



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

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ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

Final

DEPARTMENT: Human Nutrition and Dietetics

TEI: Alexandrio Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki

Version 2.0
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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 “Human Nutrition and Dietetics” of the Technological Institute of Thessaloniki consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Dr Sevastianos ROUSSOS (President)
Directeur de Recherche IRD-Biotrans, Aix-Marseille Universite, Marseille, France

2. Dr Eleni P ANDREOU-GEORGAKI
Assistant Professor Nutrition/Dietetics, Department of Life and Health Sciences and Engineering, University of Nicosia, Cyprus

3. Mr Rodios GAMVROS,
Expert-Consultant Expert on Quality, Regulations and Management of Food Companies, Athens, Greece

4. Dr Demetrios KAZANTZIS
Expert, Vice President R & D, Del’s Lemonade & Refreshments INC. Warwick, Rhode Island, USA

N.B. The structure of the “Template” proposed for the External Evaluation Report mirrors the requirements of Law 3374/2005 and corresponds overall to the structure of the Internal Evaluation Report submitted by the Department.

The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; they are meant to provide a general outline of matters that should be addressed by the Committee when formulating its comments.

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- **Dates and brief account of the site visit.** The external evaluation committee (EEC) visited the Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics of Alexandrio Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki (ATEI), in the 17-19 of February, 2014. The EEC committee reached Thessaloniki on the 17th of February 2014 and 1st meeting started at 17: 25.
- **Whom did the Committee meet?** The EEC met with the president of the department Dr Athanasios Papadopoulos and three more faculty members with corresponding roles:
 - Efstratios KIRINAS-Member of the Internal Evaluation Committee(IEC)
 - Maria TSIGGA-Member of the IEC.
 - Kalliopi KLEFTOURI- Member of TEI Quality Assurance Committee (ΜΟΔΙΠ)
- **List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the Committee.**
 1. Report of the Internal Evaluation
 2. List of publications
 3. List of updated CVs
 4. Student test samples and student evaluation for final project
 5. Teaching material and practicum notes (ie books), especially developed by the faculty members
- **Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed.** The EEC met and briefed by Deputy Chairman of TEI Council and Chairman of Quality Assurance Unit Pr. Panagiotis TZIONAS and interviewed and discussed with the 11 teaching faculty and with the 3 lab assistants (all full time). Also, the EEC met a number of students (41) from all levels of academic years including the president of the student union (Panayiotis LEMPETIS). Furthermore, the ECC met with 3 administrative staff and librarian and visited the sport facility of the campus. Finally, the EEC attended the presentation of 2 final year thesis projects.
- **Facilities visited by the External Evaluation Committee.** The EEC committee visited the following areas: The teaching areas (3),the laboratories of the department (i.e., chemistry, biochemistry, clinical dietetics, obesity, food preparation, computer lab etc), the offices of the academics and technicians , amphitheatre (140 seats), conference rooms (2 rms), the library of the campus and the sport facility, the staff cafeteria and the student lounge. All the teaching rooms, conference rooms and the computer and labs provided audiovisual equipment.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- **Appropriateness of sources and documentation used.** The sources and the documentation used were very appropriate for the current occasion. The EEC members had at their disposal prior to and during the evaluation process the following documentations: (i) reports of teaching and research activities of the Department in the period 2012-2013, and (ii) Internal Evaluation Reports for the periods 2007-2009, 2012-2013. These documents included detailed and documented information on the structure of the Department, the building facilities and a short introduction of the organisational structure of the ATEI, the position, role, and function of the Department within the University. Additional documents concerning several research aspects and activities were made promptly available upon the request of the members of the EEC (e.g., textbooks, theses, teaching material).

- **Quality and completeness of evidence reviewed and provided**

The reports supplied reflected the current situation of the department (up to 2013). They clearly described the goals, structure, organisation and facilities of the Department. The Department made a truly professional effort to provide a complete picture of teaching and research activities of administrative and laboratory facilities and expeditiously responded to all requests of EEC.

