



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

Α.ΔΙ.Π.

ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ
ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ
ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITY OF THE AEGEAN

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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of **Business Administration** of the **University of the Aegean** consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. Dr. George Vozikis, (President)
Director, Institute for Family Business, Department of Management Craig
School of Business,
California State University, Fresno, USA
2. Dr. Eleni Stroulia,
Professor, NSERC/AITF (w. IBM support) IRC on Service Systems
Management, Department of Computing Science,
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
3. Prof. Dr. –Ing. Constantin Kinias,
CEO, ergoTOP-I.A.U. Institut für Arbeitswissenschaft und
Unternehmensoptimierung GmbH (Institute for Ergonomics and Business
Improvement)
Kiel, Germany
4. Dr. Alkis Thrassou,
Professor of Marketing, School of Business,
University of Nicosia, Cyprus

N.B. *The structure of the “Template” proposed for the External Evaluation Report mirrors the requirements of Law 3374/2005 and corresponds overall to the structure of the Internal Evaluation Report submitted by the Department.*

The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; they are meant to provide a general outline of matters that should be addressed by the Committee when formulating its comments.

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

Dates and brief account of the site visit.

The visit took place between December 9th-13th, 2013; including the meeting(s) in Athens on the 9th. The committee (excluding Prof. Thrassou) was briefed in Athens on the 9th, and subsequently (all four members) started the on-site visits and meetings at Chios. A brief description of the visit (in Greek) proposed by the department and fully accepted by committee is shown below:

Δευτέρα 9 Δεκεμβρίου 2013

Ενημέρωση των μελών της Επιτροπής στα γραφεία της Α.ΔΙ.Π. για τις διαδικασίες και τα έντυπα αξιολόγησης.

Σύντομη σύσκεψη των μελών της Επιτροπής (εκτος του κου. Θρασσου) στα γραφεία της Α.ΔΙ.Π. για να συζητήσουν τις λεπτομέρειες και να προετοιμασθούν για τις συναντήσεις των δύο επόμενων ημερών.

Τρίτη 10 Δεκεμβρίου 2013

Γενική Παρουσίαση του Τμήματος.

Παρουσίαση του εκπαιδευτικού έργου του Τμήματος (Προπτυχιακό, Μεταπτυχιακό, Διδακτορικό, Δια Βίου εκπαίδευσης).

Παρουσίαση του ερευνητικού έργου του Τμήματος.

Παρουσίαση δράσεων διασύνδεσης του Τμήματος με τον επιχειρηματικό κόσμο και την κοινωνία.

Σύσκεψη των μελών της Επιτροπής στο ξενοδοχείο για να καταγράψουν τα σχόλια και τις εντυπώσεις τους από τις συναντήσεις της ημέρας.

Συγκέντρωση και μελέτη/ανάλυση επιπλέον στοιχείων που η επιτροπή θεώρησε σημαντικά (π.χ. ποιοτική αξιολόγηση δημοσιεύσεων).

Τετάρτη 11 Δεκεμβρίου 2013

Συνάντηση με το διοικητικό προσωπικό του Τμήματος.

Συνάντηση με τοπικούς κοινωνικούς, παραγωγικούς και πολιτιστικούς φορείς.

Επίσκεψη στα Εργαστήρια, τις αίθουσες διδασκαλίας, τις υποστηρικτικές δομές και μονάδες του Τμήματος (Φοιτητικές Κατοικίες, Βιβλιοθήκη κ.λπ.).

Συναντήσεις με προπτυχιακούς φοιτητές, μεταπτυχιακούς φοιτητές, υποψήφιους διδάκτορες.

Συναντήσεις με αποφοίτους του Τμήματος.

Συνάντηση με τα μέλη του διδακτικού και ερευνητικού προσωπικού του Τμήματος.

Σύσκεψη των μελών της Επιτροπής για να καταγράψουν τα σχόλια και τις εντυπώσεις τους από τις επισκέψεις και συναντήσεις της ημέρας.

Πέμπτη 12 Δεκεμβρίου 2013

Συγκέντρωση και μελέτη επιπρόσθετων στοιχείων.

Σύνταξη του σχεδίου της έκθεσης εξωτερικής αξιολόγησης, σε χώρο που διατίθεται από το Τμήμα.

Whom did the Committee meet?

The committee examined the following documents, provided by the department before the visit.

- ‘Δημοσιεύσεις 2012-2013’
- ‘Ετήσια Έκθεση Εσωτερικής Αξιολόγησης, 2011-2012’
- ‘Οδηγός Σπουδών ΔΠΜΣ 2013-2014’
- ‘Οδηγός Σπουδών ΠΜΣ 2013-2014’
- ‘Οδηγός Σπουδών ΠΠΣ 2013-14_Short version’
- ‘Πίνακες δεικτών αξιολόγησης 2012-13’

Additional materials were made available to the committee through the department’s MODIP web site (<http://modip.aegean.gr/is/extev.php?c=211&sid=4073>), including the Tuesday presentations. Finally, the committee requested and was provided additional relevant materials, including sample theses and list of doctoral students.

