



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

Α.ΔΙ.Π.

H.Q.A.

ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ & ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT of Social and Educational Policy

UNIVERSITY of Peloponnese

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, CULTURE & SPORTS
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The External Evaluation Committee

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- Brief account of documents examined, of the Site Visit, meetings and facilities visited.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

- Comments on the quality and completeness of the documentation provided and on the overall acceptance of and participation in the Quality Assurance procedures by the Department .

A. Curriculum

APPROACH

- Goals and objectives of the Curriculum, structure and content, intended learning outcomes.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Rationality, functionality, effectiveness of the Curriculum.

RESULTS

- Maximizing success and dealing with potential inhibiting factors.

IMPROVEMENT

- Planned improvements.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

- Pedagogic policy and methodology, means and resources.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Quality and evaluation of teaching procedures, teaching materials and resources, mobility.

RESULTS

- Efficacy of teaching, understanding of positive or negative results.

IMPROVEMENT

- Proposed methods for improvement.

C. Research

APPROACH

- Research policy and main objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Research promotion and assessment, quality of support and infrastructure.

RESULTS

- Research projects and collaborations, scientific publications and applied results.

IMPROVEMENT

- Proposed initiatives aiming at improvement.

D. All Other Services

APPROACH

- Quality and effectiveness of services provided by the Department.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).

RESULTS

- Adequateness and functionality of administrative and other services.

IMPROVEMENTS

- Proposed initiatives aiming at improvement.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

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

- Short-, medium- and long-term goals and plans of action proposed by the Department.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- The development and present situation of the Department, good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process, recommendations for improvement.

External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Social and Educational Policy of the University of Peloponnese consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. **Panayiotis Angelides**, Professor, University of Nicosia, Cyprus
2. **Nikos Fokas**, Professor, Eotvos Lorand University, Hungary
3. **Panayota Gounari**, Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts
Boston, USA
4. **Anastassia Tsoukala**, Associate Professor, University of Paris XI, France

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

The External Evaluation Committee (henceforth: Committee; also abbreviated “EEC”) visited the Department of Social and Educational Policy (henceforth: Department; also abbreviated as “SEPD”) on the Corinth campus of the University of Peloponnese from 13 to 15 January 2014. To prepare for the visit, the Committee members had individually read and studied the Internal Evaluation Report which the Department had earlier submitted to HQA. The Committee also received the undergraduate and graduate student handbook, and other supporting material. During the on-site visit, the Department Chair and the Department Internal Evaluation Committee provided other materials (e.g., printouts of powerpoint presentations, Department self evaluation and student evaluation documents). At the Committee’s request, the Department granted access to hard copies of course outlines and student written work (*i.e.*, examinations, student papers, theses, and dissertation proposals). The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) conducted an exhaustive review of the material and the four committee members had the opportunity to discuss their analysis and comments prior to and during the site visit for the purpose of framing questions for interviews.

On January 13th, the Committee members were welcomed by the Department Head (Professor Lina Ventura) and met the Rector (Professor Constantinos Masselos), and Vice Rector (Professor Constantina Botsiou) for an overview of the University. The Committee met then with SEPD faculty. During these initial meetings the Committee was given important information about the University, in general, and the Department in particular.

The EEC also met with the internal evaluation committee spearheaded by Despoina Tsakiri that presented the internal report process, sources of data collection, faculty and student questionnaires and other assessment tools.

On January 14th the Committee spent nine hours (9:00 AM – 6:00 PM) attending presentations from the following faculty members:

- Lina Ventura (Head of SEPD)
- Athanasios Katsis (Undergraduate program)
- Maria Geitona (Field experience)
- Despoina Karakatsani & Yiouli Papadiamantaki (Erasmus and International Relations)
- Giorgos Bagakis (Teaching)
- Kyriakos Souliotis (Research)
- Andreas Feronas (Employment opportunities; student affairs; connections with the local society)
- Athanasios Jimoyiannis (Postgraduate program)
- Anna Tsatsaroni (Doctoral studies)

On that same day the EEC also met with undergraduate students from the Department (15); postgraduate (17) and doctoral (7) students.

