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HELLENIC REPUBLIC
H.Q.A.A.
HELLENIC QUALITY
ASSURANCE AGENCY
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION

THE ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI

January, 2012

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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Philosophy and Education of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. Professor Petros Pashiardis (Chair)
Open University of Cyprus, Cyprus
2. Professor Richard McKirahan
Pomona College, Claremont, California, USA
3. Professor Panagiotis Dimas
University of Oslo, Norway
4. Assistant Professor Maria D. Avgerinou
DePaul University, Chicago, USA

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

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

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

The External Evaluation Committee visited the Department on 5-7 December 2011. We met the following individuals and groups:

- the Vice Rector of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) & Chair of the MODIP
- the Chairman of the Department the Directors of the Divisions of Education and of Philosophy, and the members of the OMEA
- the teaching staff of the Division (*tomeas*) of Education
 - the majority of the staff attended
- the teaching staff of the Division of Philosophy
 - all the staff attended
- the administrative executive staff of the Department
- the administrative staff (secretariat) of both Divisions
- the librarians of both Divisions and the person responsible for the computers
- Undergraduate, post-graduate students and doctoral candidates of the Department
- 23 students attended, including 4 doctoral candidates and 5 postgraduate students

We examined the following documents that were provided by the Department:

- the Department’s 2011 Internal Evaluation Report
 - the Program of Studies (Study Guide) for 2010-2011; we were also given a hardcopy of the 2011-12 Study Guide
 - information about the undergraduate students admitted in 2010 and in 2011 which were not included in the Internal Evaluation Report
 - sample course syllabi from the Division of Education (DoE)
 - sample tests and final examination material from DoE
 - books authored by DoE faculty
 - the CVs of the Faculty members of both Divisions
 - the Department’s website
- and we also looked at the Vice Rector’s Report on AUTH 2010-2011,

We visited the Department’s facilities including:

- the main building, housing the administrative offices and most faculty offices
- the teaching rooms (classrooms and amphitheaters)
- the library (both the main library for the School of Philosophy as well as the two Division libraries)
- the computer laboratory
- various micro-teaching smart classrooms and small research units

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

In general, the Internal Evaluation Report of the Department gives a thorough and detailed picture of the history and the current state of the Department and it provided a very good basis for the work of the External Evaluation Committee. The sources and documentation were entirely appropriate. All supplementary information that we requested, including additional data on students and CVs of faculty members of the Department, was promptly provided, as well as sample student assessment material, Masters’ Theses and Doctoral Dissertations.

A. Curriculum

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

Division of Philosophy**APPROACH**

The Department offers one undergraduate program with two concentrations: Philosophy, and Education. It also offers four postgraduate study programs, one in the Division of Philosophy and three in the Division of Education. Both Divisions offer Doctoral programs.

Undergraduate study program (USP) in Philosophy

The USP is designed to qualify students for positions as professors of Philology in secondary education. Unlike the USP of the Division of Philology, the Department's concentrations in Philosophy and in Education, in addition to giving students an adequate background in philology, also provide a broader education which, the faculty members assert, make their graduates more successful teachers. The USP of the Division of Philosophy requires completion of 55 courses (244 credits in the ECTS); the USP of the Division of Education requires completion of 55 courses (242 credits in the ECTS).

The following requirements (38 courses) are common to both USP's:

- 5 core (kormos) courses in Philosophy
- 3 courses on philosophical texts
- 5 core courses in Education
- 14 courses in Philology
- 3 courses on teaching methods
- 4 courses in foreign language
- 2 courses in Information Technology (pliroforiki)
- Each USP allows 2 elective courses (eleftheris epilogis)

The concentration in Philosophy requires (in addition to the 5 core courses in Philosophy and the 3 courses on philosophical texts mentioned above) 17 courses in Philosophy, distributed as follows:

- 6 additional core courses in Philosophy
- 9 more advanced courses (katythisi) in Philosophy

Postgraduate study program (PSP) in Philosophy

The purpose of the PSP is to provide a course in philosophical studies at a deeper and more specialized level in particular areas of philosophy. It requires students to take five postgraduate level courses in two years and to write a dissertation of fifty pages or more. This year, twelve such courses are offered, six each semester. The program has two broad directions: historical and systematic.

Doctoral Program

The requirements of the Doctoral Program are that the student be enrolled for no less than three or more than six years and to write a dissertation which is a substantial contribution to learning. 55 doctoral students are currently enrolled. There is no department established procedure for revising the curriculum of the USP, the PSP or the Doctoral Program.

Division of Education**APPROACH****Undergraduate program in the Division of Education**

The goals and the objectives of the Curriculum are generally to provide students with the necessary knowledge in order to function as secondary teachers of "philology" in the Greek Education System. Apparently, the objectives were decided some time ago back in 1985 when the then Department of Philosophy, Psychology and Education was founded within the School of Philosophy. No particular factors seem to have been taken into account when preparing the curriculum and there did not seem to be any consultation with other stakeholders, such as the Division of Secondary Education within the Ministry of Education which is supposedly the main employer of their students. On the contrary, as was mentioned by members of the academic staff of the division, the division has changed and modernized their curriculum content, but the curriculum in the schools where their students will teach, did not change in unison with them, therefore, the university curriculum is not very

consistent with the objectives of the secondary schools' curriculum and the requirements of current society.

Post-Graduate program in the Division of Education

The goal of the Post-Graduate program in the Division of Education is, as mentioned in the Study Guide we received, "to prepare leaders in education, specialized in curriculum program development, educational policy planning, for administrative/counseling functions of education, and for developing leaders in adult and continuing education". However, it seems that it can be inferred (from the course offerings) that the post-graduate program is a continuation of the under-graduate program with advanced courses, sometimes, even with very similar course titles as in the under-graduate program. As it stands now, the program cannot offer the specialization needed for advanced studies. A more rigorous specialization of concentrations is needed for someone to achieve the necessary expertise and specialization in a particular area. One course is not sufficient toward producing "specialists" at an advance level, and even more so, it cannot produce leaders in education, as is mentioned in the goal of the post-graduate program.

Division of Philosophy

IMPLEMENTATION

Undergraduate study program (USP) in Philosophy

The PSP is balanced among the areas of expertise of the existing faculty. A glaring weakness is the absence (since the retirement of Professor Avgelis) of any courses in the Anglo-American tradition of analytic philosophy. This way of doing philosophy, in particular, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and epistemology (gnwseologiva), has been in the view of many the dominant kind of philosophy for the past fifty years. In United States and the United Kingdom, this is the main kind of philosophy taught in every major research university and any philosophy department in those countries that does not teach it at all -- even a department that emphasizes the history of philosophy -- would not be considered significant. It was also noted that the curriculum does not include symbolic logic. We were told that logic is rarely taught in philosophy programs in Greece. Elsewhere however, it is regarded as basic and is typically a required course in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. In our opinion, the absence of analytical philosophy and symbolic logic needs to be addressed as soon as possible. In future hirings highest priority should be given to filling the gap in these two critical areas. We think that this curriculum requires students to take too many courses. Many excellent undergraduate programs of studies in Philosophy require a smaller number. We recommend that the faculty re-think the shape of the curriculum.

