



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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HELLENIC REPUBLIC

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HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

FAVULTY OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

NATIONAL & KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS

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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME
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External Evaluation Committee

External Evaluation Committee

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Primary Education of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. **Dr. Mary Andrianopoulos**, Associate Professor, Department of Communication Disorders, University of Massachusetts, U.S.A. (Coordinator)
2. **Dr Charoula Angeli-Valanides** Associate Professor, Department of Education, University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus
3. **Professor Michael Tsianikas**, Professor of Modern Greek, School of Humanities, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia
4. **Mr. Alex Mavrocordatos**, Training & Consultancy at Centre for the Arts in Development Communications (cdcArts), University of Winchester (Emeritus), U.K.

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

Background

The Department of Primary Education at the University of Athens was founded during the 1984-1985 academic year to address a longstanding demand of educating and building capacity of effective educators (teachers) to serve the needs of children in the primary education system in Greece. According the Department of Primary Education's International Evaluation Report (IER) per Article 1 of the "Organization and Operation of the Pedagogical University Education institutions " document, its overall mission is to: a) foster and promote the Educational Sciences in academe with respect to applied teaching and research; b) provide graduates with the necessary skills to ensure exceptional training of scientists and careers in education; c) contribute to a high level and broad range of training needs in educators with respect to issues related to primary education pedagogy; and d) contribute to addressing and solving pedagogical problems in general.

The statutory committees in the Department include the Coordinating Committee Graduate Studies (BGS). The Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) was organized recently with the approval of the Department during a General Meeting. The IEG was charged to lead the evaluation and devised the Internal Evaluation Report (IER). The President of the Department, with the approval of the General Assembly, also oversees the curriculum committee and the Project and the Project Library Academic Mobility-Program (ERASMUS). The internal regulations of the Department operate in accordance with the Rules of the University of Athens (PD.160/3-11-2008). In addition, guidelines or rules have been established since 2002 for the Department's Graduate Studies.

As reported in the IER, as of June 2013, pursuant to the laws 4009/11 and 4076/12, the School of Education was formed at the University of Athens and it is comprised of the Department of Primary Education and the Department of Preschool (Early Childhood) Education. Based on information provided to the EEC during the site visit, the School of Education currently does not have a Dean, whom will hold a four (4) year position. Elections for the position of Dean will be held in the future. In addition, a council of the School of Education will be elected or assembled at that time. The Department of Primary Education is divided into the following five (5) subject areas: Education; Special Education and Psychology; Humanities; Mathematics and Informatics; Science, Technology and Environment

The Department's faculty and staff offices, lecture halls and classrooms, including approximately 14 laboratories are currently located at eight (8) different locations within the perimeter of one (1) kilometre. To operate in a more efficient manner, faculty in the Department of Primary Education reported during the site visit that the Department plans to centralize their offices, classrooms and laboratories in two buildings at one location (Marasli Str. 4). In addition, most of the classrooms, laboratories and facilities in the main building at Marasli Str. 4 have been renovated for this purpose. The EEC visited all of the Department's buildings at the 8 different locations and 13 laboratories.

With respect to the composition of faculty and staff in the Department, Professor Daskalakis serves as the President (Chair). The ADIP document completed by the IEG and provided to the EEC on December 9, 2013 and information provided during the site visit, there are currently a total of 32 professors and lecturers, three (3) assistants to the faculty; approximately three to four (3-4) administrative staff. The breakdown of faculty includes: 16 Professors; 6 Associate Professors; 7 Assistant Professors; and 3 Lecturers. It is important to note that approximately three (3) years prior, the Department was

comprised of approximately 41-42 faculty. The Department had approximately 16 administrative staff, which were recently downsized to approximately three to four (3-4) staff. There are also three (3) assistants to the professors and six (6) technical staff. The IER report and information provided to the EEC, faculty in the Department will be further reduced during the 2013-14 academic year to approximately 26 to 28 faculty.

According to the IER, the Department also has six (6) staff members that are responsible for Personnel Management, Technical-Research Support, Library, Technology Engineering, and Registry support. This level of staff support was deemed to be inadequate or marginally capable to carry-out the increased and diverse needs of the Department.

The External Evaluation Procedure. The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) was comprised of four (4) members as enumerated and listed in the previous section.

On the morning of December 9, 2013, the EEC met for a briefing-in and orientation at the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (HQA) offices in Athens. The EEC departed the HQA headquarters on that Monday and was driven by President Daskalakis to the headquarters of the Department in the city center where they met with the members of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) and President Daskalakis from the Department of Primary Education. The IEG and the President provided the EEC a brief overview of the Department's composition across all five (5) subject areas and the make-up of the student body, the Department's current state given the administrative shut-down since the start of the Fall 2013 academic semester, and their future goals and objectives as a Department. The EEC exchanged views and ideas on how the site visit can be improved or even strengthened so that it includes an adequate question and answer period following each presentation and an adequate amount of time for meetings with current undergraduate, masters, doctoral student, and alumni. The EEC also requested a meeting with administrative staff from one of the collaborative school practicum sites, which was scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on December 10, 2013. The meeting was followed by a tour of the Department's nearby city center laboratories, classrooms and lecture halls, faculty and staff offices, and theater studios. The Department's Library in the city center was closed due to staffing issues.

During the site visit on December 9, 10, and 11th, 12/2013), the EEC also toured the Department's Kolonaki campus on Marasli Str. 4 and viewed the newly renovated classrooms, lecture halls and laboratories in that building. The two-day site visit included tours of all the laboratories (i.e. Language and Culture, practicum, etc.) in the Department of Primary Education. In addition, the EEC met with administrative staff.

The EEC was provided the following documents for their review:

The *Internal Evaluation Report* (IER) focused on content areas: the process of the IEG evaluation, Department's composition, Curricula, Undergraduate, Postgraduate (MA) and Doctoral Studies; Teaching, Research, Relations with social and cultural bodies, Academic Development Strategy, Administrative services and infrastructure, Conclusions, Appendix, and Tables. This IER concluded with a discussion of the Department's short- and long-term goals in Sections 7-10 in this document, including, which took into consideration the current difficulties facing the Department and University across all levels.

The Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) organized a display, for each of the five Divisions of the Department, of the Teaching material available to the students for the courses offered by each member of the Department (in printed and/or in electronic form). The following materials were provided to the EEC on during the site visit: a) a large, bonded book that consisted of a synopsis of the Department's history, accomplishments and internal evaluation over the past 20th years (1984-2004 period), which was organized, written and published by members of the Department on their own volition; b) the Department's 2011-2012 and 2013-2013 soft-cover student handbooks; c) several soft covered books, periodicals, publications, works, scholarly contributions, and teaching materials completed by the Department's Faculty, Compact Disks (CDs); d) posters and announcements of art work and art exhibitions by various faculty; e) two flash drives containing the PowerPoint presentations that were presented to the EEC over the 2.5 day site visit; and f) a hand-out that included links to and Department's main website home page and personal faculty's laboratory websites. A list of faculty publications from the 2005 year to present time were located in two (2) documents that supplemented the IER and included various tables of student enrollment data, curricula, and faculty research productivity.

The EEC met and interviewed the following individuals during the site visit:

- As previously noted, the EEC met and interviewed the IEG and the President of the Department during the afternoon of December 9, 2013, including some administrative and faculty during their tour of various buildings;
- The EEC met and interviewed the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and two (2) faculty for a brief meeting the University Club on December 10, 2013.
- The EEC was introduced to all faculty, who attended and participated in the formal presentations held on Tuesday, December 10, 2013 and Wednesday, December 11, 2013. Some staff also attended these presentations;
- An interview was held with a cohort of 11 administrative staff on Wednesday, December 11, 2013;
- Two separate interviews were held back-to-back on December 11, 2013 comprised of a cohort of 12 undergraduate students and a cohort of 14 post-graduate (Masters) and doctoral students. Three (3) of the undergraduates graduated and are alumni and are now post-graduate students in the Department;
- As previously mentioned, one (1) interview was held with an EEC member and an administrator (Principal) from one of the collaborative school sites on December 11, 2013.

Appropriateness of sources and documentation used: The EEC believes that the IER, supplemental materials, interviews, and 2.5 day site visit was appropriate and adequate for the EEC to conduct its internal evaluation process of the Department of Primary Education at the University of Athens. The EEC believes that it succeeded in meeting its objectives for this internal evaluation.

The EEC wants to thank the Department of Primary Education for its hospitality and supportive nature during the entire site visit.

A. Curriculum

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

APPROACH

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME

What are the goals and objectives of the Curriculum? What is the plan for achieving them?

According to the IER and the 2012-2013 program of study, the goals and objectives of the curriculum are to prepare primary-education student-teachers to:

- a. Adequately respond to the needs and challenges of the teaching and learning process in the 21st century classroom.
- b. Be able to competently implement the school curriculum.
- c. Be able to solve practical classroom problems.
- d. Pursue their own ongoing teacher professional development, so that they are able to use and integrate contemporary learner-centered teaching strategies in their own teaching.
- e. Develop research skills so that they are able to pursue empirical investigations in order to investigate problems related to students' learning, as well as their own teaching for the purpose of improving the educational system through reflection and action.