Moreover the EEC attended two undergraduate courses (around half hour for each).

On January 15th the Department Head led the Committee on a guided tour of the Department's Library, Department classrooms and amphitheaters, computer labs, and faculty offices.

During this tour the EEC had the opportunity to meet with the administrative staff, EEP and ETEP personnel.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The Department of Social and Educational Policy produced a detailed report addressing the requirements of HQA. Detailed narratives and statistical data were included. The Committee was also provided with a complementary report that reflects more up-to-date information. Overall the reports were good and the interviews with faculty helped illuminate these parts that needed clarification or further information.

A. Curriculum

The Committee reviewed the Department's curriculum based on the following data: information in the Internal Evaluation Report, hardcopy versions of the Student Handbook, course outlines, and faculty and student interviews.

Undergraduate

APPROACH

The program of study at the Department of Social and Educational Policy combines the field of Social Policy with that of Educational Policy. It is an interdisciplinary curriculum that aims at equipping students with knowledge in the said fields; it also aims at producing students who can fathom in the two fields as well as to see their interconnections; to transfer their disciplinary knowledge in everyday practices in the different organizations and institutions of social life; to specialize in particular areas in the field of social and educational research; to shape researchers who possess a breadth of theoretical and research competencies and skills that will enable them to integrate and shape the conditions of their professional trajectory; promote science and research taking into consideration the current social and political developments that deal with the protection of citizen's rights, prevention security and social growth and education as leverage of social growth and social justice; connection with social and educational policies, their monitoring and evaluation.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Curriculum is currently under revision as the Department is working towards reducing the number of courses required to obtain a degree. There are two concentrations, Educational Policy and Social Policy but students are awarded a single degree in Social and Educational Policy. The program of study articulates in two "cycles" each lasting four semesters (4 years total, 240 ECTS). During the first cycle, students in both concentrations are required to take the same core courses. In the second cycle, in the fifth semester students need to choose a concentration and take courses in the concentration of their choice and choose from a wide range from elective courses available in both concentrations. Therefore, in order to graduate

students need:

a. required general core courses (25 courses or 108 ECTS) b. concentration courses (18 courses in each concentration, 81 ECTS) c. Free electives (6 courses, 27 ECTS). In addition, students need to take one required courses in English (5 ECTS each) unless they can document language proficiency based on the Department's language requirements. Finally students are expected to conduct either a research project or a Practicum (5,5 ECTS). Students at the end have the option to either write a thesis (13,5 ECTS) or take three additional elective courses.

Core required courses for both concentrations include introductory courses in Sociology, Law, Economic and Political Science and State and Public Policy, as well as courses on the institutional and historical framework (i.e. modern history of Greece) and introductory courses in both social and educational policy. Each concentration then offers specialized courses in the two respective fields.

RESULTS

The Department offers an interdisciplinary, rich in content and directions program of study. Undergraduate students are exposed to a wealth of general knowledge in the discipline and in their chosen field of study. Students can “sample” a wide array of courses.

The Department appears to be aware of the changing social and educational landscape in Greece and attempts to connect the current realities to their curriculum and course content.

IMPROVEMENT

SECD daringly combines two disciplinary fields that are customarily offered as separate degrees in institutions worldwide. This is undoubtedly an innovative and challenging approach. It is innovative because it combines aspects of fields that traditionally have been taught separately. At the same time it is challenging because in a short period of time it aspires to expose students to rich interdisciplinary knowledge. More work needs to go into making the connections between social and

educational policy to create an integrated field of study through course content, courses etc. Multidisciplinary is commendable but lack of depth poses problems in the organization of the curriculum that is further reflected in the job prospects of applicants.

The Department needs to reflect on their mission and goals and how these connect with disciplinary knowledge in the field historically as well as the needs of contemporary societies.

There is no clear alignment of curricular goals to job prospects. Both faculty and students seemed to have difficulties to articulate specific job opportunities for graduates.

