ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY

T.E.I. OF WESTERN GREECE

(former T.E.I. OF PATRAS)

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External Evaluation Committee

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Speech Language Therapy (SLT) of the TEI of Western Greece (former TEI of Patras) 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 Fofi Constantinidou,* Professor, Language Disorders & Clinical Neuropsychology, Department of Psychology and Director, Center for Applied Neuroscience, University of Nicosia, Cyprus.

3. *Dr. Maria Kapantzoglou,* Assistant Professor, Speech & Hearing Sciences, Portland State University, U.S.A.

4. *Dr. Ageliki Nicolopoulou, Professor,* Department of Psychology, Lehigh University, U.S.A

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 Speech Language Therapy (SLT) at the Technical Educational Institute (TEI) in Patras was established in 1996. The Department is located in the capital of Achaia, which is the third largest city in Greece with a population of 215,000 inhabitants (2011 census). This Department is the 1st in all of Greece leading to a recognized degree in SLT by the State. Two other TEI programs in SLT were established next in Epirus, Ioannina in 2000 and Kalamata in 2008. In June 6, 2013, some of the TEIs merged. Currently, the Department of SLT in Patras belongs to the Technological Educational Institute of Western Greece, which is comprised of four (4) Schools: Health and Welfare Professions; Technological Applications; Management and Economics; Agricultural Technology, Food and Nutrition Technology. Entrance into the TEI's SLT program is by national entrance exams. The Department only offers a Bachelor's degree in SLT.

The SLT Department is one of five (5) Departments of the School of Health and Welfare Professions, which also includes the Departments of Nursing; Social Work; Physiotherapy; and Optics and Optometry. The Scope of Practice for SLTs (Professional rights) was established by Presidential Decree #96/2002 (ΦΕΚ 82 τ.Α') in 2002.

According to information provided during the site visit, the administrative structure of TEI includes: a Head; Department Meeting (unofficial body); Official Decision Body or the Board of the School of Health and Welfare Professions; the Dean of School of Health and Welfare Professions; Heads of the four (4) Departments within the Health and Welfare Professions. All decisions are subject to expediency and legality auditing by the President of TEI. Internally, the following committees run the Department: Clinic Committee; Practical Training Committee; and Evaluation of Incoming Students Committee.

The Department does not have a formal mission statement; however, in the Internal Evaluation Report (IER) the Department's Aims and Objectives are enumerated in the Curriculum section.

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 February 17, 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 they were driven by Interim Department Chair and Associate Professor Ilias Papathanasiou to the TEI-Patras. One member of the EEC joined the committee in Patras. Upon arriving at TEI, the EEC met the following administrators and faculty: 1) President Socrates Kaplanis, Professor of Mechanical Engineering; 2) Vice President of Academic Affairs Hera Antonopoulou, Professor of Management and Information Systems; Dean Maria Papadimitriou, Professor of Nursing; and members of the TEI SLT Department: Department Head and Associate Professor Ilias Papathanasiou; Professor and Representative of the School of Health; Professor Arhonto Terzi and Assistant Professor Nikolas Trimmis, both of

whom are Members of the Representative of School of Health in the Institution Quality Assurance Committee; Lecturer Georgia Stafylidou; and Professor and Vice President of Research Affairs Voula Georgopoulos. Some discussion pursued regarding President Kaplanis' vision and future direction of TEI in establishing standards based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in conjunction with the European Network of Quality Assurances (ENQA) and the Hellenic Quality Assurance (HQA) bodies. President Kaplanis suggested that he would like to move the SLT profession to a scholarly level in that SLT graduates will become professional scientists to the society and not technicians. The President also indicated that TEI is in the process of piloting a collaboration with the University of Patras to offer a master's program with another existing program. In addition, the President indicated that the TEI will be moving in the direction of developing infrastructure for distance learning. It is the impression of the EEC, some of the aforementioned future directions had not been shared or discussed with the SLT Department prior to that time.

During the site visit on January 17, 18, and 19 (2014), the EEC toured the Department's building on campus (Mimosa Building), the classrooms and laboratories in that building and the on-campus clinic located a short distance away. The two and half day (2.5) site visit included tours of the University of Patras' General Hospital, TEI's Library and a tour of the area.

The EEC was provided the following documents for their review:

The *Internal Evaluation Report* (IER); including copies of syllabi, samples of projects, PowerPoint presentations; several hand-outs, and other materials.

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

- A cohort of approximately 7-8 undergraduate students, three of whom were male;
- A cohort of approximately 12 alumni. Many of these individuals served as clinical supervisors (adjuncts) at their part-time teaching location;
- Approximately 7 part-time (adjunct) faculty;
- One retired faculty member;
- Two Administrative support staff;
- One library administrator.

Appropriateness of sources and documentation used: The EEC believes that the IER, supplemental materials, interviews, and course syllabi, and the 2.5-day site visit were appropriate and adequate for the EEC to conduct its internal evaluation process of the SLT program at TEI of Patras. The EEC believes that it succeeded in meeting its objectives for this internal evaluation.

The EEC wants to thank the TEI Department of SLT 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

This report refers to the four-year undergraduate program for Speech Language Therapy (SLT) at the TEI of Patras. Currently, there is no master level program.

