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**Abstract**

As a consequence of the toning down of the University Standards in 1991, many universities in Japan changed their institutional arrangements for undergraduate education. Generally speaking, new curricula put emphasis on specialty programs in each department resulting in relatively weaker general education programs. However, Hokkaido University decided to keep and strengthen the general education programs, which were continuously articulated to each of the specialty programs. The arrangements are a possible model for research universities in Japan of the next generation. In this arrangement the common core curriculum, the essential part of the undergraduate education, is supported by an interdisciplinary education system. The system is "a university in the university" in the sense that it offers a consistent program made of essence of each specialized field abstracted and reorganized for non-specialized students. In contrast, the graduate programs for each department should be more flexible so that they fit the competitive environment in the changing research world. The model is discussed on the basis of the proposals by a task force for strategic planning of

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Hokkaido University in 21st century. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)