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ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
**H.Q.A.A.**  
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY  
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

## **EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS

February 10, 2014

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### **External Evaluation Committee**

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Business Administration Department of the University of Patras consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

Professor Spyros Economides (Coordinator)  
California State University, East Bay, USA

Professor Andreas Efstathiades  
European University Cyprus, Cyprus

Professor Maria Michailidis  
University of Nicosia, Cyprus

Professor John Tsalikis  
Florida International University, Miami, USA

The Evaluation took place from 27 to 29 January 2014

**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 **EEC** or equivalently, **the Committee**) received the first document of the Department’s Internal Evaluation Report (**IER**) on January 20, 2014 before the visit to the Department of Business Administration (henceforth **DBusAdmin**, or equivalently **The Department**) of the University of Patras. The Committee was extremely impressed with the effort that was apparently devoted by the **OMEA** (Internal Evaluation Committee, *Ομάδα Εσωτερικής Αξιολόγησης*) and all other members of the Department faculty to prepare the **IER** (Internal Evaluation Report) with the material for the EEC Review. Moreover, the material was very well organized and professionally presented. It reflected most issues and areas of interest that were discussed and debated during the meetings.

The material included:

- The Department’s IER (including tables with statistics on research productivity, average grades of graduating students, list of courses offered at various degree programs etc.) as well as the procedures used for gathering, assessing and presenting the information.
- An assembly of all the Department’s Power Point presentations relative to all main aspects of the departmental structure and organization including but not limited to personnel, facilities and the activities of teaching and research.

As the meetings progressed and as clarification questions came up, the Department responded by gathering, printing and distributing on the spot the requested information and/or clarifications.

After an overview and orientation meeting at the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (HQAA) offices, the Committee visited the Department Monday through Wednesday 27-29/1/2014. Upon arrival to the University campus location, late Monday afternoon, the Committee members were met by the Chair of the Department (Πρόεδρος του Τμήματος), Dr. C. Siriopoulos and Dr. Ioannis Giannikos, the OMEA coordinator. A meeting between the EEC members, most of the departmental faculty members, the Department Vice President Leonidas Maroudas, the university MODIP members (Professors Dimitrios Vergidis, Nikolaos Karamanos, Athanasios Karalis, Konstantinos Ververides and Konstantinos Stathopoulos), Vice Rectors Pantelis Kiprianos and Joan Daouli as well as the University Rector George Panayotakis followed immediately.

Rector Panayotakis welcomed the EEC members indicating his appreciation for the time and

effort they devoted for the assessment process and touched upon some general issues of concern for the University as they relate to the functions of the Department. His main comments touched upon the legally mandated governmental regulations as well as the budgetary cuts that have affected negatively the academic institutions nationwide. Specifically he expressed his concern regarding the approximate 50% reduction of the university budget and the mandated layoffs, especially to the administrative personnel that resulted in a significant operational handicap accompanied by extended strikes of the affected administrative personnel categories. Finally, he expressed the same concern as the Department administration for the unreasonable lead time that exists between the election of a new faculty member and his/her official hiring, thus, often resulting in the loss of the new faculty member mainly to a foreign institution.

As it pertains to the Department, the Rector mentioned that it is one of the first that initiated the process leading up to the assessment and that the Department plays an important supportive role for the university acting as an in house management consultant. He stated his opinion that the Department is recognized as a producer of a significant research work within the university in spite of the heavy workload carried by its faculty in other areas of duties and responsibilities. He also mentioned the upcoming reorganization of a number of departments into a School and the creation of the position of a Dean, as it is mandated by the new legislation for educational reform. The **DBusAdmin** will soon be part of a school including the departments of Economics (Οικονομικών Επιστημών), Administration and Management of Agricultural and Food Products (Διοίκησης Αγροτικών Προϊόντων και Τροφίμων), and Management of Cultural Environment and New Technologies (Διαχείρισης Πολιτισμικού Περιβάλλοντος και Νέων Τεχνολογιών).

Next in the agenda was an extensive meeting between the EEC and the faculty of the department. A presentation by the Department Chair, Professor Siriopoulos touched upon a wide range of issues of interest such as:

- The declaration of the three principles adopted and pursued by the Department:
  - Excellence
  - Continuous assessment for improvement
  - Emphasis on promoting entrepreneurship
- A brief introduction of the Department's academic staff (ΔΕΠ)
- The methodology, application, use and interpretation of student evaluations as well as a wealth of statistical data on student enrollments and faculty/student ratios which have been significantly increased due to the Greek economic crisis and the ensuing austerity measures
- A self-assessment of the Department's academic staff research interests and output based on data compiled over time
- A detailed description of each educational program (undergraduate, post graduate and doctoral) accompanied by a description of each course cluster ( Marketing, Economics / Finance , Quantitative Methods and MIS, Support Courses) of the undergraduate program, including individual course descriptions and designations (core or elective)
- A detailed description of the postgraduate (MBA) and Doctoral Programs including program objectives, a list of active Doctoral students, employment history after graduation, publications, conference participation and other vital statistics.

The second day of meetings started with a presentation of the infrastructures in support of teaching activities. The infrastructure categories presented included teaching room facilities, a departmental student reading and lounging facility, laboratory facilities and hardware,

software and other computer based platforms for managing and delivering educational material and facilitating professor /student interaction.

