



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
**Α.ΔΙ.Π.**  
ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ & ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ  
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

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

## EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF CRETE



**European Union**  
European Social Fund



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 of Philosophy and Social Studies of the University of Crete consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Prof. Dr. Nikolaos Psarros (Coordinator)

Philosophical Institute, University of Leipzig, Germany

2. Prof. Dr. Antigone Mouchtouris

Département de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie, Université de Lorraine,  
France

3. Dr. Nicolas Argenti, Senior Lecturer

School of Social Sciences, Dept. of Anthropology, Brunel University,  
UK

4. Prof. Dr. Nikos Fokas

Faculty of Social Sciences, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary

## ***Introduction***

### **The External Evaluation Procedure**

The evaluation committee met with the members of the HQA at the headquarters of the agency. During the one-hour briefing we were introduced into the aims of the evaluation procedure. Afterwards we travelled to the University of Crete (UoC) at Rethymno where we were introduced to the Vice-President of the University, Prof. Dr. Papadaki, the Dean of the School of Philosophy Prof. Dr. Kopaka the members of the internal evaluation committee (MODIP) of the university and faculty members of the Department of Philosophy and Social Studies (PSS).

During this session the President, the Dean, and the representatives of MODIP gave us a general briefing on the UoC and the procedure and the goals of the internal evaluation of the UoC. The committee received a detailed documentation of the university structure and of the position of the PSS in it.

We were provided with an extensive and very complete documentation both of the general structure of the UoC as well as of the structure, staff, curricula and research activities of the Department.

We had extensive discussions with all the members of the faculty, except of two who were absent due to other obligations, with four non-faculty members, and with representative samples of under- and postgraduate students and of PhD students.

Finally, we had the opportunity to inspect a lecture hall, the Rethymno campus library and the facilities hosting the offices of the faculty.

### **The Internal Evaluation Procedure**

Materials, methods and presentation of the internal evaluation give an exact and critical picture of the current situation both of UoC and PSS, underlining not only the strengths, but also the existing problems and challenges that the institutions are confronted with. The material provided by the University and the Department was of high quality and complete in every aspect.

The internal evaluation is reflective, self-critical and able to delineate both the strengths and the problems of the unit due to external factors, especially due to the dire funding situation of the University and the Department.

## **A. Curriculum**

### **Goals and objectives in general**

The department has a bi-sector structure consisting of the sector of Philosophy and the sector of Theory and Methodology of the Social Studies (TMSS). To those sectors are attached the following Laboratories: To the sector of Philosophy the Laboratory for Bioethics, and to the sector TMSS the Laboratory for Psychology. A separate Laboratory for Teaching Practice is run jointly by both sectors.

The Department offers one intersectoral undergraduate curriculum and four postgraduate curricula, two of which under the auspices of the sector of Philosophy and two under the auspices of the sector TMSS, covering all three levels of academic education: undergraduate (4 years), pre-doctoral postgraduate (2 years, equivalent to MA) and doctoral (min. 3 years). The curricula do not correspond exactly to the requirements of the so-called Bologna Agreement (3-5-8), since it has not yet been implemented in the Greek system of higher education.

Reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the Department the undergraduate curriculum provides a thorough introduction in both scientific subjects, Philosophy and Social Studies. The postgraduate curricula are dedicated to a more in depth teaching of the sectors subjects. It is, however, important to stress the point that all four postgraduate curricula provide a certain specialization by focusing on the philosophical side on Practical Philosophy and Bioethics, and on the social science side on Anthropology and Developmental Psychology and on a theoretical, historical and political approach to Education.

### **Undergraduate program (4 years)**

#### *APPROACH*

The main objective is to offer an integrated interdisciplinary program of undergraduate studies preparing the students on the one hand for a career in the secondary education system, and on the other hand for any other engagement in society, including careers in academia, in the public sector, or in the private sector. A speciality of this program, that renders it unique among the current philosophical/social science undergraduate programs in Greece, is, that it provides the students with the opportunity to gain practical experience by short-term employments in various institutions of the public and the private sector, preparing them for and helping them orientate themselves in their future professional life.

In contrast to the study programs commonly used in Greece the undergraduate program of the PSS has a semester structure that allows the student certain flexibility in the composition of their individual studies. There exist a

number of mandatory courses as well as a large selection of optional courses; there are two types of optional courses: the one consists of sets, from which students must choose one, while the other type consists of courses that may be freely selected among those on offer from other departments, with which the PSS has made appropriate co-operation contracts.

