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HELLENIC REPUBLIC
H.Q.A.
 HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
 ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT: Department of Logistics Management

TEI: Technological Educational Institute
 Stereas Elladas (Thiva)(central Greece)

28 March 2014



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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, CULTURE & SPORTS
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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Logistics of the Technical Institution of Stereas Elladas (Thiva) consisted of the following three (3) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

- 1.** Dr. *Maria Michailidis*, Associate Professor, Department of Management and MIS, School of Business, University of Nicosia, Nicosia, Cyprus (*Coordinator*)
- 2.** Dr. *Marianthi Ierapetritou*, Professor, Department of Chemical and Biochemical Engineering, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, USA
- 3.** Dr. *Evangelos Moustakas*, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing and Enterprise, Middlesex University London, UK

4.

Introduction**I. The External Evaluation Procedure**

- On Tuesday the 18th of February 2014, the EEC travelled to Thiva where it had the first meeting with the members of the faculty including the Department Head P. Trivellas and the following professors: A. Mertzanis, P. Reklitis, E. Marinagi. This meeting covered the introduction to the program and details about all aspects of teaching, research and services of the department. In the afternoon the EEC met with the rest of the tenured faculty members C. Massouros, and S. Anastasiou, the temporary staff and part time lecturers P. Kofakis, I. Leon, I. Rousou, V. Vrysagotis and G. Moustiris, and the secretary of the department D. Gianniotou and her assistant E. Papadimitriou. The EEC also met with a large number of students in the department's amphitheater (without the presence of professors) to share their educational experiences at TEI.
- On Wednesday February 19th the EEC had meetings with the departmental alumni, alumni employers, members of the local industry, the City's Mayor, and members of the local authorities, all of which highlighted the importance of the institution for the city and for the local community. In the afternoon, the EEC carried out a brief tour of the facilities including classrooms, computer labs, and the library.

The schedule below was followed and the indicated personnel attended:

Monday, 17-2-2014

Arrival in Athens, Meeting of committee's members in the hotel

Tuesday, 18-2-2014

9:00 - 11:00 Departure from HQAA offices and transfer to the Department in Thiva

11.00 - 13.00 Meeting with the Head of the Department and academic staff

14:00 – 17:00 Meeting with the students

17:00-18:00 Travel to Athens

Wednesday, 19-2-2014

9:00 - 11:00 Departure from HQAA offices and transfer to the Department in Thiva

11:00 - 16:00 Meeting with representatives from Local Authorities and Bodies in Viotia, members of administrative personnel, and alumni

16:00 Last meeting with the Head and academic staff of the Department

17:00 - 18:00 Travel to Athens

Thursday, 20-2-2014

9:00 - 18:00 External Evaluation Report Preparation

Friday, 21-2-2014

9:00 - 18:00 External Evaluation Report Preparation

Saturday, 22-2-2014:

Completion of External Evaluation Report
Departure from Athens

Participants on the discussion with the External Evaluation Committee

Company Representatives

- Alexander Paraskevas Metro Cash & Carry SA
- Konstantinos Stavrianakis Hellenic Aerospace Industry

- Stella Lardoutsou, graduate (works in a meat processing firm)
- Giorgos Harlas, graduate, Police personnel

List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the Committee:

1. Resumes of the permanent members of the faculty
2. Syllabi of all the courses
3. Program handbook
4. Department Internal Evaluation
5. Undergraduate Thesis Guide
6. Procedure followed for changing the departmental handbook
7. Letters from employers of department graduates
8. Information about the mobility program «ERASMUS»
9. Samples of student bachelor theses
10. Department's graduate data
11. The department's Head presentation

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

All the documentation provided was helpful and had all the details needed from the EEC to evaluate the department. In addition, the faculty provided any additional information requested by the EEC.

The objective of the internal evaluation is the realistic and objective representation of the characteristics of the department operation (positive and negative), highlighting the main problems, making suggestions for dealing with them and recording aspirations of staff and students. As such, the EEC believes that the process was indeed very useful for the department since it clearly helped the department in identifying its main strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, the internal evaluation was instrumental in determining ways to improve the current program and to reach out to all constituents.

A. Curriculum

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

APPROACH:

The objectives of the Program refer to the operation of the Department within an international environment where primary "competitors" are equivalent European or International Institutions. Furthermore, to contribute to the development of well qualified Logistics personnel according to the international standards and practices.