How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?

The objectives were initially decided according to Law 1268/82 articles 24 and 25, Law 2083/92 article 9, and Law 2188/94 article 1 paragraph 5, as these were amended by Laws 4009/11 and 4076/12. In 2006, an ad-hoc committee was formed to examine the curriculum and submit recommendations for improving it. Two years later, the committee submitted its recommendations, but these recommendations were never fully implemented. During the academic year 2012-2013, the Department revisited the issue of restructuring the curriculum, and it is expected to fully revise it by the end of 2014. In doing so, the faculty of the Department, in their own academic divisions, and in the general assembly as well, have discussed the need to seriously rethink the structure of the curriculum in order to resolve the overlap that exists among the current elective courses, to upgrade the existing curriculum according to appropriate international standards and societal changes, so that the needs of their graduates can be fully met. Accordingly, the Department is in direct contact with different stakeholders from both the public and private sectors in regards to this issue.

Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?

Until recently, the curriculum was consistent to a great extent with the objectives of the curriculum. However, with the latest developments and societal changes as these relate to increased poverty, foreign students in the Greek school classroom, and unemployment, the Department is ready to undergo major curriculum changes to meet the needs of the future student body.

How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?

The curriculum was a collaborative effort undertaken by the faculty of the Department,

teaching assistants, technical staff, and students. All proposals are evaluated first by a Departmental committee, which then reports to the General Assembly. Decisions are then evaluated by the dean of the school and are then forwarded to the senate for final approval.

Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?

Yes, as already mentioned, the Department is ready to initiate a major curriculum restructuring effort. This effort aims to solve problems identified in the past, and offer opportunities for students to work in other areas, such as adult education, and production of learning/instructional materials with new technologies. A Departmental committee consisting of faculty from all academic divisions will be formed. The Department expects to have a new curriculum by the end of 2014.

GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

1. Departmental Master Program

The goal of the Departmental master program is the training of graduates in specialized fields of knowledge and research to ensure both expertise and contribution to the development and cultivation of primary scientific research, and in the formulation and promotion of scientific thought. Students can pursue a master's degree in several specializations, as these are offered by the five academic divisions of the Department. Master students are required to take 11 courses to graduate and to complete a master thesis. The Department has not discussed any problems related to the master's program and no intention was expressed for revising it.

2. Master in Educational Technology and Human Resource Development in collaboration with TEI Pireas

The program aims at providing specialized graduate education in science and technology education and human resource development, and the combination of technology education with the development of human capital and general human resources. All constituent faculty from both institutions worked collaboratively for the curriculum of the program. Students can pursue a master's degree in four specializations. Master students are required to take 12 courses to graduate and to complete a master thesis. The Department has not discussed any problems related to this master's program and no intention was expressed for revising it. The EEC recognizes that some changes to academic curricula and programs require government/law/regulation changes.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The doctoral programme is solely based on the preparation of a doctoral thesis in close collaboration with a mentor (director of the doctoral dissertation), and it does not require taking any courses. In the case of a strong need to take courses, the doctoral candidate can take graduate courses as these are offered in the master's degree program. The programme accepts students who already have a master's degree in a related field of study. The programme does not carry any fees. It is managed through an internal set of rules and regulations. No screening (comprehensive) examination is required to receive the status of the doctoral candidate – instead the Ph.D. prospective student, if he/she gets admitted receives the status of the doctoral candidate right from the start. The doctoral candidates who were interviewed by the EEC raised an issue related to the quality of the doctoral theses and stated that all doctoral candidates must at least publish one paper related to their thesis in referred journals prior to graduation. The Department has not set a procedure for any revisions in regards to the doctoral program.

IMPLEMENTATION

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME

How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?

As already mentioned, up until recently the Department's goal, with the exception of a few weaknesses, was met satisfactorily by the curriculum. The weaknesses are identified by the EEC as follows:

1. The subject of educational technology is taught by faculty not specialized in the field of educational technology (they have doctorates in other fields of study). Thus, it is important to hire somebody who specializes in educational or instructional technology.
2. The fact that courses such as Educational Research or Educational Statistics are not mandatory courses in the curriculum creates a problem related to how well students will be able to solve problems related to teaching and learning during their teaching practice and later on in their own classrooms. Besides, as it is explicitly mentioned in the objectives of the curriculum students **are expected** to develop research skills, so that they are able to pursue empirical investigations in order to investigate problems related to students' learning, as well as their own teaching for the purpose of improving the educational system through reflection and action. It is also important to mention here that students explicitly stated, during the interviews the EEC had with them, that the research methodology course should be a mandatory course for all.
3. The EEC, while they fully understand all practical problems and constraints related to the economic crisis and the lack of personnel that the Department currently faces, feel at the same time that it is possible to make some curricular changes in order to extend the duration of the actual teaching practice, which is currently limited to, more or less, one week per student. For example, it would be beneficial if the teaching practice began during the second year. This means that all teaching methodology courses would need to be offered during the sophomore and junior years.
4. The EEC identified some overlapping amongst the existing elective courses, but as the faculty mentioned they are well aware of that and they will solve the problem in the immediate future.
5. Lastly, as the undergraduate students mentioned in their interviews, it would be beneficial to them if the microteaching courses (or just one of them) become mandatory courses in the curriculum.

As far as the new curriculum that the Department is about to propose is concerned, it is evident that the faculty will need to propose a new set of courses, thus, a collective effort will be required for changing the existing structure of the curriculum. The aim of the faculty is to "open up" the curriculum in order to offer opportunities to students to work in other areas, such as adult education, and the production of learning/instructional materials with new technologies.

Is the structure of the curriculum functional, rational and clearly articulated?

With the exception of the few items mentioned above, yes, the existing curriculum is functional, rational, and clearly articulated. Succinctly, the existing structure of the curriculum includes mandatory courses, mandatory-electives (κυμαινόμενα, δηλαδή κατ' επιλογήν υποχρεωτικά), and electives. Each student is required to take 49 courses to graduate, of which, 30 are mandatory, 7 are mandatory-electives, and 12 are electives (there are 60 elective courses students can choose from). Courses are taken from a variety

of content areas. Within the Department, different content areas are grouped together and form five academic divisions, namely, (a) the division of educational sciences, (b) the division of special pedagogy and psychology, (c) the division of humanities, (d) the division of mathematics and informatics, and (e) the division of science education, technology, and the environment. Mandatory and mandatory-elective courses are thus distributed across these five divisions, and students have to follow pre-specified requirements in regards to the number of courses, both mandatory and mandatory-electives, they have to take from each division. This does not hold in the case of elective courses.

Students are also required to complete a teaching practice in order to graduate. The teaching practice consists of four phases. All phases are implemented within the context of existing courses. In other words, there is not a separate course that students need to take for their teaching practicum. The first two phases are offered as part of the courses "Teaching methodology and teaching practice I" and "Classroom management and teaching practice II" during the 5th and 6th semesters, respectively. The teaching practice in the context of these two courses takes place in real school classrooms once a week from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and consists mostly of classroom observations followed by discussion and reflection. The third phase of the teaching practice is associated with courses within the areas of science, language arts, and mathematics and takes place during the 7th and 8th semesters. There is no common philosophy or common policy to guide the implementation of the teaching practice in these areas and it is left to the discretion of the professor or the division to decide accordingly. Lastly, during the end of the 8th semester, the fourth phase of the teaching practice takes place. During the fourth phase, all students teach for one whole week in a real school classroom. All four phases of the teaching practice are coordinated by a Departmental committee.

Is the material for each course appropriate and the time offered sufficient?

According to the undergraduate students the EEC interviewed, it is not enough to have only one mandatory book per course. Students strongly expressed the need to have access to more teaching materials either through E-class or the library. They also mentioned that it would be extremely beneficial if they could access online materials, the university currently subscribes to, such as journal articles for example, from home through VPN. They also mentioned that the library materials are very helpful.

Does the Department have the necessary resources and appropriately qualified and trained staff to implement the curriculum?

At the moment, the Department needs to hire a faculty member in the field of educational technology. Additionally, more personnel is needed to assist those professors who are directly involved in the teaching practice, especially in mathematics education, where one faculty member plans, organizes and oversees the teaching practice of more than 400 undergraduates. The new curriculum will of course create a need for hiring more faculty.

GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

1. Departmental Master Program

Neither the Department nor the students face problems with the implementation of the Departmental master program in its current form.

2. Master in Educational Technology and Human Resource Development in collaboration with TEI Pireas

There are no problems with the implementation of the program in its current form.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The Department has no problems with the implementation of the doctoral programme in its current form, since in reality this is limited to how well a student works with the Ph.D. advisor. It is worth mentioning here that all doctoral candidates stated that they face no problems in their program and praised the good and productive relationship they have with their mentor. They explained that some doctoral candidates never complete their doctoral studies because of reasons related to financial difficulties, change of interests and or career.

