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ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
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HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF CROP PRODUCTION
TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF KALAMATA

Version 1.0
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External Evaluation Committee

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

1. Dr. **Athanasios (Tom) Papadopoulos**, Senior Research Scientist, and Adjunct Professor, Greenhouse and Processing Crops Research Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada (**Coordinator**)
2. Dr. **Georgia Drakakaki**, Assistant Professor, Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis University of California, Davis, California, U.S.A.
3. Dr. **George Manganaris**, Lecturer, Department of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology & Food Science, Cyprus University of Technology, Lemesos, Cyprus
4. Dr. **Pietro Tonutti**, Professor, Institute of Life Sciences, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa, Italy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Crop Production at the TEI of Kalamata is a regional-based Institution located in an important agricultural area, running a 4-year undergraduate program. Well-equipped facilities are available as teaching labs. The well-respected and well-trained faculty and staff are deeply involved in delivering the undergraduate academic program. Changes and improvements are needed in the curriculum, the teaching efforts and methods and the research activities to completely meet the society and student expectations, and increase the visibility of the Department at national and international level. We commend the dedication of the faculty, and hope that the discussion and recommendations outlined herein will help them improve.

Introduction

Introduction

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) visited the Department of Crop Production (DCP) on 14, 15 and 16 of November 2011. Initially, the EEC met briefly with the Management of the Institute and with the IEC for a general overview of mandates, programs and prospects of the Institute and in particular of the DCP.

The EEC met and talked with all the Faculty members, contract professors, technicians and the secretary of the Department. In addition, the Committee had the opportunity to discuss with two groups of students from different semesters, and a group of 12 alumni. Apart from the Faculty members of the Department, the committee was in close cooperation with the president of TEI of Kalamata, Dr. Kanakis, and one of the Vice Presidents of the Institute, Dr. Kapolos, as well as with the Head of the DCP, prof. Xinias. Dr. Kanakis is a professor in the department of Organic Greenhouse Crops and Floriculture while Dr. Kapolos is an associate professor in the Department of Food Technology. These two Departments are in close cooperation with the DCP, since they share common equipment and many courses are supported by Faculty members of these Departments.

The EEC visited most of the facilities, including laboratories, greenhouses and field trials, library and some faculty offices and classrooms. Reports, documents, and other data examined by the EEC included the Department's student Study Guide (2006), undergraduate students' theses, internal evaluation forms, samples of written examinations, and the Internal Evaluation Report (IER), prepared (in Greek) by two faculty members and a student representative.

The length of the visit was adequate, allowing the EEC to get an overview of the DCP and the possibility to interact with both faculty and students. During the visit the EEC met with the faculty (permanent and non-permanent teaching staff) and the technical and administration support staff, the secretary and the students, including alumni.

Overall, the Department did a good job in preparing for this External Evaluation, and faculty, staff and students should be congratulated for accommodating the EEC requests.

A general introductory presentation of the DCP by the Department representative, its scope and strategic plan within the Greek higher education system would have been helpful to the EEC members in their evaluation procedure during their on-site visit

The format of this report follows the format requested by HQAA, and it discusses each of the following parts: Curriculum, Teaching, Research, Other Services, and Strategic Planning. At the end of each part, we have listed the most important points for that section in table format and in the form of Strengths, Weaknesses, and Suggestions for Improvement. Finally, the last section of the report outlines our Overall Suggestions for Improvement.

A. Curriculum and Teaching

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

A1. Curriculum

The current undergraduate curriculum was designed to address the needs of the Agricultural sector in Plant Sciences. The curriculum is consisted of 8 semesters and appears generally well-designed and according to the IER, each Faculty member tries to adapt and incorporate the new technological advances and knowledge. The courses of the first 3 semesters are common to all students. Then the student must select a direction related to Horticultural crops or to Field (grains and cereal) crops. Accordingly, there is diversification to a total of 7 courses. It should be noted that no elective courses are available.

In some courses, their title should be rephrased to relate better to their aims and scopes. The title of the course should be in accordance with the titles of similar courses offered in other Universities and TEI both in Greece and at European level. Furthermore, the students should have the option to select two elective courses from those dealing with field crops or horticultural crops. In that case, a student majoring in field crops must have the possibility to attend and be examined in courses dealing with temperate fruit crops. Therefore, the Department should be given every opportunity to improve, adjust and modernize its curriculum. The curriculum should be designed as to allow the students to develop knowledge, skills, and professional ethics.