The committee met with almost all members of the faculty. In addition, the committee met with (a) a group of about ten current undergraduate students; (b) a group of current postgraduate students in the MBA and Tourism programs and in the Doctoral program; (c) a group of about seven representatives of the local and regional authorities, and major public organisations; (d) a group of about seven representatives of local employers of department graduates; and (e) a group of about twenty locally employed department alumni. Finally, the committee also had one-to-one meetings with six faculty members of all ranks.

The committee visited the two major administrative and teaching buildings (the main building and the building where the offices of the two Masters programs are housed). In the first building, we visited (a) the main amphitheatre; (b) several typical lecture rooms; (c) a computer lab; (d) several faculty offices; (e) some typical administrative offices; (f) the Library; and (g) some other supporting and auxiliary facilities.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The documents provided by the department were appropriate. They were complete and of adequate quality, though some points required further analysis by the committee, which could have been prepared for it e.g. the qualitative evaluation of the faculty publications, as opposed to the ‘plain’ list provided. In some cases the committee had to clarify between numbers that were official and ‘on paper’ as opposed to actual, ‘in practice’. For example “official number of students registered for a course/lesson versus the actual regular attendees” and “official number of doctoral students versus active ones” etc.

According to the Internal Evaluation document (2011-2012), the Department’s goal(s) and objectives are (verbatim):

Οι στόχοι και οι σκοποί του Τμήματος σύμφωνα με το ΦΕΚ ίδρυσής 31/20-3-84 Τεύχος Πρώτο είναι:

Η μελέτη και ανάλυση των δεδομένων που συνθέτουν το σύγχρονο εξωτερικό και εσωτερικό περιβάλλον των οικονομικών μονάδων, εξασφαλίζοντας την αναζήτηση, επιλογή και εφαρμογή των πλέον κατάλληλων και αποτελεσματικών λύσεων στη διοίκηση των επιχειρήσεων, που επιδιώκεται μέσω:

1. της παροχής υψηλής ποιότητας επιστημονικής κατάρτισης σε τομείς διοίκησης επιχειρήσεων.
2. της έρευνας μέσω της ανάπτυξης ερευνητικών προγραμμάτων.
3. της σύνδεσης εκπαίδευσης και έρευνας με την πράξη, μέσω συνεργασιών με επιχειρήσεις και οργανισμούς.

It is this committee's opinion that

- the first objective is largely successfully met;
- the second objective is partially met, but that there is significant potential for achievements considering the talent among the faculty (which should be appreciated more and better utilised); and
- the third objective is mostly successful regarding collaborations with local and regional authorities, but appears much less so in relation to local companies.

The possible tools to achieve all three targets are presented by the committee under F of this external evaluation report.

A. Curriculum

To be filled separately for each undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programme.

APPROACH

The undergraduate program aims at providing undergraduate students with the fundamental knowledge that their prospective scientific and professional prospects require, while at the same time ensure that critical thinking, ethical and responsible behavior are embedded to form a responsible member of society.

There are two postgraduate MBA programs: One in Business Administration and another in Planning, Administration, and Policy of Tourism.

The goals and objectives of the Business Administration MBA aims at creating the next generation of high scientific level business executives according to international scientific criteria.

The goals of the Master's in Planning, Administration, and Policy of Tourism aims at providing the basic education and systematic education of students in issues relating to tourism and tourism development, as well as research and analysis of areas related to tourism, such as Sociology, Cultural Anthropology, Regional Development, etc. Finally, a fundamental objective of this program is the fulfillment of society's needs vis-a-vis the professional goals of the program's graduates.

• How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?

The undergraduate curriculum was decided on: a theoretical background in terms of economic issues and other business related issues that emerge during the exercise of one's duties as a business administration manager, and secondly, on the methodology of decision making and problems solving based on quantitative and critical qualitative thinking analysis.

The graduate programs and their objectives were decided on the basis of the relationship between theory and practice. The criteria used were dependent on the offering of high quality education and specialization on each of the thematic areas of Business Administration, while the unit ensured the alignment of the programs with programs of related top foreign university programs.

· Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?

The undergraduate curriculum is presented as a social science serving the needs of both society and economy, based on innovation and regional development.

The curriculum of each of the graduate programs of study is consistent with the External Evaluation of Higher Education Academic Units. The objectives set, reflect well the needs of the society to produce well-rounded managers coming from different disciplines (for MBA), the service orientation of the Greek Economy (for Master's in Tourism Management).

· How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?

The current undergraduate curriculum was the result of a significant initiative mainly by faculty members who wanted to incorporate new developments in the business administration field in their teaching programs, as well as to adjust to the new realities in the domestic (and international) business field. Suggestions for improvement were made by students during Departmental meetings, by ex-students who have now managerial positions in profit and non-profit organizations, and by managers through interactions of faculty members with the industry.

The curricula for the various graduate programs were mainly designed by faculty members based on similar programs offered by other internationally recognized business schools. They were the outcome of constructive discussions among faculty members (with one of them taking the lead for each program). The programs have been regularly revised with input provided by students, and in some cases by suggestions provided by managers.

· Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?

The curricula for all active undergraduate and graduate programs are periodically reviewed to include new ideas/suggestions and reflect recent trends in market. Overall, it appears that a network of actors and institutions was consulted a priori in order to set up the original curriculum. The objectives have taken into consideration wider societal needs, intra-institutional, and intra-departmental concerns (e.g. related to structure, overall departmental objectives, individual interests and resources) and the evolution of respective scientific subfields. Notable is the recognition that additional factors (e.g. graduates' career paths) have already been factored and will continue to do so into any attempt for further curriculum development.

IMPLEMENTATION

· **How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?**

It seems that the goals set by the Department for the undergraduate program (i.e., fundamental knowledge that the student prospective scientific and professional prospects require, critical thinking, ethical and responsible behaviour to form a responsible member of society) are adequately implemented in the curriculum, as this is reflected in the structure of the programs, the breadth and depth of the courses offered, and the descriptions of the courses provided.

The implementation of all curricula of the graduate program helps to achieve the goals of the Department for building well-trained managers, interacting with the business world, contributing to the local economy/society and so on.

· **How does the curriculum compare with appropriate, universally accepted standards for the specific area of study?**

The program provides detailed analysis of organizations, their administration processes and the constant changes they face in their external environment, while at the same time develops skills for the students that are based on sound scientific pedagogies and methodologies based on international university benchmarks.

· **Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated?**

The structure of the undergraduate program (i.e., providing basic knowledge in the first four semesters and proceeding with specialized knowledge in the final four semesters) is rational and this is an approach that is adopted by leading universities abroad. However, we have observed a lot of specializations, which need to be reduced only to those that are more in demand by the local and international market.

For the graduate programs the structure for both programs is rational and clearly articulated. However, here too we have observed a lot of specializations, which need to be consolidated to make sure that the courses offer a better conceptual flow.

· **Is the curriculum coherent and functional? Is the material for each course appropriate and the time offered sufficient?**

It seems that on paper the undergraduate curriculum is quite coherent and functional, both within each semester and from one semester to the other.

The curriculum of all graduate programs seems to be coherent and functional. However, there is scope to improve some curricula, It must be also noted that the curriculum may indeed be wide but, compared to other programs it is definitely an over-loaded curriculum which needs to be revised in the light of institutional and wider economic constraints. The breadth appears to be attractive for students but this needs to be seen in the light of available resources that can allow depth of offerings.

Does the Department have the necessary resources and appropriately qualified and trained staff to implement the curriculum?

Teaching on some subjects is made by visiting lecturers, because of the lack of relevant faculty within the department, especially in the marketing-related subjects, which to make things worse, constitute a specialisation area of the undergraduate program. This

situation needs to be remedied or engage into a drastic revision of the specialization areas for the programs, so teaching extends beyond the classroom and students must have teachers to consult whenever they need and want.

RESULTS

· **How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives?**

It seems that the pre-defined goals and objectives are to a large extent achieved through the implementation of the curriculum program. However, the existence of constraints in human resources and infrastructure, coupled with the fact that a large number of students transfer almost invariably during and right after the first semester to other universities because of the geographic remoteness of the island of Chios and the high cost of living here. These issues create serious impediments and uncertainty in the smooth implementation of the program.

For the Graduate programs the implementation of the curricula seems to achieve the pre-set goals and objectives because of the better structure of the program and the compulsory nature of attendance for the students. The discussions of the committee with students from the various programs gave us a positive feeling that they are well equipped with knowledge, tools, and techniques, which will help them to compete effectively in the international market.

· **If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt with?**

On the undergraduate level the high transfer ratio of students creates problems of planning, budgeting, and resource allocation that do not have an immediate solution especially during these hard times. The graduate programs do not seem to be heavily impacted since they are tuition paying programs.

· **Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?**

During discussions with faculty members, the committee got the impression that they are fully aware of their role in implementing the curriculum. They are also aware of the problems hindering the effective implementation of the program. In fact, most members of the faculty are teaching courses over and above their required workload, which takes away significant time from their research.

IMPROVEMENT

· **Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved?**

The departmental members are creative in their approaches and seem to know more or less what needs to be done to further improve the quality of the course offerings. However, following wide extra-and intra-departmental consultation (including faculty, staff, external professional bodies, students etc.), the Department should seriously consider streamlining the course offerings in line with available current and future level of resources, especially as it relates to the reduction of the specializations in the

undergraduate program. The understanding of the committee during the visit was that restructuring the undergraduate program is a simpler and more urgent task than restructuring the postgraduate one. Therefore, the department should focus on the undergraduate restructuring as a matter of priority so that available resources can be directed towards other related objectives (e.g. research).

· **Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?**

According to the discussions that the committee had with many segments of the department's stakeholders, some of the improvements that the Department is planning to introduce in its curriculum, are the inclusion of some new focus that reflects the reality of the present day and the current and future job openings (e.g. tourism), and the incorporation of new content covering timely problems and issues within the material of existing courses.