The structure of the curriculum suggests that students will normally begin with more general subjects (kormos) during the first two years and then go on to more advanced courses in the following years. Students are not required to follow this plan, although it appears that most of them do so. We noticed that aside from the general expectations that students will complete the core before taking more advanced courses and that seminars will be taken by third- and fourth-year students, courses do not have prerequisites. We recommend that the department look into the possibility of setting prerequisites for some courses, so that there can be a noticeable progression of expectations of both faculty and students as to the prior knowledge required of students who enter courses and as to the level of sophistication at which the courses will be taught.

The descriptions of the core courses in the Study Guide are uneven and some are written in a way that would make it difficult for beginning students of philosophy to understand the course content. (This may be one consequence of an unfortunate *laissez faire* tendency that we noted in several areas of the department's functioning.) Since the Study Guide is intended for student use, we recommend that it be edited for consistency of style and content.

Postgraduate study program (PSP) in Philosophy

There appears to be little or no structure to the courses a student in the PSP is expected to take. Each member of the division seems to offer one course in his/her specialization. We recommend that the Philosophy faculty meet to discuss the goals of the PSP and to make them more specific, and to consider instituting a structured curriculum designed to meet those goals. Students expressed a desire for there to be a public defense of the dissertation, as with doctoral dissertations.

There are currently no foreign students enrolled in the postgraduate program. The Study Guide only recently begun to indicate how many ECTS credits students receive in the postgraduate courses. This may facilitate compliance with the Bologna process/ECTS requirements, and will hopefully improve student mobility at the postgraduate level between the Department and foreign universities and related institutes. Both Greek and foreign students would benefit immensely from the expertise provided by the programs. Unfortunately, we had little opportunity to discuss the PSP with current students, and the department self-study did not give us a sense of how the students perceive it.

Doctoral Program

As with the PSP, there was little opportunity for us to discuss the doctoral program with current students and the department self-study did not give us a sense of how the students perceive it. Of the several completed doctoral dissertations we were given to examine some seemed to be of a high quality, judged by international standards.

Division of Education

IMPLEMENTATION

Undergraduate program in the Division of Education

The feeling of the committee is that the Division of Education goals are not very well implemented by the curriculum. The curriculum seems to be **heavily** concentrated on issues dealing with the History of (Greek) Education as well as numerous courses in the area of Sociology of Education with not much room for other courses which students will need in order to function in modern schools, such as courses in Instructional Technology, Classroom Management, Adolescent Psychology, Learning Theories, and Organization and Administration of Educational Institutions. The structure of the curriculum is not very rational and not clearly articulated in terms of coherency and functionality. Moreover, there are too many courses with the result that they are compartmentalized and really based on the professors' expertise and knowledge. In a sense, one gets the idea that the curriculum and its content are implemented and driven based on the professors' expertise and cognitive area and not driven by the functionalities that their own graduates will need to perform in order to perform effectively as secondary school teachers in today's Greek schools. Moreover, through the examination of the "indicative program of studies", one can see that in most semesters, a student is required to take about 24 credit hours per semester. That is too heavy a load and this is why students mentioned that their load is huge and cannot really cope with it.

Post-Graduate program in the Division of Education

Again, the same criticism holds true for the post-graduate program, as was provided for the under-graduate program. The structure of the curriculum is not very rational and not clearly articulated in terms of coherency and functionality. Moreover, there are too many courses (with 2 credits) with the result that they are compartmentalized and really based on the professors' expertise and knowledge. Therefore, the program lacks coherency and specialization in a true sense. For instance, with just two courses in Program Evaluation, one does not become an expert in that area. Or with one or two courses in School Pedagogy, one does not become an expert in Educational Leadership, Organization, and Policy. The program offers the opportunity to obtain a Masters and/or a PhD degree. The admission requirements vary according to the degree aspired. The duration of the studies varies between four and six semesters for obtaining a Masters and six and twelve semesters for obtaining a PhD degree.

Division of Philosophy

RESULTS

Undergraduate study program (USP) in Philosophy

Both students¹ and faculty are dissatisfied -- rightly so, in our opinion -- with the core courses. Faculty complain that most of students enrolled in these courses do not attend

¹We note that the Department self-study contains essentially no student input. When student surveys were taken, there was apparently considerable suspicion and hostility to the external review. We were

them. (400-500 students might enroll, although the amphitheater has only 300 seats, and only 40 students regularly attend classes.) Subsequently hundreds show up to take the final examination, of whom a large number do not pass the course. The students complain that they learn little to nothing in the courses, some of them going so far as to say that the first two years of study are lost time. We understand that this is a structural problem in Greek universities. Nevertheless, we believe that some steps can be taken immediately to alleviate these problems with the core courses. (See below in the section on Teaching.)

As is to be expected, the level of satisfaction (of both faculty and students) is higher in advanced courses where the enrollments are smaller. In more advanced courses and in the seminars, essays (ergasies) and oral presentations are typically required, and of course the smaller number of students facilitates in-class discussion.

Some faculty and many students expressed dissatisfaction with courses in which the only graded work is the final examination. The faculty members in question and all the students agreed that students learn to do philosophy better and faster when they have written exercises (ergasies) that count for part of the final grade of the course. Some of the faculty said that it would not be possible to have a course in which there is no final examination. However, all four members of the external evaluating committee have found from their own personal and institutional experience that this is not the case, and we encourage the faculty to discuss how to make the system of evaluation of student work more appropriate to the goals of individual courses and to those of the USP overall. In particular, the charge that students learn very little in their introductory courses should, in our opinion, be a cause of serious concern to the faculty and should spur them to reconsider this part of the USP. With the exception of the core courses, the students we met were generally satisfied with the academic content of the USP. The members of this self-selected group were enthusiastic about philosophy and generally pleased with their experience in the Department.

Division of Education

RESULTS

Undergraduate program in the Division of Education

Based on what we have heard, it seems that the Division of Education is doing pretty good in achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives, based on the ASEP examination. We have not really seen any results, however, the professors claimed that the graduates of their department do really well during the ASEP examinations which are organized by the Ministry of Education in order to qualify as a teacher in Greece. In essence, the professors seem to be pleased with what they are "producing" according to the expectations of secondary education in Greece. The teacher candidates' perception however contradicts this view: though on the pedagogical level they report feeling adequately prepared to perform their future teaching duties, on the content knowledge front and by comparison to graduates of the Literature Department they notably feel less prepared, more incompetent and insecure.

Post-Graduate program in the Division of Education

There is really no way to find out about the success of the post-graduate program, except with "proof" from the successes of its own graduates in the Greek Education System and also the graduates' acceptance at prestigious universities for further studies. Therefore, one can only make inferences about it. However, based on international standards and practice, there should be more of a specialization and concentration of graduate studies within the Division of Education.

happy that that attitude has apparently vanished; the students we talked to were supportive of our work and were surprised to learn that their predecessors (unlike the Education students) had not cooperated by filling in the questionnaires. We are somewhat surprised that that the Department did not make another effort to solicit input from the Philosophy students nearer to the time of the external evaluation, but perhaps this has to do with the time when the internal self-study was written. We note that when we write about student opinions our information is limited to what we learned from the relatively few Philosophy students who came to meet with us.

Division of Education**IMPROVEMENT****Undergraduate program in the Division of Education**

Having said so in the previous section, it seems that the Department does not believe that the Curriculum should be improved, and therefore, there are no improvements planned by the Department.