Some slight but critical changes in the curriculum are needed. The curriculum does not offer any elective courses or majoring, which would address student's ability to find employment in the private sector. Given the low attendance rate of the theoretical part of courses, some of them should be merged and be renamed: e.g. in the areas of Plant Protection, Plant Propagation and Horticulture. Based on the number of lab exercises the EEC was convinced that a great deal of hands-on practical experience is made available to the students.

Attendance to laboratory classes is mandatory, but not for lectures. It is appeared that many theoretical lessons are being offered to 1-10 students. That means that contract and permanent Faculty members have to initially offer background information at theoretical level during lab exercises and prior to hands-on exercise. The low attendance should be noted as one of the main reasons that students finish their undergraduate studies many years after the 8th semester. All faculty members need to take ownership of this issue and come up with creative solutions to overcome this problem.

Farm facilities (including greenhouse facilities) are excellent and additionally most of the laboratories are well-equipped and efficient workspace is available for the students. Therefore the implementation of dissertation thesis from the students appears to be facilitated. A critical point is whether TEI education is meeting industry and social needs.

The EEC considered that there were several aspects of the 6-month practical experience that needed the attention of the Department. For example, a strengthening of the role and mandate of the faculty responsible for the practical experience of the students is needed. Also, a database on potential hosts of students in agribusiness or public institutions should be established, updated and be enriched continuously over time.

Strengths

- The curriculum is focusing on applied science, complemented with a thesis and 6-month internship
- Adequate lab and farm facilities
- Existence of pilot-plant facilities
- Both Greek and English version of curriculum are well-written

Weaknesses

- Only mandatory courses are offered and not even one elective course
- No diversification compared to the curriculum followed in the other six Departments

of Crop Production, situated in Greece

- The curriculum that was delivered to the Committee was dated in 2006

Suggestions for improvement

- Provided the low attendance rate of the theoretical part of the courses, three of them should be merged and, accordingly, be renamed: (1) Plant Protection of Field Crops and Plant Protection of trees should be merged and renamed as Plant protection (2) Production of asexual propagation material or Seed production should be merged and renamed as Plant propagation (3) Essential oils, aromatic and pharmaceutical plants and Specialized Horticulture should be merged and accordingly be renamed.
- All individual course syllabi should be standardized and updated at a regular basis in cooperation with advisory boards and/or other academic institutes
- An updated curriculum both in Greek and English language should be prepared

A2. Teaching

Teaching in the TEI of Kalamata consists of 40 courses, and is divided into theory and laboratory/practical sessions over 7 semesters. The program also includes a thesis and six calendar months of internship. The program consists of required courses with no electives. A semester consists of 10-13 hours of theory and 10-11 hours of laboratory/practical work per course.

Most faculty members of the Department are well-trained and well regarded scientists, and in general, they have very good relationships with staff members and students. As it was emphasized by the students, the quality of the material presented both in theoretical and practical part of the courses was exceptional. The ratio between the teachers and the students is 1/20. However a big teaching load is covered by temporarily hired contract lecturers. In real terms, because of extremely low attendance the teacher/student ratio is irrelevant.

According to the internal evaluation report, the theoretical courses are carried out through lectures with the support of electronic means to ensure better understanding of the discussed concepts. The text books provided to the students are the same ones that are provided by the Greek Schools of Agricultures and are provided free of charge by the Greek government. Additional texts relevant to the coursework are available at the library.

With regard to the practical/laboratory courses, the main teaching methods focus on applications of the theory and project assignments that are completed at the laboratories or in the field. The EEC was impressed with the quality of the equipment available to perform all the laboratory exercises. Namely, state of the art equipment including fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), several high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC), gas chromatography-mass spectroscopy (GC-MS) units as well free flow fractionation (FFE) and several atomic absorption units were available to undergraduates. Practical laboratory sessions make up a significant part of the overall teaching activities, and offer hands-on knowledge to students.

The EEC noted that training the undergraduates on using state of the art equipment on several analytical methods gives them a competitive advantage as future agricultural specialists. This was one of the most obvious strengths of the program.