The field experience is poorly conceived and executed. As a pedagogical exercise whether in an NGO, public sector office or private sectors it should be designed to enrich students' experience and forge the connection between theory and practice. Currently this connection is weak. The criteria for selection of field experience sites are unclear, and the protocol for supervision needs to be redesigned in pedagogical terms.

The research dimension at the undergraduate level needs to be rethought in light of the very low entrance grade (13 or 14 average). The EEC is concerned about the challenging task to apprentice high school students into a research culture in four years. This culture is arguably reflected in the high number of undergraduate students opting to write a thesis at the end of their studies.

The EEC noted an inconsistency in assigning ECTS in undergraduate courses. Some courses have 4 ECTS, others 4.5, courses in the old schedule had 3.5 ECTS. Faculty needs to work on aligning required workload in each course with a specific number of ECTS. Committee also recommends getting away with half ECTS.

Postgraduate Programs

APPROACH

The SEPD currently offers four Postgraduate Programs of Study (leading to a

Masters). Ph.D. candidates are enrolled and supervised by the academic staff of the Department.

1. Educational Programs and Materials: Formal, Informal and Distance Learning (Conventional and e-learning forms).
2. Institutions and Health Policies.
3. Social Discrimination, Migration and Citizenship.
4. European Social Policy.

The objectives of the academic programs offered by the SEPD are articulated in the Law 1268 of 1982 and reproduced in the Internal Evaluation Report.

All Programs, as well as research carried by Ph.D. candidates, are consistent with the objectives of the Department and meet the whole range of its mission as defined by the law.

The four Postgraduate Programs of the SEPD were established in 2007. All four programs accept graduate students from other academic fields. The programs are selective admitting in general about half of the applicants. Student selection is based on a written examination followed by an interview and an overall evaluation of the prospective student's qualifications. Students are required to attend all courses. The master thesis is a research project carried out under the supervision of one of the faculty members.

The MA programs operate on a tuition model (2000 Euros for the duration of the studies). The EEC notes that the growing number of applications demonstrates the strong demand for the programs offered by the SEPD. A good portion of the postgraduate students interviewed by the Committee declared that they came specifically to the department in order to join the offered programs.

1. The Master program in Educational Programs and Materials: Formal, Informal and Distance Learning (Conventional and e-learning forms) has 90 ECTS structure, including a compulsory 30 ECTS diploma thesis, comprising uniformly 5 ECTS courses. The program combines a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches with their application in the different educational policies providing the

students with knowledge and practical tools needed for their professional career. The program focuses both on the theories and the difficulties of pedagogical practices.

2. The Master program in Institutions and Health Policies is offering a comprehensive analysis of the multi-level system of healthcare protection and is focusing on the topics of planning and institutional constitution, as well as the utilization of technology and communication. Since this program concerns health care professionals as well as graduates from different areas it also intends to combine theory with practice. The program has 90 ECTS structure providing very different ECTS number courses.

3. The Master program Social Discrimination, Migration and Citizenship aims at deepening the understanding of the historical and contemporary factors that produce and reproduce inequalities, discriminations and social exclusion at different levels. This program has a clear interdisciplinary character connecting migration in the modern and contemporary era to cultural and social discrimination and inequalities. Particular emphasis is placed on citizenship, interrogating the transformation of state and nation-building or transnational phenomena. This program has a very open structure and is in fact a system of collective lectures and courses taught by a variety of faculty members as well as of invited speakers. This gives the program a strong interdisciplinary character.

4. The Master program in European Social Policy is the only postgraduate program in Greece dedicated specifically to this field. The program focuses on applied European, Global and Comparative Social Policy, more specifically on the impact of the growing pressures of globalization on the national social protection systems. Its goal is the understanding of the implications of the role of supranational institutions and adjustments (EU, Council of Europe, OECD, ILO, etc.) towards the Europeanization of social policies under the conditions of modern globalized life. The program has a strong interdisciplinary character, addressing the academic knowledge, research perspectives and career opportunities.