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

The goals and objectives of the curriculum as reported in the IER are the following:

Academic goals:

Provide up to date scientific knowledge related to the characteristics and development of human communication and swallowing throughout the life span;

Provide up to date theoretical and clinical knowledge on etiology, diagnosis and treatment of communication disorders and swallowing;

Provide courses that prepare students provide up to date clinical services that are appropriate for the Greek community and multicultural and multilingual environment;

Train students to use up to date research methods and technology, and critically review scientific literature and its clinical applications;

Conduct research in line with the above goals. Research in communication disorders with a focus on the Greek language, and on other languages when it is useful and/or scientifically interesting.

Goals related to clinical education:

Prepare students to manage a variety (in type and severity) of clinical cases of communication disorders and swallowing;

Provide students with the opportunity to relate their theoretical knowledge and view with the clinical application using up to date and appropriate diagnostic and treatment methods;

Teach students now to work in interdisciplinary teams to manage cases of people with communication disorders and swallowing;

Provide students with the skills to work independently as speech therapists.

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

These goals and objectives of the program were decided by the faculty at the SLT program in the TEI of Patras. These adhere to internationally recognized standards of professional education, research, and clinical practice in SLT. The SLT program in Patras is one of the partners of the Network of Tuning Standards and Quality of programs in SLT across Europe (NetQues). As a next step, the EEC committee suggests that the Department articulates its specific mission and vision and adjusts these standards to them. In addition, the Department should aim to dovetail the courses to its own goals and objectives. It should be noted that currently, the official government newspaper, ΦΕΚ, does not specify goals and objectives for SLT departments in the TEI of Greece.

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

The curriculum of the Department appears to be a standard SLT curriculum. The program of study includes 8 semesters, 39 courses, and a total of 240 credits. Topics represented in the material include speech, language, voice, fluency, and swallowing disorders. The curriculum also includes topics of basic neuroanatomy and neurophysiology, cognitive psychology, speech and hearing sciences, and linguistics. Courses are designed to address assessment, differential diagnosis, intervention, professional development, and research methods. The curriculum appears consistent with Department's goals and objectives to educate and train in clinical practice of SLT.

The clinical practice complements well the theoretical and laboratory work in the Department. The clinical practice of the undergraduate curriculum begins in the 5th semester and ends during the 8th semester. Throughout the 5th semester, in Clinic A, students complete direct observations and also start having some contact hours with clients. During the 6th and 7th semesters, in Clinic B and Clinic C respectively, students provide supervised services to clients with a variety of communication disorders and in a variety of settings. During the 8th semester, students complete an off-campus practicum and are paid 80% of regular pay.

- *How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?*
- *Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?*

According to the IER, there is no Curriculum committee that handles curriculum issues. However, the faculty informed the EEC that they modify the curriculum every five years. The most recent revision (3rd revision) was completed in 2007-2008 and resulted in the current structure of the program (39 courses + B.S. thesis + practical training). The first revision included major changes in the number of courses and the general program structure (separation of courses from clinical practice). The second revision included smaller changes to adhere to European standards related to the number of credits for graduation (240 credits in a 4-year program following the ECTS requirements). The EEC committee did not identify any established processes through which revisions are proposed, discussed and adopted; the EEC recommends that the Department does so.

More recently, faculty reported that two additional changes have been made in the past year as follows: 1) courses taught during the fall and spring semesters will only be offered once during the academic year over the two academic semesters; and 2) admissions will only take place once annually in lieu of twice a year.

IMPLEMENTATION

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

● *Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated?*

● *Is the curriculum coherent and functional?*

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

The curriculum is implemented with a clear delineation of core courses. In addition, prerequisite courses are well defined. The EEC committee suggests that some reorganization of the courses may be reasonable. It is of the opinion of the EEC that the following two (2) specific suggestions pertaining to changes in the Curriculum should be considered:

The course in Developmental Psychology, which is taught in the first semester of the first year of studies, should perhaps be taught after the course in Cognitive Psychology, which is offered in the second semester, to facilitate better understanding of the course material;

Currently there is a course on Research Methods and Statistics taken in the 6th semester. The Department should consider the needs of students for critical review of the literature throughout their studies and consider moving this course during the 5th semester, in time for more advanced disorders courses and for their thesis work.

Nevertheless, overall, the curriculum is logically organized. There is a coherent academic rationale for the content and order in which courses and clinical practice are offered. The program is easily accessible online and indicates in which semester each course is offered.

In addition, the curriculum is effectively implemented with a high number of theoretical courses that also have labs. Specifically, 27 out of 39 courses have labs, which provide students with the opportunity to associate their theoretical knowledge with clinical applications.

Effective implementation of the curriculum is lacking in some areas. Individual full-time and part-time faculty develop and distribute syllabi at the beginning of each course. The syllabi include goals and objectives, the course description and a bibliography. However, the EEC believes that the syllabi should also contain a detailed description of what

material will be covered in each class meeting (i.e., book chapters and articles for each class session), how the students will be evaluated, what the professor expects of the students, what the students should expect of the professor, as well as office hours and contact details for the professor. Opportunities for students to earn additional points towards their final grade should be clearly described in the syllabus. The syllabus should act as a contract between the student and professor. The syllabus may also positively affect student participation since the students will have a better idea of what each lecture entails. All syllabi should be available online.