RESULTS

How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives? If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt?

As mentioned previously, the Department is about to embark on a serious and systematic effort for the purpose of changing the existing curriculum. The impetus for this change has been the latest developments and changes in Greece as these relate to the economic crisis, high unemployment rates, and issues related to the admission of foreign students in the Greek classroom (which it has been traditionally homogeneous). For all these reasons, the faculty are planning immediate initiation of the curriculum restructuring effort and expect its completion within the academic year of 2014.

Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?

Yes, the faculty fully understand all issues related to the effectiveness of the current curriculum and the need to change the curriculum to better address the needs of a multicultural society in the middle of an economic crisis that has caused unemployment and poverty rates to rise.

GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

1. Departmental Master Program

It is worth mentioning here that all master students stated that they face no problems in their program and praised the good and productive relationship they have with their mentor. They explained that some master students never complete their graduate studies because of reasons related to financial difficulties, change of interests and or career.

2. Master in Educational Technology and Human Resource Development in collaboration with TEI Piraeus

It became evident that more and more master students take longer to complete their thesis in comparison with students from previous years.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Faculty stated that they were satisfied with the progress of their Ph.D. students. Ph.D. students also expressed their satisfaction with the program and their working relationships with their doctoral mentors. An issue that requires an action immediately is related to several Ph.D. students who have been inactive for years. The faculty are aware of this and they are devising a plan of action to resolve this issue.

IMPROVEMENT

Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved? Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?

Yes, the faculty know how the curriculum should be improved and are planning carefully the improvements that need to be introduced. Below, the EEC provides a list of these improvements. Some of the improvements are recommended by the EEC in order to strengthen certain aspects of the existing curriculum and others are ideas and insights that the faculty shared and discussed with the EEC. It is worth mentioning here, that the following have not been approved by any academic body of the University due to the close down of the university on Sept 15th.

(a) Reconsider the profile of the primary education teacher who is well prepared to teach in the 21st century multicultural classroom. Some aspects to think about are the following:

- The teacher as a cross-cultural communicator with skills to (a) cope with the psychological and emotional stress of dealing with the unfamiliar, (b) quickly establish rapport with others, (c) sense other people's feelings, (d) communicate effectively with people from varying backgrounds, and (e) respond adequately to miscommunication.
- The teacher as a reflective practitioner.
- Teachers need to be familiar with a variety of cross-disciplinary teaching methods and strategies that meet the needs of diverse student populations.
- Teachers need to become culturally competent teachers with an awareness of their cultural, ethnic, and gender attitudes, expectations, learning preferences, teaching style, and personal biases.
- Prospective teachers need a repertoire of teaching methods and skills so they can adapt instruction to a wide range of students. They need to know about first and second language acquisition, familial and cultural differences in language use, and cultural variations in narrative styles. Thus, preservice and in-service teachers need to be familiar with ESL teaching methods and strategies.
- Teachers need to learn how to use technology in ways that are sensitive to cultural and individual differences. Technology is not culture-free since it reflects the cultural perspective of software developers. Teachers should be able to assess both the educational value of software as well as its cultural content.
- There is an urgent need to rethink how to provide appropriate teaching practice and early-field experiences. It is of utmost importance that field experiences and teacher supervisors incorporate a multicultural focus. Preservice teachers should observe diversity in the classroom and how effective classroom teachers apply multicultural teaching practices. Just as foundation and methodology instructors provide knowledge and techniques for teaching in culturally diverse classrooms, so should supervisors and cooperating teachers nurture and inspire students to apply culturally appropriate strategies. Carefully designed student teaching in a multicultural setting allows students to probe their own multicultural competency, to put into practice the culturally sensitive strategies that they have learned, and to reflect on the effectiveness of their own teaching on student learning.

(b) Consider changing the status of some courses such as Research methodology, Educational Statistics, and Microteaching from mandatory-elective or elective to mandatory.

(c) Rethink Teaching Practice (early-field experiences) so that graduates feel well prepared to teach young children, after graduation. Early-field experiences can start with classroom observations during the first academic year followed by some actual

teaching practice in the second year, followed by extensive teaching practice in the third and fourth years. It is imperative that the new conception of Teaching Practice incorporates all subject-matter areas and not just Greek, Math, and Science.

- (d) Reconsider the sequence of courses offered to students every semester, so that students can have the opportunity to take very early on in their program courses related to pedagogy in general as well as courses related to the teaching of the various content areas in particular. This will ensure that students will be well prepared for their teaching practice during the third and fourth years.
- (e) Think about adding a course in the curriculum related to the teaching of Greek as a second language.
- (f) Provide students with more course materials (in addition to the one required book and professor's notes).
- (g) Establish an office to seek connections with the workplace to ensure that the graduates will be well prepared to join the workforce.
- (h) Examine the idea of opening up the curriculum in order to offer opportunities to students to work in other areas, such as adult education, and the production of learning/instructional materials with new technologies.

GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

1. Departmental Master Program

In the interviews the EEC had with the master students, they stated that they would like to have two mandatory courses in Research Methodology instead of only one. The Department may offer an additional course in Research Methodology that students can choose to take as an elective.

2. Master in Educational Technology and Human Resource Development in collaboration with TEI Pireas

No problems were reported in regards to the program and no intentions were expressed for changing it.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The Department is considering taking a few actions for improving the quality of the Ph.D. program, such as for example requesting a Ph.D. proposal from those applying to the program. This will ensure that students do have a direction and a plan of what it is they want to do. Changes to the initial doctoral proposal can be made once admitted to the program. Besides this, the Department should also prepare a handbook for how to prepare a Ph.D. thesis, so that the structure and format of a thesis is the same across all areas and is not subjected to the preferences of each individual Ph.D. mentor.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology?

According to the IER (Sections 2 and 3) and information provided during the site visit, the Department aims to: a) prepare '*good teachers*' equipped for today's realities; and b) address and contribute to the international discourse and praxis of primary education.

These aims appear sound; however, they are not entirely supported by a coherent, agreed methodology or philosophy (approach) in regard to academic teaching praxis. In an educational institution where the content (teaching) is inextricably linked with the means of delivery (teaching), this may be a weakness. Nonetheless, the Department does not have in place a 'branded' teaching and lecturing style for course delivery. Academic freedom is also exercised by all faculty in the Department, whereby each lecturer is free to use his/her own teaching and learning strategies. Unfortunately this does not ensure consistency in teaching and generalization of specific course content for the acquisition of practical skills. Greater standardization in teaching methodologies and pedagogies could be more useful to ensure quality assurance. Such consistency in curriculum are in line with other State and European institutions that may also promote the Department and draw national and, importantly, international students to choose this above other institutions, including international students participating in the ERASMUS program.

Teacher/Student ratio:

The overall teacher / student ratio was reported to be 1:70. This figure is based on a faculty size of 41 and an administrative staff of approximately 16 based on data reported in the IER. However, the EEC was informed that the faculty was recently downsized to approximately 29 (and soon to 26) and the administrative staff to three (3) and the teacher / student ratio is no longer 1:70. The current proportion of faculty (n=29) to manage and serve 1231 active and a total of 2155 undergraduate students, 924 floating in active students, 759 post-graduate Masters, and 291 Doctoral students enrolled in the Department during the 2013 academic year, is inappropriate. This current teacher / student ration will jeopardize the Department's teaching effectiveness, quality of education and student outcomes. In addition, the three (3) remaining administrative staff left to service students' needs is inadequate. (Please see Section E that follows).

Either increasing the number of full-time faculty or reducing the number of students across the board to a manageable level is deemed appropriate, so that the students' quality of education will not be compromised.

Student / teacher collaboration

In the interest of advancing the Department's identity as well as its research profile, especially internationally, there is currently an appreciable degree of collaboration in research and its dissemination (i.e., papers, publications, conferences, etc.). There is also the potential for greater teacher-student collaboration in (Participatory) Monitoring and Evaluation of course delivery and curricula; however, these areas need to be further developed. (Please see sections that follow below.)

Means and resources

The current conditions, number of faculty and administrative, means, and resources are inadequate. The EEC found that staff morale and coherence is not adversely affected. The 26 students and alumni, who voluntarily attended the (plenary) interview with the EEC, were generally positive about the use of **currently available** resources. The need for increased resources was unanimously cited by all interviewees and reports.

In spite of the current shortages, the use of Information Technology is satisfactory and growing, yet needs to be further developed and institutionalized.

The method of examination in the Department is left up to the discretion of each faculty member and lecturers. Forms of assessment include the end-of-term written exam, oral exam, course work, and essay. Assessment of students enrolled in undergraduate courses is almost entirely conducted using one written exam at the end of the semester (IER, Section 3.1.3). The weight of this one written exam typically constitutes the students' final grade in the course. The Masters post-graduate curriculum offers a fuller range of assessment options, but according to the cohort of 14 graduate students interviewed during the site visit, this method of assessment is unsatisfactorily in that the final written exam is still heavily weighted. The Doctoral curriculum offers limited 'practice based' learning. Fulfillment of the Doctoral degree is largely based on the completion of the conventional written dissertation, supported by publications and conference presentations. According to the Doctoral students whom the EEC interviewed, the latter criteria (publications and conference presentations) are neither institutionalized nor rigorously followed, in practice.

