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ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

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EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

Departement of German Language and Literature

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens



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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, CULTURE & SPORTS
MANAGING AUTHORITY

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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department DEPARTMENT of German Language and Literature of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens consisted of the following five (5) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Prof. Dr. Hans Bickes (Coordinator)
Leibniz University Hanover, Germany
2. Prof. a. D. Dr. Dr. hc. Konstantinos A. Dimadis
Free University, Berlin, Germany
3. Dr. George Tsoulas, Phd., Senior Lecturer
The University of York, UK
4. Ass. Prof. Dr. Antroulla Papakyriakou
University of Nicosia, Cyprus

Introduction

The External Evaluation Committee (henceforth *EEC*) visited the Department of German Language and Literature of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (henceforth *the Department*) between the 27th and 29th of January 2014. The EEC would like to thank the members of the Department for their warm welcome, their helpfulness and professionalism. All staff engaged fully and constructively with the evaluation process making themselves available to answer questions and provide information as and when it was requested.

The Department is a tightly knit unit with a clear sense of their distinctive identity within the School of Philosophy, unwavering commitment to academic excellence, both in delivering the best possible student experience and generating internationally recognised research in all the areas where staff is active. The Department also has a very strong sense of purpose and mission both academically and in responding to societal needs and workplace challenges.

During the visit the EEC had the opportunity to meet with almost all the academic staff (one member of staff was absent due to ill-health), the support staff, and the librarian. The EEC met with a range of students, both undergraduate and postgraduate and had the opportunity to observe part of a class in progress. The EEC also had a brief meeting with the Vice Rector for academic affairs. The department made available a wide range of detailed documentation to the EEC, including (apart from the documents that had already been provided by ADIP) :

- Detailed student handbooks for the last 4 years
- A report on the plans for upgrading the electronic infrastructure of the secretariat
- Student questionnaires
- CVs of the members of academic staff.
- A list of publications by members of the department
- A wide selection of publications by staff
- Detailed course information for courses in both literature and linguistics
- Several Masters and Doctoral dissertations by students of the department.
- The powerpoint presentations used during the visit were also made available to the EEC.
- The material appearing on the Departmental website (study guide for the German language courses etc.)

The documentation was rich and informative and gave the EEC a thorough understanding of the activities of the Department.

In terms of the facilities, the EEC visited staff offices, the multimedia center, a number of classrooms, the departmental library, and the secretariat.

The documentation produced by the internal evaluation committee provided a very rich source of information for the EEC. A wide range of sources and metrics were

used and the internal evaluation committee displayed a self critical spirit equally evident during the external evaluation visit. The evidence provided included a narrative account of the aims and objectives of the Department and the strategies the Department has devised in order to achieve those aims and objectives as well as a wealth of clearly presented statistical evidence supporting the narrative account and strengthening its conclusions. The EEC was impressed by the quality and thoroughness of the work of the internal evaluation committee. It is clear that a lot of work and effort was put into producing this documentation and it represents clear evidence of the extent of reflection that has taken place by the members of the Department on all areas of the Department's activities. The EEC would like to underline that the process of internal evaluation, although primarily undertaken by the internal evaluation committee, was an inclusive process taking into account the whole of the department. As a result, staff feel that they truly own the programme and they are part of a common effort to reach their stated goals. The EEC would like to specifically commend the internal evaluation committee on this point.

The main aims and objectives of the Department were initially set out in its founding document in 1977, in a brief statement, focusing on the teaching of German language and literature and the formation of education professionals capable of teaching German language and literature. Thanks to the efforts of the members of the Department these goals have been achieved not only in their original formulation but also in the updated and far more detailed form that appears in the internal evaluation document. Specifically, the aims of the department now include

- Excellence in research as well as teaching.
- Preparation of students for the workplace using the latest methods of teaching.
- Focus on the internationalization both of the student experience and the department's research, e.g. through the organization of international conferences and the formal collaboration with universities in the German speaking world and beyond, participation in research programmes etc...

It is the view of the EEC that these objectives have been largely and adequately met.