The programs offered by SEPD organize public lectures, workshops, field trips as well as student workshops with international invited speakers.

IMPLEMENTATION

The programs overlapped thematically only in the field of methodology, otherwise they are complementary, embracing thus the whole spectrum of research of the disciplinary area. This complexity gives students the opportunity to choose among a wide selection of fields of study and research, since they graduate having written a compulsory diploma thesis.

The programs are attended by a relatively large number of students and have also a relatively large number of yearly admissions. After graduation, most students pursue a career in the secondary education system.

The curriculum implementations for the Master's programs are described in detail in the internal evaluation report. All Master's programs focus on innovative research and educational practices and accredit research and professional skills. The Committee met graduate students who expressed their appreciation for the quality of teaching, the competent supervision and the practical value of the acquired knowledge.

RESULTS

1. The Master program in Educational Programs and Materials: Formal, Informal and Distance Learning (Conventional and e-learning forms) has a very good output regarding both teaching and research.
2. The Master program in Institutions and Health Policies has a strong practical orientation. Its graduates are effectively prepared for careers in the dynamically emerging market of health services. The research output is very impressive and meets international standards.
3. The Master program in Social Discrimination, Migration and Citizenship has an

impressive research output in the field, which is reflected in the educational aims of the program.

4. The Master program in European Social Policy has an open structure that is likely to promote international collaborations.

Doctoral studies

The doctoral program of the Department follows the line of the traditional continental European doctorate that consists of individual research conducted by the candidate in close collaboration and exchange with her supervisor. However, the Department intends to provide, by having established two research seminars, a space of open exchange between the candidates and scholars from other institutions in Greece and abroad. The EEC encourages the department to follow this direction.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

Teaching Methods and Teacher/Student Collaboration

The EEC has based its evaluation on the following sources:

Interviews with faculty and students, incidental observation of two courses, student evaluations and the course descriptions.

The overall impression was that the faculty promoted a friendly atmosphere in the classroom. The students appeared willing to participate locally in discussion and to contribute to the lesson. In the discussion with the EEC, students spoke positively of the relationships they have with the faculty, as well as their accessibility both face-to-face and through email. The EEC would like to acknowledge the motivation and commitment the faculty exhibit in their relationship to students in the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level.

However, it was evident that most courses are lecture-driven and a number of them seem not to regularly and systematically include a wide range of constructivist teaching approaches including collaborative learning, problem based activities, group

work, experiential practice (e.g., hands-on activities, field trips), and approaches that cultivate higher order and critical thinking skills as well as metacognitive reflection. Further, students confirmed the impression of the EEC that in the lectures teaching follows a frontal approach with limited opportunities of interaction between students and between students and the instructor. Both the faculty and students indicated that in many courses they are given the opportunity of interaction although this does not mean the systematic use of group projects, demonstrations, presentation of ideas, journaling and supplementary independent investigations/literature searches/reports. The high school education does not encourage this type of constructivist, student-centered approach which requires them to play an active role in the learning process. The EEC feels however that the students we met could manage the requirements of this approach.

Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)

Our committee would also like to note the broad use of the University system e-class. E-class allows faculty members not only to distribute course syllabi, materials, PowerPoint presentations and other printed and audiovisual materials online, thereby making course materials and resources accessible to students at anytime, anyplace but also to interact with each other opening group work facilities and electronic submission of assignments. In the future, the Department might consider adding new dimensions to e-class, such as discussion forums and teaching (e.g. courses on research methods for graduate or PhD students) and evaluation procedures.

Examination System

Most of the courses are exclusively evaluated by one final exam. The examination procedures do not systematically use a wide range of assessment strategies that go beyond the standard end of the term examination.