A series of presentations followed, in which one faculty representative from each identifiable, informal research interest group (Marketing, Management, Economics/Finance/Accounting, Business Administration and MIS, Quantitative Methods, Support Courses) presented an overview of the research interest team's objectives, activities, main pursuits, focus and related results as they pertain to teaching methodology, courses offered, teaching support tools available, list of graduate and doctoral students, research and publishing interests and activity, participation in research programs, collaboration with other University of Patras departments or departments of other institutions, professional employment and advancement of the graduates. Finally, future improvements and enhancements, goals and strategy as well as perceived weakness were discussed for each research interest group. It must be noted that the designation of the research interest groups closely corresponds to the undergraduate program clusters.

The third day meetings started with a visit to the Department's administrative center composed of a three women employees, one of which is the newly hired secretary, one other being on a maternity leave and two male employees on renewable contracts. Two former employees were victims of the recently mandated government layoffs resulting in an understaffed and overworked administrative support unit serving approximately 1100 students of all academic programs and an academic staff of about 18. After a brief presentation by the secretary regarding the organization and the duties and the issues of the department, the EEC members listened to their concerns, the most important ones being the overload, lack of computerization, low wages and job insecurity, in spite of which they indicated their allegiance and dedication to the Department.

The most interesting of the meetings for the EEC was probably a simultaneous session with randomly selected students grouped together in their respective undergraduate, post graduate and doctoral programs. There was an open, candid exchange of information between the EEC members and the students during which a number of issues, concerns, as well as useful feedback were voiced by the students.

The student responses and feedback to the associated questions imposed by the EEC members were as follows:

- The undergraduate students would like to see student residence halls on campus
- The undergraduate students would like for the department to adjust its course offerings more often as needed to adjust to the employment market demand for professional skills. However, they are satisfied with the quality and breadth of their study programs
- The undergraduate students are not happy with the criteria used to place them in the university department and a career path that is not of their choice but they recognize that this is due to the national educational system and not university related.
- All students look favorably at the external evaluation of their department
- All students are satisfied with their academic workload
- All students are very satisfied with the personal and professional relationship they have with their professors and supervisors
- The undergraduate students favor and are satisfied with the assignment of research oriented course projects

- All students would like to see the adoption of a reasonable number of seminar like sessions to acquire knowledge regarding the principles and practices of research methodology
- The undergraduate students would like to have more training and exposure regarding the use of tools, such as software applications, directly applicable to potential professional tasks.
- All students are pleased with the emphasis placed by the department on quantitative courses rather than on qualitative courses. In fact, a number of students stated that that was a reason for choosing to enroll in the Department
- A number of undergraduate students stated they feel that their affiliation with the department greatly enhances their prospect to pursue a graduate degree.
- A number of undergraduate students would like to see extended library hours and a canteen more accessible relative to the location of the Department. They feel that their department is somewhat isolated as far as student activity and social life is concerned compared to other departments in the university
- The graduate students like of course the fact that the department is one of the very few of its kind that does not require tuition fees but if reasonable fees were to be imposed they would still choose this department to pursue their graduate studies. They feel that the department's reputation in the job market is very good.
- The undergraduate students would like to see smaller size classes, more computer laboratory facilities and more responsive administrative services
- Concerning the teacher evaluation practices, the undergraduate students stated that they do not feel that the feedback they provide leads to tangible improvements or at least they do not know the eventual use and handling of the results. They would like to see a 'Comment' or 'Opinion' section incorporated in the evaluation form that is being used
- The graduate students feel that the professors adapt the course content to the job market trends even though they recognize that the Department does not have the authority to modify the graduate program course set.
- A number of graduate students feel that the department has a wealth of knowledge that is not propagated adequately to benefit the business and industrial community, a cooperation and communication link that needs to be strengthened.
- The graduate students are very satisfied with the guidance, supervision and working relationship they have with their faculty mentors and appreciate the time that the professors devote to the relationship.
- Some graduate students stated that the reason for choosing this Department for their graduate degree, the Doctoral degree in particular, was to enhance their chances to pursue an academic career abroad. This in effect is an indirect testimony for the excellence of the department. At the end of the session, both sides thanked each other for the time devoted and openness demonstrated during the session.

The final day of the EEC visit was devoted mainly to touring and inspecting various university facilities such as the library, the conference center, the gymnasium and others. The visit concluded with a farewell meeting at the Rectors office with the presence of a Vice Rector, representatives of the university MODIP Committee and members of the Department faculty and its Chair. In a very congenial atmosphere, the Rector expressed his appreciation and thanks for the EEC's work and the EEC assured the audience that they will do their best to make their assessment fair and constructive.

## **II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure**

The production of the IER by the Department followed the required procedure. The IER was



of high quality, complete, informative and contained the material necessary for the external evaluation. All relevant documents included numerous tables of statistical information presented in a well-structured and professional manner. The IER coordinator, Professor John Giannicos provided a 2012-2013 updated IER and during the discussions he supplemented with more recent updates produced on demand. The **Committee concluded that the Department has met the objectives of the internal evaluation process with exemplary professionalism.**

## **A. Curriculum**

### **UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

#### **APPROACH**

The goal of the undergraduate program in Business Administration is to contribute to the development of high qualified managers according to international standards and practices. The aim is to develop business managers reinforced with the theoretical and practical background that is needed to adapt to the rapidly changing and evolving business environment.