The availability of teachers to respond and support students in need was considered satisfactory as it is stated in the IER and confirmed by the students themselves. As stated by the students, professors are available outside of working hours. Student interviews conducted during this external evaluation confirmed both high student satisfaction, and good relationship between faculty and students.

Grading and assessment is separate for laboratory and theory, and a range of assessment forms is used including exams and coursework. Generally for the theoretical part, the final mark is assigned using a final exam. However, the department had pioneered a “special projects” concept that contributed up to 20% of the final mark. This was adopted in the form of a field exercise or review project in a “paper format”. Both the professors and students were satisfied with the outcome of its implementation because it leads to increased participation, higher involvement of students in the class, and provided means of improving their final grade.

A process of course evaluation by the students was initiated during the spring and fall semester of 2008-2009. The student feedback was overall positive regarding the teaching methods and the course structure. However this evaluation is not probably representative due to extremely low attendance in the classes. The department has implemented an electronic format of class material through e-class, although this is not yet adopted by all the professors.

There is very low attendance, which in extreme cases results in one student per class. This could be, in part, due to the traditional type of delivery of lectures that is carried out in the Greek educational system, but several more factors conspire to have this highly undesirable outcome. One of these factors is the malfunction of the Greek system of higher education which allows students to abstain from attending lectures. This is particularly common for courses for which textbooks are provided for free. So, even if teachers implement new

knowledge into their courses, students do not have access to this due to their low attendance rate. Furthermore, until recently the legislative framework for higher education allowed students to keep their student status for life. This may actually have acted as a deterrent for students to complete their studies within a reasonable time.

The student graduation rate on time was very low to the extent that in one recent year it was 0%. This is a situation common in many Greek academic institutions and widely seen throughout the Greek system of higher education, but the causes are not always clear. According to the discussion with all the professors including the non permanent staff, the cause is attributed to the low quality level of student education entering the program. Nevertheless, the EEC suggests that such a situation must be immediately addressed and remedied.

The EEC found no evidence of procedures that secure a systematic updating and validating of the course material, especially taking into consideration that 2/3 of the teaching staff is temporary on 9-month contracts. Such procedures should be institutionalized.

While it is claimed that students are involved in research activities within the framework of a large proportion of courses, the reality is that the link between research and teaching remains limited, since student exposure to the research work of the Department or to recent international research developments is limited. Although the course evaluation process is implemented there is no clear evidence as to the follow up process by the department. The comments made by students should be considered for the improvement of the quality of course material and the professor's teaching.

Suggestions for improvement:

A possible way could be to modify student assessment and include tools such as regular homework assignments, weekly quizzes, group presentations, discussions or other group/team work, and more midterm exams. In general, student participation in theory/lecture classes should be increased, and the splitting of lengthy 2-3-hour theory lectures and 2-3-hour laboratories should be reconsidered.

Some faculty and staff are using modern information technologies in their lecturing and encourage students to use them in their presentations as well. A departmental web page has been implemented that can contain lecture material, syllabi, and other program information. The possibility of using e-learning should be further investigated as a means to help students that work and cannot attend theory classes.

Most faculty members have very good relationships with students, welcome conversations with students, and are eager to answer questions or to guide/mentor students. However, in general, the EEC saw very little evidence of officially designed academic support for students. The student support provided by faculty should be made formal and academic advisors should be assigned to all students. The effort to obtain student feedback should be continued and expanded to include information about individual courses, and individual faculty.

If the desire of the Department is to create an MSc Program, the EEC believes that they have the ability at least to develop a draft proposal also indicating changes/improvements in the undergraduate program. This potential MSc program should serve societal and industry needs, and should be geared towards training and re-training not only recent graduates, but other industry personnel as well.

The internal evaluation did not provide any clue since out of the 40 courses we have information about the student's evaluation of very few courses. It is highly recommended that the questionnaire should be provided during the lab exercises also where their participation is mandatory and to be divided in two sections. The first section should address questions related to the practical part of the course and the second should be completed from the students regularly attending the course. However, they have to define for which particular reason they do not attend. In some cases, students voiced concerns of how the lecture material is presented. In addition, it was confirmed that a certain number of students have to work as they attend school. The ultimate goal of this report should be the increase of the attendance of students to lectures. The EEC recommends increasing the use of technology, where all material is available online.

Concerning mobility/ERASMUS: Since 2007, the department has accepted 14 students and 3 teachers as incoming mobility, while 2 students of the department have undertaken

their internship at another EU country and 3 teachers have spent teaching periods abroad.

