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

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT:
DEPARTMENT OF PLASTIC ARTS AND ART SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY:
THE UNIVERSITY OF IOANNINA



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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the **Department of Plastic Arts and Art Sciences** of **The University of Ioannina** consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Professor Emeritus, Rick M. Newton (Coordinator)
Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, USA

2. Professor Diane Katsiaficas
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota USA

3. Professor Dimitrios Kozaris
Accademia di Belle Arti di Milano, Brera, Italy

4. Professor Panayiotis Zaphiris
Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus

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

The External Evaluation Committee (henceforth: Committee) visited the Department of Plastic Arts and Art Sciences (henceforth: Department) on the campus of the University of Ioannina from 2 to 4 February 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 ADIP/HQA, as well as other materials which had been electronically submitted (Student Handbook, various tables). The Committee also had access to links from the University and Departmental website. During the on-site visit, furthermore, the Department Head provided additional materials (printouts and electronic versions of power-point presentations prepared by faculty, the departmental response to requests by ADIP for points of clarification arising from the Internal Evaluation Report). In addition, the Committee reviewed samples of student written work (undergraduate theses and projects, MA theses, doctoral dissertations, student journals from internships, papers) which were available in the teaching laboratories and faculty offices. The Committee also reviewed student creative activity (painting, sculpture, prints, photography, animation, multimedia projects) which were on display and in-progress in various studios and laboratories.

On the evening of 2 February, the Committee members were met at the airport by faculty members from the Internal Evaluation Committee and conveyed to their hotel. They were then welcomed at a dinner which included the Internal Evaluation Committee and the Department Head/Vice Rector (Professor Georgios Kapsalis).

On 3 February, the Committee attended a briefing from ADIP representative and former-Rector Professor Gerothanassis, in which the procedures and rationale for the evaluation were outlined and explained. The Committee was then transported to the campus of the University to meet the Rector (Professor Triantafyllos Albanis), the Vice Rector/Department Head, and the 19 full-time members (DEP) of the faculty. The Rector provided a brief history of the University of Ioannina and addressed the serious impact which the prolonged economic crisis was having on the entire university. The Department Head introduced the faculty members to the Committee, and the Committee explained the rationale for the on-campus visit. Four faculty

power-point presentations ensued, focusing on (1) the history and structure of the Department, (2) teaching, (3) research, and (4) outreach activities, colloquia, conferences, and exhibits. The Committee then met with the faculty in two separate discussion sessions, one with tenured faculty and the other with pre-tenure faculty. After these discussions, the Committee visited several studios (Painting, Printmaking, Photography), during which time they had the opportunity to meet with graduate students (5 MA students and 2 PhD candidates). Because the on-site visit took place while university examinations were in progress, the Committee was unable to meet formally with undergraduate students. Some students working in the studios, however, were available for informal conversations with the Committee members.

On 4 February, the Committee toured the Sculpture Studio, faculty offices in the Art Sciences sector, teaching laboratories, and classrooms. During these visits, the Committee members spoke individually with various faculty members and individual students. The Committee toured the University Library with the Department Head and the Library Director and, after a brief farewell visit with the Rector, proceeded to the Department's administrative offices to meet with the secretaries and administrative support staff. Concluding the on-campus tour, the Committee met amongst themselves and then with the Department Head and the members of the Internal Evaluation Committee to share their general impressions. A cordial farewell dinner was provided in the faculty dining room, attended by the Department Head, Internal Evaluation Committee members, and the director of the departmental secretarial staff. Throughout these activities, the Committee was courteously transported by the University's driver, Kostas.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The materials and documents which had been submitted in advance of the visit were informative, though very brief. Though not required, an English version or section summaries would have been useful, since the External Evaluation Committee formed by ADIP routinely includes academics from abroad.