The fulfillment of this goal is achieved not only through the design of the curriculum but through the organization of additional educational events such as workshops, internships, conferences etc. In addition to substantive knowledge, through this program students acquire skills and competences that enable them to work in both private and public sector organizations and also proceed with further studies.

The curriculum has undergone some modifications from the original one. At the beginning the program was structured in four concentrations namely:

Management / Human resources Management / Marketing  
 Finance/ financial economics  
 Technology management and MIS  
 Services Management

At the early stages and until 2004 the department offered a large number of elective courses covering all the four concentrations. Due to budgetary constraints and the gradual reduction of faculty members it was impossible for the department to offer enough elective courses so as to ensure the offering of the four concentrations.

The first modification to the program has been done during the academic year 2004- 2005. The attempt was to remove the offering of the concentrations through the reduction of the number of elective courses. Additional modifications have been performed on the core courses and the remained elective ones. In the following years (2004-2013) minor modifications on the course structure have been developed. Final modifications to the program have been done in May 2013 that are implemented in the running academic year (2013-2014).

The Department has in place a procedure for curriculum design and revision. It involves an “academic program committee” which is comprised by both faculty and student representatives. The last revision, which took place in May 2013, has been done by the “academic program committee” of the Department and the revisions were approved by the General Assembly. Within this curriculum, the Department actively seeks and attracts students with high potential.

The program as has been developed and operates is comprised of 48 courses or 46 courses plus a final project work. Course wise 2 courses could be substituted by the final project. Specifically students should attend 40 core courses and 8 electives or 40 core courses, 6

electives plus a final project work. There are no concentrations. Students can select elective courses from any discipline. The courses are taught by well qualified academic staff most of whom are research active in the courses they teach.

The department operates an internship scheme on a voluntary basis where almost half of the eligible students take advantage of it. This safeguards the practical orientation of the course giving the opportunity to the students to expose themselves in a real business environment and thus helping their employability. The internship scheme is not incorporated in the curriculum since it is on a voluntary basis. The program is considered as a quantitatively oriented program giving to the students all the necessary tools to function in a highly competitive environment. This is considered as a major strength of the curriculum as seen by the students and as a result attracts high quality students with quantitative background. Considering the structure of Greek organizations (Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's) and their problems, it is felt that this orientation gives to the students increased employment opportunities.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The structure and the implementation of the Program is consistent with the fulfillment of the intended goals and objectives. The syllabi of the taught courses are up to date and comparable with equivalent courses of reputable universities. The Program is clearly described on the web site of the Department and brochures, thus it is effectively communicated to various audiences, including students, staff and visiting academics, employers and prospective students. The aims and objectives of the curriculum in the published material could be possibly elaborated a little further.

The Program's international orientation is strengthened by participation in the ERASMUS exchange Program, the European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students. During the academic year 2012-2013 the number of intake students where 18 while the number of outgoing students is on average 10 per year. The Department plans to offer courses in English in an effort to facilitate the incoming ERASMUS students.

This program is considered as an intensive highly quantitative curriculum, while the highly qualified faculty members safeguard the proper delivery of the courses. The problem is the on-going reduction of the faculty members, teaching the courses. This increases the work load of faculty members (62 students/ faculty member). This ratio is considered as very high that might affect the quality of service that is given to the students and might have implications on the time left for research by faculty members.

The number of teaching staff is 18 with total active students of 1133 (including undergraduate and post graduate students).

There is an urgent need for recruitment to replace lost staff. Yet recruitment is frozen due to budgetary constraints.

### **RESULTS**

Student evaluation survey results that were made available to us, and meetings that the EEC had with the students, provided convincing evidence that the curriculum is regarded

positively by its students. It enjoys high demand, requires relatively high number of points to be achieved in the Panhellenic entrance examinations and as a result attracts highly capable students. Its graduates are appreciated by Greek employers (especially local). Of course the recession in the Greek economy has negatively affected the employability of the recent graduates. There is also evidence that students of this program find internships and employment abroad. Some students continue their studies in reputable universities worldwide.

Concluding, it is the opinion of the EEC that the Department is achieving the goals and objectives it has set for this curriculum program in terms of providing the students with the skills and knowledge required to satisfy their needs and consequently the needs of the economy.

### **IMPROVEMENT**

The design of the curriculum and its implementation is considered as fulfilling the objectives set although the objectives are not clear in the published material. The department modifies the curriculum on an on-going basis. Some suggestions and recommendations are listed in section F of this report.

