



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

**Α.ΔΙ.Π.**

**H.Q.A.A.**

ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

## **EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

ATHENS UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

June 25, 2010

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### **External Evaluation Committee**

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Marketing and Communication of the Athens University of Economics and Business consisted of the following five (5) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Professor Vakratsas Demetrios (Coordinator)  
McGill University, Canada
  
2. Professor Tsoulouhas Theofanis,  
North Carolina State University, USA
  
3. Professor Thanassoulis Emmanuel  
Aston University, Birmingham, UK
  
4. Mr. Koutsianas Nikolaos  
CEO, APIVITA Natural Products, Greece
  
5. Mr. Agis Pistiolas  
Head of Marketing and Exports Dpt, EV. GE. PISTIOLAS S.A., Greece

**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

- The committee visited the department over a three-day period, Monday June 21 to Wednesday June 23, and met with Faculty members, the Rector and Vice-rectors as well as students from all degree programs; undergraduate, master’s (full and part-time) and Ph. D.
- During the first day the committee attended a presentation by the Department, led by its chair, Professor Papavasiliou. The presentation was thorough and comprehensive and covered all the main points related to the evaluation including Curriculum, Teaching, Research, Services and outreach. The presentation was interactive and the members of the Faculty answered satisfactorily the questions the committee posed. Following the presentation the committee met with the Vice-Rector of Academic affairs and had a discussion about the various degree programs and possibilities of further exchange programs that will enhance the international reputation of the institution and, consequently, the department.
- On the second day the Committee met with a large number of Faculty members to discuss issues related to teaching and research as well as potential inhibiting factors both at the institutional and the state level. Subsequently the committee met with the University Rector. Unfortunately, the meeting was interrupted by a group of students that demanded to be present and persisted that committee members identify themselves because they were opposed to the presence of a practitioner member of the committee. The afternoon was taken up by a meeting with undergraduate students as well as graduates of the undergraduate program who discussed curriculum, teaching and infrastructure issues. The committee also visited the Secretariat of the Department as well as the undergraduate teaching facilities.
- On the third day, the Committee met with graduate students from all programs (Master’s full and part-time, in Marketing and Communications, HR and PRIMA and the PhD program). The sessions were focused on curriculum and teaching issues as well as student needs.
- The following documents were provided to and examined by the committee:
  - The Department’s Internal Evaluation report (including tables with statistics on research productivity, average grades of graduating students, list of courses offered at various degree programs etc.)
  - The Department’s Power Point presentation
  - The Department’s newsletter on the research conducted by the Faculty including list of publication
  - The Department’s study guide

## II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

- The internal evaluation report was comprehensive with extensive appropriate supporting documentation including tables, figures etc. The committee would have liked to see more evidence regarding the placement of graduates and the career progression as well as the depth of research collaboration with other institutions (within and outside Greece) and the nature of the research projects undertaken by the faculty members.
- Overall, the Department has met the objectives of the evaluation process as evident from both the Internal Evaluation report and the site visit.

## **A. Curriculum**

### *Undergraduate program.*

#### APPROACH

- The goal of the curriculum is to develop the knowledge and skills of students in the theories and practices of management, marketing, communication, human resource management and organizational behavior. The curriculum is designed in order to be responsive to the needs of society and the marketplace so that graduates of the undergraduate program can acquire vocational positions corresponding to their level of qualifications.
- The department has established an undergraduate curriculum committee which considers feedback of faculty members in order to propose curriculum revisions which are then forwarded to the general assembly for approval. The faculty pointed out that teaching evaluations are also considered in this process.
- The curriculum is consistent with the objectives stated above. The internal report explains that the department was created in its current form in 2002 after staff in the fields of Operational Research and Marketing left to join the then created Department of Management Science and Technology.
- The committee notes that the curriculum is not always implemented as designed, in that some elective courses may not be offered in certain years, i.e. they “remain in the books” often due to insufficient uptake by students. This is potentially due to the fact that a large number of courses are available while only a relatively small number of “free electives” are necessary to fulfill the degree requirements. The design of the curriculum should look for ways to minimize this problem.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- The undergraduate degree offers three options: Marketing, Communication and Mixed. The Marketing option is well structured and popular with students. The labeling of the communication option, on the other hand, does not reflect the HR/OB content of the program accurately. It includes a wide array of courses, both OB-related and communication-related. Although it is understandable that “communication” includes both external (e.g. advertising and PR) as well as internal (intra-organizational) forms of communication, this may not be clear to the students especially in the initial stage of their studies, thus causing confusion. Perhaps a re-labeling and even re-focusing of this option should be considered. Further, some students claimed that this option is more theoretical. They also mentioned that they felt the multi-media course is irrelevant.
- The great majority of courses are taught by full-time faculty members who are well-qualified and cover a wide range of topics. The curriculum is comparable to those offered by reputable international schools.
- Although classroom capacity appears adequate for the delivery of undergraduate courses, classrooms are not well maintained, have poor climate control and instructors frequently encounter audio visual (AV) problems.
- There are a good number of projects carried out either individually or within groups of students. This helps student exposure to the practice world and to teamwork. In the same vein students are also exposed to a number of case studies. A case course could be offered to further enhance the presentation and writing skills of students.
- The Department has established a flourishing exchange program at undergraduate level with universities in other countries (approximately 150 exchange agreements)