As ever, there are areas where improvement is possible. Our recommendations and suggestions can be found in the final section of this report.

A.1 Undergraduate Curriculum

The Department's Curriculum is structured along six, to varying degrees interdependent, principal axes, namely:

- Linguistics
- Literature
- Translation
- Language Pedagogy (Didactics)
- German Civilisation
- Language Training (Sprachpraxis)

Although the curriculum is organised along the above lines it must be noted that Linguistics and Literature are the basic pillars of the curriculum with translation and civilisation subsumed under linguistics and literature respectively.

The overarching goals of the Curriculum is to deliver high quality knowledge and training in all the basic areas of curricular activity. Furthermore, the Curriculum aims to prepare students as well as it is feasible for the world of work beyond academia.

The department takes a multi-pronged approach to the achievement of these goals. The strategies chosen are specifically tailored to each of the main axes, but with some overarching strategies cross-cutting the different domains. Thus, the fact that all teaching takes place in German serves directly all the above aims. In order to realise the aims of the curriculum, the Department offers a wide range of modules. A number of those modules is offered every year (compulsory introductory modules and so on) and a selection of the rest is offered as options. The crowning achievement of a student's career in the Department is the production of a dissertation, in German, on an agreed topic.

The objectives and strategies were decided by the department as a whole. Most of the staff have studied both abroad and in Greece and are well acquainted with the current international standards in and approaches to curriculum design and, most importantly, the current standards regarding the teaching of German. The curriculum combines breadth and depth both in good measure. Students who graduate from the department have a good knowledge of the relevant fields of study and are well equipped to pursue post-graduate study in any of these fields.

The Department has an extensive range of activities that connect it to the society at large and is using the feedback received from such programmes and initiatives as input to the design of the curriculum in order to make it more relevant and responsive to the needs of society at large and the needs of its students as highly trained active citizens.

There is a clear procedure for assessing and revising the curriculum on a yearly basis. The Department has created a specific committee to deal with reviewing the curriculum. The committee meets and considers matters that may arise at regular intervals and makes recommendations to the Department.

IMPLEMENTATION

The curriculum implements effectively and appropriately the goals of the Department. It provides clearly defined pathways including optional courses which students can use to strengthen their profile in one or another area or to pursue areas where they have greater interests. As such, the curriculum offers both a coherent whole and the possibility for further specialization. From the sample of courses that we considered from the paper documentation available, from the electronic resources that we have accessed and from our discussion with the students, we have concluded that both the materials offered and the timescale allowed are appropriate for the relevant courses.

The Department offers to the students a recommended semester plan which most students follow and are very satisfied with. The students discuss their plans with staff members who are specifically charged with this task (Advisors). There is no doubt that the Department's staff is highly qualified, trained and enthusiastic in the discharge for their curricular duties. As far as non-human resources are concerned, there is equally no doubt that they could and need to be improved and enriched with the help of the University.

RESULTS

The choice of modules, progression pathways and practical implementation, (such as conducting all teaching in German) shows that a great deal of thought has gone into the design and implementation of the curriculum. The implementation is complete yet flexible and allows for adjustments if and when they become necessary. The EEC is satisfied that the chosen implementation actuates the goals set by the Department in an appropriate and effective manner.

The Department has worked as a unit in the process of designing and implement the curriculum. The success in achieving these results is the direct consequence of the Department's planning. Therefore the Department is fully aware of the reasons and causes of its achievements.

IMPROVEMENT

The Department understands its curricular provision as an evolving object. The curriculum is kept under constant review and improvements are made as and if they become necessary. There are no specific areas where the Curriculum is in need of urgent or deep revision.

A.2 Graduate Curriculum

The Department offers a 2-year Graduate programme which aims to:

- Provide both deeper and broader training in linguistics and literature.
- Develop and promote research in these areas.
- Equip graduates with the necessary tools for the challenges of the global workplace

The Graduate Curriculum contains a range of advanced modules in linguistics and literature covering all the major areas of the subject and end with a dissertation on an agreed research topic under the supervision of relevant member(s) of staff. The topic of the dissertation must be an original contribution to knowledge. Students in the graduate programme also have the opportunity to spend the 4th semester of their study and research at one of several foreign institutions with which the Department has Erasmus agreements. The time at the foreign institution is an integral part of the research plan the students follow and is designed in consultation with their academic advisor the Department.