Post-Graduate program in the Division of Education

The Division of Education does not really seem clear about the post-Graduate programs it offers. In our view, this is not a “specialized” Masters that is offered, but rather, a collection of advanced courses based on the under-graduate curriculum. The Division should really move on the offering of more focused Masters’ programs, such as a Masters in Adult and Continuing Education, a Masters in Curriculum Development and Evaluation, a Masters in Educational Leadership and Policy, a Masters in Educational Technology, etc.

B. Teaching**Division of Philosophy****APPROACH****Undergraduate study program (USP) in Philosophy**

Core courses, more advanced courses, and seminars require different approaches to teaching. The very high student-teacher ratio of the Department (approximately 40:1) places severe limitations on the kinds of teaching that can be offered and the amount of time the faculty can spend with individual students. This high ratio is due to a considerable degree to the fact that each year the Department is forced to admit far more students than they say that they can teach. We understand that the responsibility for this situation does not belong to the Department, but we want to go on the record as stating that the practice of forcing universities to educate more students than they are able is detrimental to the quality of the education they can provide, and simultaneously increases the number of poorly educated citizens as well as decreasing the number of well educated ones.

Division of Education**APPROACH****Undergraduate program in the Division of Education**

As far as particularly core and teaching methods courses are concerned, it seems that lack of mandatory attendance which impacts student numbers, large student enrollment which is also disproportionate to full time faculty, as well as available classroom size are the important criteria driving pedagogical decisions with regard to teaching approach and methodology. As a result, lecture is overwhelmingly selected in this instance where staff/student ratio can be anywhere from 1:150 to 1:600 (including other AUTH students) despite the fact that faculty find it difficult to pedagogically model what they ask their students to observe, and while at the same time students do not necessarily find it as conducive to their learning. By the same token, elective courses are taught, and microteaching practice events are conducted in a seminar format which accommodates 30-35 students on average (maximum student number: 50), typically takes place in more updated and better equipped classrooms than the large classrooms with the poor structure and infrastructure. This format allows for attendance to be taken, but also for more student to student interaction –including group projects, some of which research based--, and student to instructor interaction which students report as more satisfactory overall. Students value particularly the mandatory five week practicum conducted through field experiences in local schools, and microteaching practice events in the Division of Education (DoE). Since the student majority typically opt to extend this practicum to seven weeks, and considering the best practices in teacher education on this front, it would be recommended for the DoE to consider extending the practicum to cover at least a period of two academic semesters. This way students will feel better prepared both regarding content knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge and thus overcome current sentiments of insecurity and lack of confidence regarding mainly the former (which, as was aforementioned under Curriculum Implementation, are not endorsed by the Faculty who believe quite the reverse).

Post-Graduate program in the Division of Education

Due to the relatively small number of students, courses are taught in a seminar format which

students not only greatly appreciate but also report as highly conducive to their learning. This also partially explains why according to the Internal Evaluation Report, graduate students appear overall more satisfied than undergraduates with their learning experiences in the DoE. Faculty also assert that they are doing a more effective job with the graduate students that is owed mainly to smaller groups, student readiness, and more updated classrooms.

Doctoral Program in the Division of Education

There are no taught courses for the Doctoral candidates who nevertheless are able to actively participate as facilitators of the teaching of other Undergraduate or Graduate courses of the DoE.

DoE Undergraduate, Graduate and Doctoral Levels- Use of Educational, and Information and Communication Technologies

Based on the Internal Evaluation Report but also on our on-site visit, with the notable exception of the interactive whiteboard and video recording of microteaching events, use of educational technologies is rather limited to basic applications (MS Office Word & Power Point), while there is close to non-existing use of AUTH's Learning Management System (Blackboard). In alignment with pedagogical goals and the learning outcomes of the DoE, especially those referring to preparing teacher leaders and teacher candidates to meet the needs of the "digital learner" generation and assist them develop core 21st century skills, better informed, systematic and varied integration of educational technology should be implemented across all subjects. This could include more extensive use of Blackboard, as well as other available affordances such as Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 free and open source software and applications. As far as use of Information and Communication Technologies is concerned, there is regular email exchange between faculty and students, and among faculty too. The Departmental website is well populated with information related to the life of the two Divisions, instructional material (archives), details of programs offered at all levels, faculty's research and teaching expertise, specifically designated area for online submission of course selection, etc.

DoE- Undergraduate & Graduate Student Assessment, and Doctoral Candidate Examination

Student assessment takes place via final examinations (oral, and/or written), group and/or individual projects and presentations throughout the academic semester. It is not clear whether there is always a specific rubric for the latter which however is assessed both for content and for presentation. Due to the unpredictable number of enrolled students who might appear at final examinations, it is recommended that the Division hires teaching assistants to assist in the grading of final papers. In addition, various forms (online too) of formative assessment addressing different learning needs, skills and knowledge should be introduced in order to assist students improve their own performance during the life of the course, but also expose them to concrete examples and related educational potential of assessment for their own future classes.

Division of Philosophy

IMPLEMENTATION

Undergraduate study program (USP) in Philosophy

Within the Division of Philosophy, and judging by student enrollments rather than numbers of courses, the preponderance of instruction occurs in the core courses and the method of instruction employed is lecturing, with little opportunity for class discussion. In more advanced courses the mode of teaching varies with the instructor, from mainly lecture to mainly discussion, and occasional oral presentations. The seminars are limited to 25-30 students and are mainly done through discussion and oral presentations.

The most commonly used method of evaluating undergraduates is examinations held at the end of each course. However grading is not anonymous since students are instructed to write their names on their examination papers. We recommend that a procedure should be put in place that ensures the anonymous grading of examinations. Moreover we recommend that there should be more graded work in each class including obligatory midterm exams, different kinds of graded exercises, such as assignments to be done at home, papers written individually or in collaboration with other students, and projects for involving supervision

from members of the academic staff.

The Departmental self-study makes frequent mention of the lack of teaching space and the difficulties of scheduling meeting times for classes. We have no reason to doubt that this is a serious problem and although we have no specific recommendations to make on this matter, we want to stress that the provision of an adequate number of appropriate rooms for teaching is a basic responsibility of a university. Our suggestion to reduce the number of required courses should help in this direction. Aside from the problem of the number of teaching rooms, from what we saw it appeared to us that the teaching rooms are satisfactory in size and all of them have internet access and the capability of projecting PowerPoint presentations. We recommend that the University make every effort to provide adequate teaching spaces for the classes offered by the Department. Satisfactory also are the departmental routines for informing students through the internet about the courses offered as well as their subject matter and content.

In the section on Curriculum we identified some unsatisfactory aspects of the core courses (too many students enrolled to fit into the amphitheater, low attendance, low passing rate, student perception that the courses are a waste of time). To these can be added uninspiring teaching, at least in some cases. The faculty seem to agree, but do not appear to have met to discuss the existing problems or to find ways to address them. In conversations with some individual faculty members we discussed two ideas that might contribute toward the solution of these problems, with little or no cost.

Online learning (using the learning management system Blackboard, which is already installed in the central computers of the university and is free for the use of students and faculty). By this means the course lectures could be captured live and made available for viewing off-site, and at any time. PowerPoint presentations or notes used by lecturers could likewise be made available to the students. Study questions could be posted. Online student discussion groups could be formed. Well-crafted questions could force the students to see that there is more to the subject than just regurgitating material from the text. It could encourage them to learn to think and write philosophically. In some cases it might spark a genuine interest in philosophy and make them more likely to attend the course, pass the examinations, and graduate on time. It appears that it would be possible to implement this practice in one or more core courses immediately, and if only one or two faculty members did this on a trial basis, it would then be possible to assess its value and possibly to adopt it as a normal standard of the Division.