B. Teaching

APPROACH

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology? Please comment on:

- **Teaching methods used**
- **Teaching staff/ student ratio**
- **Teacher/student collaboration**
- **Adequacy of means and resources**
- **Use of information technologies**
- **Examination system**

The faculty pays particular attention to teaching, and it is deemed as a most important function of the department. Current and past students are also fully appreciative of the teaching efforts and results of the faculty; and overall it appears to be a strongpoint of the department. In addition, the faculty comes from a variety of educational backgrounds (internationally), which accumulates different teaching styles and philosophies, facilitating the exchange of ideas and knowledge.

IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

- **Quality of teaching procedures**
- **Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.**
- **Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?**
- **Linking of research with teaching**
- **Mobility of academic staff and students**
- **Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources**

In spite of the relatively limited physical facilities (with the exception of the main amphitheatre), the lecture rooms are adequate for their purpose and equipped with a PC and projector. The department additionally uses state-of-the-art technologies to

support teaching at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. Course materials are shared through Moodle (<https://moodle.org/>) and some courses are delivered synchronously through BBB (<http://bigbluebutton.org/>).

The student evaluation system is not uniform among the teachers, though there is a general consensus in terms of evaluation processes (which the committee deems acceptable). These include tests, midterm exams, final exams, projects and presentations. The students themselves deem the evaluation system to be fair and logical; and they are satisfied with the teaching standards.

The number of students interviewed, the intensity of the interviews and the honesty of the answers allowed the committee to accept their (albeit) subjective opinions at face value.

RESULTS

Please comment on:

- **Efficacy of teaching.**
- **Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.**
- **Differences between students in (a) the time to graduation, and (b) final degree grades.**
- **Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?**

The result of the teaching philosophy, approach and implementation is positive; and the committee's observations, the very competencies/experience of the teachers and the students' comments point to this conclusion.

IMPROVEMENT

- **Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?**
- **What initiatives does it take in this direction?**

Teaching on some subjects is made by visiting lecturers, owing to the lack of relevant faculty within the department. Typical are the marketing-related subjects, which in fact constitute a specialisation area of the undergraduate program. This needs rectification, as (a) it is an end in itself to have teachers internally on the specialisation areas, and (b) teaching extends beyond the classroom and students must have teachers to consult whenever they need and want.

C. Research

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

· **What is the Department's policy and main objective in research?**

As stated in the departmental presentation, the department's research objectives involve (a) the authorship of research publications; (b) the participation in research projects; and (c) the collaboration with other Universities and organizations locally and abroad.

· **Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?**

These objectives are part of the department's shared culture. They have not been quantified in terms of internal standards, however the department monitors the degree to which these standards are met through the CVs of the faculty members that are accessible through the department's public web site.

IMPLEMENTATION

· **How does the Department promote and support research?**

To promote research, the department supports the faculty members with education/research leaves and provides funding for participation to conferences (through the funds obtained through the Masters programs, only to the participating faculty members) and for the organization of conferences. Information for funding opportunities is disseminated by the central administration of the University of the Aegean, which also supports the development of proposals and the monitoring of the awarded projects.

· **Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.**

In its internal-review report, the department correctly points out that it does not have sufficient space to support its research activities and that the infrastructure is acceptable but requires continuous maintenance. The committee agrees and applauds the department's excellent use of its facilities.

· **Scientific publications.**

· **Research projects.**

· **Research collaborations.**

As part of the internal-review report, the department collected data on the scientific publications produced by the faculty members in the past year, the research projects undertaken, and other research collaborations and activities.

This data was included in the internal-review report and presented as part of the first-day meetings. The committee agrees, to a great extent, with the conclusions of the internal-review report:

1. The research productivity of the department is fair overall. Most faculty members have developed publications in the last year.
2. The number (and funding level associated with the) research projects undertaken by the department is decreasing, a fact due, in part, to the general situation in the country and Europe in general.
3. The department could improve in terms of numbers of international research awards.
4. Finally, a relatively small number of post-graduate students is involved as co-authors in research publications.

RESULTS

· **How successfully were the Department's research objectives implemented?**

- **Scientific publications.**
- **Research projects.**
- **Research collaborations.**

With respect to scientific publications, the committee feels that the department objectives have been met to a large degree. There is however, substantial variance in the number and quality of research publications among faculty members. It is this committee's opinion that highly ranked venues (with high Impact Factors) should be targeted. At the same time, the committee wishes to recognize the research excellence of a few select faculty members who have continuous presence in such selective venues.

The list of projects to which the department faculty participate also varies a lot. A number of the projects mentioned in the internal-review report are for the development of summer schools and post-graduate programs, which, although they bring funding to the department, do not support research activities per se. Again more emphasis should be given to purely research projects. The committee wishes to recognize the department's team effort to lead a FP7 project; more such initiatives must be pursued.

The committee concurs with the department's assessment on the need for more awards. Although by no means objective quality measures, such awards can substantially increase the department profile and amplify the success of the department's efforts in all dimensions. Similarly, more international collaborations will accelerate the department's participation in research projects.

