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ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

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AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

TEI OF ATHENS

SEPT 2013



European Union
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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 Social Work of the Technological Educational Institution of Athens consisted of the following three (3) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. ***Dr Efrosini Kokaliari***, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, Springfield College, U.S.A.
(Coordinator)

2. ***Dr Christos Panayiotopoulos***, Associate Professor of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Policy, University of Nicosia, Cyprus

3. ***Dr Charalampos Pouloupoulos***
Director at KETHEA (Therapy Center for Dependent Individuals), Athens, Greece

Introduction

The last few years Greece has been at the center of the economic crisis experiencing the full impact of the economic recession with many significant changes occurring at the economic, social and political level. The consequences are extremely negative in the areas of health, education and social care.

Two of the major consequences of economic crisis are the increase in unemployment rates and the consequent decrease in income resources and subsequently the collapse of the working and middle class. Living standards deteriorated enormously with an increase in malnutrition delinquency, marital violence, family dysfunction, child neglect, early school drop-out, violation of human rights and increase of social exclusion and racism. In addition, mental health issues such as depression, substance abuse, suicide rates, are on the raise. The crisis severely affected the direct (social services) and indirect (family) social support system.

Social work is one of the few remaining standing disciplines that can be utilized to respond to this crisis. According to the definition of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) “the social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work” <http://ifsw.org/policies/statement-of-ethical-principles/>

The department of social work in Athens has been operating since 1984 and provides undergraduate social work studies. Unlike other countries where the terminal degree for professional social work is the Master degree in Greece it is the Bachelor. Considering the economical, societal crisis, the ongoing violation of human rights its importance as a department, the need for its empowerment and functionality are of paramount priority

The department of social work is not simply a department but a political statement against the systematic dehumanization of the Greek society. The committee believes that it should be of central attention within the ATEI of Athens.

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

The committee, was composed by Dr. Kokaliari (chair) Dr. Panayiotopoulos and Dr. Pouloupoulos. The committee met initially for a debrief at the offices of ADIP.

During the dates of Monday (1/7) and Tuesday (2/7) and at the department of social work the committee met with the head of the department other full time and adjunct faculty, social work students, and administrative staff. The committee carried out individual, group interviews with full time, adjunct faculty, and students. The committee interviewed administrative staff

too.

· The committee was given a tour of the social work department and visited the social work library, various classrooms and staff offices and one student placement (e.g. KETHEA).

· In addition, the committee met with the President of the TEI of Athens, Nino, Dr. Halari (MODIP) and Dr. Mpratako vice president. We were kindly given a tour of the TEI of Athens, the amphitheatre, restaurant and the library.

The hospitality arranged by ADIP, the social work department and TEI was particularly generous at all times.

The committee was provided with the following documents.

The **Internal evaluation document**: which was composed predominantly by the objectives of the curriculum; research output and community contribution of the department. This report concluded with the short term and long term goals and objective of the department. This report had been composed in 2008-2009 and had been approved by the faculty council in 2011. In addition we were given an update of the above report dated Spring 2013.

Upon our request we were kindly provided with updated full CVs of the faculty; course syllabi, samples of exam questions (developmental psychology), manual for practicum placement and the manual for dissertation.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used
- Quality and completeness of evidence reviewed and provided
- To what extent have the objectives of the internal evaluation process been met by the Department?

It was evident that the department invested a lot of work in preparing their evaluation in 2008-2009. We comment the faculty for the preparation of this evaluation in the context of their limited resources. It had appropriate structure and information.

The evaluation was written in 2009 it was approved in 2011 and we received an update for Spring 2013 which in our discussions we came to discover that did not reflect in detail the work and various projects accomplished by faculty and students. Some of the tables (p.109 of the internal evaluation report) provided in the Appendices of this report seemed confusing to both the faculty and the committee. The department is kindly requested to either update or remove

these tables.

As discussed later the committee felt that despite the heroic efforts of the faculty the objectives of the internal evaluation process have not been fully met . Some of the reasons are that over the last five years faculty has dramatically been reduced and financial restraints have made possible advancements impossible. Other reasons were related with deeper old organizational issues such as the lack of social work faculty in the position of associate and full professor.

The committee suggests that this evaluation process can be integrated as an ongoing process in the department's affairs so that it will not overwhelm the faculty or compromise its potential quality. In addition it will benefit the whole department in the process of developing a strong coherent social work identity.

For n the next evaluation faculty may wish to prepare a self-evaluation (vertical, & horizontal) closer to the evaluation year accompanied by an appendix folder with all relevant department documentation such as syllabi, updated CVs, field education docs, dissertation etc

Finally we would like to repeat and stress that the committee was struck by the lack of social work faculty in associate and full professor rankings. One of the core recommendations in this report is that TEI should proceed as soon as possible in the hiring of social work associate and full professors for the department.

A. Curriculum

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

APPROACH

The department has set 13 goals all appropriate for a social work program. Even though the goals are well described what was noticeable was, that traditional wording around anti-discriminatory practice, diversity human rights social justice was only implied and not spelled out.

The department has set **11** learning outcomes that all seem appropriate for a social work program. The learning outcomes are significant for social work practice but they should be directly aligned with the aims of the program and also be measured.