Another special feature of the undergraduate program is, that some of the courses are offered in seminar form instead of lecture form, especially courses addressing students in the second phase of the program (i.e. from the 5<sup>th</sup> semester onwards). The students benefit from the seminars in a twofold way: they learn to participate actively in scientific discussions and learn also to express themselves in written form. Both of these aspects of the seminar form encourage independent thinking and provide the students with an advantage for their future advancement.

The diploma can be obtained also by submitting a final degree thesis in the value of 20 ECTS replacing one seminar and two lectures. This alternative is used currently by 5 to 10% of the students.

The program was conceived independently of the structure of related study programs at other Greek universities and reflects the autonomy of the department. In its current form it is the result of a revision that takes place on a regular basis (ca. every 7 years). This allows the Department to keep abreast of the needs of stakeholders both in science and in the wider community, including the secondary education system. Conception, implementation and revision of the study program is undertaken by the faculty of the Department in close co-operation with the requirements of the society.

#### *IMPLEMENTATION & RESULTS*

The departmental goals are served well by the curriculum. The primary goal of preparing students to teach in the secondary education system is met through the pedagogical emphasis on independent thought, both in discussion and written assignments, described above. The same aspect of the curriculum also prepares students well for professional roles in the private sector. The programme is appreciated by the current students, as was made clear in our discussions with them. Their passion for the subject and their enthusiasm to apply their skills after graduating were evident.

The multidisciplinary nature of the degree, covering a range of disciplines including Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, Education Sciences and Anthropology has both costs and benefits: On the one hand, graduating with an interdisciplinary degree provides a broad basis of education with a wide range of potential applications in later professional development. On the other hand, the plurality of orientations means that a student will not master any one discipline to the same level as if she were studying it as a single subject.

This limitation of the multidisciplinary approach is, however, addressed at the graduate level, where students can specialise in the MA and PhD degrees in one of the disciplines of the department.

With respect to resources, the department seems on the whole to be re-sourced adequately, with good provision of administrative staff, but teaching staff did underline their concern that an increasing staff-student ratio meant that seminar groups were growing beyond optimum proportions, restricting the ability of students to benefit from the benefits of the seminar format.

### *IMPROVEMENT*

There is a very large number of courses on offer and there is certainly no need to increase the number of courses on offer. It may even be advisable to reduce the number of courses.

The links between courses in philosophy and sociology might be improved. It seems at the moment that they have their own independent orientations, whereas the strengths of the department in possessing these two disciplines could be brought out fully in orientating philosophy and sociology (and the other disciplines) toward one another and leading them to address joint or related topics to emphasise the insights that each can bring to the other. However, the Committee stresses the point, that this suggestion does not mean that both sectors should be merged in one Department of “Social Studies”. In the contrary, the unique interdisciplinary character of the Department and the undergraduate program demands that the academic autonomy of both sectors must not altered.

The Department also provided the Committee also with statistical data showing an increasing trend over the years of students leaving the university for other institutions before the completion of their degree course. The department might benefit from obtaining data regarding the reasons, for which students are leaving before completion, and organise a formal response to address this matter.

Another trend identified through the statistics provided by the Department concerns the final degree scores of undergraduate students. This trend is slightly descending over recent years, with increasing numbers of students doing less well. The Committee is aware that this trend is mainly due to external factors regarding the Greek university admission procedures. Nevertheless, it would again be useful for the Department to adopt a strategy to deal better with this issue.

For the better implementation of the undergraduate program the Committee considers as a first measure enabling the Department to determine autonomously the number of the student intake accompanied by the right to define the requirements for the admission of students.

If the Department shall continue to provide education to the current number of students, a reduction of the vacancies among the faculty is essential. In addition, however, the right of the Department to define the admission requirements remains a prerequisite for the improvement of student performance.

Finally, the award of the ECTS points to the lectures and the seminars needs further explication. Currently lectures are awarded with five (5) ECTS points and seminars with ten (10). The Department explained this by referring to the fact that the participation in a seminar is more labour-intensive for the students than the attendance of a lecture. This is in general true, however, there is no explicit mentioning of the total workload (in semester-hours) necessary to attend successfully a seminar or a lecture as well as the distribution between presence hours and study hours.