· **Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.**

No relevant information regarding has been provided.

· **Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department? Rewards and awards.**

The internal-review report did not explicitly discuss the visibility of the department's research activity (at least not beyond what is implied by the research collaborations). The committee looked up the department's publications in the Association of Business Schools (ABS) Academic Journal Quality Ranking (Version 4) and observed that (a) practically all of the publications authored by Full Professors were not ranked; (b) many of the publications authored by Associate Professors were ranked at levels 3, 2 and 1; and (c) several of the publications authored by Assistant Professors were ranked at level 3 and 2 and 1.

In addition, the committee looked up the department faculty members in the SCOPUS database and observed a broad range of citations ranging from 1400 for an Associate Professor, to a range between 100 and 600 for 9 other faculty members, to double-digit and 0 citations for the rest of the Faculty members. Clearly, the department's research production is visible through the work of some of its Faculty members; however there is substantial room for increased productivity (in terms of more publications) and improved results dissemination (through publication in highly ranked venues) for the rest.

IMPROVEMENT

- **Improvements in research proposed by the Department, if necessary.**
- **Initiatives in this direction undertaken by the Department.**

The department has not identified any specific initiatives for the improvement of its research productivity and visibility. The committee feels that the development of explicitly stated expectations regarding number and quality of publications is a necessary prerequisite for improvement in this dimension. These expectations have to be in line with international academic standards and should refer to, but not be limited to, metrics such as publication citations and venue impact factors. Furthermore, those faculty members who reach and exceed the standards must be recognized for their excellence and merit and ranked and positioned accordingly.

D. All Other Services

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

- **How does the Department view the various services provided to the members of the academic community (teaching staff, students).**

The department is making good and proper effort to offer supporting services to its faculty and students. In the context of the current adverse conditions however these are justifiably limited. Even in the same context though, greater attention should be paid to students with special physical, mental and/or psychological needs e.g. (physical access to people with wheelchairs, better/wider support by trained psychologists, special teaching and exam processes for people with problems such as dyslexia etc).

- **Does the Department have a policy to simplify administrative procedures? Are most procedures processed electronically?**

The various procedures appear to be bound by external regulations and the committee is not aware of any intention to simplify and/or modify these.

- **Does the Department have a policy to increase student presence on Campus?**

The department has not campus per se and under the present conditions it does not appear to be the intention to improve the situation or to have the ability to do it.

IMPLEMENTATION

· **Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).**

The department has an adequate number of administrative personnel and though all appear to assist in every way necessary, each program and function has its own secretariat support. The administrative personnel is capable, with good educational background, motivated and attached to the department.

· **Form and function of academic services and infrastructure for students (e.g. library, PCs and free internet access, student counseling, athletic· cultural activity etc.).**

The efforts to maximise these are largely inhibited by financial constraints. However the department does offer adequate administrative support, excellent communication and IT infrastructure and a library, which (although poor in physical publications/books) provides local and remote electronic access to databases (Note: the committee did not check the quantitative and qualitative quality/standard of the databases as it was informed that this is the same for all Greek universities). The department also has some cultural and athletic activities and further offers the opportunity to faculty and students to participate in conferences, events, research programs etc towards their development.

RESULTS

· **Are administrative and other services adequate and functional?**

Yes

· **How does the Department view the particular results.**

The department appears satisfied with the range and quality of services they have, always considering their financial situation.

IMPROVEMENTS

· **Has the Department identified ways and methods to improve the services provided?**

The committee was informed that the department has recently secured the services of a psychologist to act as a counsellor to students who need it. We recommend that more attention is paid to this matter, and information about these services is communicated more frequently. Furthermore, the department should probably track the usage of these services in order to be able to estimate whether the types and amount of these services need to be extended and/or enhanced. Finally, the issue of the challenges that the building poses to students with mobility problems remains, although we, of course, recognize that it is particularly difficult to address this issue solely through administrative means.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

· Please, comment on quality, originality and significance of the Department's initiatives.

The department appears to be accepted and appreciated by the wider community of the island. More practically, at cultural level the department supports and is supported by the community, with some of its major facilities being in fact donations by the community. In terms of collaborations, the department is strong in relation to the local and regional authorities, but local private companies appear less enthusiastic regarding the department's contribution (*Note: (a) the latter is unverified as it arose from the interview with the corresponding group and may be unrepresentative of the wider population of businesses); (b) the mere presence of the department adds value to local businesses through its wider economic impact).*

Overall, the department, both individually and as part of the wider Aegean University is deemed as an important part of the island's life; it adds to the island's economic, cultural and social value; and is a source of pride to the locals.

E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Please, comment on the Department's:

- Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental level, and proposals on ways to overcome them.**
- Short-, medium- and long-term goals.**
- Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit**
- Long-term actions proposed by the Department.**

There is no doubt that this evaluation exercise has already prompted a critical self-reflection within the Business Administration Department, as evidenced by the elaborate internal evaluation report. Furthermore, strengths and weaknesses and threats and opportunities have been identified in a SWOT analysis, and directions for improvement have been outlined which cover the whole spectrum of teaching, research, administration and service activities of the Department. We share the views of the Department and encourage them to persist with the implementation of the important actions they have identified.