Strengths

- Good relationships among faculty members
- Adequate laboratory facilities, in most cases also well-equipped

Weaknesses

- Low attendance rate in the theoretical part of the courses
- Very few students finish in four years, or even in 6 years
- In some courses, the failure rate is unacceptably high

Suggestions for improvement

- A range of assessments, including exams, coursework and practical skills should be included.
- Provide incentives to students for increased attendance in theory/lecture classes
- Change the format of assessment to include mid-term exams, reports, quizzes, etc.
- Use e-learning web-based technologies
- Where possible, courses should not have 3-hour lectures or 3-hour labs
- Improve teaching style by including activities that increase student participation, student discussion, active learning, problem solving, etc.
- Set up a peer tutoring service and/or assign official faculty advisors to all students
- For students that lack the appropriate science and math background provide appropriate support training.
- Receive and use Student Feedback for individual courses and individual faculty
- The evaluation report for each course by the students to be carried out simultaneously during the lab exercises when the attendance rate is high. In that way, it will be justified why the students do not attend the theoretical part of the courses
- Foster an environment where students can participate and lead professional activities
- The Erasmus Action should be advertised by the Faculty members. The number of students that taking advantage of this mobility grant is unacceptably low

B. Research

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

APPROACH

Traditionally, research is not the main task at TEI, and this is clearly evident considering the IER where no specific chapters or paragraphs are dedicated to research activity (with the exception of the list of publication and scientific conference participation). Besides the fact that research activity is not considered in the operational framework of TEI, it must be stressed that the department's faculty members are overloaded with teaching, and it seems rather difficult for them to be involved in the submission of competitive research grants or in performing research projects, in particular if this is not considered an "added value" and somehow encouraged by the Department administration. Some individual efforts for involvement in competitive research projects have been made, but these were sporadic and did not follow an overall research plan with specific objectives and short-term or long-term strategic objectives of the Institution. The EEC has been provided, during the meeting, with a document describing and listing recent research projects and related budget, totalling approximately 200.000 Euros. The success of some faculty members as participants in applications for research grants indicates that there are (some) faculty members who are competitive at national and international level. With few exceptions, it is evident that, most of the research is done based on the available economic resources of the Department for the teaching and training activities, and this is mainly performed with undergraduate students as part of their thesis work.

IMPLEMENTATION

The evolution of TEI and the evaluated DCP should be encouraged to include research activities as part of their mission, vision and overall objectives in particular considering the research facilities and lab equipment available at the Department. Besides the field trials and the experimental farm, the EEC has been impressed by the significant amount of space that can be used for research purposes both as wet and dry labs, and the equipment and instruments available in these labs. This is a great advantage for the Department in terms of both activating research-based policies and proposing coordinated activities with other Departments of the same Institute or other research Institutions to set up joint labs and/or implement and broaden the research topics. This is an important aspect considering the lack of a critical mass of active research faculty and the possible under-utilization of high-tech instruments. Young scientists will take great advantages in terms of scientific impact, career advancements, and options for leading research groups.

RESULTS

The internal evaluation document reports less than 80 publications in scientific journals (listed since 2003) and from this list is evident that there is a marked productivity discrepancy between the faculty members, an aspect that needs to be addressed in the future. Out of the 76 publications listed, 52 (some of them in peer-reviewed journals with medium-high impact factors) are the result of the research activity of just three faculty members. Some other members had a limited output, while other members had no publications for the considered period (2003-2010). After the highest number of publication in 2007, a decreasing trend in publishing scientific papers is evident in the following years, possibly indicating difficulties in getting research grants and/or an overload of teaching and organization duties. This could indicate a decreasing interest/attraction for research activity in the last few years. Faculty members participated with oral or poster communications mainly in national conferences. It is not clear from the report what the level of cooperation with other research institutions or Universities is at national or international level. No specific metrics or standards for assessing research or evaluation system of the scientific output have been set up by the Department. Very few data concerning the technological transfer activity have been provided.

