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ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

**H.Q.A.**

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE  
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

## EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, EDUCATION, & PSYCHOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF IOANNINA



European Union  
European Social Fund



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, CULTURE & SPORTS  
MANAGING AUTHORITY

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### **External Evaluation Committee**

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the **Department of Philosophy, Psychology, & Pedagogy** of **The University of Ioannina** consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Professor Emeritus, Rick M. Newton (Coordinator)

Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, USA

2. Professor Stefanos Efthymiadis

Open University of Cyprus

3. Associate Professor Panayota Gounari

University of Massachusetts Boston, USA

4. Professor Athanasios Raftopoulos

The University of 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.

## **Introduction**

### . The External Evaluation Procedure

The External Evaluation Committee (henceforth: Committee) visited the Department of Philosophy, Education, and Psychology (henceforth: Department; also abbreviated as “PEP”) on the campus of the University of Ioannina from 16 to 18 December 2013. To prepare for the visit, the Committee members had individually studied the Internal Evaluation Report which the Department had submitted to ADIP/HQA. The Committee also accessed links from the University website. During the on-site visit, the Department Head provided other materials (*e.g.*, printouts and graphs of student teaching evaluations, packets assembled by separate sectors). In addition, the Committee requested the *curricula vitae* of all full-time faculty as well as copies of appendices and attachments to the Internal Evaluation Report which were not originally included in the electronic version. The Committee also requested hard copies of student written work (*i.e.*, examinations, theses, and dissertations)

On 16 December, the Committee members were welcomed at the local airport by the Department Head (Professor Konstantinos Petsios) and conveyed to their hotel. They were transported to the University for a meeting with the Rector (Professor Triantafyllos Albanis), Vice Rector (Professor Georgios Kapsalis), and Department Head for an overview of the University and an account of the impact of state-mandated budget cuts and staffing reductions on the institution’s operations.

The Committee was then escorted to the Department, where they were welcomed by the faculty and support staff. The Rector and Vice Rector gave a power-point presentation, followed by a brief discussion. The Committee explained the rationale for the on-campus visit, inviting an open dialogue so as to bring the Department’s best practices to light and enable the Committee to submit a report that would best address faculty needs and support their professional and educational objectives. Before leaving the building, the Committee visited the Department Laboratory for Research in Modern Greek Philosophy, administered by the Department Head.

On 17 December, the Committee spent eleven hours (10:00 AM – 9:00 PM) meeting with various groups in the following sessions: a) the full Departmental faculty, during which the three sectors presented power-point descriptions of undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs; b) full-time faculty holding the rank of Lecturer and Assistant Professor (twelve present); c) full-time faculty holding the rank of Associate Professor and Professor (nine present); d) undergraduate students (fifteen present); e) postgraduate and doctoral students (twelve present); f) secretarial staff and technical assistants (seven staff in total), who were visited in their offices. At day’s end, the Committee visited the Laboratory for Empirical and Social Research in Pedagogy. Each session lasted for 1 ½ - 2 hours.

On 18 December (9:30 AM- 2:30 PM), the Department Head led the Committee on a tour of most of its twelve laboratories, followed by a tour of the University Library, in which the Vice Rector and a member of the Library staff participated. The

Committee then met briefly with the Department Head and Vice Rector to share general impressions from the campus visit. Throughout these activities, the Committee was courteously transported by the University's driver, Kostas.

## II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The materials and documents were ample and informative. The online version of the Internal Evaluation Report, including tables, was received in advance, allowing time for study and preparation. Not all appendices, however, were attached to the file (such as faculty *vitae* and detailed publication lists). These were promptly provided on site by the Department Head upon the Committee's request.

The Committee believes that the on-site visit was the most useful source of information. The person-to-person exchanges that took place in formal meetings and informal conversations established an open atmosphere for exchange of ideas and provided a secure foundation for a fair and accurate evaluation. The personal contact that arose from the on-site visit was especially beneficial in allaying the many faculty apprehensions that permeated the Internal Evaluation Report. All faculty members and students who attended were open, forthcoming, and fully participatory. In both written and oral formats, the Department provided information helpful in enabling the Committee to conduct its review.

Preparing the final version of this report, the Committee reviewed and discussed three separate sector responses (Psychology, Education, Philosophy) to the draft report, as opposed to a unified Departmental response as stipulated by ADIP guidelines. The Department forwarded these documents, addressed as letters to the Department Head, with no transmittal memo and no explanation that the letters' disparate content and opinions, as well as disparaging comments voiced in one of them, were representative of the Department as a whole. Despite this procedural irregularity, ADIP asked the Committee to proceed. The Committee notes that not all authors of the response letters were present during the on-site visit and failed to meet the Committee in person.

### ***A. Curriculum***

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

The Committee reviewed the Department's curriculum based on the following data: information in the Internal Evaluation Report, online and hardcopy versions of the Student Handbook (*Odigos Spoudon*), course descriptions posted in the Department's hallways, and faculty and student interviews.

#### **UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS**

##### **APPROACH**

The Department is comprised of three sectors, each with its own disciplinary identity. The Department's mission is articulated according to four areas: research and teaching in Philosophy, Education, and Psychology; an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of philosophical social, and psycho-pedagogical topics, including an examination of their epistemological assumptions; basic professional

teacher training in secondary education; and the establishment of an academic environment which fosters the formation of responsible citizens with a scientific, social, cultural, and political consciousness.

The overall goal of the Department is to promote research and link it with teaching to enable students to fulfill their scholarly and professional ambitions. The curriculum is flexible and up-to-date, offering courses in contemporary developments within each field and providing a wide array of options to help students meet individual goals. The Philosophy Sector reports that course materials, including conference proceedings and papers, clarify all contemporary aspects of institutional, psycho-pedagogical, professional, and sociological issues.