IMPLEMENTATION

Quality of Teaching and Adequacy of Course Materials

In the Department there are encouraging practices, especially in reporting and reflecting field practice activities. The EEC feels that the SEPD faculty should adopt constructivist oriented procedures when it comes to teaching. The quality of teaching

procedures is not quite suitable for a department with an educational orientation and is not grounded in recommended practices advocated in the research literature. Nevertheless, the adequacy of teaching materials is often challenging. In the current legislation, students are only allowed one free textbook for each course. This practice severely limits the SEPD faculty's literature recommendations. In some instances, two books are listed on the syllabus and students can choose one based on their interests.

Linking Research with Teaching

There is a strong emphasis in linking research and teaching – both among faculty and students. Faculty for example, typically engage in the study of their practice, or what we call scholarship of teaching, while students frequently use research techniques such as observation and interviewing during their courses. In Masters level studies the link between Research and Teaching becomes more efficient.

Mobility of Academic staff and Students

The SEPD participates in the Erasmus program having connections to a number of other European Universities. Despite that, mobility of academic staff is quite limited primarily due to financial constraints. Many members of the staff reported that they travel to congresses and conferences on private expenses.

At the student level, mobility levels are higher for outgoing students but not for incoming students (foreign students coming at the SEPD). Whenever Erasmus incoming students are enrolled in classes, these are conducted in English.

Teaching Evaluations

Informal responses by students during the open-ended discussion with the EEC were positive. Besides that, there is a formal evaluation process administered to students at the end of each course in an electronic format.

RESULTS

For the most part, students who register and get assessed in the SEPD courses are successful. Success rates vary but the number of courses where a large percentage of

students fail is rather small. There are, however, a couple of courses where failure levels approached 50%. Those are typically required courses with large numbers of students and using only one method of assessment. The mean grade average during graduation is 7.38/10.

Time to graduation also varies largely given the flexibility offered to students by the Greek legislation in the past. Nevertheless, most students graduate within a reasonable timeframe with the great majority of students graduating within the timeframe (time set+2) recommended by the new law.

IMPROVEMENT

The SEPD envisages improvement of teaching quality by adopting more student centred approaches. It would be good to integrate e-class procedures into both teaching and its evaluation.

C. Research

APPROACH

Research Objectives

From the late 2000s onwards, the SEPD is actively engaged in a range of research projects related to crime, education issues, immigration issues, and social inequality. Research activity follows to a twofold objective: to produce high quality research work likely to promote academic knowledge both at national and international levels; to achieve visibility of research work by presenting it in domestic and international conferences; and publishing relevant findings in Greek and international peer-reviewed journals.

At the international level, research is being conducted within the frame of EU-funded research programs (namely FP6, FP7, Comenius, and Tempus). At the national level, research is being regularly conducted in cooperation with other Departments of the University of the Peloponnese and on an ad hoc basis with other Universities (e.g. University of Athens, Thessaly, Crete) and research institutions (e.g. National Centre for Social Research [EKKE], National Hellenic Research Foundation).

Among the ongoing large-scale projects are worth mentioning:

- The Program ‘The Management of Immigration and International Organizations’ (2012-2015), funded by both EU and domestic bodies;
- The Program ‘Learning for Female African Migrants’ Solidarity: Help-Desks for Female African Migrants in the Eastern Mediterranean Region’ (2013-2015), funded by the European Union.

In addition to the abovementioned large-scale projects, the SEPD is engaged in many smaller projects funded by national and international bodies.

There are no explicit standards for assessing research. Standards are being set implicitly through the attention paid to participation in international conferences and publishing in high quality international peer-reviewed journals.

IMPLEMENTATION

As mentioned above, from the late 2000s onwards the SEPD has been actively involved in a wide array of research projects. The latter are being funded by many different international and national bodies, including the European Union, the British Academy, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Public Order, Labor Unions, and Education-related bodies.

The SEPD members are encouraged to create large-scale academic networks through their participation in international and national research projects involving Greek and foreign Universities, and through their participation in international conferences.