In addition, several of the bibliographies listed in the syllabi are outdated (e.g., they do not include any articles published within the last decade). Furthermore, some of the courses do not seem to include a more contemporary bibliography available now in Greek. Updated class materials will serve well the Department's goal to provide up-to-date scientific knowledge and enhance evidenced-based practice. The syllabi do not utilize classic books translated into Greek (i.e., *Motor Speech Disorders* by Dr. Joseph Duffy and translated by faculty at the TEI of Epirus in Ioannina).

Current clinical practices in discipline and profession of Speech Language Pathology place significant emphasis on evidence-based practice. To the EEC, it is unclear as to whether SLT's course and clinical teaching emphasize treatment methodologies based-on-evidenced based practice, and on general principals of assessment and intervention in case of lack of evidence. The lack of normative data in Greek for a range of speech and language abilities creates significant difficulties for professionals practicing in Greece. However, the EEC's opinion is that the use of standardized normed referenced tests translated in Greek for the purpose to diagnose communication disorders in Greek speaking people, is worrisome. In an effort to address this problem, clinicians and academics must focus: (a) on evaluating validity evidence for the use of specific diagnostic materials for evaluation and treatment purposes; and (b) on continuous data collection during sessions to assess treatment efficacy. Issues related to evidence-based practice need to be approached in a uniform manner in all courses.

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

Lastly, the EEC committee views the lack of assessment and intervention materials in the Department as an additional obstacle for the effective implementation of the curriculum; however, at this time the greatest limitation in curriculum implementation appears to be the large student/instructor ratio and the low number (only 5) of full time faculty in the Department of SLT at the TEI of Patras.

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 with?*

The present curriculum achieves most of the stated goals and objectives of the Department. Faculty at the departmental level and staff make consistent efforts to meet the Department's goals and objectives. The inclusion of laboratory courses is a distinct advantage as these expose the practical aspects of the curriculum and ensures that the students understand the application of the theory in real environments. Based on reports from alumni, and part time faculty who work as clinicians in the area or as faculty in other departments, students at the Department of SLT at the TEI of Patras stand-out among at the TEI for their academic performance.

However, as stated previously, there is room for improvement by realigning and refocusing some of the material and introducing some current material.

During the site visit, the EEC was informed that class attendance (as opposed to lab attendance) is not compulsory and that many students do not attend theory classes regularly. This puts these students at a disadvantage especially with respect to their preparation and comprehension of lab work. Also, for some of the theoretical courses, there is a high percentage of student failure. The EEC recommends that the Department develop a strategy to encourage student attendance and ensure quality of teaching. This will improve student performance as well.

IMPROVEMENT

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

The Department has achieved a good reputation as to the quality of its graduates.

Given the Department's experience with the evolution and operation of its curriculum thus far, and given the Department's collaboration with local institutions, it is now an opportune moment to re-assess the organization of the curriculum, seeking input from students and professionals in the community during the process. The EEC encourages the Department to identify its mission and modify the curriculum to meet the Department's fully articulated goals and objectives. This is an opportune moment to establish a formal Curriculum Committee structure that will be continuously active, will take ownership of the curriculum and establish procedures and mechanisms for its (curriculum's) revision and improvement.

According to the IER, the Department is planning on organizing meetings of full time faculty 1 or 2 weeks before the beginning of each semester to revise and update course content. The EEC applauds the faculty for this initiative and encourages the Department to schedule this meeting well in advance to allow faculty with enough time for modifications. The EEC recommends that all teaching staff prepare syllabi with detailed course schedules describing what material will be covered in each class meeting, and provide clear assessment procedures and expectations. This is likely to facilitate the review process for the course contents, and at the same time enhance student participation and success in the theoretical courses.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:
 	
• *Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology?*
 	
    • *Teaching methods used*
 	
As previously stated, the Department's curriculum consists of a total of 39 courses. Approximately 27-28 of the 39 courses include a "lab" or laboratory type exercises to further reinforce course content and integrate theoretical constructs with clinical practice. In addition to the more traditional lecture and laboratory teaching pedagogies, the Department has a clinical practicum component given the nature of the discipline in Speech Language Therapy as an applied science and field. Students are not required to attend class lectures; however, they are required to attend laboratory sections and complete the required projects assigned to each laboratory section. According to both faculty and student reports, approximately 50-60% of the students attend the theoretical course lectures, yet students are allowed to miss only two (2) laboratory sections of the course.
 	
 According to the IER, full-time and adjunct faculty in the Department teach most courses in their area of expertise and discipline. For example, four (4) of the 39 courses taught are taught by expert senior faculty and includes: Introduction to Linguistics; Introduction to Methods and Statistics; Psychophysiology of Hearing, Speech, Speech; and Language Development - Language Acquisition. In all instances, care is taken to ensure that all courses in the SLT curriculum are taught by well-qualified part-time teaching staff (adjuncts) who are experts and specialists in their disciplines (i.e., Neurology, Economics/Marketing, SLT, Linguistics, etc.).
 	
Full-time faculty are engaged in research and scholarship in that they are active in publishing (i.e., manuscripts, books, edited books, and book chapters, etc.), writing and submitting grant proposals, and presenting their work at both professional and scientific conferences. Some faculty are affiliated with the University of Patras' General Hospital and students engage in clinical practicum and teaching experiences through this mechanism. Thus, faculty share their expertise through formal theoretical lectures, laboratory assignments, workshops, clinical cases studies, including video case studies, work-related and student presentations, research experiences, and on- and off-campus clinical training opportunities.
 	