Discussion sections. This practice is employed regularly and successfully in other countries. Section leaders are doctoral candidates and second-year postgraduate students selected on the basis of objective academic qualities (grade average or performance in courses specifically related to the subject of the class whose section they would teach). In these supplementary meetings of the course, the undergraduates can ask questions and get clarification on material covered in the lectures, and get practice in philosophical discussion, while the section leaders gain valuable teaching experience. We recognize that in the current economic situation it is difficult or impossible to find funding for such positions, but they might be very attractive if they count towards the academic experience (proyperesia) required to qualify for a regular university position. Discussion sections increase student interest in the subject and also lead to improved performance on examinations and papers. We recommend that the faculty meet to discuss these suggestions, and for them to be implemented as soon as possible in at least two core courses on a trial basis. If they succeed we recommend that the faculty consider how best to institute them in other core courses.

An area in which there is room for improvement is the Department's practices of supervising its students. There is no doubt that the members of staff make themselves amply available through office hours. Moreover, students can meet with the professors at other hours upon request. However, even if this is the case, if there is to be contact between teacher and student, the initiative must come from the student. The Division of Philosophy lacks a mechanism for picking up those students who, for whatever reason, are not able to or hesitate to seek supervision themselves, and may for this reason, as seems often to be the case, fall out of the loop.

Division of Education IMPLEMENTATION

The Committee is not able to comment thoroughly on the quality of teaching procedures as we only observed part of a (very well designed) microteaching activity. However based on our own impressions of the student/staff rapport, and the student responses to the Internal Evaluation survey, we assume that teaching procedures linked to faculty expertise and research interest, are more than satisfactory despite the given space, and infrastructure-related limitations. Our review of teaching material and resources indicates that these are by and large up to date, and aligned with the course learning outcomes. Nevertheless, more material from internationally renowned scholarly journals, and other sources should be introduced at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, especially in the requirements of the research-oriented projects for the former, and all projects for the latter. Based on the Internal Evaluation report there is evidence of student (e.g. Erasmus), and faculty mobility.

Despite their complaints about the big volume of courses and ensuing unmanageable study expectations, both graduate and undergraduate students consider the opportunity to closely work with faculty as one of the strengths of their programs. Undergraduates appreciate the breadth of the curriculum however they do not consider it as relevant to their future job requirements. During class time, they would also expect faculty to ignite student interest and offering more prompting for student questions and general involvement. Graduate students seem overall more satisfied with faculty work, structure of the program, educational material and its relevance both at the theoretical and the applied levels, than undergraduates and this is mainly attributed to large audiences and relatively inadequate classes.

Division of Philosophy RESULTS

Undergraduate study program (USP) in Philosophy

Our conversation with Philosophy students provided the following information, which the students seemed to doubt was well known to many members of the faculty.

- They want to have closer academic relations with their professors.
- They want be more discussion in class and correspondingly less lecturing.
- They said that in some courses no weight in the course grade is given to the essays (ergasives), which they took to suggest that the faculty do not think that there is much value to this kind of exercise.
- They agreed with us that like piano playing, becoming good at philosophy is a matter of practice as much as of knowledge, and they said that they very much wanted more practice at writing and talking philosophy.
- They responded positively to the suggestion that they think of organizing an informal philosophy club for student-only discussion of philosophical topics.

The picture these evidently serious and motivated students presented, if accurate, indicates a need for improvement in many areas not addressed in the report of the Department's self-study. Even if this picture is not accurate, it is clear to us that there is need for improved communication between faculty and students.

Among comments made by students we note the following.

- The students perceive some of the faculty as excellent, concerned with students and with teaching, and able to make their subject interesting and clear, while they perceive other faculty members as falling very far short in these respects.
- Some professors do not make clear at the beginning of the semester what the course requirements and expectations are; students sometimes find out what is expected of them only late in the semester. We recommend that there be a syllabus for each course to be distributed (either in paper or electronic form) by the instructor no later than the first day the class meets.
- There is no system of student course evaluations, thus no regular and institutionally validated procedure for gathering information from students (anonymously) about their academic experience in individual courses and with individual professors. We recommend that the Division institute the practice of soliciting course reviews from the students in each course. These reviews should be anonymous and should provide

space for written comments in addition to whatever specific questions they may contain. They should be submitted to the division secretary.

There is no systematic academic advising. The only undergraduate adviser is the director of the Division. We recommend that an academic adviser be assigned to each undergraduate in Philosophy. Advisees should be required to meet once a semester with their adviser in order to determine what courses they should take the following semester and to discuss their progress towards their degree.

There have been instances of courses in which the professor regularly did not come to class. Many books from the Philosophy library are unavailable to students because they are (sometimes for years) in the homes of the faculty, and in some cases in the homes of retired faculty members. This situation was brought to our attention by an advanced-level student whose research has evidently been negatively affected by this practice. There is a great deal of copying done by students in the examinations.

Division of Education

RESULTS

The Committee was able to attend some classroom teaching at the undergraduate level (small class size, ca. 20 students). It was clearly a well-designed experience (microteaching), geared toward the needs of the practicing teacher, and conducted within a highly engaged learning community with good rapport with each other and with the faculty, who acted as the guide and facilitator. This observation is aligned with student responses regarding satisfaction with the learning experience as designed and delivered by DoE faculty overall.

The DoE faculty have undoubtedly a good understanding of their student perceptions and needs, thus are also aware of the degree completion problems, and graduation rates. Although no significant discrepancies are observed in the success/failure between courses, faculty pointed out that they are more satisfied with their work and its results at the graduate vs. the undergraduate level. Among other things, they attribute this phenomenon which impacts degree completion rates as well, to the current university entry system in Greece which physically exhausts students at the level of exam preparation so that when they attend their first university year they typically take time to rest. Faculty also mentions how disappointing the student/staff ration is to students, but also how unprepared for university study the majority of students are. Students lack academic writing skills and thus feel insecure and unprepared to write academic papers. Thus it is recommended that a series of academic and study skills noncredit bearing yet mandatory courses are developed and offered throughout one's undergraduate studies. Those instructors in charge of such courses should also assist students as needed with academic paper writing related to core and elective coursework.

Division of Education

IMPROVEMENT

The DoE faculty seem to ascribe all teaching related problems to the disproportionate faculty/student ratio which also results in teaching way beyond the 6 semester hours as mandated by the law; the inadequate teaching facilities and faculty offices; the inordinate amount of time between student ordering and receiving textbooks; the insufficient funding of the DoE programs and activities; the limited alignment between core and concentration courses; the irregular student attendance of mainly the core courses; and, finally, the space, time, and faculty workload-related limitations which further decrease course offering and scheduling options.

Faculty report that a lot of discussion has taken place to improve the above issues. Discussion mainly focuses on a more efficient and coherent integration of the courses offered by both Divisions of the Department, as well as the Departments of Literature and History-Archaeology. In order to improve course attendance rates, faculty suggest updating and enhancing their teaching methods and tools with specific reference to online course offerings, and also establishing the role of the academic advisor (tutor) for first year undergraduates. Combining divisional Library facilities into a larger unit and relocating is another recommendation that will help free up space for teaching activities. The DoE faculty also suggest collecting data on program satisfaction by the Division's Alumni/ae.