### **Pre-doctoral postgraduate programs**

#### *APPROACH*

##### *General remarks*

Each sector offers two pre-doctoral postgraduate programs. All four programs also accept graduate students from other scientific subjects and have thus the character of conversion courses. The programs are strictly selective admitting in general only about 30% of the applicants. The dropout quota is less than 10%. The programs were initially state funded, however, the funding has been drastically reduced in the last four years. The postgraduate students interviewed by the Committee declared unanimously that they came specifically to the department in order to join the offered programs, even accepting higher living and travel costs as well as the less favourable employment situation. An important motive was also the fact that all programs are free of tuition fees. A good portion of the program students goes on to pursue a doctoral degree.

##### a) Philosophy

Program 1: “Philosophy – Knowledge, Values and Society”

Program 2: “Bioethics”

Both programs provide a specialisation in Practical Philosophy, Program 2 being more specific and focusing on Bioethics. Both programs have a 120 ECTS structure, including a compulsory 30 ECTS diploma thesis, comprising classes in lecture and seminar form.

Program 1 aims at deepening the understanding of Philosophy for other fields of scientific inquiry and has an interdepartmental/interuniversity character, including co-operation with the University of Ioannina.

Program 2 has its focus in applied Ethics, more specifically in Bioethics. Its



aim is the understanding of the implications of human activity in areas like Medicine or Environmental Protection under the conditions of modern globalized life. The program has a strong interdisciplinary character, addressing both academic and practicing medical doctors and lawyers. Besides the classes that take place also at the Heraklion campus of the UoC, the program organises public lectures, workshops, away-days as well as student workshops with international invited speakers. A Bioethics Laboratory supports the program materially and technically.

#### b) TMSS

In contrast to the programs offered by the sector of Philosophy the programs offered by the TMSS do not overlap thematically, but they are complementary, embracing thus the whole spectrum of research of the sector.

#### Program A: “Culture and Human Development”

The program provides specialisation in four different fields, namely Cultural Studies, Developmental Psychology, Science of Education, and Art and Creativity Studies. This complexity gives the 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 program is attended by a relatively large number of students and has also a relatively large number of yearly admissions (ca. 20). Most students pursue after graduation a career in the secondary education system. The Committee feel that the strengths of the department would be better advertised if social anthropology were highlighted.

#### Program B: “Theory, History and Politics of Education”

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, but exposes it to the vagaries of funding availability.

### *IMPLEMENTATION & RESULTS*

Program 1: The program has a very good output regarding both teaching and research. The majority of the graduates remain in academia pursuing a doctoral degree.

Program 2: This program has a strong practical orientation. Its graduates are effectively prepared for careers in the dynamically emerging market of ethical consultation services. Nevertheless the research output is very impressive and meets international standards.

Program A: The program has an impressive research output in the fields of Developmental Psychology and Social Anthropology. However, the latter is not reflected in the educational aims of the program, which emphasizes Cul-

tural Studies rather than Anthropology.

Program B: The idea of a program with an open structure is very interesting, but it raises certain questions: First, the specific aim of the program is not clearly discernable and this may be the reason for the relatively low student uptake of the program. Second, its high degree of dependence on external teachers exposes the program to fluctuations of the availability of teaching staff in correspondence with the fluctuations of the funding situation. The Committee does not know if this is the main cause of the reported delay in the completion of the studies by the enrolled students, but this cannot be ruled out.

### *IMPROVEMENT*

#### a) Philosophy

In spite of the fact that graduate Program 1 of the Philosophy sector has a clear systematic focus, i.e. the treatment of definite philosophical questions that make up the field of Practical Philosophy, many of its components are structured historically. The Committee acknowledges the value of a historical approach to Philosophy, nevertheless it is of the opinion that the historical approach should be always integrated in systematic courses and not vice-versa.

#### b) TMSS

The Department recognizes the need for revision of Program B. There are many proposals in this direction. The most promising appears to be the merger of both TMSS programs into a single entity.

### **Doctoral program**

#### *APPROACH*

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

In order to fulfil their role, the supervisors have established internal doctoral seminars, in which the candidates have the opportunity to present their work in progress and to discuss it with their fellow students and supervisors.

*IMPLEMENTATION and RESULTS*

Because the main research seminar is currently interdisciplinary, the Committee thinks that both the PhD students and the faculty of TMSS would benefit by establishing regular subject specific research seminars, similar to the seminar in ancient philosophy. A severe problem that hinders the undisturbed completion of many doctoral projects is the lack of financing in form of fellowships or research appointments. The candidates are, thus, forced to take up external jobs or to pursue their doctoral research parallel to their main occupation.