IMPROVEMENT

Since TEI (and the evaluated Department) is an “applied university”, applied (but not only) research should be an indispensable and integrated part of teaching since it promotes the introduction of students to fresh ideas, hands-on experience in the laboratory and allows the teachers/researchers to introduce new knowledge into their courses and develop creative thinking and problem solving ability. Applied research can be also seen an essential element to efficiently implement technology transfer. The department should clearly define strategies and policies to encourage and support the faculty to be involved in research activity and, in particular, in competitive research projects (i.e. appropriate recognition, less teaching hours assigned, etc.). This is particularly important for the newly hired (full-time/part time, temporarily/permanently) teaching staff. Considering the interest for specific crops (of interest to the local growers and economy), the Department should set-up a standing committee to act as the liaison with the major stakeholders in the public and private sector in order to create a database of potential applied projects. A plan for the rational use of the facilities should also be considered as strategic in the frame of research collaboration with other local and national Institutions. This will likely increase the success rate of research grant proposals. Similarly, efforts should be made to increase research collaboration with industry, particularly SME companies in Greece. All the above efforts will allow the DCP to be more and more involved in collaborative postgraduate studies (MS, PhD). A database with all publications produced by the faculty staff should also be considered as the starting point for the use of research output for internal evaluations and resource distribution or re-allocation.

Strengths

- Spaces and several labs (some of them well-equipped) are available for research activities
- Many of the analytical equipment are state-of the-art
- Most of the faculty (in particular young scientists) expressed an interest in research

Weaknesses

- No operating funds in support of research
- No clear research policy and direction
- Limited or null interest in terms of evaluation for the research activity
- Lack of critical mass of active research faculty

Suggestions for improvement

- The EEC strongly recommends that the Department should form a standing committee to act as a liaison with the major stakeholders in the public and private sector, by major crop
- Definition of guidelines concerning research activity of faculty staff and setting up a committee in order to develop potential applied-research projects
- The development of a post-graduate training programmes, either independently (within the bounds of legislation), or in collaboration with other academic institutions is considered of utmost importance for the advancement of research.
- There is limited evidence that a more applied version of the research outcomes is produced and distributed (knowledge and technology transfer) to the potential users. The Department’s visibility is quite limited and an effort should be made with regard

to the uptake of new knowledge by the pertinent stakeholders.

- The next IER should mention Research grants, along with the funding agent, total budget and kind of contribution
- The next IER should clearly mention the Publication record of the Faculty members, e.g. ISI journals with impact factor and citations, conference proceedings, book chapters, review papers, other publications

C. All Other Services

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

The administrative structure of the Department was set up in accordance with the relevant legislation and not in any different way than that of Academic units in other institutions of higher education. The secretarial services of the Department were excellent thanks to the dedication of a single employee.

The Institute has a new library building which is very functional. The library is well stocked with several copies of more than one text on each subject and covers the needs of all academic units. The staff of the library offers orientation to new (and old) students and advises the users on the services of the online system. Within the library operates an excellent document duplication centre, including facilities for the printing of large posters. A large number of PCs connected to the Institute Intranet is also available for the use of faculty and students. According to the library staff, reasonable funding is available throughout the year for new acquisitions. It was noted that a particularly large collection of books was available on the events of the civil war and on other contemporary political developments.

Student counseling was available but it was not always clear to the students who the counsellors were. The athletic facilities were not apparent to the EEC, but apparently they did exist. The cultural activities also were not obvious to the EEC, except for the loud preparations for the 17 November anniversary activities. Student accommodation facilities were excellent in quality but were located remotely from the Institute and not in satisfactory quantity.

Collaborations with social, cultural and production organizations were mostly driven by individual faculty members. There were several cases reported where faculty members had established cooperation with colleagues in other TEI or Universities had contributed to joined research projects and had co-supervised graduate students. There were instances where Faculty members had close cooperation with local Agri-business and had assisted in the resolution of crop production or protection issues within the local agricultural community. Several cases were also reported where staff members were either organizers, or participants in short educational sessions, seminars, or open houses for the benefit of the local and regional farming community.

D. Strategic planning, perspectives for improvement and potential inhibiting factors

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

The DCP does not have an updated comprehensive strategic plan with clearly stated mission, vision, or long-term and short-term objectives. Therefore, the EEC encourages the department to take small steps towards creating a mission, a vision, and long and short term objectives. Below are some examples of proposed short-, medium- and long-term goals and plans of action:

The Department should be able to offer the Bachelor's Degree within (4+ 2) 6 years to at least 50% of the students in order to meet the job market requirements of the private sector.