Both the aims and learning outcomes should be directly aligned and there should be explicit evidence as to where and how they are met in the curriculum (vertical & horizontal). Some of the learning outcomes need to be reconsidered. For example number 10. The committee felt that the social worker role is rather well described but it should not simply be to "control" for personal bias and prejudice but goes beyond that. Social workers have an ethical

duty to recognize the various forms of diversity, forces of oppression and be excellent advocates for these groups. Even though this is well reflected in practicums since students have the opportunity to receive training in relation to several diverse groups it is important that this duty along with ethics should be spelled out throughout the curriculum and expand to discuss explicitly other vulnerable groups (illegal immigrants, LGBT).

The curriculum is decided by the faculty under existing legislative framework of TEI.

The committee believes that the curriculum needs changes to be consistent with the goals of the department and requirements of the Greek and European society. (See recommendations). It is overly loaded with allied discipline courses that could have been replaced with introductory or advanced social work courses

The committee acknowledges the fact that the existing legislative framework of the TEI of Greece specifies percentages amongst groups of modules as we were aware of these restraints. What is recommended is a curriculum that will strengthen the position of social work department in the coming years and it will align with the departments of social work in countries with a long history in social work.

The committee hopes that despite the legislative framework that such observations will be taken into consideration by TEI's and proceed in such changes that will strengthen social work department and identity. Alternatively in the context of the current legislative framework where students are required to receive courses in allied disciplines it still can be other ones that provide knowledge in science, history, culture.

Finally, the objectives were decided among the faculty and were last updated in 2008-09 but not since then. The department would benefit from a curriculum committee that would address curriculum issues. It is recommended that in this committee the department could include apart from the faculty, graduate students, practitioners and service users. Thus they will achieve maximum linkage with the society needs.

IMPLEMENTATION

- The curriculum differs widely from European and US departments. The main difference is that it requires a significant amount for labs which is not customary. This is a great addition as it gives students the opportunity to gain experience from various fields of social work.
- The curriculum also differs as it offers unusual numbers of courses in allied professions especially sociology
- The structure of the curriculum is prepared thoughtfully but it could be further improved (see recommendations)
- The coherence can also be improved (see recommendations below)
- Some courses can be omitted and some can be moved across the semesters to maintain a

developmental sequence in the acquisition of knowledge.

- The department has a capable and experienced team however more PhD social workers are required. There is no Social worker at the level of Associate or Full Professor which instantly limits the direction the department can undertake. In addition it could be argued that it gives an implicit confusing message for the upcoming young social workers as they do not “see” social workers in the higher rankings and can role model after.
- This an issue that social work has been struggling with for decades in Greece but other countries too. To protect social work and avoid similar issues in the United States it is customary since 2008 that social work departments get evaluated not only on their explicit but on their “*implicit curriculum*” eg. educational environment, diversity, qualifications of the faculty , adequate resources (please see below)
- According to the American Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)

The implicit curriculum refers to the educational environment in which the explicit curriculum is presented. It is composed of the following elements: the program’s commitment to diversity; admissions policies and procedures; advisement, retention, and termination policies; student participation in governance; faculty; administrative structure; and resources. The implicit curriculum is manifested through policies that are fair and transparent in substance and implementation, the qualifications of the faculty, and the adequacy of resources. The culture of human interchange; the spirit of inquiry; the support for difference and diversity; and the values and priorities in the educational environment, including the field setting, inform the student’s learning and development. The implicit curriculum is as important as the explicit curriculum in shaping the professional character and competence of the program’s graduates. Heightened awareness of the importance of the implicit curriculum promotes an educational culture that is congruent with the values of the profession (Epass,2008, p.16) (<http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=41861>)

We were excited to see that currently the department is run by a social worker and we hope that soon he will be a permanent member of the faculty team and will succeed in becoming an Associate professor. We were excited to see another social work faculty who will receive her PhD (this coming week) and another one who is a PhD candidate. We were also excited to meet a widely qualified adjunct faculty of PhD social workers, a potentially excellent pool for future hirings..

RESULTS

During the discussions the committee had with the faculty council and the students they did not offer any suggestions as far as the curriculum. In contrast they argued that the curriculum is one of the strong components of the department.

The committee hopes that the recommendations proposed will support faculty with updating its curriculum and making it more appropriate for its objectives.

Students seemed contained with the curriculum although they would like to see more material as far as clinical social work. They were also excited bythe committee’s recommendation on faculty students collaborative research projects

IMPROVEMENT

Courses

The faculty needs to re-examine **VERTICALLY** and **HORIZONTALLY** the curriculum. There needs to be continuity across the curriculum with social work in the epicentre. Aims and objectives should be re-examined and explore how they are transmitted throughout the curriculum, how they can be assessed and measured both in classes, practicum and demonstrate core social work competencies such as eg, social justice, human rights, scientific inquiry, and diversity. The curriculum also should indicate how it is influenced and continuously shaped by the historical and current changes that occur in Greece and internationally. Over the last few years Greek society has been faced with such struggles and social workers should be in the frontline.

We strongly recommend that faculty use a unified syllabi which will include for example Course description, course objectives, required and suggested contemporary reading material, and weekly material to be covered. In addition they should include, methods of instruction along with explicit instructions for course assignments and grading. Finally they should state policies e.g. against plagiarism, expected classroom behaviour, class participation and allowed absences (in labs). At the beginning of the syllabus there should be adequate faculty info such as office hours, email address and contact details.