and also participates in the ERASMUS program. This offers participating students the opportunity to experience education in foreign countries and share cross cultural experiences.

- The number of courses offered at the undergraduate level is rather extensive. This can lead to some elective courses being poorly attended. Further, the flexibility given to students to register for courses beyond the minimum number required for the degree, and the ability to then drop 'excess' courses at short notice, complicates planning for class sizes and avoidance of timetable clashes.

#### RESULTS

- There is no formal process for following up the placement and career paths of students after their graduation and this is a priority the department should set. However, the department reports that in a relevant research undertaken, there is a sense of appreciation of degree by the marketplace. The department should pursue further quantification of the effectiveness of the undergraduate program by closely monitoring graduate initial placement and career progression through an ongoing formal process.

#### IMPROVEMENT

- Core courses for the first three years of studies overlap with courses of other Departments. Certain courses taught by different departments are virtually identical. The possibility to teach core courses jointly with larger classes and exploit economies of scale at university level, without detriment to the quality of student experience, should be considered.
- The committee recommends establishing the position of "Program Director" for the undergraduate degree who will oversee general curriculum issues such as content, delivery and student experience on an ongoing basis, and report to the Department. He or she may at times initiate changes to the curriculum to keep it up to date.
- Undergraduate programs would benefit from the integration of quantitative methods within the marketing courses. More exposure of students to finance and accounting concepts would also be beneficial.

## **A. Curriculum**

### *Graduate and doctoral programs.*

#### APPROACH

- The goal of the curriculum of the Master's programs is to provide students with highly specialized skills in the degree subjects. The recently launched PRIMA program also aims at offering international experience to students via exchanges with international participating institutions. The curriculum is consistent with these objectives except that in the case of the PRIMA program, students voiced some concerns as they encountered difficulties in securing an exchange. The committee acknowledges that this could be due to the recency of the program but the department should take great care in smoothing out such glitches.
- The curricula of all Master's programs are generally well-structured and designed with specific sets of admission criteria. They are well-designed for developing student skills in the areas of marketing, human resource management and communication. However, as with the case of the undergraduate program, in the case of the Marketing and Communications with New Technologies (MENT) Master's some elective courses may not be offered due to insufficient uptake by students.
- The goal of the doctoral program is to train students to acquire a high level of skills in order to be able to conduct high quality research and become faculty members in reputable universities. There is no formal curriculum as there are no courses offered at the doctoral level which is a concern especially for research tools and academic writing courses or seminars. Doctoral students also voiced such concerns in the committee's meeting with them.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- The courses are taught by well-qualified full-time faculty members and cover a wide range of topics. The curriculum is comparable to those offered by reputable international schools.
- The building infrastructure for the delivery of graduate courses is satisfactory, with the classrooms used being comparable to those of many international institutions.
- Students of graduate programs are exposed to a great deal of case studies and the balance between practical and theoretical content appears to be good. The practical dimension of the courses is further boosted by guest lectures delivered by top-level practitioners with vast experience in the business world.
- The delivery of courses within the part-time master's programs during only certain days of the week in block form is appealing for students working outside Athens and offers a valuable service for such students while enabling the university to increase its intake of graduate programs.
- The number of courses offered at the HR master's program is rather large. Students felt the large number of courses meant some interesting areas were not covered in sufficient depth.

#### RESULTS

- There are no formal processes for monitoring the placement and career progression of both Master's and Ph.D. students and the Department should focus on putting some places to work as it will demonstrate the effectiveness of the programs. This is certainly

feasible due to the smaller number of graduates compared to the undergraduate program.