The graduate programme produces high quality student, who graduate with very high marks (on average 8.5, which corresponds to the highest band in the marking scheme). The EEC had the opportunity to meet students and consider several Masters dissertations produced by the students of the Department. The students were very satisfied with the staff and the quality of the education they received and the EEC members were impressed by the quality of the research work produced by the students in this programme.

The design and implementation of the curriculum is permeated by the same principles and spirit as that of the undergraduate programme and the comments in the previous section apply *in toto* to the present one.

A.3 Graduate Curriculum (Translation)

The Department also takes part in an interdepartmental graduate programme on the theory and practice of translation (Metafrasi kai Metafrasiologia). It should be noted that the Department is only one several constituents in this programme (currently, the departments of English, French and German are active participants in the programme. The department of Italian was a partner until 2010).

The aims of this programme are:

- Scientific training of high quality translators, capable to face the challenges of an increasingly competitive global market.
- To generate new knowledge in the theory of translation and translation methods.

The programme has active partnerships with Universities in Germany and direct connections with external users such as publishing houses both in Greece and Germany. Beyond the assessed components, the programme has a significant output in terms of published translation work. The output of the programme consists of over 40 translations as well as edited volumes on the theory of translation.

The department has highly qualified staff who deliver this particular part of the graduate curriculum and keeps its provision under constant review.

As this is an interdepartmental programme the Department has control and oversight of only a part of the overall curriculum. However, the Department participates actively in the management of the programme in conjunction with the other departments.

A.4 Doctoral Curriculum

In the Doctoral programme students pursue independent research under the supervision of a committee constituted of 3 relevant members of staff. The duration of the programme is between 3 and 6 years.

Students attend the departmental Colloquium and at regular intervals present their research to the rest of the Department at the Colloquium.

The Department has been very successful in attracting new PhD students, more than doubling the number of students between 2005 (13 students) and 2013 (29 students).

The Department made available a number of Doctoral dissertations and the EEC also met with current doctoral students. The EEC noted that a number of Doctoral dissertations have already been published as monographs.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

The department approaches its teaching in a holistic way. The policy aim is to deliver both knowledge and skills at high level using always the most appropriate method for each purpose. Staff is always keen to explore new teaching methods including the use of new digital technologies but they are severely limited by the existing resources which, as the department itself recognises, are inadequate. The staff/student ratio is very high by normal standards. The ratio is 1 member of staff for 62 registered students.

However, in practice, due to the phenomenon of “absentee” students this ratio may come down to a more manageable level. (According to our calculations this level would be 1/37 assuming that the absentee students are **truly** absent, which is an important assumption)

Staff make themselves available and work closely with students of all levels. This was something that the students commented particularly favourably on during our meeting with them. The resources made available to the teaching staff are, unfortunately, seriously limited. Staff are keen to use new technologies but the current level of infrastructure provision is inadequate.

Staff approach the issue of teaching methods with creativity. A particularly creative format of teaching is found in the translation courses where following standard workshops where students translate selected texts, the results are presented at venues outside the University, open to the general public. Short films are also produced connected to the content and process of the translation, which are then shown to the public, reflecting a commendable spirit of engagement with the wider community.

Regarding the examination system, a variety of modes of assessment are used, including open and closed exams, oral presentations and examinations. The final element of assessment is a compulsory dissertation on a topic agreed with relevant members of staff. All assessment for courses delivered by the department, including the dissertation, takes place in German. The students commented that the examination system was clear and transparent and they were always informed both of timing and criteria for assessment.