### **POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)**

#### **APPROACH**

The Department offers only one post graduate concentration in the area of Business Administration (MBA). The aim of the MBA program as stated in the presentation material forwarded to the EEC is:

- (a) To promote research in the respective areas and
- (b) To develop professionals so as to fill gaps in the economy ( public and private organizations)

The specific objectives of the program are:

- Develop professionals to cover the needs in the private and public organizations
- Develop professionals to promote entrepreneurship and innovation in the business community
- Equip students with the necessary skills so as to pursue research and proceed with further studies (PhD)
- Upgrade the skills and knowledge of professional managers

These goals are achieved by a proper selection of students with high potential and by offering research-led and practice relevant courses. The program attracts students from relatively large number of other Greek universities. The entry qualifications are restricted to Business, Science and Engineering degree holders. Nearly 20% of the students are graduates of the undergraduate program of this university. The majority of the students 64% are working students while the 68% are working in the private sector.

The duration of the program is 4 semesters comprised of 10 core courses, 4 electives and the final thesis. The total number of elective courses that could be offered is only 11. As mentioned in the IER of the department the number of elective courses offered is 7. The

above limitation is enforced due to resource limitations, mainly reduced number of faculty members. The reduction in the number of elective courses offered makes the program more rigid. All the courses are offered utilizing departmental resources.

Generally the program is considered as a quantitatively oriented program reflecting the background of the majority of the faculty members of the department. This study program equips the students with all the necessary tools to compete in a highly competitive environment and gives them the necessary knowledge and skills to continue for further studies, an implied intent of the program. The quantitative orientation of the program is considered by most graduate students as a major strength and as a result attracts high quality students with quantitative background. Considering the structure of Greek organizations (Small and Medium Enterprises) and their problems, this orientation gives an increased employability opportunity. Due to legal constraints enforced by law (ΦΕΚ) and the low number of faculty members the structure of the program cannot be updated. Since 2008 no modifications on the structure have been materialized. As a result there is no official monitoring procedure that takes feedback from the results of the implementation of the program so as to adjust the curriculum accordingly. There are no tuition fees for the students attending the graduate program. On the contrary students attending MBA programs in the majority of the other state universities of the country do pay fees. This no tuition fee policy characteristic of the program is considered as a cost advantage but on the other hand is a disadvantage in the sense that the program cannot serve as a badly needed revenue source to enhance the program goals and operation. One of the recommendations in section E of this report, is for the Department to explore the possibility of adopting tuition fees for the graduate program(s).

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The structure and the implementation of the Program is consistent with the fulfillment of the intended goals and objectives of the Department. There is ample documentation on all Programs informing students, prospective students, staff and potential employers. Again, the published information regarding the objectives of the graduate program(s) should be more coherent and stated more clearly.

This program is considered as an intensive, highly quantitative in nature, while the highly qualified faculty members safeguard the proper delivery of the courses. The problem is the on-going reduction of faculty members available to teach.

The program is implemented effectively and the courses offered are of comparable standards with other MBA programs in reputable universities abroad. It includes a combination of theoretical and practice oriented courses. Students emphasized their appreciation on the way the course is presented and especially its practical orientation. Working students have stated that the program gave them the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their managerial duties effectively and efficiently. Almost all members of staff of the Department teach on the MBA program.

### **RESULTS**

An important indicator of the success of the MBA program is its demand. On average there are 150 applications per year and the acceptance limit is only 30. Student evaluation survey results that were made available and meetings that the EEC had with the students, provided convincing evidence that the Program is regarded positively by its students. Student

evaluations give a positive picture about the way that the course material is delivered.

### **IMPROVEMENT**

The Department monitors the quality of the program through course evaluation from students and faculty members. There is no official mechanism of collecting information from alumni and employers. Course evaluation results are used to update the syllabi but not the courses offered in the program. This is restricted by law ( $\Phi$ EK). Of course the no tuition fee characteristic of the program gives a cost competitive advantage that is reflected by the increased demand. The demand has not been affected by the recession in the Greek economy.

### **PhD PROGRAM**

The goal of the PhD program is to prepare future academics and researchers in the thematic areas of the Department. There is no taught component in the program. All the work is undertaken by the faculty member who supervises the project. PhD research is conducted under supervision by members of staff with expertise in the domain of the doctoral study.

The whole procedure of admitting supervising and examining the student is explicitly stated in the internal regulations of the Department. The opinion of the students is that a taught component in the course intending to provide research competencies and a common conceptual foundation for all PhD students in the Department is useful. The taught components should concentrate in the area of research methodology and theory related with the specific research theme. The research contribution by PhD students is covered in Section C under Research in this Report.

## ***B. Teaching***

### **APPROACH**

The Department overall, utilizes the didactical approach that can be characterized as 'traditional', with a predominance of frontal lecturing and written exams (undergraduate, and Master's). The teaching and learning methods are comparable to those of well-established international Universities. Nevertheless, exercises and laboratories complement this approach and highly enrich the program, providing students with practice-related experiences and key skills in all taught areas. Beyond the traditional teaching methods above, use is frequently made of case studies, role playing and guest speakers from industry which enriches the experience of students.

Students for each undergraduate course take 3 hours of lectures per week (in some courses these hours are distributed into 2 hours of lecture and 1 hour of laboratory work) and students for each graduate course take 3 hours per week. The Doctoral program does not have any courses. As stated above most of these courses have tutorial sessions where the students have the opportunity to be in smaller groups and work in a more individualized teaching environment.

For further academic assistance, better comprehension of course content and clarification of assignments, all students have the opportunity to visit the teaching staff during their office hours.