- **To what extent have the objectives of the internal evaluation process been met by the Department?**

The Department has successfully reached the objectives of the Internal Evaluation process in a very satisfactory extend and this way the work of the EEC was positively facilitated.

A. Curriculum

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

APPROACH

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

The goals and objectives of the Curriculum are: (i) to train students in order to become educated in nutrition and dietetics, (ii) to transfer knowledge on theoretical and applied scientific background for the implementation of the most updated scientific knowledge (iii) to transfer this information with current technology, methodology, practical and technical approach in the area of nutrition and dietetics. They plan to achieve this by offering the most updating curriculum through efficient teaching methods and practicum. The department faculty believes that these objectives can be achieved through knowledge of biology, physiology, chemistry, biochemistry and the in depth of nutrition science and dietetics. Also, it includes laboratory techniques during which a number of the latest technologies are applied. The EEC noted that a critical problem is approaching the department as far as concern the age range of the department teaching faculty. Specifically there are 3 key members out of 11, close to retirement without planned to be replaced.

- **How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?** The objectives were decided according to national, EU and international curricula of many institutions. Curriculum revised on basis of experience, self evaluation, curriculum of accredited programs of European and International Universities. The department consulted other stake holders such as the Department of Health in association with clinical and public health settings and the Department of Education.
- **Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?** The curriculum is consistent in principle with the objectives and the requirements of the society.
- **How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?** Yes see above
- **Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?** Current curriculum was revised in 2013.

IMPLEMENTATION

- **How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?** The Department's goal is implemented in an effective and sufficient manner
- **How does the curriculum compare with appropriate, universally accepted standards for the specific area of study?** The curriculum was adequately compared and updated to the universal standards as it followed the international guidelines for nutrition and dietetics profession
- **Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated?** The curriculum is very rational and clearly articulated as it is consistent and it had a natural flow of the subjects (chain of classes and pre-requisites and co-requisites).
- **Is the curriculum coherent and functional?** Although the program is coherent and functional, it might be weak for the students with not appropriate background on fundamental classes for chemistry and biology due to entry criteria (National Entry

Level Exams for Higher Education).

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

The material for each course is sufficient and accordingly distributed based to the learning outcomes of each course. Students have access to well published teaching handbooks, issued by department professors. These books cover main topics of curriculum.

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

The department staff is well qualified and appropriate but the committee feels that the number of trained staff is limited and the current teaching load is extremely heavy by the fact the temporary members are dismissed and retired staff has not been replaced. The ratio teacher to students 1:76 is very high and it can contribute to the difficulty of curriculum implementation. As far as concerns the material resources they have a rich range of Greek books, especially written from the specialized staff, a small library supported by e-books and e-journals, very well equipped labs (biochemistry, food science, clinical dietetics, chemistry), lab work manuals.

Recommendation:

- (1) The entry criteria for the Nutrition and Dietetics program should be the Natural Sciences courses thus to reinforce the success of the students outcome and facilitate the appropriate duration of studies for graduation.

RESULTS

- **How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives? If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt with? Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?**

There is an overall shortage of the academic staff and technicians that despite the fact of a heavy teaching load they manage to achieve the goals and objectives. This was possible because of the complete and obvious dedication and sacrifices of the permanent teaching faculty and laboratory assistants in the respective areas.

Recommendation:

- (1) There is the urge to increase the number of the staff or to replace the retired and future retired members.

IMPROVEMENT

- **Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved?**

The department is well aware of its limitations and the needs for improvement by replacing two courses of the academic path (physics and math) with more related courses to the degree of Nutrition and Dietetics. Revised program has already endorsed these changes.

- **Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?**

Establish a continue revision process of curriculum in order to ensures that always meets the needs of the students. Implement the n+2 directive in order to overcome the problem of the lifelong students.

- **Recommendations**

(1) It should be required that the prerequisites for this degree should be for the science/natural theories direction (biology and chemistry). If the prerequisites are

not met then a foundation program (i.e. introductory chemistry, biochemistry, biology, math, statistics) can be offered. Also, EEC recommends the establishment of a student support program, especially during the first semester such as the system of personal tutor and the student tutor.