IMPLEMENTATION

The teaching procedures were generally adequate to the purpose they served. Teaching materials prepared by staff were all detailed and appropriate. As mentioned earlier, teaching resources are not adequate in terms of infrastructure. Again, to the extent that it depends on individual members of staff, teaching materials and resources are updated appropriately. It should be noted, however, that budgetary restrictions make it difficult to acquire certain resources for the library, especially concerning some, quite expensive, language textbooks.

Staff also always try to link research with teaching in innovative ways. On the one hand staff introduce elements of their own research in their teaching (at the appropriate level) but also, through projects such as the National Language Certificate, MultiLingLaw, and New School, they are able to feed into their research work experiences stemming directly from their teaching.

Another aspect of teaching and research integration is the departmental Colloquium, which is open to all students of the department and where advanced postgraduate students as well as visitors and faculty members present their research.

Student and staff mobility is mostly very healthy. Staff make substantial use of the resources provided under the aegis of the Erasmus programme. Over 50 students from the Department take part in exchanges with Universities in the German speaking world and beyond. Also 3-4 members of staff take part in exchanges with various institutions. The weak point in the area of mobility is that the number of incoming students has decreased significantly in recent years. Although this may be the consequence of the current economic situation the Department is actively investigating the deeper causes of this decrease in order to take measures to improve it.

The Department has a well developed system of evaluation of courses by the students using both paper based and electronic questionnaires. Unfortunately the response rate has been low and the results, though positive, may not be statistically representative. However, the EEC would like to stress that the results from the questionnaires were consistent with the comments we received by the students in our meetings.

RESULTS

The efficacy of the teaching is most directly reflected on the results achieved by the students. The proportion of students who graduate within 6 years of registration (74%) achieves an average of 7.5 which falls within the expected range and certainly consistent with the EEC members' experience of other institutions (In Germany, Cyprus and the UK). Available comparative statistical data show that the Department fares better than similar units within the School of Philosophy. There is a significant percentage of students who, although formally registered, do not appear to participate in teaching and learning activities and in examinations. This is not a problem specific to this Department and any potential solution should be at the most general level. It should be highlighted, however, that staff at the Department put special effort in developing strategies to re-engage with this set of students. We feel that the Department should be specifically commended on this point.

IMPROVEMENT

The Department keeps the teaching programme and methods under constant review and is responsive to any issues appearing. More specifically, the Department recognises the following issues:

- That the level of language competence of new undergraduate students is not always consistent with expectations. The level ranges from native or native-like competence to fairly inadequate (level B1 and sometimes lower). The Department carries out a placement test at the beginning of a student's degree. However, the tool employed for this purpose (C-test) does not necessarily provide a complete picture of the students' overall ability as it focuses only on vocabulary and grammar.
- That the current economic climate forces many students to take up independent employment, which impedes regular and active participation in classroom activities, although some of this employment can be of ultimate benefit to the student (language teaching etc.)
- That the number of placements and training (Praktika) available to the students

of the Department is very limited (currently 20), partly due to the current economic situation.

- That the infrastructure is in need of updating and improvement

Not all of the above issues can be addressed directly by the Department. The Department has adapted the course material and teaching modes (e.g. more small group teaching) of the first semester in order to bring the students up to the required standard of language competence. The Department is taking steps in order to create contacts with different sets of professionals that are active in areas where competence in German is required. Along these lines the MultiLingLaw project is addressed and marketed to members of the legal profession. Other initiatives are in the planning stage.

C. Research

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

APPROACH

The department organises its research along roughly the same lines as its teaching, namely, Linguistics, Literature, and Translation. The main policy goals are:

- To facilitate and enable the generation of world-class research
- To promote the visibility of the research carried out in the department
- To participate more actively in international research initiatives and networks
- To attract grant funding from EU and other institutions.

Quite appropriately, the department does not have internal standards for assessing research. It is consistent with the aim of the department to take a more central role in the “scientific dialogue” and participate more fully in international research initiatives and networks, that the standards used for assessing research should be (and are) those international ones accepted by the scientific community as a whole. Internal standards are inward looking and this department aims to be outward facing.