It is the opinion of the EEC that the Department utilizes a wide range of pedagogies, and activities to educate TEI SLT's students.
 	
    • *Teaching staff/ student ratio*

There has been a decrease in the number of faculty in the SLT Department at TEI of Patras over the past four (4) to five (5) years. According to information provided at the site visit, during the 2008-2009 years the Department was comprised of six (6) permanent full-time faculty, 13 full time adjunct faculty (full-time equivalent); one (1) special and technical educational staff; and three (3) administrative support members. During the 2008-2009 time frame, the full-time faculty were comprised of: one (1) Linguist; three (3) SLPs; one (1) dual SLP/Audiology; and one (1) Electrical & Computer Engineer. According to the IER and information provided at the site visit, the Department currently consists of five (5) full-time faculty: (2) Linguists; one (1) SLP; one (1) dual SLP/Audiology; and one (1) Electrical & Computer Engineer. One of the Linguists with a specialty in German language recently joined the faculty this past fall (2013) semester due to a merger of the two Technological Educational Institutes in Western Greece. There are currently 19 part-time adjunct faculty (about 8 full-time equivalent); one (1) special and technical educational staff; and two (2) administrative support members.

It is important to note, that the number of full-time faculty and administrative support members has decreased in the past years and only two (2) faculty members in the Department of SLT are SLPs! Nonetheless, the number of students in the program has been increasing annually from a total of 511 students in 2007-2008 to 670 in 2013-2014 (per the IER report).

According to the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (HQA-ADIP) summary table, during the 2013-2014 academic year, there are currently a total of 776 students enrolled in the Department, comprised of 128 students that were admitted during the current academic year; 536 students are enrolled within the four year program period and 240 are inactive.

It is the opinion of the EEC that the number of full-time faculty is significantly insufficient for a student body comprised of approximately 670 students.

- *Teacher/student collaboration*

The full-time faculty collaborate with the students through coursework, clinical practicum experiences, research, and a variety of other activities. For example, students are required to complete a thesis in their 8th academic semester. This involves planning and implementing a research project under the direction of one of the full-time faculty. Some of these projects are submitted and presented to peer-reviewed professional and scientific conferences. Based on information provided at the site visit, students engage in community service projects under the direction of some full-time faculty.

- *Adequacy of means and resources*

With respect to the SLT's adequacy of means and resources, it is the opinion of the EEC that the Department is significantly lacking in full-time faculty to educate and meet the

demands of a student body comprised of approximately 670-700 students, basic infrastructure and resources needed for academic courses and clinical practicum requirements, the campus clinic, and the classroom infrastructure (i.e., heating and air conditioning units, chairs, etc.). During the site visit, faculty and students reported that there are not enough seats in lecture classrooms to accommodate the number of students enrolled in required courses, and as such, this encourages students to not attend classes as there is no seating for them during class lectures. In addition, the classrooms lack heat, air conditioning and proper acoustics and it is difficult to tolerate these uncomfortable conditions during class lectures.

- *Use of information technologies*

The Department utilizes the e-Class/e-Learning and electronic, digital (online) technologies in the central administration for academic coursework, access to course syllabi and lab materials, to register for classes and add and drop classes during TEI's ADD/DROP period. In addition, the Department communicates with students electronically for general dissemination of announcements, etc.

The Department has a fair number of desktop host computers to accommodate software programs for statistical (SPSS), acoustic, motor speech, voice, laryngeal, nasal, and audiological analyses, etc. However, some of the host computers for the commercially prepared computer software programs are outdated (i.e., Kay Pentax). Faculty have downloaded public domain software (i.e., PRAAT, speech recognition) on their newer computers in their labs, which they reported are more efficient and capable software programs for their purposes.

- *Examination system*

The method of examination in the Department is left up to the discretion of each faculty and staff member. Forms of assessment include the traditional end-of-term written exam, laboratory assignments, and make up exams or essays. Assessment of students enrolled in TEI's SLT courses is almost entirely conducted using one written exam at the end of the semester. The weight of this one written exam typically constitutes the students' final grade in the course. However, some faculty include some weighting of the laboratory assignments in the students' final grade, but this is practiced rarely and not uniformly.

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. A broader choice of agreed assessment options, including written exam, essays, oral assessment and course work, should be considered by the Department, especially for courses with a high rate of student failure.

IMPLEMENTATION

- *Quality of teaching procedures*

According to the IER, students complete an end of the semester course evaluation form for each course. The faculty reported during the site visit (and also in the IER) that they have neither synthesized the outcomes of these course evaluations nor implemented any changes into their courses and curriculum to date. The faculty reported in the IER and during the site visit that this is one of their future goals and objectives.

- *Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.*

As previously stated, the curriculum and course syllabi, including some teaching materials, are provided to the students via the e-Learning system. The faculty provided the EEC electronic access to their e-Learning system and electronic copies of syllabi for review. A description of the quality of these materials is provided in the Curriculum Section. (Please see Curriculum).