- The Department in its presentation to the committee has pointed out that the number of applications for the Master's programs has increased which should be considered as a good indicator of the program's effectiveness and reputation.

#### IMPROVEMENT

- Graduate programs appear to operate to a large extent as separate entities in terms of resources (e.g. secretarial support, computer labs). There may be scope for pooling resources across degree programs to generate economies of scale and provide better services for students.
- Graduate programs would benefit from the integration of quantitative methods within the marketing courses. More exposure of students to finance and accounting concepts would also be beneficial.
- The minimum GMAT level of 600 points required for admission to the PhD program is adequate. In contrast we would recommend raising the minimum GMAT score of 550 points required for admission to the master's programs.
- As stated elsewhere, the role of PhD students is not clearly defined. There is a lack of an institutional framework that describes their duties and benefits. Although this may be an issue of state legislation, it forces Ph.D. students to heavily rely on their supervisors for any procedural matters including securing the appropriate resources to conduct research.

## **B. Teaching**

### APPROACH:

The Department has a well-defined pedagogic policy comparable to those followed by established international schools. Teaching methods consist of a mix of lectures, labs (or problem solving sessions), projects (group and individual) and practical training.

Based on the Department's internal report, the average teaching staff to student ratio is approximately 1 to 24. A target for a ratio smaller than 20 is desirable.

Overall, the collaboration between faculty and students seems to be adequate. Each student, at least at the Master's level, is assigned an advisor to guide him/her through his/her studies. Further comments are provided in the implementation section below.

The Committee believes that classrooms in the main building (used for the teaching of undergraduate courses) are adequate in terms of basic standards such as appropriate desks and chairs; however, they are in grave need of basic maintenance such as cleaning and painting, as well as better climate control. For example, when the committee met with approximately two hundred undergraduate students in a classroom, the air conditioning was inadequate and the windows could not be opened. The situation is much improved at the building which is used for the teaching of master's programs. Again, further comments are provided in the implementation section below.

With respect to the use of information technologies, there are computing and multimedia presentation resources available, but some are either dated or have reached the end of their usable lifespan so that they break down in high frequency. More specific comments include:

- Multi-media lab software is not up-to-date according to student claims. Access hours are limited due to the lack of resources in hiring after-hours staff.
- Faculty and students report technical problems with the use of projection and computer equipment. This could be problematic in case exams are delivered using the computer. Missing considerable lecture time due to non-operating audio-visual equipment was reported to be a frequent occurrence.

Regarding the examination system, the Department relies on a combination of assessment methods, including problem solving questions, labs or problem solving sessions, research projects, final examinations and practical training. However, midterm exams are not typically offered in most courses. The inclusion of midterms could be a motivating factor in student learning, facilitate gradual learning and provide more opportunities to students to improve a low grade. Instead, the current system relies on allowing for multiple opportunities to retake the final exam, which is inconsistent with international practice. That is, instead of students taking a couple of midterms and a final, they are taking a final exam

multiple times until they pass it.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

The Department has 25 regular faculty members and 6 additional teaching or lab staff members.

- The Department uses the online “eClass” tool for the submission of material by the students and the dissemination of knowledge in general, as well as for the speedy turnaround of assignment feedback if properly used. The committee found that students are quite satisfied with the use of the tool.
- Faculty members are available to students via e-mail and hold a minimum of two office hours per week. Nevertheless, some students claimed that faculty access and responsiveness can be improved.
- Faculty is required to collect teaching evaluations at the end of each teaching semester. We recommend the inclusion of the following two general questions that are currently missing from the undergraduate teaching evaluation form: (i) evaluate the overall effectiveness of the instructor and (ii) evaluate the overall quality of this course.
- Faculty members host guest lectures by experienced practitioners. The students are very responsive to them and would like the number of guest lectures to be increased.
- There are extensive exchange agreements with a wide range of institutions. The department contributes 12 courses to the ERASMUS program, which provides a great deal of international exposure.
- AIESEC cooperation helps students gain valuable experience through projects.
- The number of group projects is satisfactory.
- The department requires progress reports by Ph.D. students, and faculty members encourage them to publish their work in reputable refereed journals.