The Programme attempts to integrate theory, practical exercises, workshops, case studies, theoretical research papers and dissertation theses. The objectives were decided based on the market's needs as well as on the Ministry of Education's guidelines for Technological Institutes.

The fulfilment of these objectives is achieved through the curriculum of the Logistics Program which sufficiently meets in theory the specialized needs of the Greek Economy. It teaches various aspects of the movement and storage of materials on their journey from original suppliers through to final customers. It also centres around the organization of educational events such as internships, site visits at local industries and exchanges with other universities through the Erasmus program. In addition, to substantiate knowledge through this program students acquire competencies and skills that enable them to work in the related sectors and also to proceed with further studies.

The Department's Undergraduate Studies Program was created in 2005. Since then the program has not undergone significant modifications. Only one course was added in 2010 (Business plan). The department offers 48 required courses or optional/required courses which are composed of the following: 34 pure theoretical, 70% of the total courses; while 14 courses include theory and laboratory, 30%. The program includes 8 pairs of pre requisite courses. The Students have a Thesis requirement and internship. Students should succeed in 42 courses in total (37 compulsory and 5 optional/required) to get their degree.

There are no concentrations. Courses are taught by qualified academic staff, most of them are research active in the academic areas they teach.

The department operates a required internship scheme for all students. Given that this is incorporated in the curriculum it safeguards the practical orientation of the taught courses by providing them with the semester long opportunity to explore and contribute to the real logistics environment, thus increasing their employability during or upon completion of the program.

The Department under the auspices of a five-member committee nominated by the Senate is currently revising the Curriculum, a process which will be completed by the end of March 2014. This modernization change process aims at restructuring the program in concentrations, these being Logistics in: Shipping, Aviation and Railway both for the private and public sector. Adding courses such as Green Logistics, & Reverse Supply chain, Quality Assurance, Shipping transportation, Logistics management. In the attempt to update the program, the curriculums of well-established programs delivered by other Universities in UK, USA and Asia were studied.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The structure and the implementation of the program is to some degree consistent with the fulfillment of the intended objectives. It revealed advantages but also shortcomings in the functioning of courses that were given to students.

The syllabi of the taught courses are up to date, but the list of courses need to be enhanced by the addition of popular courses (a course on Chemical Quality Control which would require a lab and a course on Warehouse management, which would require a Warehouse Simulation

area and a GIS lab to simulate real conditions through the supply chain) to be comparable with equivalent courses of reputable institutions.

There are courses, which have a high degree of demand from the labor market (something which was acknowledged during the meetings with students, alumni and employers). However, there are also courses which their teaching has been interrupted (short or long term) due to staff shortages, IT systems failures and software licensing issues). Thus, within the curriculum, specialized education is provided which in several occasions is limited due to lack of funding (e.g. SAP software). Nevertheless, there is no clear evidence if there will be funding for renewal or purchasing the licensing of various programs. Teaching staff, current students, alumni and professionals confirmed the importance of such programs as they play a fundamental role in the success of the program.

These shortages create extensive knowledge gaps when students get to the labour market and to students who wish to pursue postgraduate studies locally and abroad.

Another critical aspect is the course scheduling and corresponding estimated student workload (amounting to approx. 24-26 hours a week). A large number of students have to commute from Athens daily and some are forced to do side jobs in order to cover their costs. Since laboratories and courses in general are not repeated (sections of courses) in order to enable attendance flexibility for students, this may be a contributing factor to the low attendance rate and large number of deferred students.

The assessment for the theoretical courses is mostly based on exams. The examination system, seems to lack tracking mechanisms such as: Selection Committee (examination unit), the institution of the External Examiner and plagiarism control as far as the assessment papers (such as Ephorus) are concerned.

The EEC stated that it is vital for the curriculum to be updated, partly or in whole, with systematic market research with the intension of keeping up to date with the needs of the economy and the local and international industry/ environment.

Furthermore, the curriculum assigns importance to both theory and practice. Logistics curricula, looking at it from an international perspective, tend to follow one of two directions; either focusing on technical aspects, or adopting a predominance of managerial aspects. Moreover, programs tend to also include area-specific, differentiating modules in the syllabus. This program of Logistics has a combination of both a managerial focus and technical one. Upon the update of the program, which is forthcoming, the program will be enhanced with specialized courses that are closely connected to the needs of the local community and regional economy.