C. Research

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

Division of Philosophy

APPROACH

At the time this report is written, there are 13 permanent members of academic staff in the Division of Philosophy. We were not able to discern that the areas of specialty and competence of the academic staff members were part of a well thought out research strategy. Three more members of staff are expected to join the division in the future but it does not appear that they were hired with a view to implementing a clear research strategy of the Division. Indeed one of them, though a capable scholar, is a specialist in an area the Division is already quite strong. It appears that the main concern of the Division as regards strategy is that its academic personnel be able to cover enough areas of competence in order to satisfy the teaching needs of the Division, as the Division understands these needs.

Division of Education

APPROACH

Contrary to what is the norm in academic units comparable to the DoE, and despite the fact one of the DoE objectives is to cultivate and foster research, a specific policy in research does not appear to exist. Though in the DoE report it is recognized that research productivity is amongst the most significant criteria for faculty evaluation and promotion, there is no such policy requiring faculty to have achieved so much research-wise in order to join the DoE, or move up in academic rank. Research is infused in some undergraduate coursework, and it is mandatory at the graduate level since anyway this is the main objective of this level of studies, i.e. to produce researchers for research and teaching activities in education and education related professional fields. The DoE does not appear to have come up with a set of internal standards for assessing research, however based on the review of the Internal Evaluation report, as well as other research-related material that was originated by the DoE faculty and students, it gives the impression that there is an internal understanding of what general expectations are in that area.

Division of Philosophy

IMPLEMENTATION

The Division has a very strong group of scholars covering Ancient, Hellenistic and Byzantine philosophy. There also seems to be a fruitful scholarly collaboration and understanding among the members of this group. Other areas that are represented by the research interests of members of staff of the Division are Ethics and Political Philosophy, Epistemology, Aesthetics and Idealism.

A clear majority of the staff consider research an important aspect of their work, which is also confirmed by their scholarly activities. But the division has not designed systematic ways of planning and assessing research.

Each academic staff member gets 6 months sabbatical for every 3 years of service. However, neither the Department nor the Division seem to have criteria that staff members must fulfill in order to get the sabbatical. It seems the department treats sabbatical as a right one has in virtue of being a staff member rather than something one deserves on account of one's research record or project. At the same time it must be noted that staff members get promoted on account of their research, mainly, so promotion is an incentive for research. Once the level of full professorship is reached, however, the Division does not provide any further system of research incentives.

The Division has a good library and access to Heal-link, a major research tool that makes available basically every article in every journal. The overall library facilities seem adequate. However, economic austerity measures have already decreased the amount of books purchased and there is also danger that access to Heal-link may be terminated. That would be disastrous for research, if it were to happen.

Division of Education

IMPLEMENTATION

The DoE is engaged in a number of research activities at faculty level (e.g. publications, research centers, journal editorial and review boards, conference organization, research collaborations, etc.), and student level (weekly colloquium for graduate students, research projects for undergraduates, etc.). Although students feel they have satisfactory access to online journals, and appreciate the faculty support in all of their research endeavors, they share the same negative sentiment with their faculty about the quality and adequacy of the research infrastructure.

Division of Philosophy

RESULTS

The CVs of the staff members in the Philosophy Division show that most of them are prolific producers of articles and books. The vast majority of publications are in the Greek language. One of the purposes of the division, as explicitly stated, is to address itself to the Greek philosophical community as well as provide a source of philosophical knowledge for a wider circle of Greek intellectuals. A further clearly stated goal is to develop and promote a Greek philosophical vocabulary. With respect to both these goals the output and substantive contribution of the clear majority of staff members has been admirable. There are publications also in other languages, such as English and German, but this represents a minority of the research output. Though the effort to establish a modern Greek philosophical tradition is important and fully appreciated, it is necessary that the views of the staff members be presented and assessed by their peers abroad. Moreover, since most philosophy research is registered in international language, the Division needs to publish more actively in German, French, and especially English in order to communicate its research to the wider world of philosophers.

Members of staff have participated in several national research programs. This year, (2011) the University of Thessaloniki inaugurates the *Center of Aristotelian Studies*, a research center that is bound to provide a further impetus to the research of the Division. It should also be mentioned that after the initiative of one of its members the division established and now runs *Critica*, a Greek philosophical review journal that has become a success as a helpful research tool for Greek professionals and students.

Division of Education

RESULTS

The DoE believes that even though they produce research under adverse circumstances, their scholarly productivity is still significant. According to the Internal Evaluation report this is evidenced through the research centers (4) and laboratories (2) they have established and successfully run, visiting universities internationally in order to participate in research collaborations, organizing research conferences and symposia, participating in research committees internal to AUTH but also in some academic associations, joining the scientific and organizing committees of other research conferences, and serving on the editorial and review board of academic journals. Further evidence to what the DoE perceives as establishing the significance and visibility of their research and scholarly productivity, is the number of citations of their work as this emerges from various relevant indexes, as well as web-based and online searches. Finally, the large number of graduate students and doctoral candidates the DoE attracts is presented as a reflection of the scholarly and research output of the DoE faculty.

Faculty express their concerns about their own research productivity which admittedly does not compare favorably with other comparable units in the EU and elsewhere. They assert their time is very limited due to them being consumed with teaching way beyond the regular teaching load for the academic year. Still they are working toward that end, and mostly submit to Greek academic journals, and other publication venues. Interestingly and in sharp contrast to what is the norm in academia, the tradition of this division is for the faculty NOT to appear as co-authors and publish graduate student work that they have supervised. Even though DoE's main thrust is to effectively deliver applied pedagogy and adequately prepare educators, faculty and student engagement with schools cannot and should not remain just at the practicum or field experience level. Various research activities can and should take

place, particularly under the auspices of Teacher Action Research, which typically are endorsed by governmental authorities. Yet, the DoE laments the fact that the Greek Ministry of Education does not trust them to conduct research in schools. In many instances, research proposals have been rejected due to their intention to utilize research tools other than surveys. In addition, they assert to not receive any funding for academic research support, but that they get some funding for the professional development of teachers.

Based on the Internal Evaluation Report as well as interviews with faculty, and evaluation of relevant material, it is this committee's understanding that the DoE's poorest performance is in the area of research. Thus, the committee's recommendation is that this unit should establish a task force with the mandate of carrying out a serious and sincere reconsideration of their research and scholarly output, establishing a concrete research policy and expectations for faculty member annually but also in the longer run, promote attendance at least one international conference annually, and introduce annual/bi-annual performance evaluation. Another important consideration is to require Doctoral dissertations to be written in English which is anyway typical for this type of work.

Division of Philosophy IMPROVEMENT

The Division prides itself of having a long tradition of scholars, widely recognized in Greece, and important intellectuals who have been influential in the Greek letters, arts and society in general. This is a clear source of inspiration for members of the Division, many of whom considered the Division the best philosophical academic unit in Greece. They moreover explicitly and unmotivatedly stated the ambition of becoming an exceptionally good such academic unit by international standards.

The division has a good reputation in Greece, as evidenced also by the fact that it attracts better students than any other comparable unit. The more general ambition the division as stated seems realizable, but it requires that the division develop a reputation outside Greece as well. For this to happen, however, we are convinced that the unit must develop and implement a research strategy. Such an action would have to involve the following:

- A clear statement of research objectives and a system of assessing success in achieving them.
- Development of research groups within the existing members of staff.
- Aggressive pursuit of research funds from international organizations such as the EU.
- Greater focus on publishing in good international philosophy journals, even if that means, which it will, fewer publications.
- Collaborations with research groups abroad.
- Development of clear incentives for quality research.