The Committee believes that the on-site visit was the most useful, indeed essential, source of information. In particular, the person-to-person exchanges that took place in formal meetings and informal conversations established a healthy and open atmosphere for exchange of ideas and provided the most reliable foundation for a fair and accurate evaluation. The personal contact and in-depth information that arose from the on-site visit was especially beneficial in both supplementing and correcting impressions that had been left by the Internal Evaluation Report. Most, if not all faculty members and students who attended were open, forthcoming, and fully

participatory. The commitment of all faculty members to their specific disciplines and to their students became especially evident and prominent during the meetings, tours, and discussions.

The Committee also notes, however, that the time allotted by the schedule which had been mandated by ADIP imposed an undue burden and stress on both the Committee and the Department, potentially resulting in an evaluation that may not do full justice to this promising and impressive Department. The first full day, for example, extended to twelve uninterrupted hours and allowed the Committee no time to reflect and discuss among themselves. The second, and final, day was also overscheduled. If the Committee had been permitted to devote the amount of time normally allotted for such reviews (i.e., three full visiting days that include time to reflect and share impressions, followed by two days *in situ* to compose the External Evaluation Report), this evaluation may have been significantly stronger and more precise. The Committee also considers it unfortunate that no undergraduate students were available for formal consultation. As a result, this report lacks the all-important student voice.

A. Curriculum

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

APPROACH

What should be taken into consideration for this evaluation are the changes of character and structure of the original undergraduate (ptycheiakes), graduate (metaptycheiakes) and doctoral research programs. The department has gone through three different eras where it has redefined its academic goals. The curriculum has moved from one that focused primarily on the role history / art theory in the artistic creation to one that equally emphasizes the development of visual practice and the study of art history and theory. This is mentioned in p.6 in the internal evaluation of 2013.

The Department was established by Presidential Decree 85/2000 as the " Department of Art Sciences" and renamed the P.D.96/2003 to " Department of Plastic Arts and Art Sciences ".

In 2000 in the newborn Department, most of the courses were offered by the theoretical Department of the University of Ioannina. The initial core of visual courses was in the minority.

The change made in 2003 transformed the School towards one that also emphasized

visual art practice. This need came from the students' request to revise the study program.

This radical conversion brought structural changes in the curriculum. New disciplines were introduced. This meant new staff members and lecturers were hired who had creative specializations. This led to the initial autonomy of the Department. In 2006-007, two study directions were in place, 1. the direction of Visual and 2. the study of Art History and Theory (under the Ministerial Decision No.67344/V1/22-7-2009 (GG 1476 v. II) . Students now have the opportunity to choose one of these two directions. This direction is noted in the degree they receive from the Department of Plastic Arts and Art Sciences. (p.7)

After completing the compulsory core courses, students follow one of the two directions of the department. They chose art historical and theoretical subjects in order to build directions in their creative art studies. (Study Guide p.5)

Since late 2010, a third group of courses have been added and permanent professors hired. These courses are in the fields of photography, video art, installation, public art, museology, and curatorial studies. These courses broaden students' training by providing both new technical and artistic knowledge and enriching artistic contemporary creation.

During this time, the bulk of the visual faculty members was elected by professors of the School of Fine Arts in Athens and Thessaloniki. Thus the educational staff of TPET was mainly determined by professors from other schools. Today, the faculty works independently of these two institutions for its coordination and decision-making. To date, because there is no full professor of art in the department, the chair has been a professor who comes from another faculty of the University of Ioannina .

The University of Ioannina has embraced TPET and has helped in a multiple way by providing logistical and organizational support management. The students enjoy all the benefits of student welfare that the university offers (accommodation, food , sport etc.) .

Studies are in line with the goals of preparing students to actively participate in art disciplines either as practicing artists or as art historians/ theoreticians. Graduates of the School exhibit works with distinction and success in high caliber artistic institutions within Greece and abroad. Some continue their studies at the postgraduate level in the visual arts and as art historians / theoretical researchers at doctoral level.

Studies emphasize the idea of developing autonomy, mobility and adaptability in order to invent or create new jobs and work patterns. In a meeting with graduate students, an example of this entrepreneurship was revealed. Students have started to cooperate with a local museum in Ioannina to create applications (software / interface) for virtual visits to exhibitions.