Technical subjects such as statistics, data analysis, can involve additional hands-on sessions in computer labs which mainly involve the use of specific computer software. Finally, all undergraduate students have the opportunity to take part in an internship/placement for a period of three months either at a local organization or at an ERASMUS placement site for practical experience. This however, is not part of the curriculum and it is optional, but highly recommended by the faculty.

Additionally, it was emphasized by both teaching staff and also the students seen by EEC that course materials including course information, sample exercises, PowerPoint presentations, case studies, are all placed on-line on the system "e-class" which is accessible to all students (80% of the undergraduate courses, and all the post graduate courses). This is updated frequently by the teaching staff. Although this system appears adequate as a basic repository of teaching materials numerous more features, for example facilities to enable checking for plagiarism, facilities for assessment submission and feedback, time dependent visibility of materials, etc. would be suitable and desirable. The EEC's understanding is that such on-line capabilities will be available in the forthcoming system, «Ψηφιακό Άλμα». Thus, the existing system, as this Committee understands, is soon to be replaced by a much more efficient, effective and up to date system.

The students the EEC met expressed the view that their teachers were accessible either for face to face meetings during their office hours or on email, regarding their courses especially during the pre-examination periods. Furthermore, emphasis was placed on the fact that they were at all times supportive and encouraging and showed a genuine interest in them not only on issues related to their academic development but also on issues related to graduate studies and career development.

Notable and also commendable are the team-cohesion, commitment and motivation of the teaching staff and the excellent teacher-student relationship, which was greatly emphasized by the groups of undergraduate and graduate students seen at the University. Moreover, the EEC would like to state that the teaching staff/student ratio is extremely high. This is 1/62, in comparison with the European average which is 1/16.3; (The current number is 18 Research/Teaching Faculty ( $\Delta\text{E}\Pi$ ) members for 1133 undergraduate and graduate students).

The teaching facilities for both undergraduate and graduate programs in the physical sense are of varying quality and size. There are several large amphitheatres and smaller teaching rooms all equipped with the basic facilities such as desks, chairs, and portable power point projectors. In some cases the students seen by the EEC stated that the acoustics in the amphitheatres were not very good, and with the large number of students (230 first year undergraduates) at times it becomes rather difficult to follow.

All students have access to three well equipped laboratories (MIS and Business Intelligence, Research and Tourism Satellite Account and Innovation, Development, Transfer and Knowledge Management) and to a reading room with printing facilities, supervised by a graduate student. Furthermore, the students have access to a small 'departmental library' currently being under reorganization and slight upgrading.

Additionally, dedicated facilities for postgraduate students especially the ones at the doctoral level could be more spacious. However, the buildings both internally and externally are somewhat aged but very clean and without graffiti unlike some buildings seen in other schools.

Facilities were especially small and confined for the administrative staff who support students with multiple varying requests on a daily basis. More space can be found for them, perhaps with the upcoming re-organized structure of the 'School of Business Administration'.

With regard to the course grading procedures, generally credit given is by examination and assessed assignments. The courses vary in terms of assigned project work and the majority of the courses have group project work optional, which may not encourage team-building and team collaboration. The students are allowed, as dictated by the Law, several examination retake opportunities to pass a course. However, the recent modification of the law forbids an undergraduate to continue beyond the 6<sup>th</sup> year of study and forces such students to withdraw; this has eliminated the massive problems that existed of 'longtime' students. Lastly a validation system of the examination and assessment process by a second marker and/or an external examiner (as the norm in Greece is not in line with established practice at other universities), is absent; this is a recommendation in section F of this report.

## **RESULTS**

On the whole, EEC believes that teaching is delivered very well with professionalism, devotion, perseverance and enthusiasm at all levels. This is also reflected on the student satisfaction evaluations which are conducted every semester after the 13<sup>th</sup> week of classes. Specifically when examining the student satisfaction surveys of 2012-13, the mean score for



student satisfaction with the attendance of lectures and the punctuality of the teaching staff was over 4 out of 5 (best) on a likert scale. The mean score for student satisfaction with the delivery of lectures was almost 4 out of 5 (best) on a likert scale. The mean score for student satisfaction for instructor organizational, motivational, communication and collaborative skills was almost (4 out of 5). Finally, the student satisfaction mean score for the quality of notes and didactical material given to them and the appropriateness of this material was also almost 4 out of 5 (best). However, the mean scores given by the students regarding the use of the central or the departmental library and the classrooms were almost 2 out of 5 (best) on a likert scale.

In summary, the EEC agrees with the comments of faculty and students that teaching is effective and in line with the institution's core competence.

In terms of program completions, taking into consideration averages, as presented during the EECs meetings from 2007-2008 till 2012-2013, EEC notes that

7.14% of undergraduate students graduate within six years;

21,17 % of undergraduate students graduate within five years; and

24,39% undergraduate students graduate within the 4 years.

The median duration of 5 years for a 4-year undergraduate program.

As far as the average grade of graduation of the undergraduate program is 7.25 out of 10.

As far as the graduate students are concerned, 40 % of graduate students attending the MBA program, graduate within 2 years, nevertheless according to the rules the maximum duration for MBA students is 3 years.