A continuation in the syllabi will give faculty a wide opportunity to align their teaching assess where and how they meet their goals. In addition, particularly important social work matters such as ethics, diversity they will be able to spell them out across the curriculum. We believe that it will offer a tremendous help and it is required in Europe and USA.

We recommend that all faculty include other than the final exam assessment methods such as weekly quiz, group assignments, papers. We are hoping that this practice will improve classroom attendance and reduce the phenomenon of the *Eternal students* a misuse of public education and waste of limited resources.

Overall courses should aim and explicitly state their social work purpose. Currently the TEI degree is considered the terminal degree leading to a professional qualification .. Exploring the curriculum and judging from the course titles some core courses do not explicitly state their social work context. For example the course *Ethics, professional practice and Business enterprises* could have been named *Social work code of Ethics*.

The several courses in other related disciplines was really noticeable. We noticed in the evaluation, in our interviews, but also on how the department operates a “split” between sociology, psychology, and social work. This was a particularly unusual dynamic and soon was evident to the committee that several issues in the curriculum were related to that split. In an effort to understand this over insertion of sociology classes we explored the curriculum of Pantios- Sociology program.

<http://sociology.panteion.gr/index.php?p=content§ion=3&id=51&lang=el>

and did not see sociology labs or did we see any social work classes. In addition the committee explored the curriculum of Crete social work department that within the legislative framework a different curriculum can be built.

There are currently seven sociology classes that the committee believes are not necessary and has not seen in other social work programs in the European or US tradition unless if the students graduate with a double degree, or subspecialty. To support a more coherent social work identity consistent with the departments mission and goals the committee recommends the omission of the following classes:

Sociology of Health, Sociology of Education, Sociology of deviance, Sociology of Communication, Sociology of the family. We also recommend the omission of sociology labs. The committee as discussed below recommends that these lab hours could be used to accompany social work classes such as the one that addresses Social work ethics.

Even in the current legislative context the committee argues that it would be preferable for students to receive a class for in modern Greek history, human behaviour in the social environment, rather than so many sociology classes. Should the legislative framework gets reconsidered we recommend that the program gets enriched with more social work courses such as international human rights, social work in education, social work family treatment clinical social work practice; Diversity and social work: Advanced interview skills, immigration, and understanding of psychological trauma, supervision, social work practice with couples, social work with survivors of trauma –complex PTSD, and/or other classes that are relevant to the current Greek and international realities within the context of social work.

We understand that TEI requires for students to complete a particular amount of lab hours. As mentioned earlier we recommend that these lab hours can accompany social work core classes such as ethics class, social work with family, clinical social work, social work with groups, couples where students can practice role playing, watch real sessions, do child, infant observations etc.

We recommend that the department reconsiders their sequence of classes and design continuation of learning objectives and skills from one to another with benchmark expectation on each level. An example of a sequence could involve Practice classes such as Social Work Clinical Practice, Advanced Social Work Clinical Practice Psychodynamic Social Work; etc.

Other recommendations

-Other recommendations are that classes should not be seen as autonomous entities for example elements of the code of ethics and professional and writing style should be impeded throughout the curriculum.

-Classes especially core social work ones should be renamed to include the term “social work”

-We recommend that all faculty adopt a single writing style and use it, eg. APA 6th edition. This will strengthen writing and research skills.

Adjunct faculty teach technology in social work which we have not seen in other curriculums. We wondered if the particular adjunct faculty who happens to have a PhD could be invited to teach other social work courses instead. If the department wishes to maintain such course it could also add modules on cyber ethics,.

-As Professor Papouli will be shortly a PhD social worker we hope that she can immediately proceed in the development of further social work classes.

-Dr. Maniadaki as a psychologist could teach a class on testing and measurements and introduce students to the utilisation of standardised tools. This would prepare students to further advance their research skills and prepare them for dissertations.

-To be able to oversee the appropriate and effective delivery of social work we recommend the introduction of course leads that will maintain continuity and quality control especially over social work core classes. These changes will bring closer the department to the actualization of its core aim which is to produce high quality social workers with current knowledge.

-For a more appropriate update of the curriculum we recommend that the school can develop an advisory board composed of practitioners service users faculty and students, international scholars that can discuss e. g. best practices that could be included in the curriculum.

PRACTICUM

Practicum is the fundamental form of the curriculum where students are invited to function like professionals and harmoniously synthesize theory and practice. In the United States practicum is considered the *signature pedagogy* of each program, meaning that all classes, all material should contribute the development of competent professional social workers. Field education should include strong components of supervision, curriculum and a combination of classroom and field.

We were impressed to see how much and excellent work social workers from the department do but also adjunct faculty. We were also impressed to see a high quality adjunct team with very good qualifications that have a long tradition at TEI and do a lot of work while underpaid. All practicum faculty were social workers and we must say this part gave a wonderful feeling of how a social work department should operate. The field office has created a rich list of agencies with high standards of education that have contribute widely to students learning. It was also impressive to see how many students utilize Erasmus programs and gain significant European experience.