Teaching staff consists of a very small group of lecturers (5) who hold permanent position who are also involved in research processes and 12 who are employed on short-term teaching contracts, who are mainly involved in teaching. It is a fact that the Department has insufficient manpower that possesses good knowledge of the corresponding disciplines but are expected to work way over their workloads to cover the needs of the department. The academic group is able to conduct future changes in the curriculum based on their specialized knowledge and educational experience but needs to be enhanced with added permanent members.

Lastly, there is no distance learning alternative (e-learning) and only a limited number of collaborations with other institutions abroad are available.

RESULTS:

The Government Gazette (GG) 222/17-9-2003 does not provide goals and objectives. However, the aim and objectives of the Department are included within the general objectives of the founding laws of TEIs, which are described within the Government Gazette of professional rights of the Department. In general terms, the objectives of the Department are achieved. The Department understands the process and the limitations.

Preliminary student evaluation survey results that were made available to us, provide

evidence that the Program is regarded positively by its students. Its graduates are appreciated by Greek employers (especially local). Nonetheless the recession in the Greek economy has negatively affected the employability of the recent graduates.

Concluding, it is the opinion of the EEC that the Department is achieving the objectives it has set for this Program in terms of providing the students with the skills and knowledge required to satisfy their needs and consequently the needs of the economy. Encouraging is the fact that the department has realized the urgent need for restructuring and updating the program, which is in progress.

IMPROVEMENT

The Department is aware of the limitations and ways to improve the Curriculum.

The Department proposes a number of improvements such as:

- Recruiting additional academic and administrative staff who can support the curriculum.
- Changing and restructuring of the academic curriculum with innovative content which will enhance the student learning experience
- Increasing the number of guest lectures and residential visits with the industry
- The involvement of stakeholders (unions, professional bodies, associations) in order to keep up with recent developments in the relevant areas enhancing the competencies and skills delivered by the program.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

Largely, the didactical approach can be characterised as ‘traditional’, with a predominance of frontal lecturing, presentations and written exams. However, the program is enriched by exercises, guest speakers and laboratory work which complement this approach and enhances the program, providing students with the key skills and practice-related experiences in the area of logistics. Noteworthy is the motivation and commitment of the teaching staff and the respectable staff-student relationship.

Conversely, this is the basis of creating an effective learning environment, which to a large degree compensates for the infrastructural, technological and financial deficiencies that the specific program faces. Nonetheless, the adopted didactical methodology is compatible with the ones of equivalent programs at other institutions at both national and international levels. Among the defined objectives of the specific department of Logistics, teaching plays a fundamental role. Additionally, according to the internal evaluation report, the purpose of the department is to advance knowledge and understanding in the field of Logistics. The aims of the program revolves around the following:

- General education
- Education and training in the area of logistics
- Competence development in the course of discourse, aligned with the needs of the Greek and international economy in general.

Additionally as described in the Department’s Study Guide, students are expected to gain knowledge and understanding of the following:

- the process of applying scientific perspectives of Logistics
- the quantitative techniques of engineering and analysis to infuse logistics considerations into product design development, production and operation
- the main factors affecting logistics management
- the significance of Logistics Management in the context of the current business environment.
- the technologies currently available for streamlining and automating the management of supply chain.

However, the design and content of the curriculum are aligned with the designated objectives which comply with the legal requirements and guidelines defined by the Greek Ministry of Education for Technological Education Institutions (TEI).

Thus, the implementation of the department’s curriculum utilises three teaching instruments:

- Lectures (Theory): The didactical method here is the traditional frontal lecturing; this method represents about 70% of the total teaching hours.
- Laboratories (Practice): Within laboratories, students practice under the supervision of professors and technical staff assistance. There are 4 computer labs in the Department.
- Projects and Assignments (Self-Directed Learning): In addition to the above, students in several courses are also required to complete assignments on an individual and group basis and case studies reports. The weight of this fluctuates between courses.

Additionally, the program features and actively pursues links with the local logistics sector, not only during the students’ internship but also as part of the teaching activities. These include frequent residential visits to companies and case studies. However, the software training portfolio is very limited (mainly excel, word).

Lastly, with regards to examination approaches, they can also be characterised as ‘traditional’. Although, there are in some courses mid-term exams, graded assignments and presentations, the grades are largely determined by written exams held at the end of the semester (with some exceptions).