Undergraduate and graduate students informed the EEC that further discretionary options exist for assessment in courses, whereby students may opt to have course work or essays considered in their overall assessment, including bonus (incentive) points that are offered by some faculty, in that the 'bonus' option is factored into the students' final, overall grade. It is the view of the EEC that the primary form of assessment in the majority of courses in the Department is based on a student's performance on one written exam. Given contemporary acceptance that each person has different strengths and multiple intelligences, as well as the contemporary shift in ways of thinking, learning and translating information into knowledge, it is no longer appropriate for an academic institution to limit assessment to one form of assessment. A broader choice of agreed assessment options, including written exam, essays, oral assessment and course work, should be considered by Department.

In addition, the IER reports to '*...significant differences regarding the distribution of scores (in some subjects the majority of students with perfect scores) warrants further investigation.*' (IER 3.1.3). Implementation of an alternative method to control for grade inflation that includes possibly a full second or double marker (grading) system (as is inherent in Doctoral assessment) is recommended; however, at the current moment it is impractical given the current faculty overload and downsizing in the Department. An alternative method that is recommended includes implementing a 'triage' system, whereby a second marker (grader) reviews of subset of high, low and average graded papers. This mechanism of grading hopefully will adjust, confirm and ensure that the level of marking (grading) adheres to universal (nationwide) standards and a calibrated grading system.

IMPLEMENTATION

Doctoral students have the opportunity to teach classes within the Department as teaching assistants. This is a constructive step in adding to experiential learning opportunities as well as offering an element of peer education. However, this system should not be deemed as an opportunistic means of addressing current shortages in faculty and administrative staff personnel. As previously stated, faculty are exploring a leadership/mentoring model, whereby a doctoral student may lead a Master's student who in turn may tutor an undergraduate. This allows the exploration of more contemporary means to peer education that links theory to practice.

Furthermore, the EEC commends the Department in that some of the practicum placements are actively implementing base-line theories of learning and teaching, as a discrete teaching activity. For example, the Mathematics placements deliberately and transparently implement Bruner's theories of spiral learning in a cycle of observation, reflection, learning, planning and action. They maintain their own wiki-space to hold discussions (reflection) that ensue while planning a further teaching action. This example has the added value since the students' empirical experiences of help them to develop a critical perspective while developing their own their personal teaching style, as well as being active in a participatory process. Moreover, the Department makes direct intra-departmental connection between courses (teaching methodology, educational psychology and the implementation of IT and social media).

Quality of teaching procedures

As previously mentioned, teaching methods are not similar among faculty. This may offer students a wide range of learning approaches, which may trickle down into the students' own choices as future pedagogues. On the other hand, lack of consistency in teaching procedures among faculty in the Department may also constrain a valid mentoring system among faculty and the quality of their lecturing.

According to faculty, a teaching mentoring system has been suggested so that faculty can share and develop teaching methods, yet it has proven to be unpopular among faculty. A strong mentoring system among senior and junior faculty is essential in cultivating inter-departmental research applications. A team-teaching approach, whereby two staff members would plan and run a teaching session together (instead of teacher/observer) may prove to be more useful for sharing pedagogical styles and teaching methods as peers benefit from this type of collaboration. A team-teaching approach may also serve to keep staff up to date with teaching styles incorporating the use of IT tools such as PowerPoint.

As new technologies are incorporated into the Department, it is advisable for some Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training be provided to faculty and off-campus collaborators in the form of in-service training and teaching.

Teaching procedures in the Department comprise lectures and labs. Labs sessions may be in the form of seminars, workshops or conventional science labs. Labs are characterised by open discussion, some interactivity and small group work. As described above, each faculty member implements his or her preferred format. However, there is no means for monitoring or providing to formal feedback from students in individual courses. The IER [1.3] reports that '*...internal evaluation data should be recorded, collected and processed on a permanent basis, preferably through computerized system MODIP UOA ...*'. It would be constructive to develop a model of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) that: a) involved all stakeholders, including students and, where appropriate, administrative staff; and b) offered additional evaluative means beyond the use of questionnaires. (Please see section below)

Evaluation by the students of the teaching, the course content and study material/resources

According to the IER (3.1.1) '*... The Personnel Department is in constant communication with students and constantly reassesses the response of the curriculum*'. Faculty are commended that feedback is taken into account on an ongoing basis. Given the pedagogic focus of these courses, this feedback system could be further developed into a formal ongoing PM&E system based on qualitative as well as quantitative data. This will allow students to have a reciprocal

input into course content. The PM&E model should be extended to include and involve administrative staff. It should be emphasized that PM&E, while being the most constructive and equitable form of evaluation for the most part, should seek qualitative as well as quantitative data and relies on human interactions rather than just questionnaires. A culture of peer evaluation is valuable but rare.

Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources

It is beyond the scope of this evaluation for the EEC to comment on the constraints brought about by the current economic crisis. However, there are some further constraints with respect to resource management (human resources) that need to be addressed. The EEC was informed that the Department will lose at least one IT support technical staff, who will no longer be working in the Institution. The implications of this imminent loss are significant in that students' work, administrative staffs' workload, including the Faculty's use of electronic teaching media (i.e. PowerPoint), will be compromised. The EEC observed a reasonable spread of computer hardware available to the Department's students in various classrooms and labs. Faculty must bring (their own) laptops and on many occasions, must carry the computer projector to classes since hardware and computers are not available in large and small lecture rooms. The EEC was informed that built in projectors were occasionally dismantled and stolen.

There is an e-learning system in place across the University, and at Department level, there is increasing use of e-class teaching (i.e., Blackboard, Moodle, etc.). The Department possesses equipment for teleconferencing and faculty make good use of this long-distance learning opportunity. This enables faculty and students to benefit from 'lectures' delivered by colleagues abroad, thus effectively augmenting the international dimension of the teaching base.

Faculty are commended for the proposed consolidation of academic and administrative centres into two buildings on 4 Marasli Str. Rather than spread across eight (8) buildings. This should help to streamline the work of faculty, students and administrative staff. However, administrative protocols and all electronic resources need to be streamlined if the Department as a whole is to function properly, especially given the reduction in physical (economic) resources. This may require the temporary deployment of IT staff to create the necessary 'systems'.

RESULTS

Efficacy of teaching

Faculty informed the EEC that while most courses have a very high pass rate (even 100%) in some cases, there is a failure rate of around 20%, however, there is no discernible pattern in these outcomes.

As previously noted, there are significant differences between the number of students enrolled in the Department and the number who actually graduate annually. The Department indicated that they are not certain of the underlying reasons for this disparity and they have not implemented any formal procedures to better understand why many of the Department's students become inactive and never complete their degrees.

IMPROVEMENT

Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement? What initiatives does it take in this direction?

Section 3 of the IER cites the Department's objectives of developing '*...methods and approaches*

beyond the routine of traditional teaching interdisciplinary approach, the organic connection of purely scientific disciplines in Pedagogy and Psychology, linking theory with practice...' In addition to the above example, with respect to the Mathematics practica, there is room for further intra-departmental collaborations. Some examples of this would explore the use of Theatre and the creative arts and developing creativity and critical thinking in any subject. The Department's Psychology courses currently include topics, such as social inclusion and bullying. It seems appropriate that these topics, for example, be explored across theoretical and practical courses.

Some Departmental subsections (i.e., Physical Sciences and Mathematics) are both engaging in an active response to changes in social context. Furthermore, faculty are also beginning to implement the arts and action research techniques in their lectures and labs (i.e., Physics courses utilizing 'learning by Design'). There is a potential for intra-departmental collaborations between sub-sections (subject areas) in the Department, which will allow for cross-disciplinary opportunities as was highlighted by President Daskalakis during the EEC site visit.

As previously mentioned, the Department's implementation of a wiki-space platform as in the mathematics practicum allows faculty to collaborate on an intra-departmental level and incorporate a range of social media as teaching tools. The technologies are becoming a key means of daily communication and offer diversification of Departmental foci. (Please see Strategic Planning section below).

Faculty reported that until recently, undergraduate students earning a Bachelor's Degree found immediate employment; however, this is no longer the case in the current economic climate where jobs are scarce. Students in general indicated that they are now pursuing a Master's degree to maximize job security, yet a cohort of other graduate students subscribe to the Master's course just to ride out the difficult economic times.

Faculty have observed this phenomenon and propose to broaden the scope of the Department by opening new pathways and awards, so that graduates may seek employment in related sectors (i.e., Educational IT applications and teaching tools, librarianship, etc). There is a need to develop and offer Continuing Professional Development training for existing schoolteachers, Long Life Learning and non-formal education programmes (i.e., literacy, Greek language, practical mathematics, etc), and non-formal and formal educational opportunities for those individuals from deprived and refugee communities. As stated in the Curriculum section, this will call for the Department to develop new courses or full degrees to meet the demands and needs of the local community and society in the current state of the State's economy. It is understood that there may be a short-term budgetary concern or trade off in the development and implementation of such new programs.