It was unusual to see that faculty are hired from the school to supervise students in the practicums but at the same time students have agency supervisors. The role of the practicum

supervisor (*Epoiti*) and with the schools practicum supervisor (*Ekpaideutikos Epoitis*) was overlapping in ways that it felt to us but also was reported by the students confusing. From our interviews with students it seems that students are also unclear as their workload etc is managed by the agency supervisor but they discuss their cases with the academic supervisors.

We believe that this creates and perpetuates a split between education and practicum and does not allow the student to fully integrate to their practicum. Group supervision as done by the school supervisors seemed a wonderful component but it should not replace the official supervisor-supervisee relationship that must be built in the agency. Practicing social work involves the negotiation of complex feelings that students should learn to identify and process within their practicum. Supervision should be a core element in social work teaching and practicum.

A model that is widely used is that all resident and adjunct faculty oversee a number of students in their practicums. They visit placements once a semester to assess the students' progress and evaluate if the students practicum needs have been met. The rest of the time it is the agency supervisor that offers support and supervision. However we understand that this model may not be possible now as it requires more social work faculty.

However, social work faculty explained and ensured the committee that the two different supervisors work collaboratively and not in parallel or contradiction throughout the semester. Maybe faculty can consider the above model in the future

Practicum should also have a syllabi for each semester with clear goals and objectives. This will help the department to create "bench marks" to assess student progress.

We also recommend that placements should be clearly divided beginners (5th), intermediate (6th) and final practicum one semester advanced placements.

Students can then follow a developmental model where they can actualise the goals and objectives of the department both in classes and practicum. In addition this can serve as a quality control and help identify troubled students in the "early" placement that are often struggling with complex transference and countertransference feelings, or boundaries.

The department last year organised a wonderful placement event where each placement came to present their work and were able to reconnect with faculty. We recommend that this becomes an annual event. This event can be used to allow placements to meet and interview potential students. This can also be developed to a day seminar where all students can present their dissertations along with their professors or/and projects from their practicum.

We would also welcome the development of a postgraduate certificate where the department with other external partners can provide supervision skills to the existing placement supervisors thus they can also add another criterion apart from the existing ones for professionals who want to become accredited placements. It is a practice widely used in UK and USA.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

The committee recognises that the department has been attempting to adopt the Bologna processes, however particular amounts of work is still needed especially in stating clearly their particular pedagogic policy and philosophy within the department of social work.

Faculty use traditional teaching methods, such as lectures, experiential exercises, discussions, invited lectures, field visits in particularly old fashioned classrooms. Faculty have made a tremendous effort to provide their material electronically and so far 39 of their courses have online platforms. This was very impressive considering the lack of resources that were evident in the department.

Faculty provide summary of lectures, copies of power points. The committee comments the faculty for engaging in publishing of such exceptional manuscripts that are used in various academic settings in Greece.

Faculty use several writing styles. We recommend that faculty adopt a common writing style such as APA to achieve further integration on the material distributed and expectations of students. To implement a common writing style training among the faculty is recommended.

Teaching staff/ student ratio : There are 492 active students in the department and 248 that have surpassed the four years. However if we consider that half of the faculty are not eligible to teach due to the lack of PhD this ratio is significantly larger. The department's faculty numbers have been reduced over the last years thus complicating the reality of teacher/student ration further. The EEC committee found this to be an excessive ratio that compromises teaching. Hiring of PhD social work faculty is an absolute priority.

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Teacher/student collaboration: Based on our interviews with faculty, students and the evaluations it was apparent that students think very highly of their faculty. Among others they consider them approachable, friendly, well organised, and great teachers. It must be noted that any collaborations are due to the faculty again heroic efforts and investment. Outside the dissertation there is no formalised system that would support such collaborations. No monitoring system for students who fail or struggle to continue was found. This could be implemented depending on resources.

- The department of social work is faced with particularly inadequate resources. Lack of technology, lack of Wi-Fi, lack of updated library, lack of observation room, lack of appropriate building, poor info structure. As noted on page 11 the “implicit curriculum” is severely compromised. The social work department should be housed with the rest of the departments at TEI.
- The social work department has one library room. Due to limited staff it remains locked for the most part undermining any potential “academic scholar culture”. In addition, the library

was poorly equipped with outdated books and did not have ANY online access to electronic databases. We were informed that they have been discontinued and that soon they will be restored. In our visit to the library we also identified particularly limited journals, books.

Use of information technologies: The department has a computer lab and wifi in some areas of the building.

Examination system:

The main examination system involves students participation in obligatory exams. In some courses students are expected to do assignments. In addition the final thesis is a major component of the examination system. The committee were struck that 68% of the students reported studying less than 4 hours weekly.

The committee felt that the examination system is inadequate for level 6 education and suggested that mid term assignments, quizzes and other forms of examination get introduced. This will enhance critical thinking and it will increase students investments in their studies. We understand that this will increase faculty work and we recommend other supportive systems such as “peer review process”, or electronic format of quizzes where they get graded automatically. Again hiring of faculty is a priority in this process. In the discussion it was recommended the use of blended learning methods of teaching something that would allow faculty with more time invested in research, training and writing. We were told this was not allowed due to the legislative framework.