The Department reviews and revises the curriculum on an annual basis, introducing new topics as determined by the General Assembly. Faculty use multiple criteria to update the curriculum, such as: a) stipulations established by the legal framework for higher education; b) existing staff availability and areas of faculty expertise; c) changes within the disciplines; and d) the needs of society.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

To align the curriculum with its missions and goals, the Department offers a four-year, 52-course program to undergraduate students. Each course carries five ECTS. In Cycle A (semesters 1-4) students complete twenty required core courses. In Cycle B (semesters 5-8) students complete twelve concentration courses and twelve electives from the two other departments in the School of Philosophy (*Filosofiki Scholi*).

Students are also required to complete four foreign language courses. Core courses include introductory courses in Philosophy, Psychology, and Pedagogy; Ancient Greek and Modern Contemporary Philosophy; Social and Political Philosophy; History of Scientific Ideas/Philosophy of Science; Educational Psychology; Education Theories; Sociology of Education; History of Education; Social Psychology; Developmental, Clinical and Cognitive Psychology. These requirements provide a theoretical knowledge base in all three fields, after which students select one area for the remaining twelve concentration courses. According to the Student Handbook, course options in other departments include Ancient Greek Philology, Modern Greek Philology, and Linguistics. Students may also take courses in other departments, such as History and Archaeology.

In addition to providing courses for its own students and majors, the Department teaches approximately 650 extra-departmental students annually who are seeking to fulfill other programmatic requirements. All lower-division PEP courses are open to extra-departmental students.

The Department hosts twelve laboratories in its different sectors that serve undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral students. In these laboratories students have the opportunity to delve into areas of scholarly interest with greater depth under the tutelage of professors who express great enthusiasm for these interactive opportunities.

Despite the faculty's desire to build on this strong tradition of student-teacher interaction, a shortage of academic staff now jeopardizes the quality of two of its undergraduate programs. The Psychology Sector has now been reduced to five full-time faculty, and Education has recently lost three faculty positions to retirements which have not been refilled. In addition, the workload for the remaining faculty who must perform the teaching, advising, and service duties of former colleagues has generated an unsustainable burden that negatively impacts teaching, research, and service.

The Philosophy Sector, by contrast, reports, that it remains equipped to cover courses in Ancient Greek Philosophy (in which five faculty conduct research), Byzantine Philosophy, and Neohellenic Philosophy.

After completing twenty required courses in all three concentrations (Philosophy, Education and Psychology), students must select a major. All three sectors provide a well-designed curriculum, although the Committee notes a considerable lack of clarity and direction in the sequencing of some upper-division courses. The rationale for electives taken from other departments, furthermore, is unclear.

The Department's educational philosophy aims to provide basic knowledge (Cycle A) in all three sectors of Philosophy, Education and Psychology, followed by an in-depth examination (Cycle B) of the specific sub-fields. The Department aims to equip all majors with basic knowledge and essential skills to prepare students to teach in secondary education. While the Department offers three distinct programs, the majority of students who graduate are placed in secondary education. Alumni also secure employment or pursue advanced degrees both nationally and internationally.

## RESULTS

The Committee finds that, in general, the Department is achieving its goals and fulfilling its multidisciplinary mission. Students seem to build an important knowledge base in Philosophy, Education, and Psychology. The Committee finds, however, that the current design of the curriculum, especially in the sequencing of upper-level courses, may not be providing optimal preparation for students seeking high-school teaching careers.

The absence of a formally required *practicum* (*Praktiki Askisi*) for all three sectors potentially compromises the Department's mission as a trainer of educators who will enter Greek secondary schools with the skills and applied training needed for success. Although it appears that many majors in the Education Sector do incorporate field-work experience on an *ad hoc* basis during Cycle B, it remains unclear to the Committee as to how these *practica* are designed and delivered. Interviews with the undergraduate students selected by the Department revealed that, in their estimation and experience, it remains possible to complete a degree in the Department with no hands-on fieldwork experience.

Furthermore, the Committee was informed that the *practicum* is to be expanded to the other sectors. This initiative is, in the Committee's estimation, to be lauded and encouraged. The Committee is fully aware of the immense task of offering a



*practicum* to such large numbers of students. The Internal Evaluation Report explicitly notes the challenges in conducting optimal field experiences in an environment of budget cuts and staffing shortages. Interviews between the Committee and faculty substantiated these concerns. Although the Committee fully sympathizes with the Department's expressed frustration with the difficulty of formally instituting and implementing a *practicum* requirement, the Committee considers such a component essential for any prospective educator.

The Committee further observes a somewhat confusing situation regarding the choice of courses available to students. During interviews with the Committee, faculty expressed the belief that, as a principle of academic freedom, students should remain free to take the courses they want. Interviews with the students, however, indicated that a stronger sequencing of prerequisites in upper-division courses would be desirable and helpful. Although many students who seek out faculty guidance select upper-division courses wisely, many others appear to take courses at random, lacking necessary background knowledge and, in some cases, not understanding how these courses fit in with their major.

#### IMPROVEMENT

The Committee suggests that the Department consider implementing prerequisites for upper-division courses in a way that is workable within the limitations of the existing legal framework in higher education. Since students, after completing twenty core courses, are free to select courses at random, there is a risk that – in the absence of clearly prescribed prerequisites -- many will find themselves in advanced courses for which they lack prior knowledge. Students should be encouraged to gradually build background knowledge by taking more sequenced introductory courses in order to be successful in advanced courses. This could be done both *via* advising (*e.g.*, in student-professor conferences) and *via* announcements posted on the Department's website and in hard-copy formats. The Committee acknowledges that the program has been designed to comply with state law, according to which three types of courses should be offered: compulsory/required, electives offered by the divisions, and free electives.

