As a university that plays a vital role in the local community, I would invite you to actively promote initiatives that connect the university with the local community. In April 2022 our university became the only official educational institution partner of Ghibli Park. Ghibli Park was opened under the concept of carrying on the spirit of Expo 2005 Aichi Japan, which was held with the aim of communicating a direction for solutions to global issues and the way of life of human beings, based on the principles of the “wisdom of nature” and “love for people, creatures, and the Earth,” and thus its policies resonate well with the philosophy and initiatives of our university. As an official partner, then, the university’s goal is to play a significant role in the return of “knowledge” through Ghibli Park. To achieve this, continued efforts will be necessary to promote attractive initiatives that will create a chain of return, whereby the “knowledge” produced by the university is returned to the local community, and those who have developed an interest in the subject will deepen their studies at the university.

In the same vein, I would encourage you to make effective use of the Nanzan University Reiners Central Library and the Nanzan University Museum of Anthropology as bases for connecting the university with the local community. The entrance lounge and seminar rooms of the Nanzan University Reiners Central Library are spaces full of possibilities to encounter people, books and knowledge, and provides a place that is full of possibilities for intellectual exchange. In this new context, please work together toward the development of attractive programs that will provide not only the university’s students and faculty with the kind of intellectual experience that can only be had in a university library, but also those in the nearby community. As a universal museum, the Nanzan University Museum of Anthropology has been meeting diverse needs, including collaboration with other museums and comprehensive learning programs for junior and senior high school students. Together with the Nanzan University Reiners Central Library, I encourage you to play an active role in promoting intellectual exchange as a center for collaboration within and outside the university.

4. *Promotion of Research Collaboration between Industry, Academia and Government*

As part of the efforts to return the university’s academic achievements to the

local community, I invite you to actively promote industry-academia-government collaboration with local companies and municipalities. In this regard, please begin to consider how the research promotion system in our university should be organized in order to further facilitate the already existing individual collaborations and to further associations.

5. *Further Promotion of Domestic and International Inter-university Collaboration*

As of the end of FY2022, the number of overseas universities and institutions with which we have concluded student exchange agreements totaled 118 universities in 34 countries and regions. Let us continue to make efforts to develop overseas partner universities, and consider concluding more inter-departmental agreements to further promote education and research.

In order to further enhance the attractiveness of our university, it is also important to strengthen cooperation with other domestic universities that can complement each other's strengths. In addition to the conclusion of inter-university agreements, I encourage everyone to consider promoting a variety of cooperative relationships, such as building partnerships among multiple universities in which the university will play a central role in a consortium.

VIII. Conclusion

My first-term as University President has been a period in which I have worked with all of you to overcome events that symbolize the unpredictable times we live in. Even though, many of our assumptions have changed dramatically and the process has been difficult at times, it is readily apparent that we have gained many new experiences and reaffirmed many important things. Now is the time to create a "new status quo," and I believe that we are at a new starting point, both as a university and as individuals contributing to the world. Now it is time for us to be united, with the "Global Concern and Our Contribution," which has been our leitmotiv or motto since FY 2020 in mind.

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the university's founding, let us strive to make it a more open place, an important locus for fostering intellectual exchange and human resources that respects diversity, and a university that continues to be attractive and chosen for its educational and research activities. This FY 2023 is a time to take concrete and steady new steps toward that end. Let us create a better future together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert J. Kisala, SVD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a distinct 'SVD' at the end.

Robert Kisala
President
Nanzan University