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

Some samples of course and lecture material, assignments, outcomes from research projects/studies, and other teaching tools were made available to the EEC for review during the site visit. The EEC committee reviewed samples of normative data with respect to acoustic measurements, motor speech measurements, child language projects, phonological analyses, research theses, and studies of linguistic and narrative analyses obtained on typically developing children with those with Autism.

It is the opinion of the EEC that the quality of some of these materials and outcomes are exceptional. It is evident that some faculty are providing the students with rich training and research experiences in these areas. It is not clear that all of the faculty do so.

With respect to published scholarly materials in the campus library and in the on-campus SLT clinic, it is the opinion of the EEC that there is a significant lack of resources with respect to test batteries and materials for use to provide intervention during practicum (i.e., treatment stimuli). In addition, the classrooms are not sufficient to accommodate the large student body in SLT. Materials available to them in the library are grossly inadequate. Books and periodicals are lacking, and many that are available to them are outdated. The array of journals for research and other purposes are limited to only a small number of journals in the discipline and related-fields.

- *Linking of research with teaching*

As previously mentioned, there are some novel pieces of instruments, projects and methodologies utilized to support academic instruction and clinical training. Some teaching experiences are enhanced with empirical investigations and use of instrumentation for diagnosis and rehabilitation, including motor speech, audiological, voice and language samples on typically developing children, children with Autism, Down's syndrome and other conditions. This enables some students to engage in translational research and links research to practice and teaching.

- *Mobility of academic staff and students*

Based on information provided to the EEC during the site visit, TEI participates in the ERAMUS Program; however, it is the opinion of the EEC that there is minimal participation in the ERAMUS program by faculty and students of the Department. There are very few students from TEI participating in ERAMUS compared to the large number of students from other participating ERAMUS programs who study at TEI and other universities in the country.

- *Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources*

See below, in the Results section.

- *Efficacy of teaching*

To date, evaluation of courses is conducted; however, there is no synthesis of this feedback into course and curriculum improvements or changes. The faculty reported that they plan to take steps to integrate course evaluations and student feedback to course and curricula changes. It is of the opinion of the EEC that a student and faculty feedback system can be further developed using a more standardized system based on qualitative as well as quantitative feedback and data. This will allow for students, alumni and off-campus practicum supervisors to have a reciprocal input into course content and curriculum. The evaluation and feedback system should be extended to include and involve administrative staff. A culture of peer evaluation is valuable, but rare.

- *Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.*

According to Table 13 of the IER, approximately two thirds (2/3) of the students pass (overall) among the 39 courses in the SLT curriculum. However, the range of success/failure varies significantly among the wide range of courses offered in the Department. For example, in one course 95 out of 115 students (82.6%) passed this course during Fall semester. On the other hand, in another course only 50 out of 101 students (49.5%) of students passed during Fall semester. Course evaluations or feedback was provided by 106 out of 115 (92.1%) of the students enrolled in the former course and 36 out of 101 (35.6%) of the students in the later course.

As previously stated, it is important for faculty to review and synthesize student feedback regarding teaching effectiveness and quality among the 39 courses, including other variables, to monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and the clinical training component of the SLT program. Course and curriculum improvements should be implemented accordingly.

It is important to note, that many of TEI's graduates are reported to be successful in their careers. According to the Department, 95% of the graduates work as SLTs, many of whom are hired at the program's off-campus training site; 20% pursue and obtain a Master's Degree in Greece or at other international institutions; 0.7 % obtain a Ph.D. However, currently there is no mechanism to keep track of alumni and their professional development.

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

According to information provided at the site visit, the length of time to complete the SLT program is on average 11 to 12 semesters or approximately five to six years. Some students need more time to complete the program, given the program's demand and the economic and social obstacles encountered by these students. According to data provided on the HQA summary, 240 students in SLT are inactive and have not completed the program within the four (4) year period. It is indeterminate why these students do not complete the program in a timely manner. The EEC was informed that the central administration followed up on some of the students and they reported economical, family-related, and social issues as hindrances in completing the program.

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

The SLT faculty, including a cohort of current students and alumni, provided the EEC feedback on the strength and weaknesses of the program's teaching. Current students and alumni reported that although they complete lab assignments and a final exam at the end of the semester, including course evaluations, there is no follow through. Students reported that they only get assigned a grade in courses and labs, and they do not receive any feedback regarding their strengths and weaknesses on these assessments.

IMPROVEMENT

- *Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?*

- *What initiatives does it take in this direction?*

It is the opinion of the EEC that the faculty are working at maximum capacity given the size of the student body and the number of faculty to serve these students, the demands of teaching, and related responsibilities (i.e., administrative work, and research productivity). The five (5) full-time SLT faculty and part-time adjuncts are aware of these challenges and propose practical methods for improvement.

It is the opinion of the EEC that 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.

For example, to alleviate the faculty to student ratio, a reduction in the number of students that are admitted annually is practical, cost-effective, and easy to implement. This would allow more time for the full-time faculty and part-time adjuncts and clinical supervisors to interact with the students on an individual basis, and allow greater advising and engagement in scientific, empirical, fundamental and translational research. This will also allow that on- and off-campus practicum placements become more manageable and effective in supervision. For example, the on-campus clinic now functions on one (1) day a week, whereas in the past it operated three (3) days per week. This also provided a service to the community by offering SLT services to the people in the local region. Moreover, off-campus placements now are comprised of 15 students per one supervisor for off-campus practicum. This ratio of students to faculty for off-campus practicum experiences is counter-productive and significantly affects the quality of education and skills that the students in SLT are acquiring at TEI of Patras.