In regards to future employment, the goals outlined in the study guide, prepare graduates of TPTET to be able to teach art in secondary schools and to move into auxiliary positions in the field of culture as specialized consultants or trustees of institutions. The bachelor degree is viewed as a mandatory and necessary asset in being able to enter into positions in public education even at a time when the economic crisis has brought enormous cuts to public education.

It is necessary for contemporary artists to become familiar with multimedia promotional tools that are available online. For this reason, priority should be given to general multimedia training and project support for every student, regardless of their direction, as well as for the multimedia promotion of the department. The website of the Department offers enough evidence and information to the student for the educational levels but it needs development. This is an ideal place for the showcasing student work, including stand alone works, short excerpts of movies and interactive applications.

It is notable that integrated into the program are courses in museology. These courses have practical application for exhibition design from concept to organization, exhibition management and events' management and for the creation of promotional materials (catalogs, leaflets, press releases, etc). This is excellent preparation for a young artist.

Good communication among artistic and theoretical disciplines exist across the department. Students study with all faculty. The committee viewed this as a positive aspect of the curriculum.

Some courses that are part of the same laboratory courses are taught through modules. For example, the sculpture laboratory is divided into two modules during the first two years of foundation studies. The aim is to teach idea development as well as skills with diverse materials. In the following two years encourage experimentation in the development of 3D forms. In this manner, traditional studies are combined with innovation through critical discussions engaging means and materials.

The coexistence of theoretical and art historical studies, contemporary visual art and multimedia engagement provide the necessary skills, knowledge, and creative experience for students. The collaborative environment among faculty encourages experimentation and synthetic thinking.

Concerns that need addressing:

1. Reassessment of when courses are offered:

a. Some courses need to be taught in the initial semesters. Just as technology courses are taught in the first semester, photography needs to be offered in the 2nd. Semester (not the 5th semester as it is presently.)

b. The multimedia direction needs enhancement. It is suggested that new courses be developed in multimedia technologies, programming, computer assembly, artificial intelligence, and Arduino. (Arduino is an open-source electronics prototyping platform based on flexible, easy-to-use hardware and software. It's intended for creating interactive objects or environments.)

c. It was not clear where and in which course website design is occurring.

2. In addition to Drawing/ Painting and Sculpture, it is recommended that a 3rd direction in Mixed Media / Technology be developed.

3. A peculiarity of the Department in relation to the School of Fine Arts is the fact that students are selected through the Panhellenic exams (without being examined on drawing/design portfolios). As a result, the implementation of a preparatory year needs to be organized for students who want to pursue visual arts in order to help them acquire basic knowledge on history and design. This applies to about 80 % of the total number of students.

4. Facilities: It is strongly suggested that in the immediate future, a well equipped laboratory for shooting video be established to cover the multiple needs for different courses like video installation and performance. This needs to include good lighting, background for alpha channels and all necessary cables, monitors, etc.).

IMPLEMENTATION

See above

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?

See above

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved?
- Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?

See above

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

The Department has a pedagogic policy that is guided by the clearly defined curriculum required of students and the multidisciplinary talents and practice of each of the faculty. The faculty are dedicated teachers, each attuned to their personal strengths within their individual areas of interest and stretching themselves to create multidisciplinary engagements for their students.

There are two faculty cores in the plastic arts: (1) drawing/painting and (2) sculpture. Other multimedia practices include a range of printmaking approaches (woodblock, etching, drypoint, lithography, collagraph), silver and digital photography, 2D digital experiments, time-based investigations that include video, multimedia installations and studies in animated movement.

In the history of art and theoretical discourse, a strong foundation is laid for students to pursue either a direction as art historians or theoreticians, or to support a knowledgeable framework for practicing artists.

A variety of approaches to art practice and teaching methods is used. This includes lectures, demonstrations, individual and group discussions/critiques of art work among faculty and students.