The Committee notes a very large number of courses offered in Cycle B and strongly suggests that the Department review all such courses to ensure that they are drawing adequate enrollments. In reviewing the curriculum, the Committee finds that some courses have enrollments of two or fewer students. Although one sector response explains that such figures are an anomaly, the Committee suggests that tighter management of course selection would not allow such rare cases to occur at all. This is an especially important consideration in an age in which University resources are being stretched beyond reason and in which faculty across Greek and international universities are being required "to do more with less." A rigorous review of all offerings, with the aim of eliminating or consolidating such courses, would be especially valuable in this era of staffing and fiscal shortages.

With regard for the training of potential teachers, the Committee suggests also that a tighter sequencing of upper-division courses be implemented in order to guarantee that all students receive significant experience in applied teaching. In short, the program leading to the Education major must require compulsory courses which include a *practicum*.

The Committee maintains that the Department should institute policies for stricter student guidance. The goal is for students to succeed in all courses they select.

## **POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS:**

### **APPROACH**

The Department offers two Masters Programs: (1) Educational Studies (hereafter: ES) and (2) Greek Philosophy and Philosophy of Sciences (hereafter: GPPS). These programs correspond to and are supported by the Education and Philosophy Sectors. Discussions with the faculty revealed that the Department suspended its Masters Program in Psychology in 2008. Any plans to reactivate this degree are not evident in the Internal Evaluation Report.

Each MA program admits up to twenty students per year. GPPS (on both the MA and PhD levels) is offered jointly with the Department of Philosophy of the University of Crete and the Institute of Modern Greek Research of the National Foundation of Research. The Department oversees the administrative management of these collaborations.

Each Masters program is divided into four semesters and two cycles. In Cycle A (semesters 1-2) students complete two core courses for ES and six core courses for GPPS. The requirements for Cycle B (semesters 3-4) are satisfied by electives from a variety of specializations. Each program requires a total of 120 ECTS as well as a mandatory thesis (*metaptychiaki diplomatiki ergasia*). Students may begin selecting their thesis topic in the third semester and must complete the thesis by the end of the fourth semester.

As a rule, courses are taught in evening hours to accommodate students who hold full-time jobs. In the beginning of the program, each student selects a faculty supervisor who assigns activities comprising up to fifteen hours of study per week. Provisions for changing a student's supervisor *in cursu* are not addressed in the Student Handbook. Students must complete the Masters thesis within six months of completing Cycle B coursework.

The general aim of ES is to provide students with expert knowledge and scientific qualifications for employment in academic and other educational institutions, as well as in organizations and enterprises in public and private sectors. The general aim of GPPS is threefold: 1) to promote scientific knowledge and meet the needs for research, education, and development within Greece; 2) to uphold a commitment to research in the rich cultural heritage of Greece, with the aim of preparing scholars current in modern developments and trends, on an international level, in research methods and content areas; and 3) to provide a multidisciplinary community of scholars, each with a distinct specialization.

The large number of applications registered between AY 2008-2009 and AY 2013-14 suggests that ES is well sought-after. Within this same time period, by contrast, GPPS admitted nearly the same number of students as applications received.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Core courses are taught by several members of the teaching staff. Various research

tools (databases, electronic access to journals, antique books, rare editions, etc.) are available within the Department's library and research laboratories and within the well-equipped University library. In each course, students must submit a substantial written assignment which provides the basis of evaluation and grading.

The Committee's interviews with the Masters' students revealed a unanimous enthusiasm on their part for the quality of their studies and a profound respect and appreciation for the collaborations they enjoy with the teaching and administrative staff. Although this is not always the case in Greek and international universities, it appears that the student-teacher interaction within the Department is continuous and impressively strong on the postgraduate level.

The Philosophy Sector requires a course in research methodology and reports that all full-time faculty members deal in their lectures and seminars with relevant issues.

### RESULTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The postgraduate programs are designed by a Special Inter-Departmental Committee (*Eidiki Diatmematiki Epitropi*) and by the General Assembly of the Department, respectively, with a view to its mission as a trainer of high-school teachers. ES has a particularly professional orientation which may account for its popularity with holders of a BA degree from this and other departments. The success of the programs is also shown in the variety of thesis topics listed in the Student Handbook.

The Committee finds a good alignment of the articulated goals and objectives of the curriculum with its implementation. In addition to in-class teaching, postgraduate studies take place on a continuing basis within the Department's many laboratories, which offer technical support and give access to resources that invite a variety of scholarly explorations. The laboratories are especially effective as training grounds for combining theory and practice as well as for connecting teaching with research.

These important connections could be further sustained by integrating students into faculty research projects, as had been customary in the past, before external funding sources were drastically diminished.

Because the availability of postgraduate course-offerings depends largely on the research areas of current faculty, course offerings are directly dependent on staffing profiles. For this reason, budget cuts that prohibit or delay the hiring of adjunct or part-time faculty, pending retirements of faculty whose lines will not be replaced, and freezes that drive faculty to look elsewhere for employment all pose a threat to these important programs by creating significant gaps in crucial content areas.

### DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

Each sector offers its own doctoral program. Admission of doctoral candidates into the Education and Psychology Sectors is based primarily on a candidate's dissertation proposal, while admission into the Philosophy Sector is determined by several criteria (*e.g.*, Masters thesis, written examination, personal interview, published work, quality and overall grade in undergraduate courses relevant to the program). All admissions are approved by the Department's General Assembly.