#### RESULTS

Overall, the committee believes that the efficacy of teaching is satisfactory. We are not aware of discrepancies in the success/failure rate between courses. 80% of students graduate within five years. This percentage does not seem to be inconsistent with Greek educational system practices, but it would be considered low in accordance with international standards. The average grade of graduation is satisfactory (ranging between 7 and 7.3 in the years 2002-2007) and trending upwards. However, the percentage of high grades (8.5 and above) is low and the grade distribution is heavily concentrated towards the middle part of the curve.

Additional evidence of teaching efficacy based on the committee’s feedback from student meetings is summarized below:

- Part-time Master's students (marketing and communication as well as HR) have a generally positive impression of the program.
- Students commented on the excellent teaching qualifications of PRIMA faculty.
- Instructors use state-of-the art course delivery methods (e.g. powerpoint presentations).
- Students commented positively on the integrity (transparency) of the teaching evaluation process. A further improvement may be the online gathering of teaching evaluations.
- All student groups were quite pleased with the available library resources, but were annoyed by disruptions in journal subscriptions due to budgetary issues.
- Overall, the students we met, at all levels, exhibited a high level of maturity and motivation.

#### IMPROVEMENT

The Department proposes several means of improvement, such as, increasing faculty salaries to compensate for the low instructor to student ratio (1/175 for core courses) and attract better quality faculty, increasing the supporting and administrative staff, increasing the number and size of classrooms and offices, upgrading the labs, and reducing the number of incoming students which has recently escalated due to the lack of a quota on transfers. They also highlight the difficulties in the day to day operations they encounter due to administrative bureaucracies and the lack of a transparent and stable institutional framework.

The committee would like to point out the following areas for improvement based on student feedback during the visit:

- Undergraduate students thought that the balance between theory and practice is tilted towards theory without enough practical experience. Master's students would appreciate more case studies.
- Encourage the use of new technologies in student performance evaluation especially in large course sections (for instance, student remotes communicating with a sensor connected to the instructor's laptop).
- Avoid allocating 100% of the grade to a single final exam. The committee does acknowledge though that many courses and instructors offer multiple means of evaluation.
- Grading could be partially outsourced to doctoral students. This can have a dual benefit: first, to lighten the load of the faculty and, second, to provide valuable teaching-related experience to doctoral students.
- There is no peer teaching evaluation system in place. We also recommend a mentorship program for new faculty (entry-level) members who are new to teaching.
- The exit interview process should be formalized to facilitate program and course revisions.
- Students claim that on occasion some lectures are delivered by Ph.D. students without prior communication. Nevertheless, as argued earlier, the committee believes that it is a

good idea to involve Ph.D. students in the teaching process on a formal and structured basis in order for them to gain experience.

- Attendance of courses can be improved through the use of multiple means of evaluation (homework, group projects, midterm examinations etc.) as well as more interactive lectures involving student discussions. In fact, students argued that attendance is higher in courses that require such evaluations.
- Students claim that there is no timely evaluation of assignments and there is limited feedback provided. This leads to uncertainty regarding the grading process and scale.
- Students complained that projects cannot be carried over to a future examination period, leading to waste of student effort.
- There should be some consideration of spreading assignment deadlines to avoid high peaks of student workload. Undergraduate students claim that there are too many projects in the last year of studies.
- Students claim that books are distributed late although a limited number of copies are available through the library.
- Students claim that teaching evaluation results are not utilized to improve course and teaching quality. We encourage the gathering of informal mid-semester teaching evaluations as a way for speeding up the receipt of feedback.
- Assign more exercises (homework) to help students comprehend the material taught.
- Attendance for undergraduate courses is quite low (students claimed it is less than 40%). Mandatory attendance at least for first-year courses (where the biggest problem lies) could partially remedy this issue. Assigning points for attendance is another means for enhancing attendance.
- Students claim that too many courses are required for graduation.
- Some students claim that a single course could be taught by several non-coordinated faculty members.
- Undergraduate students request the offering of summer courses. This will also make the use of infrastructure more efficient.
- Faculty members are encouraged to include more guest lectures from industry practitioners. One way to facilitate this process would be to establish executive-in-residence positions.
- Students claim that there are not enough internships.
- HR Master's students claim that courses are fast-paced and would like to have more in-depth exposure to the course subject. Students were positive towards courses with more contact hours. The same applies to the PRIMA program.
- Marketing Master's students enjoy off-site elective summer courses. However, students felt that they are important enough to be required.
- Students would like to choose their major later rather than in the beginning.
- Graduate students suggested that program candidates should be screened more carefully in terms of their potential level of interest and qualifications.
- New technology material in the relevant Master's program MENT should be integrated

in all courses including the required ones.