The department operates under extremely difficult financial constraints and this is a major limiting factor in the ways that it can support research. Staff are mutually very supportive and collaborations flourish, but the research infrastructure provided by the University is thoroughly inadequate. In this context, the department has come up with a number of ways to promote and support research. It has actively sought to establish and nurture a number of collaborations both with institutions inside Greece, notably there are close ties with the other German Department in Greece (in Thessaloniki), as well as institutions abroad. A number of very successful international conferences have been organised by the department, which have resulted in the speedy publication of several very well received volumes of proceedings, edited by members of the department and published by international publishers. The Department is also preparing a new electronic publication (*Lexis. Athener Zeitschrift für Germanistik*) which will serve as a forum for showcasing the department’s research alongside other peer reviewed papers and will increase the visibility of the Department on the international stage.

The department has rationalised its timetable so that every member of staff gets at least one day a week free from teaching and administrative duties in order to focus on their research. There is also a policy of research leave (one semester every three years) to enable staff to complete larger scale projects.

Staff are also encouraged to apply for research grants and participate in international research projects and networks.

Regarding publications, the Department actively encourages staff to publish in international journals and with international publishers. The strategy has borne fruit and has been very successful (see details in the next section).

RESULTS

The department's overall research objectives have been largely achieved to the extent that they depended on the efforts of the members of the department as evidenced by the list of publications mentioned earlier. Beyond publications, there is a number of research projects running in the department such as the National Language Certificate, The MultiLingLaw programme and The New School project.

Furthermore, members of staff are involved in international collaborative projects with a significant number of foreign Universities including, but not limited to, Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, The University of Vienna, The University of Milan, University College London, New York University, etc. The research carried out covers both purely theoretical and applied areas in both linguistics and literature (with amongs others comparative studies on varied authors such as C. P. Cavafy, J. M. Coetzee, F. Kafka, F. Schiller etc. as well as larger scale studies on topics such as *German expressionism* etc.). In the applied areas the impact of the research to society is most evident. Evidence for this can be found in the numerous projects mentioned above where a clear connection exists with educational practice and policy and translation. It is worth pointing out that many of the aspects of the department's research fall squarely within the range of the just launched Horizon 2020 funding programme of the European Commission, especially the strategic research agenda for Multilingual Europe. This means, and the EEC is confident about this, that the Department is very well placed to compete with other units in Europe for funds from that initiative.

In terms of scientific publications the Department has an extremely impressive record. Specifically in the period between 2005 and 2013 there have been 35 monographs, 44 chapters in edited volumes, 48 articles in peer-reviewed journals, and 178 articles in refereed conference proceedings. A high number of these publications are internationally known and recognised. Staff generally publish with major international publishers and in prestigious international journals. The members of the department have also edited several volumes with international publishers.

The standard of the publications is high and certainly comparable to internationally accepted standards and especially standards applicable to other German departments inside Germany.

In the area of research one should include the performance of research students. The Department's students produce high quality dissertations and the Department has a very healthy (and very satisfied) Doctoral community.

IMPROVEMENT

The main area of improvement that the department has identified is the success rate in securing research funding. There is intense internal discussion on this point and the department is seeking advice on how to improve this success rate. Clearly, support from the University administration will be crucial in the success of the Department's efforts. The EEC would like to stress that securing research funding is an issue that every Department we know of struggles with.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH

As in all academic institutions, the Department is both an end user of services provided centrally both from the University and the Ministry of Education and a service provider to its students. From the former point of view the Department is faced with significant bureaucratic hurdles in the course of the realisation of its mission. For example, severe delays in processing applications for permanency by members of staff lead to uncertainties and may disrupt the functioning of the unit. Moreover, a number of services that central administration ought to provide in a modern institution seem, unfortunately, below par. The degree of research support from the centre could be improved by having a more constructive relationship with the Department making sure that the Department receives the service that it needs in a more individually tailored way, including support in terms of assistance in grant proposal preparation. IT infrastructure and support, including the development of digital learning platforms, is also something that can be more effectively provided or at least more actively supported by central or faculty level resources. The Department is also responsible for maintaining the student register and organise graduations and a number of other aspects of University life that, again, could be provided more effectively by the centre through digital means.