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

APPROACH

- *What is the Department's policy and main objective in research?*
- *Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?*

Research is not of significant priority in the TEI systems since the mission of the institution focuses on teaching. This is also reflected in the heavy teaching loads endured by faculty each semester. In the 1996 official document (ΦΕΚ) for the creation of the Department, there is no stated research vision, mission or objective.

The Department has developed goals relating to research, which are stated in the IER provided to the EEC. These include: a) exposing students to research and research methodologies/technologies so that they can be informed consumers of research in communication disorders; and b) faculty should produce research in the above areas with a focus on Greek speakers with communication disorders.

There is one laboratory in the Department equipped with acoustics and speech science equipment/software. Another laboratory serves as a computer laboratory. However, computers in both labs are dated and there is no internet access available. The Speech and Hearing Clinic incorporates an audiology suite, which is used for clinical teaching and research purposes. Laboratories are primarily set up for didactic purposes, but they can also be used for student and faculty research. There is a full-time technical laboratory staff member. Her presence is important in order to maintain the laboratory and also for the programming of experiments.

IMPLEMENTATION

- *How does the Department promote and support research?*

- *Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.*

- *Scientific publications.*

- *Research projects.*

- *Research collaborations.*

Departmental support for research is very difficult given that there is no research infrastructure within the Department or the Institution. Nevertheless, individual faculty members sought and obtained funding for their research, thus allowing for some research activity in the Department. Through these external grants, faculty have established research collaborations with colleagues abroad. Further interactions with researchers abroad were made possible through EU COST Action participation and presentations at scientific conferences. Faculty receive support up to 1000 Euros per year to present their work at international conferences.

Faculty encourage their students to actively participate in research primarily by the completion of the senior thesis. Some students participate in dissemination activities by presenting alongside with faculty at local, national and, occasionally, at international conferences.

RESULTS

- *How successfully were the Department's research objectives implemented?*

- *Scientific publications.*

- *Research projects.*

- *Research collaborations.*

- *Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.*

- *Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department? Rewards and awards.*

The publication record of the Faculty over the years (2007-2013) of the evaluation period includes:

- 21 original research papers in peer-reviewed journals;

- 3 books and monographs

- 15 chapters in edited volumes

It is clear that the profile of productivity is rather atypical because of the disproportionally greater volume of book chapters as opposed to original research publications. Clearly, this trend should be reversed in the near future and the proportion of original research publications should gradually increase.

One of the main impediments in research activity in the Department is the heavy teaching load on which the EEC has commented above. Other limiting factors reported by the faculty include poor logistic support within the Department and the University in supporting extramural funding applications and lack of laboratory equipment/infrastructure. The EEC recognizes that these are indeed important hindrances, but recommend perseverance in seeking funding and in bringing research results into publication in order to advance the Department's research agenda.

IMPROVEMENT

- *Improvements in research proposed by the Department, if necessary.*

- *Initiatives in this direction undertaken by the Department.*

As stated in the IER, the Department does not have a set vision regarding research. Some general research goals have been developed by the faculty as part of the Department's general objectives. The EEC encourages the Department members to develop a vision regarding research along with short-term and long-term goals towards the vision. The Department has the opportunity to play a leading role in the advancement of communication disorders in Greece. While educating students in clinical methods and producing clinicians is of primary importance, the field cannot be developed in Greece without systematic research contribution to science. The development of standardized assessment tools for Greek speakers and clinical trials for the development of appropriate treatment methodologies that would contribute to evidence based practice are examples of feasible research objectives. In order to accomplish cutting edge research, faculty of the Department could team up with faculty from other universities or TEIs in Greece who have similar research interests. Obviously, collaboration among the Department faculty members should also be part of the Department's research vision and objectives.

Another manner in which research could be fostered and developed is through active participation in the ERASMUS program, which allows both students and faculty to visit research institutions abroad. To date, participation in this program by the Department faculty and students has been very limited. The EEC strongly encourages the Department members to utilize this mechanism for fostering faculty and student development in research and scholarship.

Members of the Department have fostered various international collaborations. These collaborations include participation in COST Actions and the Intensive Programme in Speech Language Therapy. Partnering colleagues from these programs for future grant proposals and systematic publication activities would be of benefit to the faculty, students, and the profession.

Finally, the development of a graduate program in SLT would potentially enhance the Department's scholarship. The graduate program would help meet some deficiencies in clinical, research, and theoretical training of their students. Furthermore, the availability

of the program will result in the retention of many well-trained graduates in the Department who will continue working on research projects with their mentors.

The faculty understands that the creation of a graduate program would increase their teaching load. However, they feel (and the EEC would agree) that teaching graduate students would advance the Departmental research agenda.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH

- *How does the Department view the various services provided to the members of the academic community (teaching staff, students).*
- *Does the Department have a policy to simplify administrative procedures? Are most procedures processed electronically?*
- *Does the Department have a policy to increase student presence on Campus?*

The Department is actively involved in fulfilling its role as a higher education institution and has in place a variety of mechanisms to provide services to the academic community (teaching staff and students), to local/regional institutions (e.g., elementary schools, hospitals, nursing homes), and the community as a whole.