(2) Although, it is an asset for the programme to have faculty with chemistry and Biochemistry background, it should be considered to introduce to the program more specialized dietitians /nutritionists as experts in their team.

(3) Supportive courses or part of the syllabus to be introduced with heavy emphasis in the areas: of Psychology, Counseling, Food and Drug Interactions and Likes and Dislikes of the patients, Therapeutic properties of herbs/spices/teas especially those originated in Greece, Diet Therapy in different levels, Sports Nutrition, quality of water.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology? The EEC understood that the principle of the teaching philosophy of the Department is to provide sufficient knowledge in Nutrition and Dietetics through core, major electives and elective courses, as well as applied projects towards undergraduate degrees(BSc) and graduate degrees in association with other universities (MSc and PhD).

Please comment on :

- **Teaching methods used** Main teaching practices are lectures with Power Point Presentations, field trips, practicum and lab exercises, and assignments. The distribution of textbooks to the entitled students is streamlined based to the instituted Evdoxos system which seems to work reasonably well. The books are allocated free and once to the students. The combination of these methods reflects the good quality and teaching expertise of the academic staff. The teaching faculty members for course work and laboratory work are available to the students not only through regularly scheduled office hours but also on demand at any requested time by the students. All the teaching material was uploaded in faculty intranet specifically made for ATEIΘ.
- **Teaching staff/ student ratio** In terms of active students the respective ratio is 54:1 and as far as we understand the current ratio of the enrolled students is 76:1 whereas the previous ratio was 22:1 (students/ faculty and contracted faculty). The current ratio is marginally acceptable but due to the facts of previous layoffs and expected retirements and no immediate plans for rehiring this ratio is going to result in much higher. The EEC was impressed by the didactic load of all permanent faculty members which almost exceeds the didactic load of secondary education teachers.
- **Teacher/student collaboration.** The collaboration among teachers and students in general was observed to be excellent and with high rapport and cooperation between teaching faculty, technical staff and students.
- **Adequacy of means and resources.** The availability of buildings , teaching rooms and laboratories and library was very impressive with specific labs (i.e. Chemistry, biochemistry, clinical dietetics, food science and food preparation, obesity, computer) and an efficient library access to a large number of scientific journals where a specific part is devoted to nutrition, dietetics and food science . It is worth mentioning that

copies of the thesis are saved in a PDF document in the library for future references and the prospect of writing scientific articles on the topics. A major advantage of the department is that it is located in a campus and not spread out.

- **Use of information technologies.** Information technology was implemented through availability of specialized nutritional analysis of GENESIS and FOOD PROCESSOR 2 for individual food intake and recommendations. The specialized software (DIET 200) offered the capacity to perform diet history, practice in interviewing, nutritional analysis, recipe modification, drug and nutrient interaction and diet plans specifically for different health issues or diseases. It is a necessary improvement to include utilization of the part of the program regarding food likes/dislikes, food aversions, preferences, allergies, food intolerances in cooperation with the computer department and hospital facilities and various hospitals. There is a number of all necessary laboratories fully equipped in a very satisfactory way and easily conveyed information from teaching, labs, practical applications as needed in the professional field (i.e., DEXA, Under water body composition measurement-customer made, gas- body composition analyzer, BIA, Skinfold measurements- caliper etc)
- **Examination system.** The examination system was through a final exam at the end of each semester and a second examination period at the end of each academic year. The examination system relied on multiple ways of evaluation that include exams, assignments and bonus midterm exams.

Recommendations:

- (1) The EEC feels that for better assessment of the students the inclusion of mandatory midterms, oral presentation from students, graded projects is going to improve the overall performance in all courses and thus reduce the number of years concerning graduation and the cost of attending the university for more than four years.

IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

- **Quality of teaching procedures**
- **Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.**
- **Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?**
- **Linking of research with teaching**
- **Mobility of academic staff and students**
- **Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources**

The teaching methods are highly commended (as seen also in the students' evaluations, see below) and this reflects the experience, flexibility, availability, and dedication of the teaching staff (faculty members and lab instructors). This was also reflected by the undergraduate students during the interviews.