Research conducted by the SEPD members is being increasingly acknowledged within both Greek and international academia. This is evidenced in their growing involvement as coordinators or participants in EU- and Greek-funded research programs, as well as by the rising volume of publications in high quality international peer-reviewed journals. Further evidence of academic visibility is provided by the volume of references being made to the works of the SEPD members, as well as by the quantitatively impressive presence of the latter in the editorial boards of scientific outlets.

Research productivity is actively encouraged through the sabbaticals granted to full time members of the SEPD. Presently, three members of the SEPD are taking advantage of this opportunity to undertake research.

Research productivity is further promoted by encouraging Ph.D. students to participate in international conferences.

RESULTS

The SEPD members publish the findings of their research nationally and, to an increasing extent, internationally (books, book chapters, edited volumes, journals, and conference proceedings).

In the last 5 years, the SEPD members produced 53 books, 26 edited volumes, 155 articles in peer-reviewed journals, 124 book chapters, and 176 papers in peer-reviewed conference proceedings. They presented 164 papers in academic

conferences and produced 11 book reviews. They also sit on the editorial boards of 128 journals. This impressive academic activity cannot be fully assessed because the SEPD did not provide detailed information about the volume of its activity at the international level.

As mentioned above, the SEPD also has a very good record of EU- and Greek-funded research projects. This important research activity cannot be fully assessed in financial terms because the SEPD did not provide in detail relevant information.

In addition to its involvement to various research programs, and to its collaboration with an array of international and Greek universities, the SEPD participates in international and national academic networks (e.g. CiCe Erasmus Thematic Network, Higher Education Policy Network, CESSDA Network).

The quality of research undertaken in social policy issues clearly parallels that of research work conducted by other leading Greek and foreign Universities in related fields of study.

IMPROVEMENT

The SEPD acknowledged the need to further engage in research activities, especially in inviting Ph.D. holders to continue as postdoctoral researchers.

The SEPD also envisions a more collective research activity by upgrading the two Units of the Research Laboratory for the Study of Social and Education Policies. The EEC encourages this direction because it is believed that it will contribute to enhancing the coherence of the overall research activity, and to efficiently bridging the social and education facets of the SEPD's academic profile.

The EEC further suggests strengthening the links between research activity and the local society. This may be achieved by conducting research (both by Ph.D. students and SEPD members) on issues of interest in the eyes of the local community ranging

from immigration to local labour market.

While taking into account current financial adversity, the EEC encourages the SEPD to host international conferences on a regular basis. It is believed that this will enhance the SEPD's visibility both at the international and national levels, and will foster solid bonds within the international academia that may lead to further collaborations in research activity.

D. All Other Services

APPROACH

The Department's administrative services are efficient and serve the needs of the students. Sometimes, however, things are very bureaucratic and complicated.

Electronic processing of procedures is not used for student enrolment, while most of the administrative tasks could be performed electronically.

The SEPD does not have a policy for increasing student presence on Campus.

Actually, in some cases, if all students registered in certain courses attend the class, the room would be too small to accommodate them.

IMPLEMENTATION

Organization

The administrative staff is located in the same building with the faculty. It seems that administration operates in a functional way.

Infrastructure

- Library. The EEC visited the library of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences. The building is small and there are almost no study rooms in the library. The book and journal (hard copies) collection is very limited. This might be due to chronic lack of funding. The electronic data bases and e-journals are at a good level. The EEC had the impression that the library is not used that much by students.
- Study Halls. There are no study halls in the Department building.
- Digital Tools/Internet. Access to computers and other digital technologies is very satisfactory. However, besides the computer lab, which is used for

instructional purposes, students have access only to a small number of computers in the library. There is wireless internet connection in the building. The department has started to make use of the e-class platform, which allows students to access materials, Powerpoint presentations and to engage in online discussions. The e-class could be used more widely when the number of students does not allow personal tutor-student contact.

- Facilities. The EEC is concerned about the adequacy of the number of lecture halls. Lecture halls are organised for traditional teaching (in most halls chairs are nailed on the floor). Therefore there is no availability of problem-based learning classrooms or other “smart” classrooms that can facilitate group work and student interaction.
- Infrastructure. The building infrastructure is acceptable but for sure not at the level of modern university. The faculty offices are satisfactory and well equipped.