As previously mentioned, the Department uses the e-Class/e-Learning electronic system to manage course materials online and to communicate with students; and students seemed rather satisfied with this system. Students' key complaint was that some faculty did not provide them with syllabi and/or that they occasionally did not adhere to them (e.g., whether midterm or other work would count for the grade).

The Department and the Institution have adopted the State's procedures for promotion and hiring of academic personnel. However, there does not seem to be regular internal mentoring and evaluation system of junior faculty and/or the regular faculty as a whole regarding of their teaching and research goals. The process of hiring academic personnel is followed each year and the Department has to hire a high number of temporary teaching personnel. This process is certainly a big overhead for the Department and the Institution: apart from the long process and the bureaucracy involved, the constant uncertainty about the availability, capability and expertise of temporary teaching personnel creates many organizational difficulties. Part of this problem needs to be addressed outside the Department and Institution (namely, the Ministry of Education).

The Department does not seem to have plans to increase the presence of students in the

Department. This was true for their theory courses, where class participation is not required and only about half of the students attend class as well as the presence of students in the building.

Regarding facilities, the Department has a computer lab and an acoustics lab for the students as well as a Speech and Hearing Clinic. While the computer lab seemed adequate, it was not clear that students could use the computers for their personal use. The acoustics lab was only partly adequate and both computers and software were largely outdated. More significantly, the Speech and Language Clinic is grossly understaffed, operates only one day per week, and has limited and outdated materials.

IMPLEMENTATION
- *Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).*
- *Form and function of academic services and infrastructure for students (e.g. library, PCs and free internet access, student counseling, athletic- cultural activity etc.).*

The Department has a centralized office staffed with two highly competent administrative staff, who serve the needs of the Department and of the student population. One of the administrative staff monitors on-line student course registration and tracks student progress throughout the program. Many of the tasks are completed electronically. In the IER, there is mention of one faculty member following up with inactive students, but the Committee also heard from this faculty member that it was humanly impossible for her to follow up with the students given the large number of responsibilities this faculty member already carries.

While there were some computers (PCs) available in the labs, it was unclear whether these PCs are available for student use outside laboratory hours. The software for the lab needs to be modernized.

The library did not seem to have available many of the books used by courses, and this was particularly burdensome for second baccalaureates; in addition, several key journals in the field of speech and language disorders were not available. Students' greater dissatisfaction was with lack of easy electronic access from home in downloading materials/articles from the library, lack of books used in their courses (especially for the students getting second baccalaureates) as well as journals in the library for the professions. There was no library orientation for the students unless the professor had arranged it for his/her class; but it was not clear whether the library had the personnel to offer this service.

TEI has no learning, tutoring, or counseling service center. It was unclear whether there were any athletic or cultural activities organized by the Department and/or the school in order to bring students and faculty together.

RESULTS

- *Are administrative and other services adequate and functional?*
- *How does the Department view the particular results?*

Overall, the administrative and other services of the Department appear to be functional. Many of the services such as registration and courses use electronic platforms, which make the process very efficient for both the students and the administrative personnel. The Department appears to be satisfied with the state of affairs regarding administration; however, more effort and financial resources should be directed towards updating the instructional laboratories.

IMPROVEMENTS

- *Has the Department identified ways and methods to improve the services provided?*
- *Initiatives undertaken in this direction.*

The Department is quite happy with the level of administration service that is provided by the two administrative assistants and the full-time computer laboratory staff.

EEC considers most critical the reinvigorating and modernizing of the Speech and Hearing Clinic, which can be used more effectively for clinical training as well as connecting with the community (see also below).

The Department provides its regular teaching staff office space, but given the low quality of the building (noise level, lack of heating and air-conditioning, dirty and old floors) very few faculty seem to spend time in the building besides teaching their courses. Furthermore, part-time teaching faculty or supervising fellows do not seem to have office space or a dedicated place in the building and therefore they don't have office hours on campus.

It may be useful for the Department to offer a shared office (or shared offices) to its large number of part-time teaching staff. This will enable them to spend more time in the Department, potentially increasing their interaction with permanent faculty and fostering research interaction. It would also increase the availability of temporary teaching personnel to students.

The Department is housed in a large building and plans should be made to provide a comfortable student lounge where students can meet before or after courses, work on projects and clinical cases. This will develop a sense of belonging and will increase their participation in the life of the Department.

Collaboration with Social, Cultural and Production Organizations

The Department has been active in collaborating with community speech and language pathologists in relation to student clinical practice as well as occasional student research projects. In particular, it is collaborating with elementary education, special education, and nursing home institutions. While the Department does not have a registered laboratory, it has a Speech and Language Clinic that provides free services to the community. Unfortunately, the Clinic curtailed its operation from three days to one due to budgetary cuts from the Government. The EEC recommends that the Department think of creative ways to make sure that the Clinic remains open more regularly, as it serves the community. There are also some community opportunities informational lectures or seminars in schools that they should be taking advantage to promote the profession of speech pathologists.

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

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

- *Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental level, and proposals on ways to overcome them.*
- *Short-, medium- and long-term goals.*
- *Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit*
- *Long-term actions proposed by the Department.*

Short term and long-term strategic planning is currently lacking and should be an important activity for the Department. Specifically, the Department faculty should develop a vision that will guide the activities of its members in the next few years. Specific short term (5 years) and long term (10 years) objectives designed to reach the vision need to be developed. These objectives should incorporate curriculum, research, clinical and service activities.