Doctoral candidates meet with their supervisors every month or every three months, frequency determined by the nature of the research and the students' individual progress. Candidates who exhibit specific content-area deficiencies may be required to attend either Masters-level courses in Education or undergraduate courses in research methodology (*e.g.*, statistics) in Psychology. Those pursuing a doctorate in

Philosophy are invited to attend seminars, guest lectures, and conferences.

The list of doctoral dissertation titles printed in the Student Handbook (1998-2013), reflects a rich variety of topics in Philosophy and Education. In addition, the Committee was given access to hard-copies of dissertations. The Committee was unable to determine, from the information provided, how many PhD dissertations were later published as monographs or as articles in scholarly journals.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

As with the postdoctoral students, doctoral candidates benefit from the University library and the Department's laboratories. It is not clear to the Committee whether doctoral candidates are regularly employed as research assistants in the Department's projects.

#### RESULTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Some PhD recipients have held academic careers in Greece and abroad, while others have served Greek education in various high-ranking positions. It is commendable that the Department collaborates on the doctoral level with another European University. Two PhD. dissertations from the Philosophy Sector, for example, have been supervised jointly by the Department and the University 'Charles de Gaulle'-Lille III (cotutelle).

Although the Philosophy Sector already requires a course in research methodologies, the Department should consider implementing such a course for the other sectors as well. Since research methodologies share common interests and approaches across a wide range of disciplines, such a course might be offered simultaneously to all postgraduate and doctoral students within the Department, with specific break-out sections and discussion groups that address each discipline separately.

The Committee advises that a course on New Technologies in Education be introduced (especially in the ES program) in order to keep students up-to-date on international developments in teaching. This course could be supported by the laboratories within each sector. Given the increasing role that technology plays in Education on an international scale, it is incumbent on all university programs in Education to pay specific attention to this emerging area. Such a course would perhaps require support by the University as a whole, in order to guarantee that the campus is adequately wired and equipped for distance-teaching, online instruction, synchronous and asynchronous delivery of courses, etc.

### ***B. Teaching***

#### APPROACH

According to the Internal Evaluation Report and statements by students interviewed by the Committee, the Department utilizes a variety of teaching methods for its undergraduate and postgraduate programs (lectures, workshops, seminars, small-groups, projects, in-class student presentations, papers, mentoring, and theses). Interviews with postgraduate and doctoral students, most of whom matriculated from the Department's undergraduate programs, revealed that the Department is meeting its teaching goals: the students conducted themselves and spoke in a manner that indicated that they had advanced from a "high-school mentality" to budding academics (a goal articulated in the Internal Evaluation Report). Students were

comfortable in engaging in academic discourse on a mature level. In addition to formal teaching, students feel that the faculty are approachable in offices and hallways.

Likewise, interviews conducted with undergraduate students revealed that, with a few exceptions, they hold the faculty in high regard and consider them to be, in general, experts in their fields. Undergraduates feel welcomed and supported when they approach professors. Most, but not all, reported that their emails and texts are promptly answered. The student-teacher relationship appears strong and healthy across all three levels of programs (undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral).

Interviews with the faculty, as well as statements in the Internal Evaluation Report, indicate that the student-teacher ratio is rising at an alarming pace. As a result of the State's failure to replace vacancies, faculty fear that they will not be able to sustain current levels of teaching excellence and student mentoring. It is also anticipated that pending retirements in the immediate future will result in shortages that will impact two specific sectors with even greater severity:

- The Education Sector has lost three positions in the last three years, resulting in (among other things) the Department's inability to provide all majors with supervised student teaching.
- The Psychology Sector has lost two positions in the last two years and now houses only five members, all at the Assistant Professor level. Given the administrative restrictions imposed by the State on lower faculty ranks, this Sector faces exceptional challenges, despite the accomplishments which it has demonstrated in teaching and research (see below). Sixty per cent of the Department's graduating students are in Psychology, the second (to Mathematics) largest major in the entire University of Ioannina. Many students from outside the Department enroll in Psychology courses, adding to the burden of a severely overstressed faculty. In addition, committee work within the Department is being assigned more frequently to non-tenured lecturers and assistant professors to make up for the loss of positions.

While staffing shortages accelerate, students' academic needs are increasing. The Internal Evaluation Report states that growing numbers of students are being admitted into the University and Department with ever weaker high-school preparation in academic writing. Students require more one-on-one attention in order to rise to the credible rank of "university students" at a time when the number of faculty is dwindling. The Committee considers this an untenable situation.

The Department's many laboratories are well-equipped and have adequate space for postgraduate and doctoral research, seminars, and tutoring. Auditorium space appears adequate (one with a capacity of over 200 students), although enrollment in some sections swells to 300-400. Auditorium facilities are adequate, however, only because most undergraduate students do not attend classes on a regular basis: according to teaching evaluations, only 25-40% of responding students report that they attend more than five sessions of a course per semester. This factor seriously affects the way in which teaching evaluations are to be interpreted (see below).

The Committee had the opportunity to review the MA theses and PhD dissertations but not undergraduate student examinations, despite its request to the Department for samples. In discussions with faculty and undergraduate students, the Committee learned that examinations require written (and not multiple choice) essay answers, a commendable but time-consuming practice. Faculty expressed concern that it is growing more difficult for the remaining members of the Department to devote the time necessary to evaluate such large numbers, even as committee work and other management duties increase as a result of staffing cuts.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

As indicated above, teaching procedures appear to be effective. Teaching materials and resources are of high quality. Many Departmental laboratories are used as seminar rooms and research centers. The technological equipment is up-to-date, although the University's technological infrastructure, as a whole, may not yet be equipped to take a leading role in educational technology.