There are 19 full time teaching faculty and 684 active students for an official faculty to student ratio of 1: 36. Given the Greek practice, however, of optional class attendance, the actual ratio may prove considerably smaller.

- Teacher/student collaboration

What is clearly apparent is that this is a faculty who engage with each other and their students. This is a faculty interested in supporting the maturation of their students. To this end, faculty and students work with each other on a regular and significant basis. Neither students nor faculty are isolated in individual studios based on the particular specialization of an individual. Rather, there appears to be a healthy, investigative rapport that encourages the development of basic foundation techniques and skills, developing the ability of students to experiment across media and disciplines.

- Adequacy of means and resources

There are good facilities and ample space. Studios, offices and classrooms are spread out over the campus. Most studios have both natural light and incandescent lighting. The Rector and the Vice-Rector/Department Head are clearly receptive and supportive of the need for more space, especially for upper-level undergraduates and graduate students.

What is seriously needed is the building of a single facility that will house the entire School of Fine Arts, including the administrative and support staff. A large, well-situated area of land on campus has already been designated. This would allow the cross fertilization of ideas and interdisciplinary dialogues among the faculty and students of this recently restructured Department. The present physical dispersion of faculty and facilities across the campus is not conducive to the creation of a clear Departmental identity that combines the practice and theory of art.

An additional concern of the Committee is for the health and safety of faculty and students. Good practice in line with national and international standards needs to be implemented and enforced for faculty and students alike. Students should be made aware of health hazards and become respectful of good practices for the betterment of all.

The Department is obliged to give serious consideration to the following issues:

1. A no-smoking policy within all facilities must be firmly enforced.
2. Use of safety equipment is imperative when using power tools. Safety goggles and protective ear plugs are essential. The use of equipment without such safety measures must not be allowed.
3. Ventilation of all studio spaces must be brought up to international standards.
4. Painting/drawing and sculpture studios must be regularly cleaned. Recyclable materials must be identified. Garbage containers must be regularly emptied.

In general, the responsibility for maintaining studios needs to be part of preparing students for exemplary professional practice.

5. Hazardous waste must be disposed of according to international safety standards, and hazardous working materials must be properly stored and handled.
6. Dedicated storage space for past projects must be allocated.
7. The provision of flexible project spaces for students, as currently established by the Department, needs to be further expanded to include studio space for final projects (undergraduate and postgraduate).
8. Office spaces for the creative arts faculty must be established to provide for one-on-one conferences and meetings with students.

Technical support for artists is imperative both for implementation of all of the above recommendations.

- Use of information technologies

Although there is a clear attempt to engage with information technologies, further support is needed. This includes:

- Knowledgeable and dedicated technical support.
- More equipment (e.g. 3D printers, 2D and 3D scanners, a laser cutter for etching and cutting of materials, high-definition digital cameras, drawing tablets, better digital printing facilities, digital sewing machine, digital vinyl cutter, a dedicated server for developing and showcasing student projects) will provide a better environment for research collaborations and outputs.
- Regularly updating of all software.
- Strong wifi signals within studios and classrooms.

The Departmental website does not adequately reflect the vitality and energy of the faculty and students. Attention needs to be given to redesigning the website with a user-friendly focus and to making it more informative, lively and visually appealing. Links to pages featuring undergraduate creative activities, images of faculty and their research, and alumni achievements should be included in this re-design. This upgraded website and use of social media should serve significant roles in an overall Departmental promotion strategy to advertise the many strengths of the faculty and the student body.

- Examination system

The examination system is well established and appropriate for the specific disciplines. Students majoring in art history and theory submit written examinations,

reports and papers that reflect strong research skills. This submission includes an oral defense and public presentation. Students majoring in creative arts exhibit and defend their work before faculty and peers. This work reveals a dedicated curiosity and exploration in line with contemporary practice.

As for student evaluations of teaching, no summary of student evaluations was provided to the Committee. Furthermore it is noted that only 5% of the undergraduate students completed the evaluation questionnaires.