Overall, the teaching procedures are applied efficiently. The quality of teaching material and resources is sufficiently adequate with introduction of new course materials and new books written and presented by the faculty members (i.e. Lab manuals, Food Technology, Food Additives and Policy, Manual of Nutrition, Sports and Nutrition, Maternity and Breastfeeding Nutrition, Food Safety, Grains, Nutrition and Health, Introduction to Chemistry). The Department has implemented a mandatory Diploma Thesis in the undergraduate curriculum. The latter provides the students with a first-hand research experience which may also provide a link with industry and hospitals. The link between experimental research and literature review is clear, and as a result of this it provides a better

opportunity for employment and professional career development.

The department is part of the Erasmus program agreement of the ATEIΘ. Within this program, the Department was collaborating with several other European Universities. This program has given a lot of students the opportunity to spend 1-2 academic semesters abroad or accommodate students from abroad. The Department also participates in several research collaborations with other Universities and Institutes in Greece and abroad. These efforts should be maintained and further increased in the future.

The physical mobility of academic staff and student is limited by the availability of infrequent public transportation. In general, the buildings are adjacent and easily accessible.

The evaluation by the students term of teaching is satisfactory (4/5), the course content and study materials is also satisfactory (4/5). However, the evaluation by the undergraduate students during the interviews was extremely positive on both aspects.

Recommendation:

- (1) Further improvements in the feedback provided by the students could be made through unified questionnaires.

RESULTS

Please comment on:

- **Efficacy of teaching.**
- **Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.**
- **Differences between students in (a) the time to graduation, and (b) final degree grades.**
- **Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?**

There is an overall efficacy of teaching; however the EEC noticed that there are certain unwarranted results in the success/ failure percentages. The lowest ratio is 19% which is a serious point of concern. This reflects the necessity for entry criteria for the science degree (i.e. necessity for natural theory perspective) and in some extends the specific teaching material. The average passing is 65% and it can be improved .The average grade of all courses for all years is 6.44/10 for the year 2012-2013, with a worrisome tendency to drop in recent years, at least partially due to the ill-adapted background of the admitted students through the national entrance examinations. The rate of graduation averages to 12-18% of the students which is extremely low. These results in longer period of attendance and graduation that creates a burden on the student and family expense load and also extends to the nations added unnecessary expenses that should be reduced to bare minimum. Time to graduation averages to more than 6 years which is more than the expected 4 years.

The reason of the current length of graduation time is due to: (a) the indefinite number of repetitions following failure in examinations; (b) the need of certain students to support their educational expenses by working; (c) the lack of fellowships in support of education; (d) the inappropriate background of the in-coming students from secondary education; (e) and lack of availability of contributions of funds from industry, military, health services, food industry, and educational services. Frame has been set to limit the extension of studies length by implementing the rule n+2 .

IMPROVEMENT

- **Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?**
While the Department does not propose a specific plan for improvements, it has invested a considerable effort to identify the main reasons of the weaknesses of the current teaching program.

The Department has made several positive suggestions in their Internal Evaluation Report. The EEC reinforces and/ or suggests: (a) reduction in the number of students admitted; (b) reduction in the teaching load of faculty staff; (c) avoid the danger of reduced quality of the teaching process (d) improve or and reinforce the student evaluation (students evaluating the faculty and the program) and the peer review evaluation (evaluation of the teaching faculty from peers).

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

The Department has already presented long terms and short terms goals of plan of action which are supported by the EEC. It is requested to the appropriate authorities the reduction of the number of incoming students, the adaptation of their background to natural or technological sciences, the increase of academic and technical support of its teaching programs. Thus, the EEC finds that the responsibility for addressing these issues from now on lies outside the Department.