From the point of view of the services and administrative procedures in the purview of the department there is little scope for further simplification without support from central administrative services. A large part of the procedures have been digitised and are processed electronically but there is still a long way to go to a “paperless office”. Again, this is not something we would expect the Department to undertake on its own. However, the Committee notes that the Department has a very extensive and highly detailed plan for the transition to a digital management of its records and daily administration. When this plan is completed the Department's administrative processes will be much more streamlined and efficient.

The Department takes very seriously the issue of student presence on Campus and is taking steps to increase it by, for example, broadening the range of activities for which active participation and attendance is required.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Department has a secretarial staff of three (one of whom is in “diathesimotita”) and serves the entire student community. Administrative staff is friendly and highly dedicated despite operating within an uncertain employment environment. The department also has a library with a full time librarian and a multimedia centre which is used for teaching. The library offers an invaluable service to the students and staff but due to staff shortages it can only remain open for 6 hours every day. This is due to the employment status of the librarian whose contract specifies that his working hours are limited of 6 hours per day (though in exceptional circumstances the librarian opens it at other times when students need to consult items urgently). The library catalogue is digitised and accessible and searchable from outside the University.

The library also contains a number of networked PCs that are accessible to students.

RESULTS

Within the constraints and strictures of the overall context the department's services and procedures are well designed and implemented in order to serve the student community as best as can be expected.

IMPROVEMENTS

The Department has identified a range of areas where it is possible to improve the services provided, most notably in what concerns greater and more effective use of electronic means to carry out the department's administrative duties, improve opening hours of the library in order to allow students who work. Yet again, much of the support for this in terms of design and delivery must come from the center.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

The Department has in the past initiated collaborations with diverse cultural and social organisations such as

- The Goethe Institute
- The Society for German Language (Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache, Wiesbaden)
- The National Theater (Translation of plays)
- The University's Theatre group (Translations of plays)
- The National Opera (Lectures on the occasion of the production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*)
- The National Concert Hall (Translations of opera libretti, contributions to collective volumes published by *Megaron*.)

Especially in the field of translation there are further extensive collaborations with publishing houses both in Greece and Germany (see also section A.3)

The Department's initiatives are imaginative yet targeted in order to maximise both the Department's impact and visibility but also to provide services to some of its most natural users.

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

The overarching factor inhibiting the Department to fulfil its mission successfully and to grow and develop is the uncertainty in the prevailing legal and institutional framework. This so severely hampers the Department's ability to plan for the long term that it makes the exercise almost futile. We will now list some more specific factors that have been identified during our visit and through studying the internal documentation.

The Department should be one of the leading forces shaping the teaching of the German language in Greece. Thus, it is expected that the government would consult and rely on the department alongside, of course, the corresponding department in Thessaloniki) for matters relating to German language teaching. It is a matter of some surprise to the EEC that the Government has decided to turn to the Goethe Institute alone for such questions rather than attempt to foster greater cooperation between the Goethe Institute and the Department.

In private language institutes in Greece, language classes (for example German) can be taught also by people with proficiency who haven't studied the language in all its multi-faceted sub-disciplines (culture, literature, didactics, literature etc.) and who don't have a university degree. Given that one of the main areas of employment of the Department's graduates is in the teaching profession, the fact that for a significant proportion of the educational market a Higher Education degree is actually not required leads to a potential devaluation of the degree and has the potential knock-on effect that student demand for the programmes may decrease. A clear recognition of the anomaly of this situation is provided by a key European directive (European Profile for Language Teacher Education—A Frame of Reference), and which has been incorporated in documents like the European Portfolio for Foreign Language Teachers.

The Department used to benefit from the presence of secondary education teachers, seconded by the ministry of education. The presence of such teachers in a supporting role was highly valued and needed by the department in the organisation of the teaching *practicum* as they contributed their extensive experience in teaching at the secondary level.