Lastly, 42.35% of doctoral students graduate in 5,5 years.

As far as the graduate students are concerned, their average graduation grade is 8.17 out of 10.

Concluding, the EEC observed that failure rates are the following: 23% for undergraduate students, 11% for the MBA students and lastly 12.5% for the PhD students.

### **IMPROVEMENT**

The Department having conducted teaching evaluation on its own initiative is quite aware of both the strengths and challenges associated with the teaching activity in their institution. Furthermore, the department has some involvement with the local business community, at the teaching level both through internships at the undergraduate level and through a variety of projects and postgraduate degrees (numerous graduate students are employed within the local community who are a great industrial link).

The numerous challenges the Department is facing in the future are primarily exogenous because of the legal framework in which it operates, intensified by the continuous financial crisis. A major challenge is to retain its good teaching staff or recruit replacements when they leave.

The EEC acknowledges the significant work conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency (MOΔIII) and the effective system of student satisfaction evaluations they put in place which gives feedback on teaching effectiveness. Additional recommendations are given in section F of this report.

## **C. Research**

### **APPROACH**

The research efforts of the Department fall under the aegis of the University of Patras in general. The university has adopted a “curiosity-based” overall approach to research, while in parallel encouraging innovation, interdisciplinary research and technology transfers where applicable. This approach has produced impressive results with over 500 European research projects budgeted at more than 30 million Euros. This resulted in the University of Patras being classified as one of the top universities in Greece in competitive research.

The Department, while among the newest departments of the university, can utilize the research structure of the university overall. This structure includes:

“The **Research Committee Board (RC)**, led by the Vice Rector for Strategic Research Planning and Development, is responsible for auditing and improving the project management procedures and supporting internal procedures for research activities. Furthermore the RC establishes project management guidelines, organizes provision of services to the society and supports efforts for budgeting, and communicates the strategic research plan. The **Rector’s Council** is responsible for proposing activities regarding cooperation with social stakeholders for knowledge and technology transfer to the society, coordinates institutional research, development and educational projects, and implements government priorities/directives and regional needs. The **Committee for Innovation Support and Development Planning** proposes internal activities for innovation management, formulates the strategy for collaborations with the industrial sector and organizes international activities for innovation support and technology transfer.” (University of Patras prospectus 2014, p.10-11).

Researchers at the Department can find opportunities for collaboration at the research and technology foundation DIOFANTOS, which focuses in information and communication technologies, and the Patras Science Park, which supports research activities leading to spin-off companies.

The Department focuses on research in the following areas: management, marketing, economics, finance, accounting, quantitative methodologies, and information systems. Within these functional areas the Department conducts research in many subjects, like: tourism management, labour market, cost analysis, strategic marketing, applications of mathematics on economic theory and artificial intelligence to name a few.

One of the future strategic goals of the department is to:

- a. procure funds of the financing of future research projects and
- b. establish collaboration with other research institutions in both Europe and the rest of the world.

On a yearly basis, the Department does not appear to have a formal internal process for evaluating research. The research assessment appears to be solely the function of the president of the Department. A more format evaluation of research productivity appears to be practiced only when a faculty member goes up for promotion.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Department supports research through the culture of scientific advancement both among the professors and the PhD candidates. Despite the fact that the Department is a new program, the economic situation in Greece, the recent reduction of salaries by 40%, and the extremely limited research support, the Department faculty is conducting research

equivalent to many accredited institutions in other developed countries, such as the USA.

The university in support of research provides:

- A central library (there is an effort to establish a library for the Department)
- Access to the internet and an intranet system. The Hellenic Centre for Research (ELKE) provided 410.000 Euros to the University of Patras to develop intranet research sites, 46 of which are already in operation)
- Support with travel to other research institutions through the ERASMUS program. With ERASMUS both teachers and students can initiate collaborations at these institutions
- The organizing of scientific conferences
- The financing of research by a grant by Andreas Mentzelopoulos
- The Innovation and Technology Transfer Office (ITTO)
- The collaborations with a network of other research institutions (EUA, EUCEN, UNECC, CMU etc.).
- The cooperation of a public relations office for the promotion of the research findings to the media
- The dissemination of research findings through organizations like PROTON and LERU.

While the research support, as it appears above is impressive, it is mostly applicable to the older more established schools of the University of Patras. Unfortunately, the Department does not have the opportunity to avail itself to most of the above sources of support.

The level of research support for the University of Patras in general is substantial (as seen above), the level of support for the Department is minimal. In addition, while the University of Patras has a system in place for the measurement of quality of research in some fields such as Medicine or Architecture, the measurement of research quality at the Department is informal. Other initiatives that the Department is pursuing to encourage and promote research efforts include but are not limited to:

- Providing access to 19 packages for accounting and data processing including SPSS, AMOS and WINCATI, E-VIEWS, RATS.
- Conducting, on a regular basis, a seminar on research methodologies in order to promote research among both the PhD candidates and the regular faculty.
- Promoting the collaboration of regular faculty and PhD candidates on scientific research.
- Planning to develop a reward incentive by creating an award for the best publication by a PhD candidate and the financing of conference attendance by PhD candidates.
- Planning to establish in the first year of doctoral studies a series of courses designed to help students with conducting scientific research.