IMPLEMENTATION:

The Department has 5 Research Teaching Faculty (ΔEIT), one Special Teaching Faculty (ΔEIII), and 12 part-time teaching staff that serve around 1405 undergraduate students. Thus the actual ratio is about 1:78. This is more than three-times as high as would be found in other educational institutes internationally (the student teaching staff ratio is 1/30 given that the approximation of about 50% attendance rate).

The EEC was very impressed with the quality of the teaching staff, their passion for pedagogy and dedication in the department of logistics, and it is to their credit that despite this very high ratio they instill in their students a great sense of caring and providing them with access and feedback when they require it.

Teaching staff is available to students via e-mail and during their weekly office hours. The students the EEC met, reported that they are currently content with the access they have to the teaching staff. Students also appeared satisfied with the assessment feedback they are getting which was described as timely, adequate and informative. On the other hand some improvements related to the access system in place are suggested under the 'Improvements' section.

Nonetheless, the corresponding feedback received from the alumni interviewed during the EEC visit was very positive. More specifically, they felt very strongly about the relevance and quality of the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies. In this sense, the program's teaching contents fully supports the students' and future employers' expectations. However, specific comments were related to the need of the update of the program in terms of the use of software used in industry (warehouse and accounting software and statistical packages).

In terms of teaching materials and resources, there are a number of challenges and issues that need to be dealt with. The department has successfully implemented recently the online learning platform (e-Class) for a more efficient distribution of teaching materials, scheduling and communication. Moreover, this is adopted by staff and students alike, utilising a significant part of its functionality. Nonetheless, library services are arguably insufficient. The department has no access to scientific databases, they have no access/subscriptions to area-specific journals and resources.

Additionally teaching staff was evaluated recently, for the first time by the Internal Quality Assurance Unit under the supervision of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit ($\text{MO}\Delta\text{IIT}$). The evaluation took place for each course at the 7th week the Fall semester 2013-2014. The instrument that was used is in line with what other institutions use for this purpose. The processing of the results and their reporting to the teaching staff concerned appears also to be in line with the processes that other institutions have; however, at the time of the EEC visit only general conclusions were presented as the detailed ones are still in process. Nonetheless, procedures and actions beyond this stage, in terms of follow up and the involvement of the Head of the Department could be strengthened as mentioned under recommendation section.

Furthermore, there are several exchange agreements in terms of students, teaching and administrative staff with some institutions. During the last three academic years 6 students have participated on an exchange visit through the ERASMUS program. This mobility scheme offers good exposure for the Department's students to the international context. The outgoing student numbers are estimated to increase with the increase of funding and the slow recovery of the economic crisis.

Additionally, students benefit through the international mobility of incoming and outgoing teaching staff which is not fully utilized because of teaching constraints of the teaching staff.

Lastly, the Department has plans in participating in the ERASMUS+ program (2014-2020) which will further enhance its international exposure.

As far as the use of the textbooks is concerned, it is commendable that, beyond the Greek

textbooks per course, which are mandated by legislation, students are offered additional material in notes, case studies, journal papers and power point presentations. During the visit to the library, EEC noted lack of Greek books and well-known international textbooks, which are available both in English and Greek. Also due to the large number of students attending the Department the library could be enhanced even further with more books in both printed and electronic formats, as well as journals related to the field of study. The department has implemented an online learning platform (e-Class) for a more efficient distribution of teaching materials. However, there seems to be difficulties in the utilization of the specific platform for scheduling and communication and interaction among students, and between students and teaching staff.

IMPROVEMENT:

The Department having conducted teaching evaluation motivated by HQA is aware of both the strengths and challenges associated with the teaching activity in their institution.

The numerous challenges the Department is facing for the future are primarily exogenous because of the legal framework in which it operates, intensified by the continuous financial crisis.

Furthermore, the department has some involvement with the local business community, both at the teaching level and through internships.

The Department is encouraged to aim for stronger networking with the local community. These collaborative efforts could be improved through further initiatives taken by the department in strengthening links with community involvement.

A major challenge is to retain its good teaching staff or recruit replacements when they leave.

The EEC acknowledges the significant work conducted by the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (OMEA) and the effective system of student satisfaction evaluations they put in place which gives feedback on teaching effectiveness.