Recommendations

- (1) The EEC strongly recommends the recognition by the Hellenic Republic of the professional rights stemming from the curriculum and the designation of the final degree as an Nutrition and Dietetics.
- (2) The EEC strongly recommends that the Department should expend considerable effort to find effective ways of increasing classroom attendance for the undergraduate students. For example, classroom assignments will only be handed to those attending and would need to be completed before a student is allowed to conduct the experimental part of the course.
- (3) The EEC strongly suggests that a significant increase in the quality of the incoming students will be guaranteed only if the admitted secondary school graduates come with a background in natural (currently known as «Θετικές»). In addition, the highest number of admitted students should not exceed that of 50.
- (4) Include review sessions prior to exams as a mean to increase the success rate of the students and improve the teaching style. Also, encourage students to do group assignments and study in organized groups.

C. Research

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

APPROACH

- **What is the Department's policy and main objective in research?**

The Department is pursuing research in the general area of human nutrition, dietary and food sciences. In particular, the department is benefiting from the access to the international and national societies for research as well as the personal and professional networking of the academic faculty in terms of research. There is an uneven allocation in number regarding the publications in scientific journals per academic faculty of the department and a minimal interaction among the different professionals involving research activities. However, the faculty has a great number of book publications with two or more participants of the group. There are a lot of presentations in conferences and conferences proceedings. It is commendable that the entire faculty is involved in research projects. There are three well qualified members of technical staff who help run the different laboratories for practical teaching and exercises but with no active involvement and presentation in the different projects and publications. This internal policy serves as code of practice to contact research, but not as policy on topics and mainstream direction of research activities. Consequently department is lacking research synergies.

The Department has presently 11 faculty members. They have organised their research expertise in the following sectors: (i) Medical Nutrition Therapy (ii) Obesity and Weight Management (iii) Sports Nutrition (iv) Paediatrics and Nutrition (v) Greek Mediterranean Diet (vi) Macronutrient and Micronutrient investigation.

- **Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?**

The Department has set some internal evaluation procedures through the research committee who is working towards the internal research policy (see Internal Evaluation Reports for the period 2012-13) for assessing all aspects of research activity including an external review undertaken on their own initiative.

Although, there are fully equipped laboratories in various topics, there is not sufficient number of technical staff to support both the researchers and the different investigations.

An internal committee (OMEA) was established for the evaluation of the scientific work and the presentation of the most important results. This committee was very responsive to all EEC requests for additional information or arrangements. The internal evaluation process used commonly accepted international standards for the assessment of the scientific work, such as the number of publications (peer review journals and chapters in books) and citations, the impact factor of journals in which the results have been published, the h-index (Science/Scopus), the number of invited talks at conferences, and the recognition of faculty members with domestic/national or international awards (President of the Hellenic Chemists Society, Secretary of the Hellenic Obesity Association, the Paediatric Association of North Greece).

Recommendations:

1. Increase the number of the supportive staff for implement research (such as technical staff, contracted project based post-docs). Increase their recognition by acknowledgement in publications
2. Develop and establish a post graduate program in the level of (MSc) to meet and excel the research requirements of a scientific department and meet graduate students

and market needs

3. Set a research strategy as to become a research hub of excellence on Human Nutrition and Dietetics
4. Create and enforce research policy of the department

IMPLEMENTATION

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

The Department has initiated multiple actions to promote research: a) several research collaborations have been set up with other local, national and European Universities or Associations (EFAD), many of them with distinguished researchers; b) faculty members participate in several national and international funding programs; c) several faculty members have initiated collaborations with industry; d) several faculty members arrange for undergraduate student exchanges like ERASMUS with other European research centres ; e) several faculty members accommodate each other's research by sharing laboratory space and equipment when critical needs appear.

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

The research infrastructure of the Department is good with areas for improvement with state-of-the-art instrumentation in many cases. This is a credit to the initiatives of faculty members who have been able to acquire specialized equipment through competitive national and European funding sources. It is worth noting though that equipment maintenance and technical support is still a concern. Furthermore, the limited available State approval and funds for fellowships for MSc and PhD students are noted. The EEC members fully support this, and urge the State and/or the University to contribute towards this need.