The ERASMUS program is currently more attractive for Greek students to go to Europe than it is for other European students to come to Ioannina. On the one hand, the Department requires two-years of foreign language study. This includes impressive English language instruction in art terminology which enables students to go abroad. On the other hand, because all undergraduate courses are necessarily offered only in Greek, it remains less appealing for European students to come to this Department.

A particular strength of the Department is their Internship program. This provides students with invaluable training and experience in professional venues that can lead to future career opportunities. A review of the journals kept by the students during their internships indicates high enthusiasm and engagement. Currently these internships are funded by an EU project that imposes many restrictions and limits on the number of eligible interns. Given that student demand exceeds the current supply and availability of internships, the committee urges the University explore avenues to expand these opportunities.

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

All criteria concerning implementation are already addressed in the above section.

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?

The Department currently provides a strong foundation in both theory and practice.

The curriculum is very clearly defined but it is also imposing. Greater flexibility is suggested so that students may take electives earlier on in their studies. For example: allow a student to take photography or other multimedia electives earlier in their program.

The curriculum is demanding. The four-year model, in particular, imposes restrictions on this particular undergraduate fine art programs, resulting in a misalignment of this program with other schools of fine arts in Greece. In actuality, most students require a fifth year to create and complete their final project/exhibition. Expansion of the program to five years is strongly recommended.

The Department appears to be very proud of the success of their students in a wide range of endeavors within the arts. Faculty stay in touch with their alumni.

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?
- What initiatives does it take in this direction?

The Department faculty are clearly devoted to their disciplines and their students. They are open to suggestions for improvement. The biggest obstacles, which are beyond faculty control at this point, are:

1. Budgetary cutbacks have resulted in a hiatus in hiring both faculty and technical staff.
2. Bureaucratic delays preclude the advancement of faculty in rank.
3. The university does not currently house the Department in a single unified location.

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

The Department is multidisciplinary, including (1) academics from theoretical areas of art who publish their work in traditional research venues and (2) visual artists whose research manifests itself in a variety of approaches (drawings/paintings, sculptures, video art, multimedia outputs, installations, photographs, printmaking, etc). This research activity includes the supervision of MA and PhD students in the distinct areas of faculty specializations, particularly within art history and theory.

The Department lacks a clearly articulated long-term strategy as well as an internal process for assessing research activity. This lack of clarity is not uncommon in art departments in which faculty pursue diverse objectives. It is highly recommended that, through the identification of good international examples, the Department establish its own benchmarks as to what constitutes creative activity and research and how they are assessed.

IMPLEMENTATION

- How does the Department promote and support research?
- Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

The Department does not provide dedicated research labs. Teaching studios and teaching computer labs house the creative activity of faculty who are practicing artists, while the bulk of research conducted by faculty of art theory and history takes place in traditional office spaces.

The absence of financial support for attending conferences, art festivals and seminars creates an obstacle for the exposure of faculty to international art trends and developments.

Informal conversations with individual faculty members revealed that some external funding for theoretical and applied research has been secured in the past. Such information was not forthcoming either in the written internal evaluation report or in formal discussions and presentations by the faculty. While the Committee lauds these accomplishments, it also urges the Department to become more transparent and assertive in publicizing these research successes.

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.

In addition to research published in traditional written venues (including peer and non-peer reviewed journals and conferences), the faculty is engaged in creative activity that has resulted in numerous colloquia, symposia, seminars, lecture series, workshops, and exhibitions (including individual and group). Many of these workshops and exhibitions are highly collaborative, involving faculty and students both from this Department and other universities.

Given the size of the faculty, however, the Committee considers the aggregate number of publications (i.e. traditional publications and creative activity) somewhat inconsistent and low in quantity. For example, there is a 7 year gap (2006-2013) in organized seminars and a 3 year gap in organized colloquia. In addition, the Department's presentation of research detailed only the numbers of publications and events, without detailing content or venues. The Committee recommends that the Department identify and articulate its own research mission and objectives.