Sample dissertations were reviewed briefly by the EEC members and were found to be of diverse quality. There were some excellent ones and some ones that basic issues such as inadequate introduction, lack of lit review, critical analysis, research methodology. A number of ptyxiakes were found to be inadequate of Lever 6 standard.

The issue of plagiarism was mentioned extensively. The committee recommends the advancement of the dissertation guide and a strict policy against plagiarism. Also the committee recommends for a unified dissertation (ptyxiaki) structure to be followed in terms of timing, and quality. Close supervision of the dissertations will allow the faculty to assess if the students work is original. As discussed in the research component we are hoping that faculty will utilize those dissertations (ptyxiakes) to produce quality publications.

As discussed above the committee recommends that all ptyxiakes get to be presented at an annual event at TEI in conjunction with the supervising faculty. Department exposure and recognition has been found in research to dramatically increase quality. Thus the strengthening of the dissertation component along with the field can come to be the *signature pedagogy* for the department.

IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

Based on the student evaluation and on the discussion the committee had with students it was noticed a high level of satisfaction for the faculty in terms of organisation, material delivery encouragement on participation and constructive feedback .Overall student body seem very engaged with faculty.

Teaching methods.

Faculty are using a wider variety of teaching methods varying from traditional to innovative ones. Innovative practices seem to increase student participation

Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.

Faculty are doing their best under the circumstances (considering for example that they carry their own laptops). It is impressive that so much teaching material is uploaded in the website of the department

Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?

Unfortunately the lack of contemporary books and the discontinuation of e-journals can make the course material outdated as it is another burden on the overloaded faculty to seek resources

Linking of research with teaching

This is a weakness of the department considering the fact that most of the faculty do not have the resource nor the opportunity to participate in research projects. There are some exceptions who are actively participating in research and can offer this link.

Mobility of academic staff and students

The department has international collaborations with other institutions and this is considered as a strong component.

Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources: Students are given regularly general evaluation forms to fill.

RESULTS

Please comment on:

- Efficacy of teaching: Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.

The tables included in the evaluation seemed unclear but faculty were kind enough to provide further information. We noticed in some classes elevated numbers of students registered, and a wide variation in the success rates e.g. in some classes most students pass while in others most fails. We recommend that faculty create unified grading criteria that will be applied across the curriculum and will help in such discrepancies. Also the numbers reflected “one eksetastiki” while it seems that there is a culture of students participating in several ones to increase their potential for success.

Differences between students in (a) the time to graduation, and (b) final degree grades.

A high number of students are registered and maintain the student status. This is a unique phenomenon that the committee found particularly unacceptable. This is a burden for the already limited administrative staff and for faculty who can never know how many students will decide to participate in the curriculum. This is a wider academic issue of the Greek academic system and the committee hopes that it will be addressed in the near future.

Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?

The department understands all the above. However and it is understandable due to the existing burn out they need all the support they can get to provide quality changes.

IMPROVEMENT

Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?

The department is trying hard to uphold their quality of teaching. However the morale is low. Faculty were particularly disappointed as in the last few years they have been reduced by 43% in resident faculty and that many more in adjunct. They do not receive any funds for professional development (books, conference etc), and at the same time they are expected to work under very low quality standards teach, do research etc.

The level of burn out should be taken into consideration given the current socioeconomic crisis and the extreme efforts the team is placing at responding to work demands. TEI Athens and the Ministry of Education have to take into consideration these aspects of work overload and develop and offer support systems as a way of providing positive feedback to the department (e.g. educational leaves, seminars, conferences participation etc.).

What initiatives does it take in this direction?

- Faculty agreed that they will improve the dissertation process and invest in strengthening the practicum.
- It is paramount that they get new social work faculty and it is paramount that they get resources.

They have also submitted proposals for research and training programmes.

The department should renegotiate workload for faculty who are pursuing PhD degrees to support them to complete their PhD and advance to other rankings

C. Research

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

APPROACH

Based on the meetings the committee had with the faculty of the SWP on the 2nd of July and on the internal evaluation report (2008-09, page 48) there are a number of staff publications in peer reviewed journals. Faculty is trying their best to publish despite all the limitations and the lack of resources.

The committee did not see any research policy nor research objectives.. Due to the lack of research aims and objectives the committee did not identify any internal standards for assessing research.

According to the internal evaluation report (2008-09) which was approved by the Faculty Council in 2013 the lack of the above is mainly due to legislative obstacles and to the lack of a research centre within the Department. In addition to the above the heavy teaching schedule does not help the development of a research culture within the Department.

However during the last few years, there have been many efforts from the Faculty for receiving research grants through ESPA (“Archimides III ” and “ Thales”) with no results so far.

The committee did not notice any type of Research Ethics Committee in the documents provided nor a student guide on how to conduct research. Issues of plagiarism, research ethics are of utmost importance thus the committee believes that there should be a more comprehensive “ΟΔΗΓΟΣ ΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΗΣ ΜΕΛΕΤΗΣ” stating clearly issues such as length of dissertation, time schedule, rules on how to be written (literature review, methodology, analysis of findings, conclusions), plagiarism, presentation of dissertation (i.e. no pictures, no poems, it is a scientific document), supervisors’ and supervisee duties.