C. Research

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

APPROACH

Department's policy and main objective in research

One important objective of the Department is to support and promote research. According to the information provided to the EEC during the site visit, there are no structured policies in place on Departmental or Institutional levels regarding research expectations of faculty on an annual basis. However, faculty recognize the importance of being active in research on several levels.

According to the IER, the research activity in the Department is numerous and layered. Faculty in the Department serve as Scientific Officers and research participants for a large number of institutional, national and international, but mainly European research programs. Moreover, faculty have an impressive national and international scientific research presence per the IER. It was also noted in the IER, that an appreciable number of faculty are recognized internationally and locally in their scientific research and professional communities for their scientific and professional contributions in their fields of study.

Faculty in the Department have access to laboratories, equipment and the library infrastructure, yet the resources to support the laboratories, equipment and library are inadequate due to a lack of resources at the University and State levels. This makes it very difficult for faculty to engage in research with post-graduate (Masters) and doctoral candidates. In Section 8.6 of the IER, it is noted that the Department's annual budget does include distribution of funds with respect to organizing lectures, conferences, workshops, cultural events, hiring teachers from abroad, procurement of books, electronic equipment, and costs for brochures, etc..

In addition, faculty continually seek for research funding both locally and internationally by staying abreast of new notices or Requests of Proposals (RFPs) for research sponsored activity and grants, which they submit through the European Office of Research Programs and Special Accounts for Research Grants. Table 2 in Appendix A lists the impressive number of sponsored grants and programs which the Department has received in the past five (5) years.

The Department places great importance in including Masters and Doctoral students in its research programs. The IER reports that all graduate students are involved in laboratory research work during the first semester of study and in many cases, graduate students are funded by various research projects (Section 5.8). Emphasis is placed on research issues associated with school practice and the implementation of specific innovative approaches and learning strategies in mainstream and special education. Section 5.8 of the IER enumerates the specific strategies that were utilized during the 2013 academic year to engage students in research.

Internal Standards for Assessing Research

As previously stated, there are no formal Departmental or Institutional requirements or mechanisms in place regarding expected annual requirements or milestones for research productivity. However, faculty summarize their research accomplishments periodically. Based on the information provided during the site visit, there is no digital database or system in place that archives annual faculty research accomplishments, including teaching and service contributions per faculty member or for the Department as a whole. Faculty reported that the IER was compiled largely based on data obtained from the curriculum vitae (CVs) submitted by faculty and hardcopy archives in the Department. Faculty research accomplishments are also not disseminated on the Department's main website (<http://en.uoa.gr/students.html>). Nonetheless, individual faculty accomplishments for some of the Department's laboratories are disseminated on individual websites (<http://micro-kosmos.uoa.gr>); however, this process is not departmentalized.

Based on information provided to the EEC by graduate students, there is no standardized mechanism in place to integrate post-graduate masters and doctoral students in research; however, a subset of faculty have been successful in recruiting and engaging Masters and Doctoral students in their research agendas with and without funding. The Department

strives to link teaching to research and research to practice; however, this process is implemented on an individual basis.

A cohort of Masters and Doctoral students interviewed indicated that there are no to few research scholarships and research funds to support graduate students with their research and masters' and doctoral theses. However, two (2) among the 14 Masters and Doctoral students interviewed indicated that they are currently being supported with funds from grants awarded to some faculty. This compromises approximately 14% among the cohort of 14 graduates who reported being currently funded.

IMPLEMENTATION

Research Promotion and Assessment

As previously stated, faculty are engaged in research on several scholarly levels. In the sections that follow, a summary is provided regarding the Department's research productivity and outcomes, including the current state of the research infrastructure.

Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support

As noted in the IER, the infrastructure and equipment in the Department is available for use by all faculty, staff and students, which are safeguarded by the laboratory managers and members of special committees. As previously mentioned, research opportunities and staffing in the Department and laboratories were significantly compromised due to the economic situation affecting the Institution and the State. The lack of research funds for faculty has been significantly cut over the past several years, which requires that faculty conduct their research agendas with no support for research infrastructure. In general, infrastructure for research and research engagement is limited and outdated as a result. Not all faculty have laboratories or workshops.

According to the IER, comprehensive development and renewal of research infrastructure in the Department and its laboratories largely depends on: 1) the Department's regular budget, which hinges on the availability of funds from the Institution or foundation; and 2) the current research programs and grants in the Department that allow for purchases and investments. Lack of resources in the Department and to the University of Athens in general to support the research infrastructure and faculty research has also resulted in the termination of some European programs. Nevertheless, faculty continue to participate in important research programs despite the these hardships.

Appendix B at the end this report lists the grants awarded to a subset of faculty over the past five (5) years.

It is important to note that **greater than 3 million Euros** have been awarded to a subset of faculty in the past five (5) years.

Scientific publications

Papers presented in scientific conferences with proceedings are numerous (n=359); however, the mobility of faculty to present at scientific conferences is limited due to economic factors and limited resources that support professional travel for faculty and students. The Department's research accomplishments are summarized in Table 1 in Appendix A of the EER. Based on data reported in Table 13 among the supplemental IER materials and information provided during the site visit, the Department has been cited a

total of 1,515 instances (citations) over the past six (6) years (2008-2013) per Google Scholar searches.

Research Projects

Faculty have participated in competitive and professional international and local research programs, workshops and conferences during the 2008-2013 period. Some faculty are members of scientific Editorial Boards of internationally acclaimed scholarly journals and professional publications, such as: Science & Education (Springer Publisher); International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences; International Journal of Social Pedagogy; Journal of Critical Education Policy Studies; International Journal of Comparative Education, ALMAGEST. Faculty also serve as judges (reviewers) of journals, professional publications and magazines, such as the Historia Mathematica and the British Journal of Educational Psychology. Table 13 of the IER provides an overview of the Department's recognition in research projects.

Research Collaborations

The Department has developed a wide range of joint research collaborations either as participants or organizers of national and international research programs, including inter-departmental collaborations with other units at the University of Athens, such as the Department of Informatics and Communications, the Department of Philosophy, Education and Psychology, and the Department of Economics. Research collaborators also include other research programs within Greek and international research communities, other Greek Universities and the Technical Educational Institute (TEI), including the Pedagogical Departments of the Universities of Patras, Crete, the Aegean, Thrace, Western Macedonia, Thessaly, Department of Mathematics, and TEI Piraeus. In addition, the Department collaborates on an international level with the following foreign research institutions: Institute of Education at the University of London; University of Cyprus; University of Vojvodina; University of Uppsala; University of Udine and La Trobe University, Australia; Pedagogical Institute of Educational Studies (ILO); Centre for Studies and Documentation (OLME) and with the Greek research institutes that include: National Research Foundation, Institute of Historical Research (in which the Department has signed special cooperation protocol), Eugenides Foundation, Lambrakis Research Foundation, Research Centre for Gender Equality and bodies (i.e., Union of Greek Physicists, Greek Mathematical Society, Greek Society Comparative Education).

These partnerships help to promote research activity in the Department and provide the faculty and Masters and Doctoral students and researchers the opportunity to participate in research projects, which are significantly valued in Greece and abroad (per the IER).

RESULTS

Implementation of Department's research objectives

Although the University of Athens and the Department neither have any formal or institutionalized short- and long-term research objectives nor annual faculty research expectations and standardized mechanisms to implement or measure research outcomes annually or longitudinally, the Department has been remarkably successful in many respects. Faculty are recognized locally and internationally for their research and other contributions to the scientific and professional communities-at-large. As previously noted, a subset of faculty have been very successful in submitting and obtaining grants. The Department has been prolific as a whole in terms of publications and conferences presentations, conference proceedings and chapters in edited volumes during the 2008-

2013 period. However, not all faculty are as prolific in these areas. Some faculty in the arts are frequently invited to showcase their work at galleries. There are also extrinsic and intrinsic factors that have hindered the Department and its faculty from performing to their fullest potential in a efficient manner (i.e., economy, downsizing of faculty and administrative staff).

Scientific publications

According to the Department's IER and information presented during the site visit, a total of 995 of scholarly publications and presentations have been produced during the 2008 to 2013 period. During the 2013 academic year, a total of 182 scholarly deliverables are noted. A breakdown of these scientific activities over the past six (6) years includes: books/monographs (n=79); papers in refereed journals (n=203); papers conference proceedings (n=359); papers in scientific conferences without judges (n=17); chapters in edited volumes (n=114); edited volumes as scientific editors or faculty (n=50); other jobs (n=92), refereed conferences presentations (n=56); and other refereed conferences (n=17). Please refer to Appendix A for specific details.