However it is advisable for the Department to create a 'Department Council', whose role would be to give feedback to the teaching staff members and liaise with the Head of Department, for corrective actions. Furthermore, it is also suggested that provisions should be made to give feedback to the students on their evaluations and on the subsequent actions that are taken. Additionally, the 'Department Council' could establish a system of peer teaching evaluation, which could help teaching staff in sharing good teaching practices as this would serve as a mentoring system for those new to teaching.

Additionally, it is recommended that the Department follows up on expanding its ERASMUS co-operations and actively support student mobility and very importantly teaching staff mobility.

Lastly it is recommended that the department secures funding for the creation of a Chemical Quality Control lab and for a Warehouse Simulation area. Also it is eminent to purchase authorized licenses for SPSS, and SAP software. Although, the MS office is available, there are not enough computers for the students to practice.

C. Research

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

APPROACH:

The main focus of the department is teaching. The faculty members are performing satisfactory research (55 publications in the last 5 years) given the limited resources, the increased teaching responsibilities due to staff reduction in the last few years, and the lack of graduate programs.

Teaching staff is interested in increasing their research activities, which is considered to have a positive impact to the students' bachelor theses. The main areas of research follow the research interests of the teaching staff members. However, it was noticed that the department has not developed a research agenda and a strategic plan towards improving their research portfolio.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Currently, there is no funding to support research in the department (either external or internal). There is no mechanism to recognize teaching staff for performing research outside the fact that research is mostly used for academic career advancement.

The institution lacks dedicated research infrastructure, however, the number of publications is at a quite satisfactory level in comparison with other Greek institutions.

Currently, there are no grants available for research in the department, even though it was mentioned that the teaching staff are motivated to pursue collaborations with other institutes to enable research funding.

RESULTS:

The main focus of the department is clearly the applicability of practical knowledge to its graduates with the adoption of con- current tools for logistics in different industries. The research is conducted mostly due to the scientific motivation of the faculty members.

However, as mentioned above, the number of publications per faculty member is considered satisfactory. The students are required to work on a Bachelor's thesis at the last semester of their studies. In this way students have the opportunity to be involved in research activities.

Most of the faculty members are motivated to research but the resources are rather limited. In its majority, the research work has an application focus, mainly consisting of case studies and field surveys. The department's unique selling point is its educational focus in the area of logistics.

IMPROVEMENT:

The department recommends to:

- Increase student and faculty visits to different national and international institutions with the same or similar focus
- Increase faculty collaborations with different institutions
- The increase in funding for research
- The licensing for statistical packages for data analysis
- The development of industrial connections and the establishment of further collaborations with local industry to enable research in specific applications.
- Acquire funding for the subscription to scientific journals in the Logistics area.
- Acquire funding for attending and participating in scientific conferences.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH:

The program's administrative support services are dependent on the Central Administrative office in Lamia– TEI of Stereas Elladas (Central Greece). These include the physical presence of two administrators: a full time administrator and a temporary one, and the access of an electronic platform to facilitate the delivery of a number of services for all stakeholders. The official website of the department is as follows: <http://logistics.teiste.gr>.

Furthermore, the program's administrative services have been supported by software packages used by faculty, administrative staff and students. These include: StudentsWeb for the students and the ClassWeb. Via these services, students and faculty have the on-line capability to perform administrative tasks such as grading. Services provided include the following:

- Via 'Electroniki Grammateia' the students are able to check online their biographical data, to select courses and request documents, check grade reports, and examination schedules.
- Moreover, the GUNET e-class platform is an additional service provided online as a pedagogical tool for uploads and updates of courses including power point presentations and feedback to assignments.

Although official evaluations have not been provided, rating the relative satisfaction levels of the users and practicality of these packages, the usefulness of the program's electronic administrative services have been demonstrated and commented on as being helpful.

With respect to the administrative office, its aim is to support faculty and students with a standard range of services. Additionally, the administrative office is the main link with the Central Administrative office in Lamia.

The library resources are used by students and faculty. The library does not provide access to online material by the use of the HEAL-LINK. The quality and quantity of library resources is rather poor. This aspect should be extended much further using additional resources. Examples of resources that would be considered as standard in other competing institutions in Greece or abroad include access to a wider range of books and journals, and in particular for support of a unique Logistics program to Logistics related databases.