We recommend the creation of an EAC (Educational Advisory Committee). The purpose of the Educational Advisory Committee is to provide consultation when a student is in jeopardy due to plagiarism, poor academic progress. In addition the creation of a formal IRB committee to guard the dissertation research process and protect the involvement of human beings that is so common. The committee understands that the faculty council is authorised to function as an IRB but it needs to be an explicit formal process that will “oversee” all dissertations.

IMPLEMENTATION and RESULTS

As it came out from the meetings faculty of SW are doing their best to conduct research studies whenever they have the opportunity to do so. Therefore the promotion or research either amongst the faculty or the students, happen through teaching research courses, the completion of dissertations and individual efforts for getting research grants.

Despite all the problems mentioned above there is a certain number of faculty (2 Sw, 1

Psychologist and a Sociologist) that have research output (publications, chapters and books) and involvement in research grants and training programmes in the past 4 years. These are as follow:

Books: 2 monographies and two edited books

Publications in peer reviewed journals: 8 in international journals and 7 in Greek journals

Chapters in books: 7 chapters in Greek books and 1 in international book

In regard to **conference presentation** it seems that the majority of the faculty is participating either in local or international conferences. However it was noticed that the faculty is facing severe difficulties attending international conferences due to the lack of financial resources.

As far as **research projects and training programmes** it was notified a particular focus from almost all the faculty in the latter group (training programmes). In particular in the updated evaluation report of 2013 it was noticed that out of 9 projects only one (p.22) was research oriented. A good practice that seems to occur is the collaboration amongst faculty in various research or training programmes. This practice enhances the development of group spirit and strengthens collaborative practices within the department. Collaborations of the department and subsequently of the faculty of the SW is achieved through European study exchange programmes such as Erasmus, Leonardo and Tempus.

It is worthwhile noticing the issue of the dissertation module. It was observed that there is a wealth of dissertations that could be used in various ways such as publications, presentations in conferences, use of research material in teaching. These practices would enhance scientific output in general and it would promote the work that is undertaken within the department during the completion of the dissertation.

Overall the committee did not manage to see how all the work that is being undertaken in research and training programmes is incorporated within teaching and learning material. It is expected that such practice will make the Department's research output visible not only amongst students but also in the wider academic and professional community.

It is also recommended that any scientific publication research project or results of good practices uploaded on the website of the Department to indicate the department's achievements. It is advisable that all faculty is engaged to scientific work (publication, projects, conferences) to the extent that their schedule allows them. This practice will offer to the department recognition amongst local and international academic community.

RESULTS

Please see above sections as far as this part

IMPROVEMENT

After having thoroughly looked both the internal evaluation report and the updated format of the initial report the committee would like to make the following recommendations in order to improve and enhance scientific output from the Department.

The Department is encouraged to **organize the dissertation module** in the following way in order to utilize it as a tank for publication and source of continuous and updated knowledge. Therefore we recommend the reduction of word limits from 25.000 to 13.000 for one student and to 22.000 for two students. This practice will reduce the time needed to supervise and moderate a dissertation and can increase quality. In order to alleviate an extra burden from the faculty we propose the implementation of an agreed **tight time schedule** at the beginning of the dissertation so both the supervisor and the student are aware what is expected.

It is also suggested that the department could organize joint seminars (i.e Away Day, Mental Health Day) with other department of the School of Health and Welfare Disciplines in order to promote dissertations, research output from faculty (permanent and nonpermanent). Thus the department will be a source of knowledge not only for the TEI of Athens but also for the community that is closely related to it such practice placements and other scientific bodies (Greek Association of Social Workers). It is a practice commonly used in Schools of Health and Welfare Disciplines in educational systems with strong research culture.

The **development of a Centre/Unit** for the advancement and encouragement of research either within the department or within the School. Such a practice could act as a support to faculty when they apply for research grants either locally or internationally (International Federation of Schools of Social Work, European Association of Schools of Social Work, European Union) and link with other departments in the School. The latter would promote an interdisciplinary culture amongst the School and it would provide the opportunity for wider dissemination of scientific results.

Despite the fact that the TEI of Athens is under austerity measures (reduced numbers of non permanent faculty) the committee recommends that the faculty, both permanent and non permanent, of the Department **will pursue the development of a research portfolio including publications in international peer reviewed journals, involvement in research studies and maintenance of collaboration with international and local partners as to promote research culture**. Thus will happen either with successful grants that will allow the hiring of research assistants (writing, administration) in order not to extra burden the involved faculty or with self-financed studies (no financial sponsorship) who will utilize students, practice placements supervisors and other parts as to complete a research project.

Set up a **Research Ethics Committee** within the School as to ensure issues of confidentiality, issues of hazards for both the investigator and the participant, personal data disclosure, consent forms, participants' form and other issues related to research studies. It is also suggested that upon the set up of such a committee a faculty member of the Social Work Programme Ms. Papouli can chair such process as her PhD is on ethics in social work education.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH

The environment of the specific department compromises academic culture and student learning. It was stated that maximum capacity of lecture rooms is 45 students when it was noticed that there are courses with registered numbers over 150. Some classes were of even less capacity. The committee was told during its meeting with the president of the TEI of Athens that the department of Social Work will be transferred in a new building within the next 2-3 years. **The committee felt that this is too long** considering how much this would help in the process of modernization and advancement of social work. .