It must also be noted that there is an obvious culture of collaboration

- a. Between department faculty members
- b. Between the Department faculty with other departments of the University of Patras
- c. Between the Department faculty and the faculty of other educational institutions both in Greece and abroad.

## **RESULTS**

Overall the Department as a whole has achieved a research and publication record comparable to many accredited institutions in other developed countries such as the USA.

### **Scientific publications**

The research efforts at the Department are mainly focused on Management and Accounting (28.89%), Econometrics and Finance (26.11%), Decision Science (11.67%), and Computer Science (7.78%). Marketing seems to lag behind because there are only two professors in the field providing for a limited collaboration.

The trend of research productivity shows a significant increase ( $R^2=0.742$ ) with both the bottom scores and the peak scores showing an upward movement. The variability of the scores is explained by the Department as a result of many professors having being promoted to higher positions and to the fluctuation of faculty membership.

The research efforts seem to be of high quality as indicated by the relatively high scores of SCOPUS, the world's largest abstract and citation database of peer reviewed literature that enables users to easily evaluate and compare journals using article and citation data. While a score of 3 and 4 on SCOPUS is considered adequate, 7 faculty members have a score of 5 and above, of which 2 faculty members have very high scores 12 and 9. It has to be noticed that the SCOPUS scores discriminate on age because it does not count research conducted before 1996.

A similar picture is painted by considering the total number of refereed journal publications which range from 88 to 5 (this range can be partly explained by the variance in the number of years of service of each faculty member), with a total of 587 publications (average of 30.89 and a total number of citations exceeding 1100). Many of these publications were quite recent (2010-2013). These numbers are very impressive considering that the Department has been in existence for only a few years. In addition, this amount of productivity is comparable to many accredited universities in the western economies or the USA. Of the above publications, 15 were conducted with the collaboration of faculty members with PhD candidates, 5 with MBA students and 1 with an undergraduate student. They all have contributed to the publication of scientific work. In addition, 10 MBA students have significant work in progress.

A similar picture is painted with publications in published conferences. Conference publications are not as easily quantifiable because there are international conferences and Greek conferences, refereed conferences vs invited conferences, and published vs non published conferences. However, a content analysis of the totality of conference participation reveals an impressive volume of work on all of the above categories. Many of these conferences are done with the collaboration or regular faculty members with the Ph.D. candidates. In addition to faculty members participating in scientific conferences, 15 graduate students, 6 PhD students and one undergraduate student participated in similar conferences.

### **Research projects/programs.**

There are 40 currently running research programs; 6 from Research Institutes, 14 European Collaborations, and 20 Greek governmental research programs. Some of the programs are: South East Europe Program, three Med Programs, Archimides III program, a hospital services program, a marketing plans program, ABC4Trust program, Diaspora Networks, CULTEMA, PSYA, and the GRIV by KEPE program. Most of the Department faculty participate in the above programs. These programs indicate a significant focus on current research by the Department.

### **Book publications**

The faculty of the Department has published 13 books and has contributed many chapters to

other books in the field of business.

### **Thesis supervision**

The faculty members of the Department have supervised over 75 Master Theses as part of the NIMERTIS program.

### **Review of Journals/**

Twelve members of the Department faculty act as reviewers for scientific journals, and conferences, while 5 faculty members are members of editorial boards.

### **Future research**

Future research includes: Tourism marketing, neuro-marketing, online marketing, investment decision making of multinational corporations, decision making under economic crisis, the study of exchange rates under an economic crisis and stochastic volatility to mention just a small sample.

While not easily quantifiable, future research plans (in various stages of completion) appear to be substantial.

### **Research collaborations**

Research collaborations with other institutions resulting in publications include the University of Aegean, The Economic University of Athens (ASOEE) and the Newcastle Business School.

Collaborative research is currently under way with 2 other Greek universities and 2 universities abroad. In addition, the Department has collaborative research projects with two other departments of the university of Patras (Electrical Engineering and Pharmacy).

Significant collaboration on research also exists between the members of the different fields within the Department. For example, the management faculty is collaborating with the accounting faculty members, and the finance faculty is collaborating with the finance faculty. As an example, one member of the Department faculty is collaborating with 9 other members of the Department, another member has 7 collaborators, and a third member has 5 collaborators. In a Department that has only 20 faculty members, this amount of collaborations is highly commendable.

A significant amount of research collaboration occurs between the faculty members and the students. For example, for one team within the Department, the team faculty members collaborated in 18 PhD dissertations, 11 graduate theses, and 20 undergraduate theses.

### **Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.**

The research produced by the Department faculty results in the advancement of business knowledge. The potential exists for the application of these results to make businesses function more efficiently. The university has a formalized structure to promote the application of such research. There is no evidence of any patents being registered, however such patent activities do not tend to be common in most business schools.

### **Innovative research**

There are indications that the Department is conducting cutting edge research. For example several faculty members expressed interest in advanced accounting and managerial techniques. Some members work on Chaos theory that has proved to have very practical implications from product design to predicting stock prices. Other faculty members expressed interest in studying consumers using brain analysis using CAT scans and FMRI's.

The main indicator of the department's visibility is the significant number of citations. There were some best paper awards and a three star quality award for another publication. This is an area that the Department has potential in compiling a good record.