The laboratory spaces are ample and foster a healthy community of research-oriented students. The open access which students have to laboratories and seminar rooms is conducive to linking research and teaching. Discussions with graduate students who received their undergraduate degree from the Department verified that they are receiving research training throughout upper-level undergraduate and all postgraduate courses.

Postgraduate and doctoral students report that they receive excellent guidance for theses and dissertations from faculty advisors and committees. Undergraduate students feel that courses are offered with enough consistency and regularity to enable them to complete the degree within the standard four-year period. This is an especially commendable achievement on the part of the Department, given the international norm of undergraduates' now requiring 5-7 years to complete a four-year degree.

In its 1 ½-2 hour session with the undergraduates pre-selected by the Department to meet with the Committee, the students voiced the following concerns and wishes:

- Although faculty welcome students who visit their offices, the initiative for such contact seems to lie with the students. More structure in proactive advising is needed, in addition to posted faculty office hours.
- Students feel that adherence to the prescribed sequence of programmatic courses, as outlined in the Student Handbook, is not rigorously followed. There is a student perception that the sequence of Cycle B courses requires tightening and prerequisites.
- Students desire a more timely notification of courses to be offered in the upcoming semester. When a scheduled course is suddenly canceled, they do not know what to take in its place. Closer student advising would be helpful.
- The criteria by which grades are determined remain unclear. Students would like a more objective and transparent grading system. Aside from approaching the instructor, they are not aware of procedures to be followed in requests for a change of grade.
- Although students who work one-on-one with faculty receive excellent guidance for written projects, the Department does not offer a workshop or special course in undergraduate academic writing. Written projects are

largely optional. It is possible for students to select courses in such a way as to complete the undergraduate degree after writing only one ten-page paper.

- Electives taken outside the Department to fulfill degree requirements are often viewed as irrelevant to the students' sequence of studies. Some find themselves in upper-division courses outside their major field for which they lack the prerequisites.
- Although most students in Education take a *practicum* in supervised student teaching, no such requirement formally exists.

As for teaching evaluations, it is unclear to students as to how they are used and what ends they serve. In the Internal Evaluation Report, faculty expressed concern over the content, design, and uses made of these evaluations. Given the irregularity and small percentage of regular class attendance by students (see above), the Committee is not certain that the evaluations constitute a representative sample of quantitative data. In general, the Greek system of non-mandatory undergraduate class-attendance is highly problematic in assessing the quality of university teaching.

The Committee is aware of the limitations and difficulties posed by the law in the evaluation and assessment of faculty for tenure review and for promotion in rank. The Committee nevertheless encourages the Department to establish internal procedures and criteria that clearly delineate expectations and requirements (in teaching, research, and service) as faculty advance in their careers. Such pro-active Departmental-based measures are now the norm in international universities. Faculty development procedures (e.g., guidelines for pre-tenure faculty, internal assessment of faculty who are considering applying for promotion, evaluation of teaching effectiveness by faculty peers, quality of published research, etc.) would be of value in building faculty morale and in serving students.

## RESULTS

As stated above, the teaching within the Department appears to be of a high quality. The Committee bases this finding more on discussions with the students than on teaching evaluations. Time to graduation is not perceived as a problem in need of attention.

The absence of a formal required teaching *practicum* in the Education Sector constitutes a gap in the Department's commitment to secondary education. Undergraduate students in Education, the Committee believes, must experience the "real world" of high school teaching first-hand as part of their training.

The shortage of faculty, especially acute in the Psychology Sector, has serious programmatic implications.

## IMPROVEMENT

Neither in the Internal Evaluation Report nor in discussions with the Committee did the faculty propose measures for the improvement of teaching. As a result of budget cuts, loss of faculty positions, and ever-changing State rules and regulations, the faculty may justifiably feel that any plans are unfeasible in this time of crisis. Nevertheless, the Committee encourages the Department to consider the following:

- Institute a yearly orientation day for all incoming undergraduates and provide follow-up sessions in the next and subsequent semesters. Create a culture of

“undergraduate student Departmental identity” such as already exists at the postgraduate and doctoral levels. Such “Student Success” initiatives are now common practice on an international level.

- Expand the current Student Handbook with more specific information on course sequencing, prerequisites, and academic ethics (e.g., “how to avoid unintentional plagiarism in a digital society”), grievance procedures, and the like. The solution proposed by one sector (“students are fairly early acquainted with these rules”) does not adequately address this now-international issue of academic ethics in a post-digital world in which information flows freely, often without proper acknowledgment of sources.
- Establish a systematic culture of written procedures, requirements, and regulations which students can access on a regular basis and thereby reduce the time-consuming need for *ad hoc* solutions (e.g., advising, change of supervisor, challenging a grade, processing a faculty grievance, etc.).
- Post syllabi and course descriptions that include workload expectations (reading and writing requirements, number of tests and quizzes, in-class presentations, etc.) and explain how grades will be computed.
- Institute a Writing Intensive Requirement in all three undergraduate programs, assuring that every student composes, with close faculty guidance, a serious academic paper in proper academic format in their third or fourth year of study (Cycle B). This can be implemented by revising an existing required course and upgrading it with a “Writing Intensive” designation. An undergraduate Writing Intensive requirement is now standard practice on an international level.
- For the Education Sector, collaborate with the University’s Departments of Pre-School Education and Primary Education to give students broader exposure to issues faced by all Greek public schools and to address the ever-widening knowledge-gaps that school students evidence as they advance to higher grades and ultimately to the University. These gaps, expressed as a concern in the Internal Evaluation Report, may find solutions in faculty collaborations that extend beyond this specific Department.
- For the Education Sector, incorporate an applied teaching concentration component to prepare majors for the realities of a career in secondary education (e.g., topics in assessment, course design, curricular development, supervised student teaching). It may be possible to address such topics within already-existing courses (e.g., “Language Didactics”) and to stipulate such courses as required within Cycle B.
- For the Philosophy sector, consider approaching the Department of Philology to develop and/or revise selected courses to make them more accessible to PEP students who must take them as distribution requirements. The collaborations that currently exist between these two departments/sectors in research and MA/PhD supervision should be expanded to undergraduate programmatic collaborations.
- For all three sectors, institute a formal teaching *practicum* requirement for all students who are preparing to become secondary school teachers.
- For the entire Department, institute an intradepartmental faculty professional review and development mechanism (especially in assessing teaching and research) to guide faculty as they strive toward tenure and promotion. Such mechanisms would serve to enhance, not replace or contradict, the state-mandated procedures now in place.