Lecture rooms cannot support teaching methods described in the Teaching section (case presentation, use of group work) and make unattractive the whole department. Students described the building as “ Lifeless ” and “shocking” to the first sight. Faculty offices, cafe, and toilets are using almost the same floor. The building has a quite institutionalised presentation with lack of decoration. There is no outside space for students. The building supports also the department of Health Visitors.

The committee was also struck by the amount of political posters. Such practices give such a bad and confusing impression to a visitor. We strongly recommend the cessation of such practices in similar ways like it has happened at the central TEI. It would be nice for the building to be clean and decorated with eg. human rights posters.

The Library of the department needs immediate reorganization and enrichment as far as social work books and journals concern. During the visits in both libraries, the committee noticed very few contemporary books (n=24 out of 269 in total) and a limited number of Social Work Journals. The committee noticed that e-journals subscription has not been renewed due to the austerity measures from the Ministry of Education, however the number of journals available in the library of the central building (TEI of Athens) is very limited. We counted 3-4 Social Work journals regardless related journals. The committee strongly recommends the subscription to journals such as the European and International Journals of Social Work, the British Journal of Social Work, Journal of Clinical Social Work Practice. It is also proposed to create a section in the department library with dissertations of students in the last three years and the rest can be available in e-from. Lack of appropriate library causes problems to the development of academic and research culture and also students are excluded from reading updated knowledge for their teaching and dissertation.

Administrative office. The department has been left out with one administrative person for 490 active students, 248 non active students (4 years and above in the Department) and 19 permanent and non permanent faculty members. Despite those obstacles she is very efficient

and effective in her work. The committee recommends the hiring of a part-time administrative person. This will reduce current's secretary heavy workload and burn out due to continuous increase of work.

IMPLEMENTATION

The committee would like to highlight the fact that this department's location is distant from all academic and non academic services for students (e.g. library, labs for PCs free internet access, student counseling, athletic- cultural activity etc.). This is a prohibiting fact for the development of an academic culture. In particular it was noticed that a large number of students were not attending courses. The committee got various responses to this issue; a) not enough space in lecture rooms (max. Capacity 45) b) student's participation apart from laboratories in not compulsory c) students expressed the view that courses that include a laboratory are more attractive than only theoretical courses.

It is imperative the department changes location or the existing one becomes friendlier to faculty and students and more advanced technologically. We believe that in the short term the TEI could afford to improve the conditions of the building.

RESULTS

The department agrees that all services needs to be updated and more administrative staff is needed.

IMPROVEMENTS

·Initiatives undertaken in this direction are limited due to lack of resources.

TEI of Athens the third largest academic institution in Greece should support its Department of Social Work with human resources, technological capacity, better facilities (e.g. improvement of buildings, library, computers etc.) and the support and promotion of the proposals of the Department for new innovative programmes of research, training and practice in the field.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Drastic horizontal reductions in social care and the welfare state that have been adopted the last few years lead to further deterioration social deprivation. Economic crisis has grown eventually

to social and humanistic crisis.

The Department of Social Work can play a significant role in the defense of human rights and provision of social care to citizens.

Social work department has the obligation to support further the education of young social workers (both in theory and practice) and enhance their abilities to cope with the range of the new social and community problems under a state of constant uncertainty and increased needs.

Social work department has to open up with the community relating to it especially in the areas of social, economic and policy factors and develop mechanisms related with the development of social problems that have significant impacts on people and social groups. Therefore the committee would welcome an opening to social partners (i.e. NGO's, local authorities, etc) that would make the department's contribution in the society more visible and measurable.

Its social and cultural contribution during the years to come is of utmost importance. The fact that the department has a continuous relationship with professional and organisations provides a first class opportunity for its faculty to make their presence stronger.

An engagement with production organisations can make this department more attractive to its students as it will secure job positions and it will give a different profile to Social Workers.

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.

Reductions in budget for attending conferences, buying books, subscription in journals and the location of such an important Department in such an inappropriate building are prohibiting factors in order to foster academic culture and support the growth of the department. **Therefore the faculty of the department has to be congratulated for its efforts under such difficult circumstances.** Taking in consideration all the above the committee has expressed in the various meetings it had the following measures as to overcome some of the obstacles described above. In particular the committee recommends:

Short-Term goals (6-12 months)

Better utilisation of non permanent staff (11). In particular the committee suggests that non permanent faculty to teach courses of their specialisation and not mainly being

utilised as to supervise students. The committee noticed that a great number of the non permanent faculty are PhD holders and have clinical experience in their work environment. The committee recommends that utilisation of non permanent faculty in teaching .

Enrichment of the library with contemporary books and subscription in electronic journals as the committee found very limited resources for the students and the faculty. This goal will allow faculty to provide updated material to the students and to keep a close link with the scientific committee. The committee was told that there is some αποθεματικό (6m euros) in the TEI of Athens. We believe that a very small amount (e.g 15.000euros) can be given to the specific department to buy books and modern equipments for the advancement of research and student's learning. The committee suggest the establishment of a network with libraries of significant organisations i.e. KETHEA, EIPSY thus students may have access to their databases.