From a financial point of view, the reduction by 54% of spending for foreign language programmes is a difficult situation to cope with and would be so for any department.

From an Institutional point of view the lack of appropriate infrastructure and personnel (issues that we touched upon earlier in this report) are clearly inhibiting the Department in creating a sustainable growth strategy.

Despite the above issues the department has set clear short and medium term goals while longer term objectives must, quite appropriately, wait for the clarification of the general context and institutional/legal framework.

The Department's long-term goal is to remain an independent unit within the School of Philosophy and continue to improve its profile in all areas. To achieve this the Department has a well defined set of short and medium-term goals and relevant

strategies.

In connection with its undergraduate programme, in the short and medium term, the Department aims to:

- Achieve the necessary legal recognition of the teaching qualification of its graduates.
- To connect further with the world of work and provide skills that will increase the employability of its graduates.
- Improve the infrastructural support for teaching and learning activities
- Review the curriculum in order to tailor the provision to the desired individual scientific profile of each student.
- Provide relevant motivation for the timely completion of the degree programme both overall and within each semester.
- Further develop the use of new technologies

In the postgraduate programme the Department's short and medium term goals are:

- To improve the international character of the research experience of postgraduate students by organising and hosting more international conferences and workshops and by taking further advantage of mobility opportunities provided by European level programmes (Erasmus, etc.)
- Improve the visibility of the postgraduate programmes by creating an electronic platform where post-graduate dissertations can be uploaded.
- To make students aware of ethical standards in the conduct of research.

In research, the Departments future goals are:

- To improve its network of collaborating institutions both with German institutions and others in the relevant area (e.g. the "Southern Europe" meetings supported by the DAAD and the University of Leipzig),
- To maintain the high volume and quality of the publication output, by supporting staff in their research activities.
- To improve the external visibility of the Department (overhauling the website, starting an electronic journal, see above, section C)
- To further attract research funding from national and European institutions

The EEC's view is that the Department has reflected appropriately on the goals it has set itself and has a clear understanding of the extent to which these goals are achievable through actions originating in the Department alone. In this respect, the Department has articulated a clear and realistic set of strategies.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC.

Overall Conclusion

Following extensive discussion and close scrutiny of the documentation provided, the EEC's view is entirely consistent with our initial impression of the Department as set out in the introduction of this report. The Department is an open minded community of scholars where collaboration and mutual respect and help are highly valued and widespread. The Department offers high quality educational experience to its students, produces high quantity and quality of research and scholarship.

The EEC was pleased to see that the Department pursues a policy of parallel development of theoretical and applied areas and would like to encourage the Department to continue along this path and continue the integration of research in these areas with teaching.

The following are thoughts and suggestions that the EEC would like to put to the Department with regard to its different areas of activities.

Taught Undergraduate Programmes

All the taught programmes that the EEC reviewed are well structured in terms of progression through the different levels and meet both quality criteria and respond to current societal needs. The EEC feels that students graduating from the Department have a well rounded education which opens many fields of both potential employment and further study.

Currently, to enter the teaching profession, students still need to acquire further qualification/accreditation provided by HEIs outside the Department. The Committee notes that the Department is seeking the relevant accreditation so that its graduates receive an exemption from this process as the Department has recently integrated relevant courses on Teaching German as a Foreign Language and more generally language pedagogy. The EEC is convinced that the Department has the capability to provide the relevant components and encourages the Department to develop this aspect of the curriculum in order to obtain the relevant accreditation.

As we have mentioned in the course of the report, the success of students of foreign languages and literatures crucially hinges on an excellent language proficiency and it is important for the Department to ensure that students are properly assessed at the point of entry and provided with adequate support following the initial assessment. The Department might benefit from considering different or additional placement tests which may provide a more detailed picture of a student's ability (oral/written etc.)

A possible way to provide further input and support to the development of students' ability would be, should resources allow, to create a space where students can, in appropriate surroundings, read German magazines and newspapers, watch German TV and films. This would also foster community-building amongst the student body and may perhaps even help increase student presence on Campus.