IMPROVEMENT

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

Because national and international recognition of faculty and departments is critical to the reputation of all academic and creative arts departments, the university should aggressively explore ways of providing the faculty and graduate students with adequate funds for attending and presenting work at international conferences and exhibits.

To cultivate and strengthen the Department's research culture, the Committee recommends the following:

1. Further encourage research collaborations among faculty across disciplinary lines to bring art historical research, theoretical analysis and creative activity into better alignment.
2. Encourage the development of research seminars for MA and PhD students to present and discuss their work in order to establish a more visible graduate student culture within the department.

The Committee recommends that, at a minimum, the University provide all needed financial and technical support for upgrading and maintaining teaching/research software and hardware. Providing small but useful research equipment (3D printers, 3D scanners, cameras, kinects, arduinos etc) will provide a better environment for research collaborations and outputs. The University and the Department need to reach out to the local business community, institutions and government to secure funding for such activities. For example, last year's sculpture symposium received generous support from local marble suppliers.

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?

The Department views the various administrative services provided to the faculty as satisfactory. At the moment, the Department has three administrative staff (one being the head of administration services) and 2 teaching support staff (who also provide teaching support to laboratory sessions). Most administrative procedures are processed electronically, although procedures remain complex due to constraints imposed by the law and the absence of locally adapted policies.

The University offers free housing and board to students with financial needs even to the point of securing local hotel space after dormitories are filled to capacity. The University also offers extracurricular activities through numerous clubs and societies. Although examinations, various exercises, and computer laboratory participation are required, student class attendance is poor because it remains optional. This is a common problem in all Greek Universities.

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.).

The administrative staff are well trained. The Committee was informed that students in need of personal counselling services (e.g., psychological or disability assistance, emotional stress management, etc.) are served by a university advising service which has qualified personnel on staff. In addition, the University has a strong

infrastructure of services, including career advising and placement, a gymnasium, a center for Greek studies and language, etc. The University Library provides an impressive collection of books and journals, digital and hard copies of student theses and dissertations, and ample reading spaces and computer stations. A free wi-fi network exists on campus and at the Library, and ongoing access to computer labs and art studios for coursework and project work is provided.

Discussion with the faculty and the graduate students, however, revealed that there is a serious shortage of books pertaining to the creative arts in general. The committee verified this through its tour of the library.

The University of Ioannina appropriately prides itself on being a full-service campus.

RESULTS

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

The Committee finds that the support services work well and effectively. The Department expressed a similar opinion and seems to be generally satisfied with the support provided. Interviews with the students and secretarial staff confirmed these impressions.

IMPROVEMENTS

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

The Department needs to put more emphasis on documenting and following the employability and future careers of its alumni. Examples of successes and recognition among its alumni have been mentioned to the Committee but these remain anecdotal without yet a system for monitoring these issues in place.

Technical support staff for art studios is currently inadequate. The Committee urges that, with university support, the department identify and hire technicians who are also artists within the needed specialties.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

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

The Department's initiatives include organization of social events, educational excursions, local art exhibitions and other activities. Connection with business and industry exists through the internship program, and graduate theses and dissertations display ties with the local community. The Department's presentation of outreach activities included an impressive video demonstrating the impact of arts on various aspects of society, such as art therapy for autistic children in Epirus. The Committee encourages these outreach efforts both in order to expose the Department to society at large and to provide important cultural and educational services to the community.

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.

Inhibiting factors on the state level include the severe and ongoing reduction of funding that negatively impacts all aspects of University education throughout Greece. In addition, legislative instability has created an environment in which departments and faculty members are left in limbo concerning programmatic development and professional advancement (tenure track hirings, promotions, and replacement of faculty lines). Faculty are understandably reluctant to formulate and articulate long-term strategic plans in such an environment.

On the University level, the Department of Plastic Arts and Art Sciences is a relatively new creation which grew in part out of economic and legislative exigencies. Although the University is supportive of the School of Fine Arts and the currently single department that comprises it, financial and legislative blockades impede the University from bringing this supportive spirit into fruition. The name of the Department is itself problematic. "Plastic Arts" implies 3D representations; "Art Sciences" implies applied arts and design which are not present in the actual curriculum.