Better use of the dissertations from the department. The committee strongly recommends reduction in the length of dissertations from 25 to 13.000 words and the choice for an individual student to undertake on its own a dissertation. This action will reduce time dedicated in each dissertation at least o half time faculty spends now. A proper organisation of this module will strengthen the department's profile as faculty may be able to publish through dissertations.

Unified syllabi can be introduced soon that will offer the platform for clear goals and objectives to be “seen” and “measured”

Long-term goals (1-2 years)

Hiring of minimum 2 SW faculty in the rank of Associate Professor/Professor. The department needs to **encourage its SW faculty to have strong scientific output** as to progress to the rank of Associate Professor. The committee believes that with the utilisation of very good students as research assistants or gaining research grants from the IFSW and EASSW will have the opportunity to develop international relationships through research projects.

The faculty can **re-examine** their goals and objectives and evaluate where and how they are actualised within the course and practicum curriculum.

The faculty **should explore the introduction of further contemporary social work**

modules (i.e. clinical practice skills, interagency collaboration amongst health and welfare disciplines) and the replacement of sociology courses (i.e. Sociology of communication and sociology of deviance) (social work and IT) with advanced social work practices (child protection/ child safeguarding, social work and sexual concerns), In particular the committee suggests the replacement of laboratory hours in courses such as Administration of Social Services, Sociology of Deviance with laboratory hours in other courses such as Social work with Families. The committee proposes the use of video-taped sessions or interviews between professionals and clients/service users where this is possible for educational purposes. This material can be used in laboratory sessions i.e. interviewing. This is a common practice applied for clinical courses in UK and USA

The committee feels that if they above actions/measures will be applied in the next 2 years then progressively the social work department will of Athens will grow even more and will be able to gain a significant place in the international academic arena.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

Social Work Department has a significant curriculum in terms of both, theory and practice. Academic staff has also developed an important research activity and therefore is highly capable to respond effectively in the demands of an institution of tertiary education. In addition the department has developed an extensive network of health and social welfare organizations at the national and the local community level that gives social work the option of receiving significant practice and supervision in the field of social work. The external evaluation committee considers that the current course of study provided by the social work department is at the Bachelor's level and following the proposed changes it will be strengthened to successfully implement a Master's degree in social work.

Social work department has to promote research in the areas of social, economic and policy factors and mechanisms related with the development of social problems that have significant impacts on people and social groups.

The relationship of every single person with the social environment is a core topic for social work and receives further attention during crisis times. This relationship deserves further research and practice. For this reason the department has to promote a policy of research and

practice from the point of social work for researching and facing the effects of crisis. This goal could be achieved with state funds, European union projects and other sources of alternative funding.

TEI, Athens the third largest academic institution in Greece should support its Department of Social Work with human resources, technological capacity, better facilities (e.g. improvement of buildings, library, computers etc.) and the support and promotion of the proposals of the Department for new innovative programmes of research, training and practice in the field. The Ministry of Education has to move towards recruiting new department staff in order to cover the needs that arise after the retirement of older staff and to support especially the specialties of social work. In addition it is necessary to conclude the evaluation procedures.

Recommendations:

The External evaluation committee has also specific recommendations for the improvement of the department.

Our first and core recommendation is the hiring of minimum two social work PhD faculty. It is imperative that the school expands their search internationally in an effort to attract exclusively social work faculty.

We were excited to see that one of the social work faculty will soon defend her PhD and another one in the next two years thus will belong in the appropriate pool of candidates for assistant, associate and later full professor. It is imperative for students to have a high calibre social work faculty that will serve as role model. As said repeatedly in this report part of the implicit curriculum values and messages that the department provides it was unusual to see a social work department operating with no Full or associate social work professor.

Our second core recommendation is the re-examination of the curriculum with social work in its epicentre as described in described in earlier recommendations

Our third core recommendation is the restructure of the *ptyxiakes* system so it can be used to advance social work research. This will elevate the status of social work studying.

Our fourth core recommendation is that faculty should collaborate on research projects that will conclude in publications and advance the whole department. Faculty should try and publish in peer reviewed journals. This will strengthen social work identity. We understand that they do not have extra funds, which is an international phenomenon, however they can advance collaborations with students and publish collaboratively. As stated earlier that requires an advancement in the process of *ptyxiaki* where students will be encouraged to collect data using eg standardized tools. In addition, faculty can engage in data collection that requires less monetary resources such as data collection over the internet. There is such lack in evidence from Greece that we strongly believe that their studies will be more than welcome in the international community.

Our fifth recommendation is the transfer of the social work department at the central TEI. The one we visited does not provide appropriate spaces or “ a culture “ of higher education. If this is not possible we recommend that TEI can allocate resources in the immediate future to clean up the building, add Wi-Fi , revive the library.etc. We were relieved to hear by the president that still there is an excess of 6 millions in the budget.

Overall the committee believe that the faculty is trying hard to maintain a high level of quality in teaching and practicum. The development of an internal evaluation system (peer review), the strengthen of the curriculum as far as social work courses and the increase in scientific output from the majority of staff will maintain the important role of SWP of the TEI of Athens and it will make its educational contribution more coherent.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname

1. Efrosini Kokaliari, Phd (Chair)
2. Christos Panagiotopoulos, PhD
3. Charalampos Pouloupoulos, PhD