Based on information provided to the EEC, the impact factor for many of these journals in which the faculty have published is low for various reasons. A subset of faculty in the Department have been more prolific in disseminating their research findings in refereed scholarly journals and other scholarly venues, including submitting and receiving grants.

Research collaborations

As noted previously, the Department has engaged in a number of collaborations on a University, national and international level. For example, the Department has been instrumental in organizing scientific workshops and conferences that are open to both the public and professional groups, including parents, teachers, professionals in Mental Health, Education, and other disciplines. The Department participated in other scientific activities that have been funded and organized by OP Research Programs and the University of Athens. The main purpose of these conferences is to present basic and applied research and theoretical approaches to education (Tertiary, Secondary, Primary).

During the 2009, 2010 and 2011 years, the Department organized the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Panhellenic Conferences on Science Education in collaboration with other institutions and University Departments, such as, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, National Technical University, University of Patras, Ioannina University, University of Crete, University of Thessaly, University of Aegean University of Western Macedonia, Democritus University of Thrace and the Greek Open University.

Based on the information provided via a PowerPoint presentation, the Department's faculty have been involved in more than 45 research projects with institutional, national and international funding programs during the 2008-2013 period. Again, of note are the number funded research programs, which have totalled greater than 3 million Euros in the past five (5) years(See Appendix B.)

Efficacy of Research, Application of Results and Patents

Faculty have participated and continue to participate in devising and implementing education policy on the local, regional and national levels, such as executives of the former Pedagogical Institute and the Centre for Educational Research and Educational Institute. Faculty have also participated in the authoring and publishing of

textbooks and educational materials for primary and secondary education. They also participate actively in international scientific societies and networks in the European Union, such the Erasmus Network for Comparative Education. As previously stated, some faculty serve as editors and reviewers of prestigious journals. The number of research publications and other scholarly activities were previously reported and are listed in Appendices A and B. To date, the Department does not have any patents.

Impact and Visibility Outside the Department

The faculty have been recognized for their research and professional contributions to their professions and community-at-large. According to the IER, in the last five (5) years, faculty have presented research conducted in some of their 14 laboratories to six (6) international scientific conferences (either independently or in collaboration with national or European institutions), at 14 Workshops and Symposium and 21 other events. A list of the laboratories in the Department are listed in Table 1 of Appendix A at the end of this document. Each color-coded cell represents the concentration or specialization and subject area for each laboratory. As previously stated, some faculty in the arts are frequently invited to showcase their work at galleries.

With respect to honors and research awards, faculty have received international awards. For example, Professor Skordoulis is a Corresponding Member of the International Academy of History of Science and an elected member of European Society for History of Science. A Professor Emeritus of the Department was appointed as a member to the Council of International Society of Comparative Education. Faculty have participated in the 2011 Educational Robotics and the 2011 International Olympiad Educational Robotics in Abu Dhabi. Dr. Panagiotis Tsakonas, a graduate of the Department's doctoral program, placed in first-place in the 2013 National Competition for Educational Robotics 2013 and he will participate in the International Educational Robotics Olympiad 2013 in Indonesia . Another graduate of the Department's doctoral program, Dr. Constantina Stephanidis, received an honorary award and scholarship for two (20 consecutive years from the French power company, EDF, for her research investigation on electricity.

The Department has an informal, but cooperative network of alumni, comprised mainly of alumni from the postgraduate Masters' and Doctoral programs. Many of these alumni currently serve in various administrative positions, such as principals of schools, administrators of education or as researchers. Those alumni who maintain ties with the Department participate often in the activities organized by the Department's laboratories and act as a network that supports the teaching and research mission of the Department. These accomplishments speak highly of the Department in preparing their graduates well to the workforce in the State.

In addition, current Masters' and Doctoral graduate students enrolled in the program serve as leaders or supervisors to the undergraduate students majoring in Primary Education in the Department. This system is an example of an excellent leadership model or framework for training and producing leaders in the profession. In such a paradigm, the faculty mentor the Masters and Doctoral students (as partial fulfilment of their graduate programs), who in turn mentor the undergraduate student body. The success of such a leadership model hinges on the systematic use of periodic feedback and assessment of mentoring student outcomes on all levels. A formal and systematic feedback system is currently not being utilized.

IMPROVEMENT

Improvements proposed by the Department

In Sections 9.0 and 10.0 of the IER, the Department of Primary Education at the University of Athens has enumerated its strengths and weaknesses, including a small list of short- and long-term plans for improvement. These suggestions are a step in the right direction; however, the EEC would like to offer some suggestions that may maximize the Department's ability to enhance its research potential, its efficiency as a unit, including improving its graduation rate among undergraduates, Masters and Doctoral students. The EEC appreciates the hardships and hindrances due to the State's economy and its impact on the University, Department, faculty, administrators, and students-at-large.

Of great concern to the EEC is the fact that a small number of undergraduate, Masters and Doctoral graduate students complete the program and graduate in a timely manner. For example, according to the ADIP Department Profile Summary and Tables 8, 9, 9.1 located in the supplemental materials of the IER, during the 2012-2013 academic year, 282 undergraduate students were admitted into the Department. The actual number of undergraduate students admitted is actually inflated by the number of transfer students entering the Department, which increases the student body to approximately a total of 400-500 during the academic year per faculty report. A total of 2155 students were enrolled in the Department during 2012-2013 year; however, only 1231 are active students. A total of 412 undergraduate students graduated from the Department during the 2011-2012 academic years.

Similarly, during the 2012-2013 year, a total of 414 applicants applied to the Department's Masters postgraduate program comprised of 200 majors in the Department and 214 graduate transfer students from other departments. During the same academic year, a total of 158 Masters students were recorded as active and only 88 graduated that year. Among the doctoral students, 30 of 58 applicants for the Doctoral program were offered posts (were admitted), among whom 18 are reported as currently active and 12 area earmarked to graduate during the 2012-2013 academic year.

The EEC recognizes that this problem is largely due to former educational policies that in part reinforced student behavior in detaching and becoming inactive from the Department and University without ever completing their degrees. The new policies implemented a few years ago by the State will hopefully encourage graduates in the Masters and Doctoral programs to remain active and complete their graduate degrees in a timely manner. According to faculty, under the new educational policy, Masters students will now have a grace period of four (4) years and Doctoral students, a total of six (6) years to complete their degrees. This system will hopefully reduce the number of students who become inactive and do not complete their degrees for an indefinite period of time.

As previously, it is suggested that the Department organize an ad-hoc committee of faculty to devise a standardized method for accounting and determining the composition of its current and future student body on undergraduate and graduate levels. It is suggested that the Department devise and implement an electronic (digital) method for archiving such data. It is also suggested that Department establish and implement an efficient method to communicate and keep track of its students in a user friendly, efficient and reliable manner, such as email, once they have a data of base of its students' email addresses, etc.. A digital database and electronic system is recommended and training of all faculty and administrators is essential.

It is also suggested that the Department determine the needs of its student body and disseminate a list of resources available to students on campus or within the Department in a public domain fashion (electronically). This will hopefully disseminate information to all

students given their individual needs regarding curricula, academic advising, other on- and off-campus services and resources. Such a system will be more efficient, less taxing to the administrative staff, and may potentially increase the students' potential in completing their programs more efficiently. For example, during the site visit, undergraduate and graduate students as a whole reported that faculty were supportive of students and they were satisfied with their programs. However, students as a whole were not aware of services on campus, such as the counseling center on campus, opportunities for international travel, assessment and support programs for individuals, research funding and scholarships, and accommodations for students with special needs, etc..

In addition, students-at-large indicated that they could not work efficiently from their homes since the University's offices and library in general, did not provide access to information, journals and other scholarly materials electronically. Students indicated that the only organized information they received was in the student handbook, which was given to them at the start of the academic year during their first year of study as undergraduates. Students indicated that the Department did not have a website that disseminated this information and other Institutional resources, with the exception of the minimal number of credits and requirements needed to complete undergraduate, Masters and Doctoral programs.

On the doctoral level, Doctoral students reported that since coursework was not required, they sometimes felt detached and unsupported by their peer groups. Many students indicated that a required seminar intended for Masters and Doctoral students each semester may be beneficial and will foster a research culture in the Department.

As noted in the IER and information provided during to the EEC, faculty indicated that greater involvement of Masters and Doctoral graduate students is necessary to better mentor student scholars through their research. Faculty also indicated that despite the lack of incentives through grant funding, the Department should undertake more initiatives. The EEC also recommends that Master's and Doctoral theses include spin-off research studies that are an extension of a greater number of faculty' research programs. This will allow for the natural proliferation of research studies conducted in the Department and disseminated internationally among all faculty.

With respect to faculty research productivity, the EEC commends the Department for their scholarly accomplishments, despite the significant lack of Institutional resources for research and research infrastructure. Currently in the Department, there are 32 faculty (which the EEC was informed now consists of 29 and soon 26 faculty), 16 faculty are full professors and 16 are Associate, Assistant and Lecturers. It is suggested that faculty in the Department develop a mentoring system amongst themselves involving their faculty and graduate students that includes a networking system with colleagues at other universities on an international level. For example, some faculty are more active and successful in publishing refereed journal articles and serving as participants on inter-collegial grant awards. Such a system will enhance the research culture in the Department and increase scientific deliverables. This mechanism can potentially maximize the Department's research productivity annually among all faculty, especially with respect to refereed research publications in prestigious journals, competitive grant submissions, etc.. A short- and long-term plan will enable faculty to strive in meeting certain milestones annually and over time.