- **Scientific publications.**

In the 5 past years, the faculty team presented more than 100 publications, oral presentation and conference proceedings and posters but only 25 articles in international journals are with relevant high impact factor in the topic. This is satisfactory for the ATEIO serving primarily as Technological teaching institution rather than knowledge producing and research university. In some cases the publications are very impressive.

- **Research projects.**

The department participated in 12 research projects which they were very competitive.

- **Research collaborations.**

The Department has established numerous research collaborations with domestic and international academic and research institutions, as well as with health service partners and local authorities. More than 23 external collaborators participated in department's research programs. In addition, in the research projects 24 undergraduates and 5 post graduate students were participated.

Recommendations:

1. The well presented poster need to be written as scientific articles
2. Original findings of the research need to be patented before the articles are published
3. Original publications with team collaboration but with different research areas should be published in a common article as a department at least once a year.

RESULTS

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

- **Scientific publications.**
- **Research projects.**
- **Research collaborations.**
- **Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.**
- **Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department? Rewards and awards.**

See above in implementation

The EEC considers several members of this group of researchers as highly productive and on the way to national and international excellence.

IMPROVEMENT

- **Improvements in research proposed by the Department, if necessary.**
- **Initiatives in this direction undertaken by the Department.**

Grant applications should be submitted in collaboration among complimentary disciplines within the department in order to have more success in the approval of various funding. Subsequently the number of publications will be increased in more current subjects and area of interests. For the research purposes, the local flora with bioactive ingredients or traditional agricultural products of the country that can be implemented for the nutritional support and nutritional guidelines for good health (i.e. herbs that promote health and functionality of the foods) should be considered. Also, the discovery of specific foods that serve with therapeutic properties against different diseases for the public health should be considered for research purposes.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH

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

There is availability of well developed e-services infrastructure serving main administration and communication needs for students and staff. One area that needs to be improved should be an automatic e-mail or SMS from campus administration to students and supportive staff in case of an alert or any information of concern security or accessibility of people in the campus.

Student admissions and the recording of course grades are handled by the capable secretarial staff of the Department. This secretariat is staffed with a 3 person and linked to Faculty secretariat. In addition, it appears that there is a lack of support by the central university students' welfare office for those students who face severe financial needs due to the national financial crisis and academic performance problems.

Due to the fact that Campus is located to 17 km outside main city (Thessaloniki) and limited public transportation, the trip to and from Campus may require up to 3 hr daily in not convenient trip conditions. Train access although nearby is not fully explored (frequency of trips and lack of shuttle bus). Consequently students' presence in campus and various social activities suffers and it is in a minimal extent.

IMPLEMENTATION

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

In general, the organization and infrastructure of the institution is sufficient.

The library, as pointed out before, is merely adequate but does not have either the space (reading rooms) or facilities (small number of computer terminals) that would induce the students to frequent use. The library provides free internet access. Despite the lack in financial and human resources, the student secretariat is quite efficient and the library is well organized.

The Campus restaurant catering to students and faculty is efficient and provides good quality meals but students commented that subsidizing the price of meals is not sufficient.

Conversely, there is one residence hall for out-of-town students but with specific enrollment criteria (especial financial).

Overall, given the small size of the Department and despite the multiple commitments of the faculty members and the other technical and administrative personnel, EEC perceived that a very positive, collaborative, family-like atmosphere exists that allows the accomplishment of most day to-day tasks.

Technical support is needed by the University to address specific safety issues and improve safety in general and in particular in the laboratories of the Department.

There is no knowledge of any general student counseling services existing currently as commented by interviewed students.

Although, there is newly built sport stadium (venue for volley ball, basketball, handball, ping ball) available within the university campus, the facilities are sparsely and scarcely used and they are not well advertized or utilized.

However, there is a lack of student counseling by the university students welfare office for those students who face severe financial and academic performance problems.