During their presentation the department members introduced a number of inhibiting factors both internal and external, which, as it became clear to us, may have a detrimental effect to the future development of the Department and the university as a whole. However, it should be stated here that the Department appreciates the significant gains it has made in recent years alongside the risks that current uncertainties in the economic and political state of Greece entail for the Department per se, the University of the Aegean and the overall educational sector in Greece.

At the Greek State level, inhibiting factors were recognised as:

- a. The lack of financial resources
- b. Inhibiting bureaucratic administrative procedures

- c. Lack of University/School/Departmental autonomy
- d. Lack of clarity and information from the State, that inhibits long-term planning

At the institutional level (University of the Aegean) inhibiting factors were recognised as:

- a. The constant and almost inevitable drain of students from the freshman level who transfer to other more central universities and/or those with a lower cost of living.
- b. The fact that many faculty commute weekly from central cities to their job in Chios rather than making a total commitment to the university and its regional domain and stakeholders.

At the level of the Department, inhibiting factors were recognized as:

- a. The frequently small number of students attending the lectures in the Department
- b. Considerable variations in research output within the Department
- c. The undefined and unmonitored criteria for ranking and positioning of faculty within the Department

The department's short, medium and long-term strategic goals are (though somewhat general) logical and well derived. It is the committee's opinion that their successful implementation is subject to the sincere efforts that the department will make towards this direction; the external constraints of finance and political will; and the adoption of the committee's recommendations (see specific recommendations throughout this document, and especially those of the last section).

In the short term, the department should focus on goals such as:

- a. Continuous evaluation and upgrading of the undergraduate and postgraduate programs according to the needs of the society/economy, the wants of the students and the competencies and capacities of the faculty.
- b. Within the restrictive policies and practices of the Greek educational system regarding admissions (number legislated externally, quality of the entering students depending on their grades and their declared choices in the Panhellenic Admission Process) the Department should enhance its efforts to attract the best possible candidates.
- c. Increase the use of computer and electronic communications technology to further streamline teaching and administrative processes.

In the medium term the department plans to focus on goals such as:

- a. Improving the student/faculty and teaching load/faculty ratios as to bring them closer to international standards of comparable institutions.

In the long term horizon, the department plans to focus on goals such as:

- a. Internationalizing the educational programs offered by reaching to foreign markets where demand has already been manifested. This would not only increase visibility but will generate additional financial resources especially on the graduate level.
- b. Continuing the effort of upgrading the research activity not only as a means of academic quality recognition but also as a means of possibly attracting solid faculty in the future from the Greek pool of academics or of Greek descent from

foreign institutions who wish to relocate in Greece.

Regarding 'plans and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit Long-term actions proposed for the Department': despite the timing of this visit, a strenuous period on the Greek economy and the educational system, the committee has observed a positive attitude among the faculty and staff, towards improvement and quality. This may be attributed to the continuous drive for betterment, as well as to the contribution of more recent recruits who have considerably strengthened the department. This positive attitude is accompanied by a strategic planning process developed by a strategic management committee called MODYP within the administrative structure of the Department. However, strategic objectives are still somewhat general and undefined, and lack the specificity that will quantitatively and qualitatively define the aimed means (norms, behaviours, mechanisms, processes and criteria) and results of the plan, as envisaged by the Department.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

The department is largely staffed by capable and motivated faculty; more specifically, it boasts a number of several young researchers with high research productivity in excellent international venues. Its programs of study appear mostly relevant to the competencies and specialisations of the faculty, and they are of good standard. Current and past students are happy with the standard and overall education they receive at all levels. In fact, both faculty members and students reported that there is a high degree of collegiality among staff and between the staff and students. The department is well represented in the leadership of the University; both the University President (Πρύτανης) and the School Dean (Κοσμητορας) are members of the Department. The community, including the public authorities and, to a lesser degree, private organizations, is also positive regarding the department's role and contribution. The department has an excellent track record of a practicum at the undergraduate level, even before the ΕΣΠΑ program. Today, the Department extends the ΕΣΠΑ resources through its network of collaborating business that fund additional students (with ΕΣΠΑ covering the students' benefits). Finally, the department has good technical infrastructure, including a state-of-the-art language laboratory. Overall, the department is doing good work, under quite harsh conditions relating primarily to limited funding, a complex and stiff regulatory system, and geographic isolation, which results in a potential brain drain of both faculty and students.

It is however our opinion that there are several areas in which the department can potentially improve. We detail our recommendations and rationale behind them below.

1. Focus and Specialization

The committee observed evidence of specialization at four different levels.

The undergraduate program of study offers five areas of specialization: (a) Marketing; (b) Διοίκηση Τουρισμού; (c) Διοίκηση-Οργάνωση Επιχειρήσεων και Νέες Τεχνολογίες; (d) Λογιστική – Χρηματοοικονομική; and (e) Επιχειρηματική Οικονομική.