## **B. Teaching**

### *APPROACH*

#### *Teaching methods used*

In spite of the large numbers of undergraduate students that in other Greek Departments have led to an increase of teaching in form of mass lectures, the Department is managing to maintain teaching in form of seminars. Additionally, students have the opportunity to gain practical experience by participating in two internship/work placement programs, one in co-operation with the local secondary education and one in co-operation with non-academic institutions of the public and the private sector – on Crete and also nationwide.

It has to be stressed that, although such programs have been in principle introduced in Greek universities long ago, the Department is the only Philosophy/Social Science department in Greece that has implemented a work placement program in its curriculum.

#### *Teacher/student collaboration*

Based on the results of interviews with students of all levels, the collaboration between students and teachers appears to be excellent. The students feel that their situation and their problems are taken seriously; they also feel that they are well advised, and that the teachers do their best in order to provide guidance. A visit in a class revealed that there was a very vivid discussion of the treated subject among the students as well between the students and the teacher.

#### *Adequacy of means and resources*

The resources provided by the Department (class rooms, library, computers, internet accessibility) are excellent. Especially the library meets the highest standards, despite its current funding problems and pending reductions of the staff. A point of criticism is, however, the lack of accessibility to persons with special needs.

#### *Use of information technologies*

Information technologies are intensively used. The University provides an excellent WiFi coverage and internet access to every student and faculty member.

#### *Examination system*

As already mentioned, the majority of the exams is administered in the form of written exams, following the traditional Greek system. Some teachers apply also other forms, as for example, essays or oral examinations. As it has also been mentioned, there is the possibility to obtain the first degree by writing a diploma thesis. This option is not obligatory (as it is at the postgraduate level), and is used only by a minority of the students (about 20%). One reason

for this phenomenon appears to be the work overload of the faculty members, who prefer to grade exams than to supervise theses over an extended period of time. The Committee would like to point out here, that for an accreditation within the framework of the Bologna-system, a compulsory final thesis at the undergraduate level is necessary.

#### *IMPLEMENTATION & RESULTS*

Teaching methods and materials are of high quality, constantly monitored and updated by internal evaluations. The faculty is trying to include and implement the results of its research in the particular courses in so far as it complies with the level of the courses.

The Department provides an extensive mobility network by maintaining a great number of ERASMUS (at least 42) and other academic co-operations with institutions worldwide. This has a positive impact to both the graduate and the postgraduate levels, exposing the students to international standards. Additionally, the faculty has international teaching experience because of its academic origin from non-Greek universities and from extensive sojourns abroad within the framework of the Department's international co-operations.

Due to the Greek university admission system, the incoming students belong to the upper middle level of the overall student performance. The faculty, however, manages to awake the interest of the students for the subjects pursued at the Department at a quite early stage of the undergraduate studies.

The Committee has ascertained that there is some precaution or care for students with special needs, especially for blind students or for students with cognitive impairments like dyslexia. However, the assistance for those groups has to be further improved, especially for students with mobility problems.

#### *IMPROVEMENT*

The undergraduate program has been recently revised both with respect to the structure and the content of the courses as well as with respect to the applied teaching methods, within the confines of the present funding restrictions

### **C. Research**

#### *APPROACH and IMPLEMENTATION*

##### a) Philosophy

The research focus in the Philosophy sector lies on Bioethics, Political Philosophy, Ancient Philosophy and German Idealism. Especially on the field of Bioethics and Ancient Philosophy the sector can claim the merit of being on the top placement by international standards. This holds also for research work on the early thinking of Georg Lukács. Of similar importance is the contribution of the sector to the national philosophical discourse by providing excellent translations of the classics of German Idealism, including some first translations of Kantian texts.

The individual researchers have earned several national and international distinctions by publishing in internationally renowned journals and participating in international conferences. An important indication of the quality of the research conducted at the Department is the fact that leading figures in contemporary philosophy including Noam Chomsky, Agnes Heller, John McDowell, Spiros Simitis, Philip Kitcher, and Michael Frede participated in workshops and conferences organised by the Department.