Recommendations:

1. Accessibility to the Campus can be improved by Suburban train combined with shuttle bus connecting Campus with Sindos train station.
2. Cultural and sport activities engaging students need to be further promoted ideally on voluntary basis increasing social and networking students' relations.
3. The EEC recommends that procedures relating to purchases for research and teaching should be streamlined and accounting aspects, particularly those relating to research grants, should be undertaken by competent personnel of the University administration.
4. Assign a safety officer in campus who will supervise the implementation a safety policy for laboratories and teaching rooms (ie. Need of emergency exits, fire extinguisher in all rooms)

RESULTS

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

See comments above.

The administrative and other services are adequate and functional and fully staffed.

Overall, the administrative and other services are offered with professionalism and commitment despite the lack of some resources.

IMPROVEMENTS

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

The ways and methods for the improvement of the services are included in the action plan of the Internal Evaluation Report.

Specific members of the department provide support to students exhibiting low academic performance and other academic problems through extra individualized instruction .

The Department has shown a certain willingness to contribute to local and regional development.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Please, comment on quality, originality and significance of the Department's initiatives.

Since 1985, when the first students were admitted, the Department has developed substantial collaboration with local and national commercial enterprises such as co-operatives, industrial and private sector companies as well as public sector regional and state organizations and health services. Several members of the Department have been participating in a large number of joint projects which relate to the specific needs of such enterprises/ organizations.

A number of faculty members actively participate in various Hellenic and international scientific union councils, and as expert evaluators of national and international scientific programs.

There is no clear distinction between the two entities of the department- the nutrition and dietetics. Students attending nutrition do not need to do practicum in the hospital but the nutrition students will be benefited more from interaction to food service industry or even pharmaceutical industry. It is worth noting that based to international guidelines the nutritionist is not a dietitian but a dietitian is a nutritionist

Recommendation: Create a direction in the academic path of the degree based to the students performance for Nutrition or Dietetics

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

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

Please, comment on the Department's:

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

The department has a four year degree program that is currently attended by more than 900 students. Also, there is a number of students attending graduate studies which are in collaboration with other universities. One of the prohibiting factors for attending graduate studies is a lack of available funds due to the economic crisis from which the country is suffering. Therefore, there is a great need for fund availability to improve the number of students to this level. Provision of the funds is going to prevent a lot of brain drainage and availability of the professionals to feel upcoming needs in the future openings of the work force.

Inhibiting factors, some of which were also mentioned in earlier sections, are:

- a) The lack of funding opportunities and negligible support from the Ministry of Education and the General Secretariat of Research and Technology of the state. The lack of fellowships and teaching assistantships for the MSc and PhD programs is of particular concern and duly noted;

- b) the small number of technical staff;
- c) the long delays in the approval and hiring process for new faculty;
- d) the lack of a start-up granting system for new faculty members, and bare minimum state funding to cover absolutely basic necessities for research consumables and equipment;
- e) the lack of a central Institutional administrative structure (e.g., Research Committee, Erasmus Office, Safety and Hygiene services, etc);
- f) the lack of appropriate support for securing intellectual property rights through patents;
- g) lack of visibility of the Department in the local community and national society

Recommendation:

- (1) The introduction of criteria based on excellence at the University and Departmental level for the distribution of funds for educational and research needs. The distribution of funds needs to reflect (i) the high quality of research and teaching programs, (ii) the documented excellence and recognition in research, and (iii) the continuation and enhancement of excellent achievements which keep departmental faculty members competitive with their peers at the international level.
- (2) The development of a MSc accredited program

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- **the development of the Department to this date and its present situation, including explicit comments on good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process and recommendations for improvement**
- **the Department's readiness and capability to change/improve**
- **the Department's quality assurance.**

The overall impression of the EEC is very positive despite the fact that the permanent teaching faculty, the lab assistants, and the temporary teaching faculty is shrinking constantly due to the elimination of positions and retirements. No new appointments are available even though the number of incoming and graduating students keeps increasing. In summary, the strengths of the Department are commitment to excellence in the broad areas of teaching and research covered and the presence of active and dedicated faculty members working as a team. The main weaknesses are the constraining space limitations, the lack of fellowships for students at the M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs, the limited number of technical staff, the very limited financial support provided by the State/University and the poor student attendance particularly at the undergraduate courses.