At the same time, there are three specialized labs: (a) Εργαστήριο Τουριστικών Ερευνών και Μελετών; (b) Εργαστήριο εφαρμογής νέων τεχνολογιών πληροφορικής; and (c) Εργαστήριο Ποσοτικών Μεθόδων.

The department offers two post-graduate degrees: (a) an independently delivered MBA

program and (b) an interdepartmental Masters program on “Σχεδιασμός, Διοίκηση και Πολιτική Του Τουρισμού”. Finally, when we examined the areas of specialization of the department faculty members (<http://modip.aegean.gr/is/extev.php?c=211&sid=4073>) we identified the following expertise clusters: “Δίκαιο”, “Διοίκηση Παραγωγής”, “Οργάνωση Επιχειρήσεων”, “Οικονομικά”, “Λογιστική – Χρηματοοικονομική”, “Πληροφορική”, “Ποσοτικές Μέθοδοι” and “Τουρισμός”.

Clearly there is a correspondence across these four levels; however, the committee observes that this correspondence is not complete. For example, there is an undergraduate area of specialization (Marketing), which is not covered by the faculty members’ expertise.

Furthermore, several courses in areas of specialization are not offered due to lack of resources. The department should rationalize the areas of specialization and focus on areas of expertise of its faculty members or be strengthened with new faculty members that can support the offered specialisations. As a corollary of the above statement, the committee recommends that, in today’s highly competitive tertiary education environment, both nationally and internationally, the department should take the opportunity to draw on its strength in the area of “Tourism”, emphasize it and promote it further among the undergraduates. Attention should also be paid to the “Επιχειρηματική Οικονομική” specialisation, which attracts a minimal number of students (6 out of a total of 304 students); and the reason(s) for this must be identified and rectified (or the specialisation removed altogether).

In conclusion, the department needs to consolidate its resources, energy and focus into the most “appropriate” areas that can form the most promising, logical directions for the future, based on current and future strengths and opportunities, and avoiding the pitfalls of weaknesses and threats in a SWOT analysis fashion.

2. Research

There appears to be a ‘reverse’ chasm between the ranks, with the research productivity of some of faculty members far outweighing those of some more senior ones. This unexpected phenomenon can also be perceived as a unique opportunity: the talented faculty must be promoted through the ranks in order to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities that more senior ranks afford, such as more PhD supervision. They should also be recognized through assignment to leadership positions within the department, such as specialization area coordination, lab leadership etc.

At the same time, there should be an explicit set of guidelines for all faculty members regarding the department’s expectations in terms of research output (quantitatively and qualitatively), project involvement, support to the economic and social community, teaching, supervision of undergraduate and graduate theses etc. Clearly some variation and flexibility must exist, especially since senior faculty serve in administrative positions. However, a set of clear standards must be adopted in to minimise subjectivity, increase transparency and promote and recognize high standards of excellence.

The department should aim for obtaining more funding through individual and team-based grants, in partnership (a) with the local community, and (b) with the international community. The committee especially applauds the leadership of a department team to pursue a FP7 project with colleagues from other Greek and European Universities (currently under adjudication). The committee recognizes that such grant-development activity is effort intensive and encourages the department to plan strategically for which National and EU funding calls to respond to and with which faculty team.

In addition to the general basic research, it is necessary that the department intensifies

its applied-research agenda, in collaboration with the local economy and society.

The department should make more efforts in a systematic way by pursuing synergistic collaborations with both the business and local government in research, project analysis, and economic development for the benefit of all, and, especially, the long-term viability of the region.

In spite of the excellent relationship between the community leaders and the department senior faculty, there are not many specific collaborative activities. The Department does not seem to have much data on the local economy and society although the community interests and the department's areas of expertise overlap. The representatives of the local industry sectors (e.g. banks in Chios) apparently want this cooperation but lament at the relatively infrequent presence of the majority of the faculty members on the island. More collaborative applied research will bring a huge advantage and substantially improve the learning experience of undergraduate and especially postgraduate students, who will have first-hand experience through case studies and not only through readings. Some potential topics, as they arose in the course of our discussion with the local community leaders, include (but are not limited to) the case-study analysis and support (with business plans, for example) entrepreneur activities of community members and students from other disciplines. More specifically, recognizing that Chios is one of the best diving areas in Europe according to international standards, with "clear warm water, small underwater caves, impressive rocky landscapes and cliffs, interspersed with species-rich coral, invite the visitors to dive. (Wikipedia, ten best dive sites in Europe (scubatravel.co.uk, accessed: December 12th, 2013). The department may focus on scientifically developing entrepreneurial activities in cooperation with local tourist agencies, on diving training, for example.