##### b) TMSS

The research focus in this sector lies in Developmental Psychology, Social Anthropology, Education Sciences, and Sociology. Even a superficial survey reveals the high quality of the research conducted in the sector that comprises all special topics. However, there is a clear discrepancy in the visibility of this work owed to the fact that some researchers publish mostly in Greek. Especially the research conducted in Developmental Psychology and Social Anthropology can be considered as ground breaking. The Committee has the impression, however, that the researchers have missed some opportunities for the dissemination of their work, e.g. by making it available in international languages.

As in the sector of Philosophy many of the researchers have won international distinctions, especially the younger generation.

#### *RESULTS*

##### a) Philosophy

The sector's excellence in research is visible in a large number of publications in journals, collaborative volumes, and monographs as well as in research collaborations with institutions outside Greece. This promotes not only the Department's but also the University's visibility in the international arena.

The Department's success in research is internationally acknowledged in

form of distinctions and foreign fellowships awarded from institutions like Fulbright-Foundation or Andrew F. Mellon Foundation.

Regarding Ancient Greek Philosophy, the Department has achieved a status similar to a Centre of Research, focusing on Pre-Socratic, Platonic, Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic Philosophy. Regarding research in Pre-Socratic Philosophy the sector can claim a status of exclusiveness among in the European academic landscape.

#### b) TMSS

This sector has also an impressive research output. In contrast, however, to the sector of Philosophy this output is not clearly and coherently visible. This is owed partially to the fact that a large portion of the research work is published only in Greek, and partially to the fact that there have been so far only minor efforts to present this work in a more proactive way, by organising for example more international conferences, and/or by establishing better academic and research links with international research groups working on similar fields. The exceptions, as for example the participation of members of the faculty in the governing board of the Bourdieu Foundation, are indeed very commendable, they are, however, not sufficient for the placement of the sector in a good position.

#### *IMPROVEMENT*

The Committee strongly recommends that the visibility of the excellent research output of both sectors has to be improved by giving it a paramount position in the Department's internet site. An example of a good presentation of research activities is provided by the homepage of the Department of Chemistry of the UoC.

The visibility of the research output of the TMSS could be improved by the regular organisation of international conferences on the various topics and research fields of the faculty members, by the establishment of better and tighter links with international work groups, by the introduction of subject specific seminars, and by a professional English translation campaign of the vast work that has been so far published only in Greek language.

#### ***D. All Other Services***

##### *APPROACH, IMPLEMENTATION and RESULTS*

Regarding the organisation of the non-academic infrastructure, the services provided are of very good quality. However, there is still space for improvement that can be achieved by rationalizing the structures of the administrative organisation. The Committee is aware of the fact that such reforms do not depend solely on the will and the capabilities of the Department, but are heavily interconnected with the administrative organisation of the University. The organisational structure of the administration of the Department is problematic due to the general nature of the structure of the administration of the Greek universities. Both the structure and the workload of the administrative tasks are not transparent. Each non-academic staff member has a variety of non-interconnected responsibilities that cannot be met with the same degree of efficacy at a given time (for example student management *and* financial tasks). The situation is aggravated by the recent staff reductions, which appear arbitrary because of the opaqueness of the overall structure of the administrative processes.

##### *IMPROVEMENT*

The improvement of the administrative situation cannot be achieved at the departmental level, but requires a thorough reform of the administration at least at School level. The administrative management of the students should be organised at School level. Certain duties currently performed by the departmental administrative staff ought to be the responsibility of central administration; student registration and exam administration. Only the administrative functions that are absolutely necessary for the proper function of the Department itself should remain the responsibility of the Department (e.g. finances, support of departmental self-governing, management of the appointment of new faculty members).

Also the technical support should be centralized – at least at School level. This would give to the Department the opportunity to use its IT specialist for the improvement and the maintenance of its internet presence.



### **Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations**

Apart from its teaching and research efforts, the Department is involved in a series of important activities with strong impact at the local and the national levels. These activities include the organisation of public lectures and book presentations, the organisation of common events with other social institutions, and the co-operation with local schools (teaching of faculty members at school, open Department campaigns etc.). There is also an extensive presence in the media as well as research collaborations with non-academic institutions.

An important aspect of the interconnection of the Department with the local community is the fact that Crete is the focus of the Department's social and anthropological research. Crete is a region that has preserved many traditional cultural traits and values. The anthropological and sociological field work in the geographical and social vicinity of the Department helps tighten the bonds between the community and academia and increases the acceptance of this institution as an integral part of Cretan society.