During the meeting with the EEC there were some discussions regarding the direction of the Department and its position within TEI. These include ideas about relocating the Department in the Medical School or in another department at the University of Patras. In addition, the Department has reflected and discussed some mechanisms for greater involvement and collaborations with the University of Patras' General Hospital for clinical practicum and potentially, the creation of a rehabilitation center at TEI. However, there was no consensus among the Department faculty regarding future goals and directions. Some faculty seemed to prefer the creation of a rehabilitation, whereas some other faculty preferred and affiliation with the University of Patras' General Hospital. As part of the discussion for the vision and objectives, the Department members need to reach a consensus about the

direction of their Department. The TEI administration should be part of these discussions and of a uniformed plan of action.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- *the development of the Department to this date and its present situation, including explicit comments on good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process and recommendations for improvement*

- *the Department's readiness and capability to change/improve*

- *the Department's quality assurance.*

The SLT program at the TEI of Western Greece was developed to educate professionals in Speech and Language Therapy. The program combines theoretical training and clinical teaching in order to prepare its graduates for clinical practice in a variety of clinical settings serving children and adults with communication disorders. The existing program enables its graduates to receive a well-rounded basic education in SLT and prepare them for post-graduate studies. There are of course some deficiencies in the structure of the curriculum and these have been addressed in the previous sections of this report.

Furthermore, certain deficiencies in the curriculum stem from the extremely small number of faculty in the Department and the overreliance on part-time faculty. This creates lack of cohesiveness within the curriculum and jeopardizes quality control. However, this issue cannot be solved efficiently and permanently without the intervention of the Government.

Short-term and long-term research planning in the Department is also hampered by the lack of funds for creating the requisite infrastructure that would attract substantial extra-mural funds to support research activity. However, more effort on the part of the faculty as a whole is required, as it is the only realistic way to obtain sufficient research support under the conditions prevailing in the country today. For example, the TEI administration and the Department should explore EU funding designed for student training and development of infrastructure. This would allow for developing their Speech and Hearing Clinic and purchase of equipment.

In regard to the Clinic, the Department should work closely with the TEI administration in order to re-establish the function of the Speech and Hearing Clinic within the TEI and the greater Patras community. Mechanisms to register the clinic as a recognized laboratory by the Government should be explored. The Department

and the TEI administration should enlist the expertise of business faculty within TEI or University of Patras (some already collaborate with the Department) to develop a sustainable business plan for the Clinic and determine reasonable fee for service mechanisms. Furthermore, mechanisms safeguarding conflict of interest of clinical supervisors who also sustain a private practice should be established. The current building is inadequate and non-functional. In lieu of renovating the space, the EEC recommends relocating the Clinic to the building which currently houses the Department (Mimoza). This would create cohesiveness, staff efficiency, and would increase student visibility on campus

The TEI Administration should recognize the need for functional research laboratories in SLT research. Laboratory computers are outdated. Communication disorders is an applied (empirical) science with greater needs for research-related instrumentation and resources as compared to more theoretical social sciences, such as business or social work. Therefore, the University should allocate funds accordingly.

The Department and the TEI administration should develop a plan to renovate the existing space in the building that houses the Department and include additional laboratories and an appropriately equipped student work room. The building is large enough to house the Department, classrooms, laboratories, and the Speech and Hearing Clinic. Housing all these facilities and structures under one roof creates efficiency and would reduce costs in the long term. Furthermore, it creates a more collegial environment and fosters academic and student collaboration.

The basic problem regarding the lack of infrastructure for research, and also for proper instruction noted by the students, the faculty and by the EEC, could only be solved permanently through increase in funding of the University (therefore the Department) by the Ministry of Education.

The Department consists of 5 full time faculty; 4 are in senior ranks with the exception of one assistant professor. The last addition to the faculty was over a decade ago. The EEC is seriously concerned about the lack of faculty renewal. The Ministry needs to consider this problem and deal with it strategically. Furthermore, the current over-reliance on part-time teaching personnel and lack of permanent teaching staff with specialty in SLT is a structural problem whose ultimate solution may be achieved eventually by the Ministry of Education.

Another issue of concern that relates to quality assurance is that the number of students accepted is not determined by the existing potential of the Department, in terms of infrastructure and personnel, to educate and train professional SLTs, but by other factors that influence the decrees of the Ministry of Education, which specify every year the number of students each university Department must admit and train.

All graduates from departments of SLT in Greece and abroad have the right to

practice the profession in Greece. However, the Government has no formal method of ensuring that professionals who practice do indeed possess the required competencies and qualifications. This creates significant lack of quality control of services provided to the public, and in fact leaves the public vulnerable and unprotected. This problem can only be rectified by the Government. The Department of SLT at TEI-Patras and their colleagues in the SLT program at the sister institute (TEI Epirus in Ioannina) can play an important and pioneering role in lobbying for the development of a Registration Council and in unifying the various interested bodies in Greece.

The above three issues: lack of faculty in SLT, large numbers of students admitted into the program annually, and the lack of a national Registration Council, hamper quality assurance and can be addressed only by the Government.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname   Signature

1. _____

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