- For the entire Department, give priority to faculty staffing needs in Psychology, the most overstressed sector and the most highly-enrolled program in the Department.

### **C. Research**

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

#### **APPROACH**

The Department houses twelve research laboratories distributed among the three distinct programmatic sectors and directed by specific faculty, as follows:

#### **Philosophy**

1. The Laboratory for the Documentation and Study of the History of Social and Political Ideas (Prof. P. Noutsos)
2. The Laboratory for Studies in Modern Greek Philosophy (Prof. K. Petsios). This Laboratory has been awarded two Excellency Awards, and visitors to its website have exceeded 365,000 on-line visits.
3. The Laboratory for Plotinus Studies (Prof. G. Maggini)
4. The Laboratory for Platonic and Aristotelian Studies (Prof. I. Prelorentzos)

#### **Education**

1. The Laboratory for Empirical Research in Education ( Prof. A. Gotovos)
2. The Laboratory for Research in Education and Teachers In-Training ( Prof. E. Sianou-Kyrgiou)
3. The Laboratory for Research in Social Exclusion and Evaluation in Education (Prof. P. Papakonstantinou)
4. The Laboratory for the History of Modern Greek Education (Assoc. Prof. Th. Athanasiades)
5. The Laboratory for the Study and Research of Teaching and Evaluation of Language in Education (Prof. A. Gotovos)

#### **Psychology**

1. The Laboratory for Research in Dyslexia (recently renamed; Asst. Prof. A. M. Palaiologou)
2. The Laboratory for Cross-Cultural and Psychological Studies and Applications (Asst. Prof. N. Botatzis)
3. The Laboratory for Interdisciplinary Studies of New Technologies and Identities (formerly: Laboratory for Family Studies; Prof. D. Drosos, *pro tempore* head)

Most laboratories receive some funding from external sources as well as donations in books, manuscripts and other materials. Among such donations is the Philosophy Sector's "Malafouri Library." The laboratories combine original research with teaching and provide students (especially in graduate programs) with the opportunity to participate in research.

All laboratories have extensive and informative web pages. Some of these laboratories stand out as especially noteworthy for the impressive amount of original research uploaded on their web pages; such research is rarely available from any other sources. These laboratories, in particular, are to be highly commended.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Dating back to 1979, the research productivity (*i.e.*, books, articles/chapters, and conference papers) of current faculty members is distributed among the three sectors as indicated below. In compiling these numbers, the Committee also draws attention to selected (but not all) distinctions of a qualitative nature within each sector that bear special mention:

**Philosophy Sector:**

- 69 books published with Greek presses and the University of Ioannina; 7 books with international publishers; 7 edited books with national presses.
- 235 other publications (articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings) written in Greek; 76 in international journals. Some publications in Greek appear in the Departmental journal *Dodone*, which is not peer-reviewed.
- Over 245 papers presented papers at national and international conferences.

In addition to the three categories listed above, eighteen volumes of edited post-Byzantine manuscripts and printed books, with scholarly apparatus and critical commentary, have been published through the Laboratory for Research in Modern Greek Philosophy.

**Education Sector:**

- 21 books published by Greek publishers and the University of Ioannina, and 4 books published by international presses. The faculty has also edited one book with a national publisher.
- 163 publications (articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings) written in Greek, and 42 published in international journals. A number of the publications in Greek appear in *Dodone*.
- Over 117 papers in international and national conferences. Two senior members of the Sector did not provide information concerning conference presentations. The number herein reported may therefore be lower than actual conference activity. In addition, the Education Sector responds that the tallies in these numbers may include “addition mistakes.” The Sector did not, however, provide a corrected figure.

In addition to the three categories listed above, the Pedagogy Sector has produced an online *Greek-Romani and Romani-Greek Glossary*, the only such glossary in the world.

**Psychology Sector:**

- 18 books published by Greek publishers and the University of Ioannina, and one published with an international press. The faculty has also edited one book with a national press.
- 63 publications (articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings) published in Greek, and 72 published in international journals.
- Over 162 papers at international and national conferences.

Despite the junior status of its faculty, the Psychology Sector is publishing more articles in international than in Greek venues; the journals are of a high quality and rigorously peer-reviewed.

The Committee notes that, in recent years, the research activity in all three sectors is being carried out with limited funding, with reduced institutional support, and in a

local-regional context that imposes restrictions on data-gathering. The laboratories also suffer from shortages in technical support staff.