The low utilization of the library's facilities and resources could be a result of the large number of textbooks and limited number of reference books, very limited access to computer terminals and the absence of a librarian. It is important to note that there were no security systems to protect the library.

The Department of Logistics of TEI Stereas Elladas (Thiva) does not have a Student Support faculty advisor system with the aim to support students in the development of a professional career.

In addition, there is no "Alumni Association" to connect students and graduates with organisations, which offer job positions or programs of lifelong learning.

TEI's infrastructure including classrooms, amphitheatres, labs, faculty offices, gymnasium, and library appear to be limited.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The organization and infrastructure of the Logistics program's administration seems to be simple and effective, and indeed constitutes a very lean operation. The EEC was very

appreciative of the support provided by the program Head, and his team.

RESULTS:

Overall, the administrative and other services are in general adequate and functional. However, it was very apparent that budgetary constraints were clearly inhibiting certain desirable developments such as the enhancement of the administrative office in terms of another permanent administrative officer, the purchase of software for the computer labs and the enrichment of the library with on-line journal, e-books and a qualified librarian.

IMPROVEMENTS:

The budgetary constraints (already mentioned) were clearly limiting what and how could be achieved to improve the services.

Examples of such improvements could be associated with the purchase of lab equipment and updated software, exploration of the feasibility of providing a greater range of on the premises facilities for student practical, hands on experiences, and library resources.

The library stock is minimal and it mainly consists of textbooks (most of them out-dated). Study areas are not available and a functional library administration is absent.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

TEI's mission is to provide students with the most up to date and competitive Logistics program in the region. Consequently, TEI can cover the educational needs of a wider spectrum of students, interested in acquiring competencies in Logistics in a holistic approach.

This was reflected through the discussions by the teaching staff, industry representatives, delegates of the local government, and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives/Associations in Thiva. Although, there are limited number of collaborations for projects where the Logistics program is partner with local and national stakeholders there is evidence that TEI members understand the value of such actions and have already started working towards this direction.

Furthermore, collaboration with cultural, social and commercial organisations is affected through the Bachelor Thesis Module, as was evidenced by the range of topics of theses – mostly case studies, and field research undertaken.

Collaborations projects with local production organizations and Governmental organizations:

- Municipality of Thiva
- Municipality of Keratsini
- Chamber of Commerce in Viotia
- Federation of Professional Craftsmen-District Thebes
- Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Thiva
- Chamber of Piraeus
- METRO Cash & Carry (Shimatari)
- Greek Defense Industry (Tanagra)
- Papastratos SA (Aspropyrgos)

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.

The department has identified that the main selling point is the educational focus in the area of logistics which although it is an important area of development, it has not received adequate attention in Greek educational environment. This is evident by the high degree of employability of the department's graduates and the increasing interest by the local industry.

The departmental overall objective as presented by the Head of the Department is to strengthen the quality of education in the field of Logistics, to improve the current infrastructure and to establish the institution as one of the most important units in the area of Logistics and Supply Chain Management.

The department proposed specific steps towards this goal as follows:

Short Term – Risk Minimization, Added Value Maximization

- Achieve better communication with the students utilizing the newly developed departmental website
- Increase student and teaching staff visits to different national and international institutions with the same or similar focus
- Increase teaching staff collaborations with different institutions
- Develop industrial networks and establish fruitful collaborations with local industry to enable research in specific applications
- Increase the number of guest lectures and residential visits with the industry
- Acquire licensing for the required classroom software and library resources including a librarian

Medium Term - Quality Improvement:

- Restructure the academic curriculum with innovative content to improve the student learning experience
- Utilization of the student satisfaction evaluations for teaching staff, (and their courses) towards the general improvement of the program
- Recruit additional academic and administrative staff that can support the curriculum
- Establish a laboratory focused on Supply Chain Management to support both teaching and research activities

Long Term - Reputation Improvement

- Develop an alumni association and a better way to track the department's graduates
- Establish motives for the faculty to get involved in research and increase their publication record

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION:

The Department of Logistics Management of TEI of Stereas Elladas (Central Greece) at Thiva is relatively new, established in 2005 and serves 1405 students with a small number of permanent faculty (5), and mostly part time lecturers (12 this year). As was presented in the internal evaluation report, the number of available resources in the form of additional part time or full time faculty positions has been decreasing although the number of students in the program continues to increase. This presents a great challenge to the Department in order to maintain their student offerings and the student-faculty engagement. In response, the faculty had to increase their workload beyond their typical teaching hours to cover the needs of the Department.