- Students asked for more case studies and examples from the Greek marketplace, and more business strategy game simulations.
- There is an overlap of summer electives and core courses in the PRIMA program.
- Encourage faculty to incorporate their own research experience into their teaching.
- The number of visiting professors is limited.
- The majority of PhD students have obtained their undergraduate degree at AUEB (too much inbreeding?). The application process should target students from other institutions including international ones.
- Master's students appreciate the theoretical foundation provided by the courses for their work experience.
- Some students were annoyed by the fact that certain electives are not offered.
- In general, students thought that PRIMA so far "oversold and under-delivered." The books they were provided were viewed as rather inadequate. They would like more suggestions of alternative texts. We do understand that PRIMA is still a program in its infancy.
- More links with business community for PRIMA.

## **C. Research**

### **APPROACH**

- The Department's policy is the continuous and thorough investigation of issues related to marketing and communications as well as broader business administration issues such as Organizational Behaviour and Human Resources. It should be noted that a significant number of Faculty members conduct research in the aforementioned two areas.
- The Department has set an extensive number of criteria for assessing the quality of research and for making promotion decisions. These criteria (cited in detail in the department's internal assessment report) include number of articles and types of journals based on well-established lists such as ABS and JQL.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

- The Department has a strong research-oriented culture and the Faculty should be commended for their commitment. Unfortunately, due to an inflexible legal framework (e.g. standard and invariant pay scales for each rank regardless of research performance) there are virtually no financial or other incentives except for that of promotion. However, it should be noted that the Department has established a best researcher award accompanied by an honorarium, as well as Faculty development grants to help researchers at entry-level ranks jump-start their research.
- Support is provided for participating in internationally recognized conferences both to faculty members (up to two conferences per year) as well as PhD students (one conference per year) provided they present their work. The committee finds such levels of support satisfactory and conducive to research.
- Library resources are satisfactory according to the faculty members and the availability of fully operating online access facilitates the faculty's research productivity and flexibility of working off-site. This is particularly important given the extraneous inhibiting factors that contribute negatively to the working environment at the University (student events, smoking, loud music, interference by groups of individuals etc.)
- Three research labs provide support and infrastructure for research: The Athens Laboratory of Research in Marketing, the Multi-media Lab and the Human Resource lab. Based on discussions with faculty associated with the multi-media lab, its use has declined over the years due to lack of sufficient funds and the concern that funding and sponsorship by firms may meet with resistance by some groups in the student body.
- Faculty members have published their work in reputable journals such as Journal of Marketing, Journal of Retailing and Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science among others. In addition, faculty disseminates its research through conference proceedings, in professional publications as well as in the general and business press. Some publications are co-authored by researchers outside the department but this number can increase particularly for the cases of co-authorship with renowned

international scholars, in order to forge international collaborations and research networking.

- Members of the Faculty have embarked on a variety of current research projects involving topics such as green marketing, sales management, tourism and hospitality marketing etc. There are also international collaborations such as the CRANET and GLOBE programs for topics related to Organizational Behavior and Leadership respectively.
- The Department organizes research seminars where distinguished international scholars are invited to present their most recent work to the Faculty and Ph.D. students. It also disseminates the research output in a newsletter published every two years.

#### RESULTS

- There is an extensive list of publications suggesting a satisfactory rate of output of peer reviewed papers per member of staff. The papers are published in good quality journals for the most part but there is scope to further raise the average quality level of the target journals.
- The Department has established a three-member committee to evaluate the research work of Faculty members and provide guidance for future research priorities.
- The research work of Faculty members has received over 1,000 citations in the five years preceding 2008. This is considerable even though the time span or faculty complement the citations relate to is not clear. Since, currently, there are different databases measuring citations using distinct ways and methods (e.g. Web of Science, Google Scholar etc), the department should collect data and monitor citations separately from each source further establish the quality of their publications.
- Most Ph.D. students have presented their work in internationally recognized conferences, which is a notable achievement by international standards. In addition, some Ph.D. students have published their work in reputable journals.
- Faculty members have received recognition of their overall contribution through chairmanships of local and international professional associations as well as organizations. However, recognition for specific research contributions is also desirable, especially at the international level.