## RESULTS AND IMPROVEMENT

The Committee considers the aggregate number of publications satisfactory. The distribution and quality of publications varies across and within the three sectors, ranging from minimal productivity to work of excellent quality recognized on an international level. As is perhaps to be expected in a large multidisciplinary department with a long history and diverse research mission, patterns and trends among the publishing faculty are difficult to discern and assess by a single criterion. The endeavors and activities of faculty who publish in international peer-reviewed venues coexist with the achievements of other faculty who publish in regional/national journals and presses, both peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed.

Research expectations of university faculty throughout Greece are changing and increasing. Recently-hired faculty, in particular, are especially impacted by new requirements to publish on an international level. Although these are demanding times, the Committee encourages the Department to create a culture conducive to publishing in quality international venues, even as current activities in Greek publications continue. Publication in peer-reviewed journals and presses, both nationally and internationally, is especially to be encouraged and promoted.

Although the Department's Internal Evaluation Report, as well as comments made by faculty during on-site interview, indicate that some faculty view citations (*eteroanaphores*) as relevant only to the "exact sciences" (*thetikes epistemēs*), the Committee believes that the Department's research would elicit significant citations if published in international languages. It is laudable that this Department maintains a commitment to Greek-centered topics. But the Committee suggests that Greek studies, broadly conceptualized, are of wide interest and relevance to the international academic community as well. Publishing in Greek and in other languages does not place this Department in a conflict of mission.

The research faculty in this Department have many valuable things to say, although much of their work is accessible only to readers of Greek. Although some publications are accompanied by foreign-language summaries and synopses, these do not encompass the depth and breadth of research. The Committee recommends that more Departmental research be published in international languages, in addition to (i.e., not instead of) Greek. Multilingual faculty should pursue translations of their published research. For monolingual faculty, the Department and University should consider support services to provide translation assistance so that peer-reviewed books and articles may reach the widest possible audiences.

The Department is advised to provide more support and guidance to pre-tenure faculty as they pursue research. Such steps might include the following: 1) reduce the administrative/management and committee duties of pre-tenure faculty to allow them to conduct even more high-quality research for publication in peer-reviewed *fora*; 2) provide funds to faculty who present at international conferences and thereby establish and cultivate international collaborations; 3) support faculty to travel to academic centers abroad and participate in exchange programs (such as Erasmus).

The Department has a valuable asset in its long-standing journal *Dodone* and is well-

positioned to build on this scholarly tradition. The Committee recommends that *Dodone* be conceptually expanded in order to reach a wider audience. According to sector responses, the journal's current practice of accepting articles in English, French, and German results in approximately 30% of its papers being published in non-Greek. Although the remaining articles include a brief synopsis in a foreign language, the international scope of the journal deserves to be further broadened. As the Philosophy Sector reports, only the journal's English-language papers are included in the international *Philosopher's Index*. The same sector writes that the journal currently presents "a small but at the same time representative mirror of the department's dynamics ... which could easily soon be also available online, with all the pros and cons that such an online distribution entails." The Committee encourages this initiative.

The Committee also urges that *Dodone* advance to a fully peer-reviewed status, accepting for publication only submissions approved by an editorial board of referees both external and internal to the University of Ioannina. As suggested above, the journal would achieve maximum visibility with an online version.

#### ***D. All Other Services***

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

##### **APPROACH**

In surveying the Departmental facilities (laboratories, faculty and secretarial offices, auditorium, workrooms), the Committee finds that support services for the academic community are excellent. PhD students have ample space and enjoy access to all technologies for completing dissertations. Seminar rooms for undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral students are abundant and spacious.

Secretarial services are at a very high level. Students and faculty express high satisfaction with all Departmental services. Supplies and materials are generously available in both electronic and hardcopy formats. Perhaps because these services are already well-structured and, for the most part, well-staffed, the Department has not articulated plans to improve administrative or management procedures.

As for the student presence on campus, the faculty indicated, both in the written Internal Evaluation Report and in interviews, that they already feel overburdened by large enrollments and therefore do not encourage an increase in student numbers. In fact, they are asking that fewer students be admitted in order to maintain the tradition of close student-interaction. The faculty made it clear that they are student-centered and that, under normal financial and legislative circumstances, they would welcome larger enrollments.

The faculty expressed a persistent concern over the University's extreme tardiness in reimbursing travel expenses to national and international conferences. The absence of a steady administrative policy concerning faculty professional travel imposes personal financial stresses and thwarts the Department's mission to expose its research faculty on the international level.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The Department's infrastructure is strong, consisting of three distinct sectors which cooperate and collaborate across disciplinary lines.

The University library is extremely impressive, holding excellent collections of original texts and secondary scholarship necessary for research. The library is student-friendly, offering free internet access and 800 study stations with an adequate number of PCs. The Committee was especially impressed during its tour by the high level of student activity during the pre-Christmas holidays. This suggests that there is a strong culture of student life on campus.

Although the library assists faculty in securing books from abroad *via* the Inter-Library Loan System, some faculty indicated that this access was uneven in some areas, depending on whether or not institutional dues (*syndromes*) have been paid on time. As a result, faculty often must spend their own money to procure materials needed for their research. The Committee strongly believes that the University must prioritize all support services for research faculty.

A driving tour of the campus made it clear that the University of Ioannina is a mature and full-service campus, complete with a gymnasium, cultural centers, academic conference facilities, dormitory facilities, student union, etc. The Vice-Rector, Prof. Georgios Kapsalis, expressed special pride in the University's tradition of providing room and full board for all students in need, even to the point of subsidizing hotel rooms for students after on-campus dormitory spaces are filled to capacity.

## RESULTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Discussions with the Department articulated particular needs which the Department and the University should address:

- Increase funding for faculty participation in international conferences and expedite reimbursement procedures.
- Reduce the number of incoming students to avoid further increases in the student-teacher ratio so that faculty can better serve the students already here.
- Maintain adequate levels of technical support staff within the Department, an area that has recently suffered from sudden and austere cuts by the State.

## Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

The Department is to be lauded for its many outreach activities throughout the city of Ioannina, the region of Epirus, and the rest of Greece. These activities, often carried out with no remuneration for faculty, are especially important in furthering the Department's commitment to community education and culture. Examples of such activity include:

- The cultivation of relationships with donors and benefactors who contribute funds, library collections, and archive material.
- The regular offering of national and international conferences on campus, bringing interested citizens to the region.
- The ongoing presentation of lectures, talks, and workshops to local and regional communities and cultural societies.
- The frequent publication of articles, commentaries, and regional and national

level.

- The spearheading of an initiative to incorporate children from Roma families into the Greek public school system.
- The significant involvement in the University's student psychological services program (SKEPI).

***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.*

The Internal Evaluation Report concludes with a brief (two-page) statement on plans for improvement. Although the Department is eager to further its mission, the Internal Report expresses concern over the feasibility of realizing plans for improvement in this era of prolonged crisis. In particular, the Internal Report laments the ever-increasing restrictions imposed by the State that drastically reduce funding for higher education and foster an environment of unstable legislation. Discussions with the Department's Associate and Full Professors corroborated these written statements. The Committee's open question to this group, which included the Department Head, "Where do you see yourselves as a Department in the next ten years?" generated a response of silence. In addition, two of the Department's three sector responses cite the demoralizing effect that the State has had on faculty, with one sector declaring intent to publicize these problems in the Greek press. The External Committee sympathizes with these concerns.

The Committee is fully aware of and sympathetic to the difficulties facing all Greek universities during this protracted period of economic uncertainty and legislative instability. Such a context should neither, however, exonerate institutions and programs from their responsibility to engage in long-term and short-term planning, nor should it dishearten them from articulating future aspirations, especially as they sustain the hope that the current difficulties will eventually abate and reverse. Even within the context of the current "crisis," visionary planning that originates within the Department will assist all educators and administrators in managing the difficulties and in positioning the faculty to move forward in a proactive manner when the situation finally improves. As the saying goes, "We plan for the worst but we hope for the best." It is with this spirit that the Committee makes the recommendations which appear in section F.

***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 by now a well-established and mature entity within the University of Ioannina. The curriculum embraces all three levels of higher education (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral). The programs offer an appropriate combination of disciplines aiming at a healthy balance of theory and practice. Along with the University as a whole, the Department is well-poised to advance to even higher levels. Despite the external difficulties mentioned in Section E, the Committee

believes that the following recommendations, especially those focusing on internal adjustments, will facilitate this progress.

It is with this spirit that the Committee encourages the Department to consider the following recommendations:

- Review and revise the current curriculum in all three sectors of the undergraduate concentrations, aiming for clearer focus and programmatic clarity. Establish a tighter sequence of courses with a clear articulation of prerequisites, especially for courses in Cycle B of all majors.
- Expand the Student Handbook to provide more guidance and support to students as they advance through their undergraduate programs. In addition to using this vehicle as a list of course offerings, incorporate detailed instructions concerning prerequisites, proper sequencing in course selections, and guidance for students seeking modifications within their individual program of studies.
- Build on the Department's tradition of positive student-teacher interaction by incorporating student-advising guidelines and matters of student ethics into the Student Handbook. Such information is now routinely included within Student Handbooks internationally.
- Advise all incoming students with a formal freshmen-orientation and offer follow-up sessions at the beginning of every semester for the first two years of study to guarantee that students remain up-to-date on their academic progress. Such practice, aiming at "Student Success," is now common on an international level.
- Introduce the practice of posting (online and hardcopy) detailed syllabi for each course, describing student workload expectations and grading criteria.
- To further the Department's mission to perpetuate a high level of academic writing, implement a Writing-Intensive course requirement for all three undergraduate programs. Such a requirement would be in line with international undergraduate programs.
- Expand undergraduate degree requirements in all three sectors to include a *practicum (Praktiki Askisi)* requirement.
- For students in the Education Sector, structure upper-division course requirements to ensure that all graduates receive extensive practice in supervised student teaching.
- Faculty in the Education Sector should explore programmatic collaborations and shared-courses with the University's Department of Pre-School Education and Primary Education.
- Faculty in the Philosophy Sector, who already collaborate with the University's Department of Philology in research and thesis/dissertation advising, should explore collaborations in their undergraduate programs.
- To maintain/restore a healthy student/teacher ratio, the Department should give priority to adding full-time faculty in Psychology, where the teaching load and student demands are the heaviest.
- Create a culture conducive to publishing more peer-reviewed research in good international venues, even as current activities in peer-reviewed Greek publications continue.

- Provide more support and guidance to pre-tenure faculty and articulate clear performance standards regarding published scholarship that are in alignment with national requirements and international standards.
- Articulate clear performance standards in teaching, research, and service so that pre-tenure faculty and candidates for promotion fully understand the criteria by which they are evaluated.
- Establish more international collaborations by encouraging and supporting faculty to travel to academic centers abroad and participate in exchange programs.
- Expand the scope and raise the publication standards for the journal *Dodone* by implementing a peer-review process for submissions and increasing the number of articles written in international languages. In addition to providing hardcopy issues, publish *Dodone* online in order to achieve international visibility and facilitate research collaborations with international scholars.



### The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Professor Emeritus, Rick M. Newton
2. Professor Stefanos Efthymiadis
3. Associate Professor Panayota Gounari
4. Professor Athanasios Raftopoulos