EEC noticed that the students were motivated and willing to increase their participation in departmental activities. However, there are also multiple challenges given the current economic environment in Greece and the fact that 90% of students actually commute daily from Athens. The recent development of the departmental website with a number of important links to “electronic secretary” increased the communication with the students and streamlined a number of different tasks involving registering for courses, checking the student academic status and application for textbooks.

The Department has recently initiated (motivated by the HQA evaluation) formal procedures that are concerned with faculty, student, and course evaluations. This will significantly improve the quality of the program in near future as highlighted in the report and mentioned in the discussions with the Head of the Department.

Another challenge identified by the EEC is the limited infrastructure. The facilities include 4 classrooms (with computers) and an amphitheater. There were no additional laboratories for students to work on hands-on experiments and practice the theory of the courses, which is necessary in the area of logistics. In addition, there is only limited budget for replacement, maintenance and facility operations. It is essential, for a specialised program of this sort, that technical infrastructure is regularly upgraded and updated to maintain effectiveness and competitiveness.

Finally, there is limited research activity including publications and funded projects. Research funding is necessary to raise the level of research and collaborations with different institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

On the basis of the material examined and the interviews with the various stakeholders, the EEC recommends the following:

Administration and Governance:

- The Department has a number of committees responsible for different administration functions. It is recommended that additional support should be provided to maintain the level of activity with an increasing number of students.
- The Department belongs to the TEI of Stereas Elladas although not a lot of interactions are needed with the central offices especially from the students. Given that more resources are needed to improve the facilities of this institution, it is proposed that more funds are provided to the Department in comparison with those allocated to the central offices.
- Although there is a sabbatical system in place, the fact that there are very few faculty members, limits the capability of the faculty to explore this opportunity, which would be very positive in order to establish collaborations with other universities, industry and thus increase the research activity of the department.

- The department should embark in a longer term strategic planning covering all main aspects such as curriculum of the undergraduate program, research activities and outreach to the local and broader community. The plan should involve specific implementations steps and ways to assess their program.

Research, Facilities & Resources:

- At this point it needs to be mentioned that the operation and maintenance of lab equipment and lab supplies are not funded. To date, this situation has resulted noticeable restrictions in the students' learning process as in some cases there were several computer units that were not functioning. The situation is not that critical due to staff's commitment, flexibility and time-investment. Nevertheless, in the face of improving student learning experience this issue needs to be resolved.
- The development of research agendas should be encouraged. It is expected that partnerships and teams across disciplines and sectors may provide a vehicle for the development of new knowledge resulting in a significant push for both innovative applied science teaching and research.
- The Department is encouraged to create momentum by benchmarking itself against leading international institutions both in terms of teaching and research excellence.
- The Department should use widely accepted lists such as ABS and JQL as well as metrics such as ISI's impact factors to monitor the quality of research and set objectives and criteria for research performance.

Undergraduate Program:

- Although the evaluation process of teaching staff by students in relation to the delivery and content of the course has started, it is not clear how these results are used. Staff are encouraged to explain how they aim in responding constructively in criticisms raised by students (e.g. course content and delivery style).
- The Department needs to focus in completing the curriculum update, improve teaching performance and importantly improve research record and publications in high quality peer reviewed journals. Innovation in teaching methods is encouraged.
- Introduce induction weeks (first semester) and intensify promotional activities to increase the number and quality of applicants.
- Develop a mechanism for final year students to provide guidance and recommendations for career prospects and further studies.

To summarise there is clear evidence that the Head and the members of the Department including administration staff do contribute substantially to the successful operation of the institution and wish to provide further improvement which will benefit all the involved stakeholders. It is highly recommended to improve the quality of both teaching and research as well as improve substantially the facilities and update and acquire new resources. This can be achieved through systematic performance tracking, monitoring course attendance, and grade distributions and exam pass grades, reviewing and assessing student evaluations in order to identify shortcomings and strong points to make curriculum decisions. Furthermore, the department is encouraged to aim for stronger networking with the local community. This collaborative effort could be improved upon through further initiatives taken by the Logistics department in strengthening relations with community involvement. Lastly, in spite of the current adverse financial and legal conditions in Greece, the Department will need to replace lost teaching staff and retain existing staff.