Division of Education IMPROVEMENT

The DoE faculty would like to receive more support by teaching and research assistants who can help them find more time for research, and subsequently conduct it more efficiently. In addition, as part of their strategic planning they have identified extremely relevant initiatives such as (a) hiring of new faculty with strong CVs and international visibility, (b) establishing better research (laboratory equipment) infrastructure, (c) acquiring research grants via the EU, (d) establishing research collaborations at European and international level, etc. They also make a specific point about enhancing the (albeit satisfactory) quality of their Masters programs particularly as regards international visibility. Their intention is to attract participation by a larger number of international students than what they currently have. It is this committee's view however that of the identified steps close to none has been taken toward addressing and successfully resolving issues that operate as inhibiting factors on the faculty research productivity level. Therefore we recommend that a more concerted, rigorous, and systematic effort is made toward implementing the aforementioned strategic planning objectives.

D. All Other Services

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

Division of Philosophy**APPROACH**

The Philosophy Division has one secretary who seems adequately to be filling the unit's central secretarial needs. She is the Division's main contact with the students on all academic matters, other than academic progress. She also provides assistance to the division staff members. Matters falling under her job description, and even outside it, seem to be satisfactorily expedited. In our interview she frequently mentioned that the workload could at times be overwhelming but also expressed that she is satisfied with her work, and we heard no complaints from either staff members or students.

Division of Education**APPROACH**

The teaching staff considers that the services provided by the secretarial staff are adequate. Electronic processing of information has recently been implemented in a number of important areas, such as registering for courses online. The committee believes that more can be done in this direction, especially reporting student grades and making them available on the Web. Furthermore, student evaluation of courses and professors could be conducted by electronic means, leading to lower administrative costs, easier analysis and distribution of the data, and a higher degree of anonymity.

The Department has not developed a policy to simplify administrative procedures, perhaps because the administrative staff is able to cover their needs and perhaps because it appears that even if administrative procedures were simplified the work that needs to be done would still require at least the same number of administrative staff. Actually, when the administrative secretariat was asked about the biggest problem they have to deal with, they mentioned "bureaucracy". However, when asked what and how things could be simplified, they could not mention anything, and instead they wondered about what they could do, as they are merely administrative personnel. Indeed, bureaucracy seems to be a huge problem, and a lot of "paper-shuffling" is taking place, oftentimes nonsensical.

Student presence on campus.

a) Undergraduates

The Department recognizes that in some courses only a small number of the enrolled students attend lectures, that many students do not take or pass their examinations in a timely manner, that the average time to degree is sometimes more than five years for this four-year program. The Department expressed dissatisfaction with this state of affairs, but did not offer specific solutions. More specifically, they mentioned the huge number of students in the core courses, but at the same time, they mentioned that if all students attended, there would not be enough space for all of them to sit.

b) Postgraduate students and Doctoral candidates

Our impression, based on our interviews with both students and faculty, is that there are no problems in this area and that both students and faculty enjoy the much smaller number of students in their audiences.

Division of Philosophy**IMPLEMENTATION**

The Division does not seem to have a policy to increase the student presence on campus or any thought to the effect that anything of the sort is required, which is understandable given the limited facilities at its disposal.

Division of Education**IMPLEMENTATION**

The organization of the Department's administration seems appropriate. The infrastructure of the secretariat seems adequate, although more storage area for Department archives would be helpful. The library is a pleasant place to work and has a reasonable collection of materials. It is not open enough hours to be maximally useful to the students. For instance, we found it very strange that all university facilities (including the library) are closed during

the weekends! The explanation we received is for the buildings and infrastructure to be protected from hooligans and other “outsiders” to the university. The computers available to students are inadequate, for two reasons. First, they are old and are not maintained or repaired. Second, the computer laboratory is not open nearly enough hours and does not have proper ventilation. What is the purpose of having a computer laboratory if the intended users are prevented from using it? We were told that there are reasons for both these problems, but whatever the reasons may be, we find the current situation unacceptable. The number and size of the classrooms are inadequate for the needs of the Department and because of the huge numbers of students. The classrooms are inadequately equipped by current standards. There is no wireless internet coverage in them. The reason given for this is that the walls of the old building are so thick, that there is no way to have a wireless system. Oddly enough, two of the committee members were able to get into other wireless systems from the surrounding area. There is no student advising before undergraduates declare which program of studies they will pursue. This occurs in the third year, with one faculty member assigned as undergraduate adviser in each tomas, and this is usually the director of the division.

Division of Philosophy

RESULTS

The number of students the unit is responsible for has increased greatly in recent years. This is not the result of a decision by the Department or the Division. The increase has simply been imposed on the Division without any increase in the number of staff or any improvement of the facilities and general infrastructure. As the staff members pointed out, this has put overwhelming pressure on their capacity to provide adequate services to the students.

Division of Education

RESULTS

Administrative services are not adequate but they seem to be functional. The responsibilities of administrative work are not clearly defined. Moreover, when asked how they would describe their work, the staff were able to do it but not to a great extent and with enough clarity. In any case, there is good morale and a willingness to work outside their defined area of responsibility in order to get the job done. There is an insufficient number of offices for the faculty. If each faculty member has an office, there is more incentive to spend time working at the Department instead of at home, and the result is that the faculty is more available to students, more aware of what goes on at the Department and more concerned about fixing problems.

Division of Philosophy

IMPROVEMENTS

In order to maintain coherence in the student population the division is responsible for and in order to sustain a functional relationship with its students, we feel that the number of students accepted by the division should be decreased radically.

Division of Education

IMPROVEMENTS

Many of the problems we have identified cannot be solved at the level of the Department; they stem from the over centralized structure of the University of Thessaloniki and from the over centralized structure of the educational system in Greece, where too many things have to pass through the Ministry for approval. In this climate it is understandable that the faculty are reluctant to take initiatives. Here are some practical suggestions:

- extend the library hours to later in the evening to accommodate graduate students' schedules, and also leave it open during the weekends.
- work harder to integrate the first year students into the program and into university life. For instance, each first year student should be assigned to a member of the teaching staff, to have a first place to go in case of questions or problems. We believe that many students are reluctant to approach the professors in their courses and that they do so only when a serious problem has arisen that has to do with the course taught by the professor in question. The possibility of individual advising from the beginning might well lead to a

better understanding of the way the Department works, its goals, the expectations it has from its students, etc.

- on the first day of each class every professor should clearly state that although attendance in the course is not mandatory, regular attendance is the best way to learn the material and (more importantly) professors should provide a syllabus with the expectations in terms of objectives, readings and how the students will be evaluated during and at the end of the course.
- in every course students should be required to do at least one written exercise (an essay or research paper) in addition to the final examination. Ideally, the papers should be returned promptly to the students with comments.
- make course materials available on the internet at the beginning of the semester; not only required reading but also optional reading (which should not necessarily be limited to material in Greek, since most of the students are able to read at least one foreign language and should be encouraged to do so in order to understand that they are being introduced to an international enterprise of scholarship and research).
- make use of advanced undergraduates to mentor first year students. One way to do this would be to have the advanced students conduct discussion sections for the required courses. (This could be done without cost, and experience shows that it can bring important benefits for both the beginning students and the more advanced ones.)
- course evaluations should be submitted in electronic form and should be compulsory for all professors. The Department office should be responsible for keeping the teaching evaluations.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

The opportunities for this kind of social and cultural presence are indeed many, and it seems that the Department as a whole, as well as the two divisions undertake a lot of initiatives in this respect. There are many laboratories and research units that have been created in order to archive and protect historical archival materials and study them in such a way, that they become useful to audiences at large. Furthermore, some of the faculty members in the division provide extra short courses and seminars for the teaching personnel of the vicinity of Thessaloniki, therefore, offering great opportunities for professional development.