The Department's use of ECTS facilitates student mobility. The Department might find it useful to consider aligning the nomenclature of its undergraduate degree (Bachelor vs. Diploma) with partners in other countries.

Graduate and Postgraduate Programmes

The graduate programme provides additional in-depth knowledge in the relevant fields making them attractive for prospective employers. The example of translators with a specialisation in literary translation is a case in point as there is a strong demand for such translators outside the academic world. Students are also well prepared to undertake PhD level research.

Students in the doctoral programme (recruited from inside and outside the university) find a stimulating and open-minded environment to pursue their scientific research. Particularly relevant here are the numerous conferences and workshops that the Department organises as well as the active collaborations with other Greek and Foreign Universities allows doctoral students to come into contact with a variety of international researchers.

Concerning the research environment, there is a lack in the provision of materials such as digital resources, access to electronic journals etc. should eventually be improved, hopefully alongside the library availability (opening hours). The committee is aware that resource limitations are a serious factor in this connection.

The Department might also consider ways to encourage its doctoral students to build their publication profile during their PhD, one way to do so may be to require them at some relatively early point in their studies (say, at the end of the first year or the first 18 months) to produce, instead of a satisfactory proposal, an article that they may publish either in a journal or in a Departmental publication. To facilitate this, the Department may consider creating, alongside its planned electronic journal an online series of working papers.

Research

The EEC was very impressed with the quality and quantity of research produced in the Department. As the Department itself recognises, the area of attracting grant funding is an issue of concern. Given that there is little funding available within Greece, it seems appropriate that the department turns its focus to European sources. The members of the Department that the EEC discussed this with are also aware of this. The EEC would like to encourage the Department to submit more applications to the relevant bodies (Horizon 2020, ERC). It is of course well understood that funding from these agencies is highly competitive. We would like to recommend a twofold approach. First, it is imperative in our view that the University provides appropriate research support in terms of help with finding and selecting the relevant calls and tenders, providing support with preparation of proposals, especially the budgetary aspects, and coordinating the process across the institution. Second, from inside the Department, we would like to encourage staff to create a research support network in the Department (a kind of *Research Committee*) which would be tasked to coordinate some research activities in the Department and most notably assist with grant proposal writing, reviewing applications and making suggestions for improvement. It may be beneficial to seek advice from colleagues (from inside or outside the institution) with greater experience in this. Funding bodies are often happy to make presentations in departments or run workshops concerning their activities. The Department should seek such opportunities and encourage members to participate.

The Department has shown great flexibility and a very positive attitude to change, as we noted in the main report they cast a critical eye on their activities and try to be proactive and anticipate challenges (e.g. the situation with the pedagogical certificate mentioned). Connected to that and as a driving force is the department's review and

quality assurance mechanisms. The Curriculum Review Committee keeps a watchful eye on the structure and delivery of the Curriculum. Student feedback is taken seriously and is actively sought. We noted, however, that participation in feedback exercises was low on the part of the students. We would like to encourage the Department to explore further ways to increase student participation in feedback. There are various techniques to achieve this result, such as linking the release of marks to the completion of the evaluation questionnaire, shortening the evaluation questionnaire to something that can be filled in in a short period of time (yet remain informative) and administer the questionnaires in class time when the teacher can actually collect them.

One important aspect that we would like to encourage the department to explore is to inform the students of the changes to courses that have been made as a result of the feedback they provided. It is important that the students understand that their feedback is taken seriously and can have an effect on the structure of the course.

Finally, the Committee recognises that the Department is operating in an extremely difficult and challenging economic and social environment and there is little that it can do to alter that. The Department has seen a reduction in the number of members of staff in the last few years and a severe cut in its budget. At the same time the Department offers a high quality service to the Institution, the student body, the society as a whole and the scientific community. The Committee hopes that the Department will receive the support it needs from the institution to enable it fulfil its mission in the way that we saw it can.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Hans Bickes _____
2. Konstantinos Dimadis _____
3. George Tsoulas _____
4. Antroulla Papakyriakou _____