At the Departmental level, the faculty see themselves as successfully coexisting, despite the fact that they represent two distinct cores of academics, namely art

history/theory and fine arts. The faculty face a particular challenge in advancing this current state of coexistence into a dynamic of intradepartmental collaboration in which they establish their own identity and mission. In particular, the strength of this department lies in its newness and its combination of academic and creative talents. The challenge lies in self-definition of this unit as an interdisciplinary, and not only multidisciplinary, force.

During interviews with tenured and pre-tenured faculty, the question, “Where do you see yourselves as a Department in the next 5-10 years?”, generated apathetic and dispirited responses which the Committee attributes to external governmental/political impediments. Nevertheless, the faculty expressed enthusiastic hopes for the development of a 5-year undergraduate major that would bring their program into alignment with other Greek Schools of Art. They also expressed a desire for relocation into their own building, for which plans have already been developed.

The fact that the Department is not “autonomous” and, since its inception, has been governed by heads from disciplines outside the arts has resulted in a faculty that has yet to take the initiative and determine its own future.

The Committee is fully aware of and sympathetic to the difficulties facing all Greek universities during this protracted period of economic uncertainty and legislative instability. Such a context should neither, however, exonerate institutions and programs from their responsibility to engage in long-term and short-term planning, nor should it dishearten them from articulating future aspirations, especially as they sustain the hope that the currently extreme difficulties will eventually abate and reverse. Such planning, therefore, will assist all educators and administrators in managing the continuing or even possibly worsening difficulties and in positioning them to move forward in a proactive manner when the situation finally improves. As the saying goes, “We plan for the worst but we hope the best.” It is with this spirit that the Committee makes the recommendations which appear in section F.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

In the above sections of this report the Committee has described in considerable detail the many strengths of this Departments in all areas of evaluation. Below is a summary of the key strengths and areas for further improvement.

Strong points:

- The Department is relatively new. Its progress to date is dynamic. The potential for further growth and expansion, especially in the area of interdisciplinary, is very promising.
- Two distinct academic cores currently co-exist within a harmonious academic unit.
- Ample studio space and good University facilities exists.
- Excellent student-faculty relations and collaborations are evident.
- Excellent quality of student work is reflected in student projects which are informed by the study of art history and theory.
- An excellent undergraduate internship program is in place.
- The Department has demonstrated strong outreach activities connecting the arts with the community.
- Students maintain a close and consistent working relationship with all faculty.
- The faculty have a genuine student focus and demonstrate a clear commitment to their disciplines.
- The Department offers courses in English language and terminology in specialized contexts.

Areas for improvement:

- The Department has yet to establish its own singular identity and mission.
- The Department is housed in scattered facilities.
- Dedicated studios for senior undergraduate and all graduate students are missing.
- There is limited technical support in the labs and the studios.
- There is an ongoing need for upgrades of essential software and digital hardware
- Safety and health deficiencies must be addressed and corrected.
- Given the activity of the Department, its level of publicity and outreach can be significantly strengthened.
- The Department should significantly strengthen its Web presence. A dedicated server is needed.
- The currently low enrolment in the Masters program needs to be addressed.
- A strong Departmental alumni outreach system should be instituted to track students' successes and to build a documented record that can be useful for future reviews.

- The undergraduate curriculum which now focuses on two artistic concentrations (Painting/Drawing, Sculpture) needs to add a third (Multimedia).
- Flexibility in curriculum with more electives will leave space for students to experiment within their studies.
- Departmental criteria for research and creative activity assessment need to be defined.
- The undergraduate program needs to be redesigned as a 5-year course of study consistent with art schools throughout Greece.
- The Department should institute a practice of regular program review and update in order to remain current and innovative.
- The library holdings need expansion (printed books, electronic resources and DVDs).
- The University should provide substantial increase in funds for organizing conferences and for travel and attendance at international events.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname	Signature
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