#### IMPROVEMENT

- The systematic approach of the department to the monitoring and assessment of research output using specific criteria should be highlighted and commended. The committee suggests that emphasis should be given to quality rather than quantity of research with the objective of publishing in more reputable and influential journals even at the cost of a lower number of papers. This will further boost the Department's reputation, especially at the international level. The lists currently used by the Department (ABS, JQL) are extensive but include journals of varying quality. Emphasis should be placed on the higher quality journals of those lists (e.g. top quartile), to encourage all faculty members across all ranks to publish their best

research in the best possible academic outlets.

- Many of the papers published by the faculty are joint within and outside the Department and this is commendable. Joint research can lead to real gains through exploiting complementary skills, experience and knowledge of team members. In the pursuit of team research, the senior members of faculty should ensure that those new to research can still develop independent research agendas over time in which they take the lead even if the research involves teams.
- The internal evaluation gives little information about both the extent and the depth of collaborative research between the Department and institutions within and outside Greece.
- The internal evaluation gives a long list of research projects undertaken in the last five years or projects that are in progress. Unfortunately it does not give information about the nature of each project, the outcomes and the role, lead or support, of the Department within each project. The committee would encourage the Department to maintain involvement in such projects and, where there is scope, improve the role of its staff in such projects.

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

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

#### APPROACH

- The Department has 5 administrative assistants each for undergraduate and graduate programs. The latter also support labs and related staff.
- The Department values the services provided to teaching staff and students and considers them as an integral part of the Department's operations.
- The Department is committed to simplifying administrative procedures. For example, they are currently implementing an on-line grade submission process.
- The University has assigned space dedicated to student social activities, but it is in an inappropriate location.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- The facilities at Patission street are visibly in poor state. The pavement before entering the building resembles a bazaar with itinerant sellers, while on proceeding into the building the visitor finds students or others playing cards and passing the time as if the corridor is a café, while the walls sport a variety of posters. The offices and classrooms were generally in poor state. Overall the building did not feel like a pleasant environment for students or staff.
- There are no signs of cultural or athletic activity in the building.
- In contrast, the facilities at Lefkados are generally in good condition, clean and conducive to learning.
- Computer labs appeared to be adequate at the graduate level. At the undergraduate level access was problematic especially in terms of the number of hours of the day during which the labs were open. The number of students per available computer is also too large necessitating the teaching of students in many repeat groups.
- Administrative staff appear to be restricted to purely record keeping and maintaining paper trails of students, grades etc. There was no indication that staff with sufficient qualifications were appointed to offer higher level managerial and planning support to academic staff.
- There is a functioning careers office to help students progress to jobs after their studies. This is to be commended and supported by the Department.

#### RESULTS

- Academic staff felt that, on the whole, support both from administrative and technical staff is satisfactory.

- There is no security within the school and the faculty feel intimidated on occasion by other individuals.

#### IMPROVEMENTS

- The Department has automated the grade submission process through the use of on line facilities and should be commended for that.
- The Department should consider engaging administrator(s) who would be capable of offering higher level support to senior faculty on strategic planning and management issues.
- The department should consider ways to make the environment at the building in Patission Street more conducive to learning. The Committee appreciates this is a University rather than Department issue but the Department should press this issue to the extent it is capable within existing structures.
- Administrative personnel should devote time in handling alumni relations and tracking the career paths of alumni.
- Within the confines of the legal framework within Greece, and in particular given the inability of any student or staff member to summon police in case of serious incidents, such as verbal or physical threats or vandalism, the Department should explore ways to enhance the sense of security for students and staff. There may be a possibility of setting up volunteer groups in the style of ‘neighbourhood watch’ schemes from within the university community itself to protect persons and property.
- Students could be provided a space for their own use, which does not interfere with the University’s everyday operations to avoid using access corridors as places to relax. The Committee appreciates such space for student use should be provided but in a way which does not detract from the functioning and appearance of the University.
- Smoking should not be allowed in the building – it is not conducive to learning and human interaction.

### **Collaboration with Social, Cultural and Production organizations (SCP)**

The subject matter of the Department requires the close collaboration with the SCP organizations, so that students may gain valuable experience from the workplace.

Faculty members have collaborated with various SCP organizations in a number of activities, including:

Presentation in day-seminars and conferences, training of employees in the subject covered by the Department, recruitment of personnel of companies and organizations, research and consultancy, membership of award committees, participation in students' academic competition.