It is suggested that all faculty seek all resources available to them, such as through the University or other scientific clearing houses, that may help them target potential grant competitions to which they can submit grant proposals. Despite the low success rate due to intense competition for landing a grant, the EEC encourages faculty to persevere and not

become discouraged since the reviewer's feedback is very valuable. As noted in Appendix B, inter-departmental collaborations within and between research units and disciplines maximize an individual's and a Department's potential for success in research on a larger scale with the research community in the European Union.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH

Campus

During the EEC's site visit, students were not on campus because of the current strike. The library was locked due to a lack of administrative staffing when the EEC went to tour the facility. During the on-site interview with undergraduate and graduate students, the EEC was informed that there are a lack of facilities in the library (i.e., computers, periodicals, books, etc.) and as a result, they cannot complete their academic work properly. However, the students reported that they were satisfied with the services they were receiving from the three (3) remaining administrative staff, who they indicated were working over time and under pressure to ensure that students needs were met under the circumstances.

This issue raises the "autonomous" nature of the Department to run a plethora of services (including the library) for all students in the Department rather than utilizing an institutionalized and centralized system on campus. The concept of centralising services is a quite common policy for most universities around the globe to offer better and financially more efficient services to their students. This could be a very difficult challenge not only for the Department for Education, but for all departments at the University of Athens.

Does the Department have a policy to increase student presence on Campus?

Under the circumstances and the nature of a multi-fragmented campus, it is challenging to further promote the culture of increasing the student body's presence on the Campus. At the beginning of each academic year, the Department hosts an introductory meeting with new students, faculty and former students. The President and faculty welcome and provide an orientation for new students and new students engage in a questions and answer period. This is an excellent initiative, which could be further developed and promoted throughout the year. For example, it is very beneficial to reach out to high school students and this is an initiative that should be considered by the Department. According to IER, students participate in Department's social / cultural life through publishing a magazine, participating in theatrical groups and by engaging in various groups involved with ecological and cultural issues. The IER also reports that "Foreign students are carefully supported by teaching staff by solving all sort of problems (in language and learning)".

Technical services and e- learning

According to IER, access and use of ICT (information communication technology) and the Educational and Research Laboratory, is very challenging due to the lack of administrative staff and out-dated equipment. Nevertheless technologies of information and communication (TIE) are used: a) in laboratories; b) teaching purposes; c) as a mean of communication between students and administration; and d) research. There are some courses available online, but these courses utilize materials available to students on the internet and is not truly an online learning program. The EEC also believes that the Department should foster the development of online teaching practices, which are

extremely important for the future of the Department.

The EEC believes that most of the teaching spaces require substantial renovation in that they are poorly equipped and outdated. As previously stated, computer projector equipment has been either stolen or is not available in lecture halls. In addition, there is a lack of adequate space to accommodate the large undergraduate lecture halls, which only have enough seats for half of the students enrolled in the course. This encourages students to miss class as a seat during lecture is not guaranteed.

IMPLEMENTATION

Administrative services and infrastructure

Does the Department have a policy to simplify administrative procedures? Are most procedures processed electronically?

With respect to the presence of international students on campus, the EEC was informed that the number of international students in the Department and on campus is indeterminate and that an office on campus oversees international studies and exchanges.

Based on information provided in the IER, faculty, student reports, it is not clear if there are any services available to students and faculty regarding issues related to sexism and bullying. Since the reporting of such cases are non-existent or indeterminate, there are no known services or resources available on campus. However, an exploration of the University of Athen's main website revealed that there is a Counseling Centre on campus that was organized and overseen by the Department of Psychology available to students.

It is important to note that a limited number of faculty have their own websites; however, all faculty are encouraged to create one. There is one administrative staff (seconded) that assists with the use of technology for educational and teaching purposes, including assisting faculty in creating his/her personal academic websites. This position is deemed to be downsized in the near future. The EEC was also informed that approximately half of the faculty use or are learning to use technologies to enhance teaching. Clearly, the Department and all faculty and administrative staff need to move into the digital age.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Quality, originality and significance of the Department's initiatives

Community

According to IER report, the Department is developing a good quality and intensive network with educational services, institutional organizations and the wider community. These initiatives are enumerated in the IER .

It is obvious that the Department is involved with many areas of the community (i.e., Schools, Theatre, etc.). This is an area that the Department should collect and promote. The EEC requested to interview more administrators from the community and cooperating off-campus schools. The EEC interviewed only one principal from a primary school, where many students are doing their practicum. It became obvious that the engagement of the Department with this school was not promoted. Also it seemed to the EEC that the principal was not certain about the Department's process and policies for off-campus collaboration between school, students, supervising staff, assessment etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Development and implementation of a digital (electronic) system to disseminate, deliver services and resources to all individuals, including students, faculty, and

administrative staff, including greater use of email for communication. As previously suggested, a more centralized (digital) system should be utilized on Departmental and Institutional levels to streamline processes and increase the efficiency of services.

Greater detail to accuracy. The 2013-2014 Departmental student handbook, which is disseminated to all new students in the Department at the start of the academic year, appears to have errors (Please see student handbook, p. 6). Two areas of studies (Mathematics and Eidiki Psychologia) appear to have missing information altogether.

It is suggested that the Department continue its good work related to the wider community engagement and collaborations.

E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

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

Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental levels, and proposals to overcome them.

It is evident that the state of the economy is leading to poor morale, community unrest and strikes within the University. It is evident that the economy is having an impact on the infrastructure and operation of the Department.

The EEC commends the dedication and effort of the Department's students, faculty, administrative staff, President, and Vice Rector, who participated in the interviews, presentations, and other activities. Most impressive was the full turnout of the all administrative staff (n=16): only three (3) are still in the employment of the Department.

The physical structure of many of the Department's eight (8) buildings were empty, unheated and in need of repair. The faculty are commended in strategically moving its campus to two (2) main buildings on Marsili 4 Str. This will allow for more efficient operations and will enhance the student experience on campus and facilitate student practicum placements.

As noted in the Curriculum section, It is suggested that the Department revise their curricula and assessment system. For example, the structure of the Doctoral should be re-examined in that the Chairperson for the Viva examination presents a potential conflict of interests and could skew the results of the assessment. The EEC appreciates that some policies are in place due to educational policies are a larger-level.

The Department operates a quasi-autonomous structure within the University. According to plans outlined in the IER and proposed by faculty during the site visit, the Department appears to have a clear vision of a future development and expansion for their focus of work and target outcomes. These changes appear to meet the changing needs of the community whom they serve.

The EEC believes that the new educational policy that incorporates maximum periods for completing degrees may have a positive impact in addressing the poor graduation rate of students and reducing the number of students that remain inactive indefinitely (i.e., 6 years Undergraduate, 4 years Master's, 7 years Doctoral). It is not clear to the EEC, whether the ECTS

credits accrued by defaulting students will remain on file, so that they can be redeemed by the student for future studies at the University of Athens or any other Bologna-signatory institutions.

Short-, medium-, and long-term goals.

Based on information provided in the IER and during the site visit, the Department proposes to be a viable provider of cutting edge Educational service not confined to Primary school Educators and plans to address all sectors of a multi-cultural and diverse contemporary society.

The EEC commends the Department for some of the short- and long-term strategic plans that they have outlined to better address the State's economy and employment rates. For example, the Department proposes to engage their students in a curriculum that exposes them to more cutting-edge educational materials (including 'APPS') and electronic learning courses to better prepare them to enter the workforce and meet the needs of the current society and community. The Department proposes to target students from minority or disadvantaged communities.

The EEC was informed that some initiatives with local schools in disadvantaged communities will begin during the next academic year (short term goal – though not cited as such). However, the Department has not strategically outlined all of these plans into practicable short-, med- and long term strategic plans that include targets, measurable indicators and outcomes. Section 10.1 needs to be expanded with more concert steps to meet the Department's immediate and long-term goals. For example, the current plan calls for the establishment of working groups to look into each proposed activity. (IER 10.2). However it does not establish details, criteria and time-lines for this activity. The same applies to a number of initiatives for improvement described throughout the IER. Specific timelines for targeted activities are essential and should be **monitored** on an ongoing basis. The EEC also recommends that the Department include methods for **evaluating** its ability to effectively and efficiently meet the proposed targets and time lines.

Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit

Based on information provided during the site visit, the Department has engaged in internal discussion among its faculty regarding potential changes to the curriculum. Please refer to Section 7.0 of the IER that describes the formation of '*committees that to study broader issues associated with the revision of the overall strategic planning*'.