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.

Division of Philosophy

As already mentioned the students are too many and the facilities and infrastructure too limited for the Division to be able to provide adequate full-scale academic services. More importantly, the work situation of most of the members of academic staff is far from satisfactory. Many need to work long hours to manage the teaching and advising obligations of the Division, indeed longer hours than their contract specifies, and clearly longer than most of their colleagues abroad. At the same time their salaries, which were low compared to salaries of academic personnel in most universities abroad to begin with, have been decreasing and it seems certain they will decrease more. On the other hand their work situation is at times unpredictable, with tasks popping up unexpectedly, as for instance the need to grade unexpectedly large numbers of exam papers, due to the fact that many more students than they had reason to believe end up taking the exam. The state and University clearly ought to expect that the academic personnel aspires to and is able to achieve high standards. At the same time the state and University should provide a working environment in which this goal achievable.

A major goal for the future ought to be that the state and the Department/Division work together constructively to reach a decision on the number of students the Department/Division is able to provide an adequate education for, given the resources available to it, and then act according to that decision. On its part, the Division needs

thoroughly to discuss with itself the possibility of designing strategies that aim at developing a sharp philosophical profile. This might well show itself to be an arduous task, but it is one that must be undertaken, with outside help if necessary, if the Division is to reach its ambitions. A goal in this respect ought to be to hire specialists in analytic philosophy, a field of research that must be represented in any philosophy academic unit that, like this one, takes itself seriously.

Division of Education

The main inhibiting factor for the Department's future is Greek bureaucracy. Further, the Department faculty members should have a very clear discussion as to where they see themselves going with regards to the future orientation of the department. Could they separate and the Division of Philosophy mix with the rest of the faculty which prepares secondary school teachers and researchers in Classics, Greek, and Philology? Could they join AUTH's existing Education Department for pre-school and elementary teacher education, and transform themselves into an autonomous School of Education per the European and American Standards? Could the Division of Education just offer Education support services courses for all those aspiring to become teachers in the secondary schools of Greece? These are questions that need to be discussed, especially under the auspices of the new law for higher education in Greece, which provides them with new avenues in order to think in the long-term about the future of their Divisions and Department at large.

However, the greatest need lies in the area of research and the research profile of the Department and Divisions. The Ministry of Education and the Aristotle University should urge staff to apply for European research projects since this would be a stream of funding of research at a time of financial crisis in the country. The Ministry and the University should lead the movement of changing the culture of application submission towards European funding bodies. To do so they need to encourage and motivate staff by providing incentives for research grant success. There are already a few EU grants, but the effort needs to be greater, as this is the best way to establish a Department as an international center of research excellence by bringing in competitive grants advertised by funding bodies such as the European Union. Towards that purpose, the following would be strongly recommended as necessary for generating a culture of research and publication success:

- Aiming towards publications in the most prestigious international refereed journals of the various disciplines and cognitive areas catered by the Department and its Divisions. Currently, this motivation does not seem to exist, at least among the majority of the faculty members.
- Policies should be introduced to allow the Heads of Departments to relieve members of staff from Departmental duties for a period of time to allow them to devote time to the preparation of technically difficult and demanding applications.
- A Research Office at University level should be created to provide assistance to academics with respect to finding research Calls for their specializations and in filling out the financial sections of the application forms for each call.
- Teaching Replacement should be arranged for a member of staff who gets a grant and secures funding for replacement. (Projects will pay for teaching to be done by Temporary Lecturers.) The University should make this a policy and facilitate it.

The successful research projects will bring to the Department:

1. Academic prestige and international standing.
2. Postdoctoral Fellows paid by the Project who will carry out research for their Project and also offer some teaching for the Department.
3. PhD students who will work on the Project topic.
4. Time for the Principal Investigator to carry out research.
5. Visits to the Department by academic collaborators

Research Grant Applications should become a priority of the Ministry and the University as well as of the Department. Incentives should be provided to motivate staff to apply for funds, and to help Departments flourish academically. In short, both divisions would benefit from more input from currently active researchers in their respective fields.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

The Department has an established reputation based on its history and tradition, both with regards to the Division of Philosophy as well as with regards to the Division of Education. It actually thrives on this established reputation, especially that it is housed in the historical “old” building of the School of Philosophy of the University of Thessaloniki, since 1925. Indeed, the building is beautiful, well maintained and respected by both faculty and students. The teaching staff is preoccupied with its own research interests.

The Department is (to a lesser or greater extent) aware of its strengths and of the weaknesses we have identified in this report. Many of the weaknesses are not the fault of the Department but of University and Ministry policies over which the Department has not much control and from which it (and presumably other departments as well) suffers.

The Committee’s overall assessment of the Department **is positive with regards to its potential** in both teaching and research. More specifically, the Division of Education has a very good rapport with the students and they “walk the talk” with regards to their teaching and pedagogical approaches with their students. However, in the Division of Philosophy, there is lots of room for improvement with regards to the student-teacher relationship. More attention should be placed on this particular area. In the area of research however, there seems to be a reversal of roles. The Division of Education needs to become more extroverts and seek avenues for publications within the international arena. Almost all of the research conducted by faculty members seems to be within the Greek language and Greek world and almost non-existent in terms of international scholarly work. This report concludes with the following recommendations as indicated from the evidence and discussions above. Most of the recommendations are common for both Divisions of the Department, however, some are only for one or the other Division. Where this happens, it is indicated accordingly.

Recommendations relevant to Part A: Curriculum:

- Create foci in the overall curriculum and reduce the compartmentalization of the courses and instead, looking at how courses can be grouped in order to produce larger entities
- Concentrate and enhance the teaching of the core subjects by making them (real) prerequisites to the subsequent strands of courses
- The Division of Education is not really clear about the post-Graduate programs it offers. A more rigorous specialization of concentrations is needed for the post-graduate program. In our view, this is not a “specialized” Masters that is offered, but rather, a collection of advanced courses based on the under-graduate curriculum. The Division should really move on to the offering of more focused Masters’ programs, such as a Masters in Adult and Continuing Education, a Masters in Curriculum Development and Evaluation, a Masters in Educational Leadership and Policy, a Masters in Educational Technology, etc.
- Make undergraduate and graduate study programs fully compliant with the Bologna process / ECTS requirements
- Encourage students to spend some of their study time abroad using the opportunities offered by the ERASMUS program and work with AUTH to smooth out the process
- For the Division of Philosophy, in our opinion, the absence of analytical philosophy and symbolic logic needs to be addressed as soon as possible. In future hirings highest priority should be given to filling the gap in these two critical areas.
- We think that this curriculum requires students to take too many courses. Many excellent undergraduate programs of studies in Philosophy and Education require a smaller number. We recommend that the faculty re-think the shape of the curriculum.
- We recommend that the department look into the possibility of setting prerequisites for some courses, so that there can be a noticeable progression

of expectations of both faculty and students as to the prior knowledge required of students who enter courses and as to the level of sophistication at which the courses will be taught