At the same time, faculty members disseminate their research more widely to society through publication in the press and e-media, as well as information leaflets. The faculty frequently invites guest lecturers from SCP organizations, which is an important element for providing an integrated learning experience.

In contrast, student site visits to firms and organizations are limited.

At the undergraduate level, students are asked to broaden their learning experience through the use of case studies, labs, library resources, and surveys to SCP organizations, rather than visits to their sites.

In addition, undergraduate students participate at a rate of 40% in internship programs which is considered rather low.

In contrast, all graduate students participate in internship programs. Furthermore, data collection from firms for the purposes of completing their thesis is much better facilitated than in the case of undergraduate students, reflecting greater recognition of the Master's program by firms and organizations.

Regarding the employment opportunities for graduates, the Department collaborates with the career office of the University and participates in career days, while there is no alumni relations office, neither at the Department nor at the University level.

In conclusion, the committee recognizes a significant effort from the majority of faculty members with the objective of strengthening the links between students and SCP's. The committee suggests the following improvement points:

- Establishing a more formal approach to linking the Department with SCP's rather than leaving it up to initiatives of individual faculty members. In particular, the committee suggests the formation of a coordinating committee that forges a closer and more formal relationship with SCP's.
- Increasing the participation of students in internship programs.
- Encouraging the establishment of an alumni association, as well as increasing firm and student participation in career days, and better student networking, in general.
- Organizing more frequent student site visits in firms and organizations.
- Encouraging a more active student participation in cultural activities and social causes (e.g. volunteerism), given the Department's curriculum objectives.

### ***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.*

While there is no formal short-term or longer-term plan, nevertheless the Department has informally discussed future directions and strategies and is committed to doing so in the future. It is worth mentioning again that the Department has been doing extremely well overall, with or without formal compact planning. It is self-evident that the Department would benefit from setting its vision, aims and objectives and developing plans, including resources for achieving them.

It is also worth noting that with respect to the hiring of new faculty and promotion, the Department has set very high standards and has committed to maintaining them. High quality research by faculty and collaborative international activities such as PRIMA will facilitate the transition of the University from a leading Greek institution to a world-class institution.

The Department faces several factors inhibiting operations and growth:

- The building situation is extremely pressing. The lack of space is evident. From what the committee heard, it is not unheard of for new faculty to wait for years before getting a permanent private office. Students would also like more computing labs.
- The operation of the organization is highly dependent on the centralized operation of the state and the high level of bureaucratic state control. This lack of flexibility in decision-making makes day to day operations and long-term planning extremely difficult.
- Student representation should be restricted to issues that concern the students directly, such as curriculum, learning tools etc, and not extend to issues related, for instance, to faculty research, tenure and promotion.
- There is no security within the school and the faculty feels threatened, sometimes physically. Faculty claimed that on occasion they were held hostage by student groups within the old buildings. This issue, in addition to space-related constraints, provides disincentives for faculty to work in their offices on a regular basis. As a matter of fact, as also noted in our introduction, the Committee itself felt threatened by a minority of students. They invaded in large number the Rector's office while the committee was meeting with him. The students proceeded to make demands asking all committee members to identify themselves and insisting that they believe there is a non academic member of the committee who should not be present. (They believed only academics should influence the curriculum.) The students then followed the committee around, including over lunch, and when the committee proceeded to enter the building for the next meeting, the same students en masse blocked the entrance to the practitioner member of the committee. The rest of the committee decided to proceed with the meeting with students and graduated of the undergraduate program, which was against the behavior of their minority fellow students and wished to give their feedback to the committee.

### ***F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC***

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

- The Department has a very good standing in terms of curriculum, teaching and research. The curriculum is up-to-date and comparable to those of reputable international institutions. Delivery of teaching material is done through multiple methods that cover both theoretical and practical aspects (faculty member lectures, case studies, practitioner guest lectures) with multiple methods of evaluation (projects and results).
- The Department has set a specific set of criteria to evaluate the research productivity of the faculty members which promote a research culture. It is also clear that there is a great collaborative spirit among faculty members creating a collegial atmosphere.
- The aforementioned two points indicate that the Department has clearly shown a commitment to continuous improvement and established itself as a center of excellence for Marketing and Communication education and research. The Department is encouraged to maintain this momentum and set objectives for benchmarking itself against leading international institutions both in terms of teaching and research excellence.
- In conclusion the Department is a leading Greek Institution in its field and stands well in comparison to international institutions



## The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname	Signature
1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____