The Department of Nutrition and Dietetics has established a high quality research and teaching program that is commensurate with international standards. The Faculty, although keenly aware of the dysfunctions of Hellenic Universities, has identified improvements, has a realistic vision for the future and it is well-equipped to implement changes and is encouraged by the EEC to do so.

- The great majority of faculty members have active and very successful research programs.
- Most faculty members pursue creative and modern teaching initiatives.
- To conduct state-of-the-art research and teaching, State/University funding is absolutely necessary for personnel, instrumentation and technical infrastructure.
- The need for appropriate and ample space for research and teaching is a *sine qua non* if the faculty members are to continue in their pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and service to the community, the nation and the region.

Positive points:

- Very goal oriented and enthusiastic teaching faculty
- Good resources (i.e. books, journals, practical guidance booklets)
- Fully equipped and contemporary resources for the labs
- Direct and good teacher /student interaction
- Effectiveness of the Erasmus and Archimedes projects
- Good relationship of the Department with Industry and the Health Services locally and nationally.
- Present faculty has capabilities for large scale research and development
- Presence of contemporary nutrition/ dietetic software
- The level of the undergraduate thesis was at a level above the requirements of graduation and sometimes reached level of a MSc.

Negative points:

- Limited and shrinking faculty and lab assistants number
- Facilities are in need of repairs and maintenance
- Lack of safety procedures in the labs
- Transportation problems
- Absence of liability and safety insurance for the laboratory work
- Lack of official personal tutoring (teacher to students) and student tutoring (student to student) system
- Lack of participation in cultural and sport activities in campus.

Recommendations:

The EEC members make the following recommendations to safeguard its achievements and to enhance the future development of the Department. Some of these recommendations are intended for the Department, while others are directed at the University and State authorities. Recommendations are spread out through the present report. Here we try to concentrate in the most important and necessary points

1. The practicum part of the program needs to be accredited and internationally acknowledged in order to give the capacity to the student to receive the title of RD (protected title for dietitians) and to help the students but also the faculty for the professional development. This is only going to be possible through the cooperation of the Department with the national and international professional dietetic associations and the national Authority.
2. Student advisor implementation.
3. The department should be advertised in the Greek embassies and consulates in order to attract the interest of international students who are usually funded for their university studies, for scholarships from their own countries both from rich and underdeveloped countries.
4. It is suggested to introduce some courses in English and offer free Greek lessons as secondary language for foreign students.
5. Buildings need to be repaired and painted, windows need screens and drains, grass need to be cut and maintained, halls need to be covered, and the garbage need to be removed daily.
6. Safety procedures need to be clearly posted in the walls and eye flashing stations need to be installed in the labs.
7. Drinking water needs to be filtered with ceramic- carbon system
8. Development of the contemporary tutoring system with provision of academic and practical help to students either from the academicians, lab assistants and good graded students.
9. Close contact with the department Alumni
10. Development of further of sister- university relations with more countries
11. Improvement of faculty compensation through research funds from outside university sources
12. Add/ replace in the curriculum more related courses, while at the same time respecting the European and International standards (number of ECTS to graduate) and quality. In achieving this: (i) avoid overlaps and duplication of subject matter; (ii) move relatively more specialised material to a flexible menu of elective courses.
- 13.** Increase the homework and project load of the students; reinforce mandatory mid-term exams and a mandatory practicum/internship; create a logical progression of courses based on prerequisites (chain courses); increase computer and computing literacy (e.g., MS Office, Matlab, SigmaPlot); offer a structure education (train the trainer system) to the educators (specialized professionals offering practicum to the students).
14. Prepare a structure 'Guidance to Practical' with specific learning guidelines and learning activities, verification statements for practicum, practical assignments, nutrition /dietetic protocols and guidance for professional portfolio based to international guidelines
15. Consider offering complete experimental courses covering material from several theoretical principles within specific areas (e.g., dietetics, drug nutrient interaction, biochemistry and metabolism, biochemical processes).

The Members of the Committee

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