Although it does not separate short-, med- and long-term targets, the IER section 10 lists four (4) key themes or plans under their strategic plans. The EEC believe these plans are sound and constructive; however, they need to be broken down into detailed time frames, with indicators and criteria to facilitate ongoing internal (participatory) monitoring and to allow future internal and external evaluation against such predetermined criteria. A list of these objectives are cited below, followed by comment.

- IER 10.1 proposes: '*To develop initiatives for making special seminars or laboratory Conference on internal self- training of teachers*'. This would be manifested in mentoring initiatives, continuing professional development of all staff and the aforementioned PM&E.
- IER 10.2 proposes: '*To establish working groups (possibly from scientific partners Ph.D. candidates) who will seek, identify and communicate ... subsidized programs of interest to the department*'. Some of these initiatives proposed require funding and provision for fundraising activities and appropriate training need to be factored in this strategic plan.

- IER 10.3 proposes: *'To create a mechanism for monitoring and updating the current educational policy...'* Suggestions provided to the EEC include adding a comparative pedagogy in research, such as that in the Finland model. The EEC encourages the Department to explore these models.
- IER 10.4 points to the need for a *'new educational paradigm'*. While Faculty are not unanimous in the nature of programme expansion to incorporate a more diverse spectrum of courses, degrees and community partners, item 10.4 is of particular importance. The EEC encourages the Department to move in this direction so that the cadre of 'good teachers' will serve the changing needs of the **whole** community.
- The EEC suggests that the Department include a *'business plan'* as proposed in the IER (Section 7.1). This is an essential component, with its delegation of activities, which will streamline the process and reduce time-wastage. A mechanism of reporting back to the rest of the Faculty is vital to note progress and meeting of deadlines. Use of an electronic system is important to track activities and measure outcomes.

Long-term actions proposed by the Department

As reported in the IER, the key long term vision of the Department is summarised to: a) broaden its approach and its range of awards or activities appropriately to target and answer the needs of the full diversity of contemporary society; and b) broaden its range of awards or activities to open up the employment potential of its graduates beyond the confines of school teaching work alone. Similarly, to achieve the above requires a host of smaller steps to achieve these goals in the long term.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

The EEC will briefly highlight some of the improvements that they are recommending for consideration. However, please refer to the Curriculum, Teaching, Research, Other Services, and Strategic Plans Sections for specific recommendations.

- The faculty plan to revise the curriculum. The EEC suggests the following improvements to strengthen certain aspects of the existing curriculum and foster others ideas and insights that the faculty shared and discussed with the EEC.
- Reconsider the profile of the primary education teacher to meet the changing societal needs in the 21st century multicultural classroom.
- Consider changing the status of some courses such as Research methodology, Educational Statistics, and Microteaching from mandatory-elective or elective to mandatory
- Revise the practicum to include early-field experiences so that graduates feel well prepared to teach young children following graduation.
- Reconsider the sequence of courses offered to students per semester, so that students can have the opportunity to take advantage of all courses and better prepare for practicum experiences during the third and fourth years.
- Consider adding a course related to teaching of Greek as a second language, adult

education, and the use of technologies and APPS for learning and instruction.

- Establish an office to seek connections with the workplace to facilitate efficient entry into the workforce
- Improve the quality of the Doctoral program, by requiring prospective doctoral students to submit a proposal. This will ensure that students do have a plan of study.
- Improve Teacher / Student ratios by either adding more full-time permanent faculty or decreasing the size of the student body. Consider decreasing the number of the doctoral students.
- Redesign assessment patterns by offering more options for assessing students' performance other than the single written exam at the end of the semester on which the students' final grade is based.
- Of great concern to the EEC is the fact that a small number of undergraduate, Masters and Doctoral graduate students complete the program and graduate in a timely manner. Implement strategies to study why students don't complete their programs or fail.
- Offer seminars and presentations geared to Masters and Doctoral students, and perhaps alumni and collaborative teachers, each semester to foster a research culture in the Department, greater peer group interactions and support systems.
- Increase the use and implementation of more IT digital tools and mechanisms for educating and communicating with students (i.e., email, e-learning, wiki-space, etc.). Require all faculty and administrators to move into the digital age.
- Offer Continuing Professional Development training for existing programs and off-campus collaborators/teachers.
- Continue to move in the direction of centralizing the Department to one location (i.e., Marsili 4 Str. Location). Centralizing services provided by the Department in a semi-autonomous manner to a more efficient and effective Institutional level (i.e., administrative staff and services, library resources, etc.).
- Develop and implement a mentoring system amongst senior and junior faculty, including graduate students to foster greater research engagement, grant submissions and awards.
- Implement support services to heighten awareness and address student and faculty needs with respect to sexual harassment and bullying.

The Members of the Committee

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

Appendix A

Table 1. Department of Primary Education's 14 Laboratories sectioned by discipline

Department of Primary Education Research Infrastructures / Workshops
Computer Lab: a) Ground (Navarino 13A), b) Maraslis 4 Basement + Ground, c) ground Hippokratous 31
Laboratory Mathematics, History, Philosophy and Didactics of Mathematics (Maraslis 4)
Laboratory Science and Environmental Education (Navarino 13A)
Laboratory Didactics and Epistemology of Science and Educational Technology (Navarino 13A and Maraslis 4)
Laboratory of Social Sciences (Maraslis 4)
Laboratory of Experimental Pedagogy (Hippokratous 31)
Laboratory of Comparative Education, International Education Policy and Communication (Maraslis 4)
Workshop "Biophysical Environment: Neuroscience and Learning" (Epirus 24, 5th floor)
Psychology Laboratory (Maraslis 4)
Speech Laboratory (Damareos 67)
Center for the Study of Psychophysiology and Education (Deinokratous 27)
Laboratory for Applied Linguistics and Teaching of Modern Greek Language (Navarino 13A)
Laboratory of Art and Literature (Hippokratous 31)
Laboratory of Visual Education (Hippokratous 20)
Workshop "Biophysical Environment: Neuroscience and Learning" (Epirus 24, 5th floor)

Table 2. Department of Primary Education's Scholarly Publications

Number of scientific publications

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
2013	17	44	-	78	-	21	7	4	9	2
2012	4	34	-	51	-	18	1	5	15	6
2011	14	22	4	48	7	23	11	18	6	-
2010	16	44	2	91	3	16	12	39	8	2
2009	19	35	2	47	6	18	16	20	15	6
2008	9	24	0	44	1	18	3	6	3	1
Total	79	203	8	359	17	114	50	92	56	17

explanations:

A: Books / Monographs

B: Papers in journals

C: Papers in journals without referees

D: Papers in conference proceedings

E: in conferences without judges

F: Chapters in edited volumes

G: Edited volumes in which scientific editor and a member of the Faculty

H: Other Jobs

I: Conference Presentations (refereed) issued practical

J: Conference Presentations (refereed) not issuing practical

Appendix B

Table 3. A sampling of the Department of Primary Education's Funded Programs

Department of Primary Education Research Funded Programs
Writing-Developing educational and teaching materials for Day Primary Schools' (finance OP II 2007-2008) (Investigator Γραμματάς).
Scientific Literacy in Second Chance Schools: Teacher Education in curriculum planning," Heraclitus Program - II (2011 to 2014 Financing NSRF) (Scientific Officer Κρυσταλλία Χαλκιά)
History, Philosophy & Environmental Science Teaching Under Scrutiny», Funding: FP-7, «Capacities» (Investigator Κων/νος_ Σκορδούλης)
Pedagogical Implications of the History of the Antikythera Mechanism , " Program " Heraclitus II " (Funding NSRF 2011-2014) (Investigator Κων/νος Σκορδούλης)
Program Pleiades: Development of Educational Software and Integrated Training Package for the Greek Schools of primary and Secondary Education Products and Distribution of Educational Software in Schools ", in collaboration with versions Researchers SA PLIADES Act, Section NIRIIDES, Research and Academic Computer Technology Institute (RACTI), Ministry national Education and Religious Affairs , Operational Programme "Information Society " Measure 1.2, CSF III , 2003-2007 (Investigator Γεώργιος Καλκάνης)
The theater as educative - educational Good and artistic expression in the education and the society» (Investigator: Γραμματάς) (250 K Euro)
Access to higher education. A study of the social, educational and institutional dimensions of demand for and supply of higher education in Greece. Problems and policies in comparative-historical and empirical perspective» (Investigator: Δημήτριος Ματθαίου) (250 K Euro)
Digital Archive Concerning Alchemy In Byzantium And In Greek-Speaking Communities Of The Ottoman Empire" (Investigator: Κ. Σκορδούλης) (250 K Euro)
"Geostreams, Exploiting User-Generated Geospatial Content Streams (2013) partially supported by the FP7 - Research for SMEs program of the European Commission contract number FP7-SME-2012-315631 (Investigator: A. Galani)
"Nature and Religion in South Eastern European Space: mapping Science and Eastern Christianity religions in South Eastern Europe and Eastern Mediterranean" Program "Excellence" NSRF (Investigator: Κ. Σκορδούλης)