Internal evaluation of all faculty members, including full professors should take place every 3 years. The evaluation should include research activities such as research grants, publications, etc., teaching load and teaching quality, service activities, and administrative tasks. In addition, the Department should establish incentives to increase the mobility of faculty members (e.g. sabbaticals)

E. Conclusions:

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

In conclusion, the overall impression of the EEC was positive regarding infrastructure, human resources and current program of studies. The EEC was satisfied by the positive attitude of all staff, the students, and alumni, regarding future prospects of the Department. The conspicuous pride of the people involved about the service they offer to the local and regional farming community, the consumers and the society at large is also noted and commented. The EEC supports the involvement of as many Faculty members as possible in the development of the Internal Evaluation Report to be written in English at least for the purposes of the External Evaluation..

On the basis of the valuable information compiled by the IEC of the Department and in particular the information gathered by the EEC during the on-cite visit, the following recommendations were agreed upon by the members of the EEC and are offered as positive suggestions for the improvement of the performance of the Department. It is noted that no attempt was made by the EEC to exceed the terms of reference dictated by ADIP and to look beyond the level of the Department.

1. The most striking observation made by all members of the EEC was the grossly inadequate number of permanent faculty members in relation to the very large number of temporary professional staff and the presence of an exceptionally large scientific infrastructure of very high quality. However, it is recognized that the situation is controlled centrally by the Ministry of Education.
2. The educational level of students accepted in the Department is very low both in basic science knowledge and foreign languages. Potential students with a non-science background should not be permitted to register in this program.
3. A major obstacle is the perpetual continuation of student ability to take repeated examinations of one or many failed courses, far and beyond the years of studies. This results in a confusing and incoherent sequence of attendance and should be considered within the framework of future planning of the Department.
4. Regarding student evaluations, only final examinations of questionable methodology are arranged in most of the courses. This is an issue which deserves closer consideration possibly through the introduction of frequent intermediate exams (quizzes) and other more innovative examination methods (similar to the special projects, already pioneered by this Department, for which the EEC has commented the teaching staff already).
5. The EEC found limited documented evidence for the existence of formal procedures that secure a systematic updating of the course material. Such procedures should be put in place.
6. Evaluation of faculty teaching by students should become more transparent and an effective follow-up mechanism should be put into place.
7. There is an obvious high productivity discrepancy among faculty members that needs to be addressed in the future.
8. There is limited evidence that a more applied version of the research outcomes is produced and distributed (knowledge dissemination) to the potential users. The Department's visibility is quite limited and an effort should be made with regard to

the uptake of new knowledge by the pertinent stakeholders. The EEC strongly recommends that the Department forms a standing committee to act as a liaison with the major stakeholders in the public and private sector.

9. The EEC found no formal process in place to track the professional development and the careers of its graduates in order to get feed-back pertaining to the value of the curriculum to their professional career. A proper system must be set-up in order to systematically track the career progress of the alumni.
10. There is good intranet access to documents and student registration information, however, the EEC strongly recommends opening up the system to the internet.
11. Definition of guidelines concerning research activity of faculty staff and setting up a committee to act as the liaison with the major stakeholders in the public and private sector in order to develop potential applied-research projects.
12. The development of a post-graduate training programmes, either independently (within the bounds of legislation), or in collaboration with other academic institutions is considered of utmost importance, based on the revision of the undergraduate curriculum.
13. A move toward regular assessment is intended to document evidence of the department's effectiveness that should be used for an on-going and continuous improvement. The Department will benefit from the creation of an external advisory board. Such a board could consist of alumni, colleagues from other universities or institutes, industry professionals, government experts, students, and others, and it would keep the department connected to the "real world".
14. A future internal evaluation report of the Department should additionally encompass the following objective elements: (1) activities to retain student's enrolment rate, (2) graduation rates and grades of the graduates, (3) assessment of student satisfaction, (4) student population demographics, (5) employment data after graduation, (6) analysis of research grants and publication records and Faculty member's recognition on defined sub-categories (e.g. ISI journals, conference proceedings, book chapters, review papers, citations, invited reviews on journals etc), (7) statistics about areas where internships are carried out.
15. Restoring some areas of the main building and a better maintenance of the entrance, entrance hall and common spaces where teaching activity is carried out would be beneficial for the activity of the students and the faculty staff

The Members of the Committee

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