- For the Division of Philosophy, since the Study Guide is intended for student use, we recommend that it be edited for consistency of style and content
- We recommend that the Philosophy faculty meet to discuss the goals of the PSP and to make them more specific, and to consider instituting a structured curriculum designed to meet those goals
- We recommend that the Division of Philosophy institute a system whereby at least three faculty members evaluate each dissertation and that all three have an equal voice in deciding whether it is good enough to pass
- We further recommend that the Division of Philosophy take the necessary steps to bring the PSP into line with the Bologna process
- We encourage the faculty to discuss how to make the system of evaluation of student work more appropriate to the goals of individual courses and to those of the USP overall. In particular, the charge that students learn very little in their introductory courses should, in our opinion, be a cause of serious concern to the faculty and should spur them to reconsider this part of the USP
- Make course materials and optional readings for every course available on the internet at the beginning of each semester

Recommendations relevant to Part B: Teaching

- Make introduction of syllabus mandatory to all core and elective courses; learning outcomes/timeline/assessment methods and rubric/reading list to be included; introduce a variety of assessment methods (more formative than summative); better and more varied integration of educational technology tools; consider offering multiple sections of the same course (online and face-to face); give ample opportunity to your students to share formative and informal feedback (anonymously if preferred) with you on the instructional design and delivery of the class, and actively listen to them.
- Place more weight on and require more home assignments, papers written individually or in collaboration with fellow students and other projects
- Since the majority of students typically opt to extend their practicum in the Division of Education to seven weeks, and considering the best practices in teacher education on this front, it would be recommended for the DoE to consider extending the practicum to cover at least a period of two academic semesters. This way students will feel better prepared both regarding content knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge and thus overcome current sentiments of insecurity and lack of confidence regarding mainly the former
- In alignment with pedagogical goals and the learning outcomes of the DoE, especially those referring to preparing teacher leaders and teacher candidates to meet the needs of the “digital learner” generation and assist them develop core 21st century skills, better informed, systematic and varied integration of educational technology should be implemented across all subjects. This could include more extensive use of Blackboard, as well as other available affordances such as Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 free and open source software and applications
- Establish a mentoring system in which advanced students assist beginning students by discussing course materials, help them with their writing and give them guidance about their academic work
- Develop and implement procedures (preferably electronic) that guarantee the anonymity of the students’ evaluations of courses and instructors. Specifically those evaluations should be processed by the Department, or even by an office higher up in the University, without the involvement of the course instructor
- Develop and implement faculty and administrative procedures to determine the effectiveness of instruction in each course and to improve it where

necessary

- Revise the requirements of the undergraduate and postgraduate programs to enable most students to complete their studies on time (reduce the number of courses/credits required for graduation)
- We recommend that anonymous grading of examinations is considered. Moreover we recommend that there should be more graded work in each class including obligatory midterm exams, different kinds of graded exercises, such as assignments to be done at home, papers written individually or in collaboration with other students, and projects for involving supervision from members of the academic staff
- We recommend that the University make every effort to provide adequate teaching spaces for the classes offered by the Department
- We recommend that the faculty meet to discuss these suggestions, and for them to be implemented as soon as possible in at least two core courses on a trial basis. If they succeed we recommend that the faculty consider how best to institute them in other core courses
- We recommend that there be a syllabus for each course to be distributed (either in paper or electronic form) by the instructor no later than the first day the class meets
- We recommend that each an academic adviser be assigned to each undergraduate. Advisees should be required to meet at least once a semester with their adviser in order to determine what courses they should take the following semester and to discuss their progress towards their degree

Recommendations relevant to Part C: Research

- The DoE should establish a task force with the mandate of carrying out a serious and sincere reconsideration of their research and scholarly output, establishing a concrete research policy and requisite expectations for faculty member annually but also in the longer run, promote attendance at least one international research-oriented conference annually, promote sabbatical leaves with clearly established research focus, and introduce annual/bi-annual performance evaluation with specific criteria on research output (types of publications and their assigned weights). Another important consideration is to require Doctoral dissertations to be written in English which is anyway typical for this type of work.
- With regards to the Division of Philosophy, it seems that the division has a good reputation in Greece, as evidenced also by the fact that it attracts better students than any other comparable unit. The more general ambition of the division (as stated) seems realizable, but it requires that the division develop a reputation outside Greece as well. For this to happen, however, we are convinced that the unit must develop and implement a research strategy. Such an action would have to involve the following:
 - A clear statement of research objectives and a system of assessing success in achieving them.
 - Development of research groups within the existing members of staff.
 - Aggressive pursuit of research funds from international organizations such as the EU.
 - Greater focus on publishing in good international philosophy journals, even if that means, which it will, fewer publications.
 - Collaborations with research groups abroad.
 - Development of clear incentives for quality research.
- Create an environment where everybody is encouraged to publish internationally, especially in peer-reviewed journals of international scientific reputation; currently, research and publications are mostly for “internal” consumption
- Formulate a strategy for future full-time appointments, which must be based on the curriculum content and not revise the content based on the professor’s cognitive area
- The University should give the Department as much control as possible over

its budget

- The Greek Ministry of Education should reduce the bureaucracy and allow faculty members to conduct research in schools. In many instances, research proposals have been rejected for proposing to follow a research methodology other than survey.
- Another important recommendation is to give students the option to write Philosophy Doctoral dissertations in English

Recommendations relevant to Part D: All Other Services

- Conduct student evaluation of courses and professors by electronic means
- The University should develop and implement an electronic protocol system and begin accepting electronic signatures
- Conduct a study of the Department's administrative procedures in order to reduce red tape which seems to be a very big stumbling block; try to get ideas from the administrative personnel
- Change or increase the hours the Department library is open and especially to be open during the weekends
- Increase the hours the computer laboratory is open
- Make wireless internet connectivity available throughout all Department buildings for both students and staff
- Increase the number of faculty offices so that each member of the Department has an office
- Introduce a peer mentoring program for students and faculty
- Create a mechanism to handle student complaints anonymously
- Further, combining divisional Library facilities into a larger unit and relocating is another recommendation that will help free up space for teaching activities

Recommendations relevant to Part E: Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

- Introduce policies in the University that promote and motivate international grant applications for Research Projects by members of staff
- Create a University research office to assist with project grant applications
- Facilitate teaching replacement of successful members of staff in research applications
- The work situation of most of the members of academic staff is far from satisfactory. Many need to work long hours to manage the teaching and advising obligations of the Division, indeed longer hours than their contract specifies, and clearly longer than most of their colleagues abroad. At the same time their salaries, which were low compared to salaries of academic personnel in most universities abroad to begin with, have been decreasing and it seems certain they will decrease more. On the other hand, their work situation is at times unpredictable, with tasks popping up unexpectedly, as for instance the need to grade unexpectedly large numbers of exam papers, due to the fact that many more students, than they had reason to believe, end up taking the exam. The state and University clearly ought to expect that the academic personnel aspires to and is able to achieve high standards. At the same time the state and University should provide a working environment in which this goal achievable.
- Finally, we recommend that the department invites external reviewers every few years so that they can suggest improvements for their department based on these periodic reviews.

The Members of the Committee

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