On a related note, PhD supervision can potentially be improved by balancing the distribution of PhD students to supervisor faculty members. At this point in time, it appears that most PhD students are supervised by senior faculty members, while more junior faculty members, in spite of their research excellence, supervise relatively few PhD students. The current number of the doctoral students appears excessive (66) for the number of faculty members actually supervising them. Furthermore, based on a review of randomly sampled dissertations from the library of the Department, the committee noticed the external examiners of the PhD theses were not sufficiently varied, and the same externals served on many committees. Such committees that consist of the same department faculty are academically unhealthy and undermine both the process and its result. However, based on documentation provided by the department, we recognize that the committees of the last two years show a positive development in this area, which is commendable.

3. Teaching

Course delivery is very well organized but can be further improved: deadlines for grade submissions should be met more consistently; course cancellations should be monitored and shared with students through notifications; new course dates should similarly be shared electronically. Furthermore, more practical components can be introduced in coursework through labs. There seems to be a significant course overlap and a number of course that are not taught and/or covered, something that demands a re-examination of the whole curriculum. Furthermore the MBA seems to be too long (14 courses) with too many core courses.

The practicum program of the department is very well received; the students we talked with were extremely satisfied with the program, applauded its value and wished for a longer placement periods. Internships offer is an essential contribution to the improvement of the quality of teaching. Currently available internships with their regular duration of six weeks are too short from the point of effectiveness for both

sides. Students and employers evaluate the period as too short. Recognizing the financial implications of this proposal (which may in fact make it impossible), the committee recommends that the practicum duration be extended to 12 weeks minimum, to establish this as a must of studying and making more flexible the temporal position of the internship not in fact only during for the summer time. The department has already partially implemented this policy and longer practicum placements are available to students who are about to graduate. Nevertheless, the committee still maintains that this great educational opportunity could be made available to as many students as possible with better and more flexible course scheduling.

Internships can also contribute to the necessary internationalization of studies, if more internships abroad were established. This implies the need for intensifying the contacts between the department and the international community, such as, for example, research collaborators in international academic institutions, employers participating in international umbrella organizations (AISEC), and entrepreneurs with origin from Chios. Furthermore, such expansion of the practicum program will necessitate more in-depth knowledge regarding internships abroad, so that the interested students may be effectively supported and counselled.

The problem of long-term students, i.e., students who have not completed their degree within N+2 years of study, is faced by all national universities and abroad. On the basis of current legislation those students are contacted by the university and informed about examination opportunities. It can be assumed, that large numbers of students will be written off the student roster, through administrative procedures. The committee proposes that the department introduces a mentoring system, connecting faculty members as mentors of individual students. We recognize that only a (potentially small) part of these students will successfully complete the degree, but every additional student who may be able to graduate through such one-to-one mentorship is an increase to the Greek human capital. For those students who cannot successfully complete their studies, the department might be able to organize vocational training, for example in the tourism sector or in the commercial sector of small businesses, capitalizing on its network of companies collaborating in the practicum program.

A cornerstone of business-administration studies today is the solid knowledge of foreign languages. The department currently offers courses on business English. Considering the special demand of the Chios island for languages such as Finnish (tourism) and Turkish (economy, tourism), the department has the opportunity to innovate by maximizing on its state-of-the-art language lab to offer additional language training. This offering could potentially be coupled with exchanges with institutions from abroad, bringing students to Chios for training and vacations, potentially offering them living quarters in the University dormitory.

4. Administration

The department has excellent administrative support. The committee however recommends that an effort be made to unify all software systems for student management (currently there seems to be separate systems for undergraduate and post-graduate students, in fact two different systems for the two different Masters streams). Furthermore, the department's web presence can be improved, with more organization on recent successes and focus on the interested stakeholders (including students, companies interested in participating in the practicum program, and potential research partners).

The Department has reasonably good facilities infrastructure. This includes for example the language laboratory. It is used by students during the daytime.

Continuous training i.e. for language training seminars for companies or institutions staff and individuals, could arise funds for the university. The funds generated can be used both for facility maintenance and for re-investment for new equipment. Additionally, those activities support the better contact with the local society. An example is the Turkish language lectures demand mentioned by interviewed society partners.

3. Knowledge Transfer and Services

Given the variety of expertise resident in the Department, and its established track record in successfully organizing large-scale conferences, the committee believes that it would be relatively “low hanging fruit” to establish a regular (i.e., annual) “Open University” day, for faculty and students, at the undergraduate, post-graduate and doctoral levels. The day can potentially involve lectures by faculty members on subject areas of broad interest, presentations by students on diploma, Masters and doctoral theses, posters and discussion sessions. These meetings can potentially strengthen the quality of the academic work with realistic feedback from the participants and also enable valuable knowledge transfer from the academics to the community. Finally, they can strengthen and further existing collaborations and establish a basis for fruitful exchanges for the benefit of the department and the society at large.

A program of teaching program universities should be established with partners. The system of Dr.HC... or Prof. hc. can be used also as a tool for internationalization of teaching.

Targeted people should be identified from abroad, either in the corporate or in the academic world, to serve and benefit the Department with seminars or Summer School sessions.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname

Signature

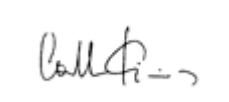
1. Vozikis



2. Stroulia



3. Kinias



4. Thrassou