RESULTS

To date, administrative services have been adequate and functional. The responsibilities of administrative staff were clearly delineated and distributed among the secretarial staff. There was good morale and a willingness to work to get the job done.

IMPROVEMENTS

In order to meet with increasing budget cuts, the SEPD uses funding from research programs and fees from post-graduate programmes to meet acute administrative needs.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

A Department like SEPD is asked to play a multifaceted role within the University of Peloponnese, the community of Korinthos and the wider area of Peloponnese.

The SEPD developed a wide range of collaborations with a variety of organizations including among others: schools, summer schools, a variety of organisations for the students’ field experience, the centre of social policy of the Municipality of

Korinthos, the Korinthos hospital, the Navarino foundation. The nature of the collaboration varies but often involves assistance in program development, instructional material development, presentations from faculty, counselling services (without pay), and in some instances student volunteers. The Department serves an important role in community involvement and contributes to the society as a whole.

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

Departments of Greek Universities are not familiar with strategic planning. The current process of internal and external evaluation and the expectation of accreditation is an opportunity for SEPD to rethink its priorities and develop a vision and a strategy. The attitude of the faculty is more than positive in this respect.

SEPD is the only higher education institution in Greece to cover the field of social and educational policy. The EEC encourages the SEPD to maximize all comparative advantages, especially the experience and the existing networks in Greece and abroad.

Although the development of almost every university department in Greece becomes problematic due to the present financial crisis and the associated budget cuts (and it is also to be noted that minorities are more vulnerable in situations of crisis), funding for research and educational programs can be attracting from European sources.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

Recommendations

The EEC would like to express its gratitude to the SEDP faculty for their cooperation, honesty, professionalism and hospitality. The evaluation was conducted in a climate of outmost respect and collegiality.

The EEC recommends the following:

Curriculum/Teaching

- Academic advisors should be actively involved in guiding students in selecting their courses and dealing more effectively with the demands of each course. In addition, they should follow their advisees throughout their studies.
- Structure the program of study by semester in such a way that becomes evident which courses are prerequisite to others.
- The apparent inconsistency in assigning ECTS in undergraduate and postgraduate courses is problematic. For example, in the undergraduate program some courses have 3.5, 4 ECTS and others 4.5 ECTS. In the post graduate programs some courses have 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.5 and 8 ECTS. Faculty needs to work on aligning required workload in each course with a specific number of ECTS. The EEC also recommends getting away with half ECTS.
- As there are undergraduate courses that relate to educational administration, it might be helpful for students to have a course in educational leadership.
- The Ph.D. program of studies should be developed to include research seminars likely to improve the academic knowledge of doctoral candidates and to create a space of open exchange between the candidates and scholars from other institutions in Greece and abroad.
- The EEC believes it would be beneficial for the department to orient the doctoral candidates to themes more closely related to the Master programs.
- Development and use of more student-centred approaches to teaching.
- It would be beneficial for the faculties of SEDP to improve knowledge of the pedagogical uses of ICT.
- The use of e-learning platform for teaching certain courses (perhaps postgraduate or Ph.D. courses) will help the Department to overcome many factors that act as barriers to its further development.

Research

- The EEC strongly encourages the SEDP faculty to continue applying for funding, particularly as coordinators in large-scale projects.
- The Department can benefit from a more organized Alumni Association. The

SEDP should increase the connections with doctoral students. It should also intensify the existing network between the Ph.D. graduates and supervisors.

- The SEDP members are encouraged to create large-scale academic networks through their participation in international and national research projects involving Greek and foreign Universities, and through their participation in international conferences.
- The SEDP is encouraged to invite Ph.D. holders to continue as postdoctoral researchers.
- The EEC suggests upgrading the two Units of the Research Laboratory for the Study of Social and Education Policies.
- The EEC recommends strengthening the links between research activity and the local society.
- The EEC encourages the SEDP to host international conferences.