Another interface between local community and the Department is the collaboration of the Bioethics postgraduate program with the local authorities and lawyer associations.

All these activities help to shape the public image of the Department as a source of scientific knowledge of great social relevance. Especially in times of social and value crisis, the Department of Philosophy and Social Studies of the University of Crete takes an active role in providing answers to the pressing ethical and cultural questions arising in our society.

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

#### **Short-, medium- and long-term goals:**

The Department has good and comprehensive short-, medium- and long-term goals in the following areas:

1. Their curriculum design at undergraduate and postgraduate levels
2. Their international student and teacher exchanges
3. Their international research activities and publications
4. Their student-staff interactions and departmental organization

The Committee recommends the following as an improvement strategy for the Department:

#### **International standing of the Department in Philosophy**

The Department is already promoting among their faculty the highest level of publication and research activities. We expect that they will continue placing high priority in this, both in their practice and the appointments to be made. However, this is not sufficient for attaining the recognition the Department deserves internationally.

- a. Their research achievements and activities need to be **publicised** appropriately. This can be achieved through appropriate additions to and redesign of their departmental website and the creation of parallel pages in English translation, as well as through a **translation campaign** of the vast research output published only in Greek.
- b. For the identification of the Department with particular areas of research strength, it is advisable to strengthen the existing **Research Clusters** and to establish new ones.
- c. Research Clusters should be well **defined** under research goals; **dynamically run** with seminars, conferences, prestigious academic **visits** – in both directions –, **dynamically advertised** internationally.

#### **Institutional support of the Department's efforts:**

- a. University support for **upgrading** the Department's web presence.
- b. University support in implementing a **retention policy** to ensure that the department retains key research leaders.
- c. University support for **building a critical mass** of members of staff for each Research Cluster.
- d. University support for **funding research activities** of the Research Clusters.
- e. University support for prospective **star graduate students**.
- f. **Rationalisation of the administrative structures** at departmental and School level aiming at the concentration and specialization of the tasks assigned to the administrative staff.

## ***F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC***

### **Conclusion**

The Department of Philosophy and Social Studies of the University of Crete is a **dynamic** and **dedicated** academic educational research unit that meets the standards of an **internationally competitive** and **innovative** academic institution. The faculty provides **high quality teaching** at all three levels of studies despite the unfavourable ratio between students and teachers at the undergraduate level, and the flawed organisation of student administration. The Committee stresses the point that the itemized administrative shortcomings and deficits absolutely **do not** lie in the responsibility of the Department. Furthermore, the Department is involved in a variety of **extra-academic activities** both at the local and the national level that provide important intellectual support to the society, and help attract potential qualified students.

Regarding its research output there is an **imbalance** in the representation of the Department in the international arena. The sector of Philosophy is **well represented** in the international arena with a large number of publications in international peer-reviewed journals, book publications, organised international conferences and workshops, research contacts and awarded distinctions. The sector TMSS, however, is **underrepresented**, mainly due to the fact that a large portion of its **vast** and **high quality** research output is published only in Greek, and a low level of activity regarding the organisation of international conferences, workshops, and seminars.

### **Further Recommendations**

The external limitations of the Department's performance can be summarized as follows:

- 1) The **lack of sufficient funding for the support of the postgraduate programs**, especially regarding the **mobility of faculty and of postgraduate students** to attend conferences inside or outside of Greece.
- 2) The marked **insufficiency of organization** of the supporting services.
- 3) The **large number of students** sent to the Department, which is determined by other authorities and not the faculty of the Department and is disproportionate to the teaching capacity of the Department.

To meet the aforementioned limitations and shortcomings, which are above the will and the responsibility of the Department, the faculty is constantly and relentlessly trying to improve the educational and research activities, so that its voice can be heard inside and outside the University. Thus, it imple-

ments a strategy that indicates its will to adjust to the requirements of the newer developments of the academic community. In addition, it attempts to make its creative presence felt in the extra-curricular activities for the benefit of the Cretan and the Greek community.

The Committee acknowledges that an **Office for Student Ombudsman Services** already exists since 2012 at the University level. However, it seems that there is no authority concerned with the providing of assistance in cases of humiliation, harassment or discrimination towards staff members. The Committee strongly recommends the creation also of an **Office of Academic Ombudsman Services** for such cases.

The Committee closes its evaluation report expressing its congratulations to the Department for its achievements and its best wishes for a further success.

### The Members of the Committee

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