### **IMPROVEMENT**

The Department identified as "needs" for the promotion of research the following:

- The licensing of statistical packages for data analysis (PLS, Market Research Monkey Survey Program)
- The increase in funding for research
- The increase in funding for attending and participating in scientific conferences
- The increase in funding for subscriptions to the top journals in Business

### **Institutional Review Board (IRB) for experimenting with human subjects**

In all universities in the USA research involving human subjects requires special education and an extensive permit process. Such a process does not seem to exist at the Department.

### **Research for Industry and outreach to companies**

There EEC did not find a significant amount of research sponsored by the industry nor a significant outreach to the local industry.

In conclusion, despite the dire economic situation in Greece and the degree of funding for research, the Department faculty has the volume and quality of research equivalent to many accredited universities in the USA and elsewhere.

## **D. All Other Services**

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

### **APPROACH**

The Department has an administrative staff of 5 persons after the recent layoff of 2 and the recent hiring of the Department secretary. Both faculty and students are satisfied with the personal and professional relationship they have with the staff but they are cognizant of the fact that the administrative office is understaffed given the workload they have to handle. The major problem that exists is the partial computerization of the procedures and deliverables of the office that are localized (stand-alone) at the moment. The EEC will not submit a recommendation for alleviating the problem since it has been told that a university wide effort is under way to automate and centralize all functions of the departmental operations, thus, reducing tremendously the manual effort at the departmental office.

As is the case in a lot of departments of higher learning institutions in Greece, the Department does not have an explicit policy to increase the student presence on campus. In the undergraduate program, the number of students admitted is imposed externally and is a function of the country wide entrance examinations administered by the Ministry of Education.

As far as the electronic processing of the procedures is concerned, the department will part of the centralized system now under implementation which will result in more efficient, responsive services as well as anticipated cost savings.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Department is self-contained and supported in terms of administrative and technical staff and the functions and responsibilities of the personnel are well defined. Surprisingly, there were no complaints regarding the heavy overload which is being carried out in a smooth collaborative way between all of the colleagues. Some uncertainty regarding the layoff threats on account of the recent governmental actions was mentioned. In general, everyone seemed to enjoy a congenial and cooperative relationship with faculty and students. With the upcoming reorganization of a number of departments in a newly set up Business School as mentioned in the introduction, and the centralization of most of the support services, other than the possible benefits and economies of scale that may result, adversity in terms of domain preservation and workload redistribution battles, at least at the initial reorganization stages may result. To the extent that this may result in some unnecessary disruption of the Departmental functions, the Committee wishes to forewarn the Department to anticipate and plan for such an eventuality.

Concerning the campus facilities, the EEC was impressed with the campus physical plant in terms of the beautiful location, its size, the well-kept grounds and buildings. In spite of some student criticism, there seems to be adequate classroom space and facilities and lots of room to expand in terms of new buildings, should the budgetary situation improve.

The EEC agreed that the most impressive facilities were the Convention Centre and the Library. The convention centre is as adequate, modern and well equipped as any municipal counterpart anywhere in the country and is often used for a variety of cultural activities and events sanctioned by the city. The library is equally impressive and as modern as it could be

not only in terms of the building features but also in terms of the supporting mechanisms for its functions. Organized well in all of its three floors with adequate electronic systems for searching and student work. Lounging and reading facilities and provision for an adequate, active subscription of many periodicals and technical or professional journals.

Finally, the EEC felt that the student access to computer facilities and laboratories that are periodically updated as well as the WI FI availability are adequate.

The EEC does not agree with some student comments criticizing the adequacy of classroom space, the computer laboratories and especially the university library. The EEC believes that a smaller Departmental library which will be reactivated soon would be useful, not as much as a source of knowledge information and academic research material but rather as a place for students to meet, lounge, discuss and socialize with their peers.

## **RESULTS**

As mentioned earlier, there is a variety of activities, both educational and professional in nature that the departmental administrative staff seems to be handling in spite of the apparent shortage of human resources and electronic support systems.

With the appropriate faculty participation, one such activity is the coordination and management of the ERASMUS student exchange program for which there seems to be an increasing trend. On the other hand, the EEC feels that the activity of outreaching and formally developing the alumni relations with the Department will result in mutual benefits and bring about a closer interaction between the local business and community sectors and the Department. That could take the form of a Departmental alumni liaison office which will require funds for a person, space and some basic support services.

## **IMPROVEMENTS**

With regard to facility improvements, the EEC feels that the department enjoys good work environment, adequate working space and has the potential to grow and expand, should the need arise and the funds become available. In reference to any perceived or planned significant improvements for support personnel and systems, since the reorganization efforts for the creation of the Business School unit via the consolidation of four departments are under way, the Department has to wait. With regard to implementation of random, small scale improvements directly related to the routine operational needs of the Department, the following improvements are already under way for the electronic administrative support system in its present form:

1. Upgrading and expanding the set of student applications for:
  - Swear-in procedures
  - Transcript requests
  - Graduate student admission
  - Doctoral student admission
  - Academic placement of undergraduate students
2. Implementation of an electronic forum module to facilitate the communication and exchange of information between students relative to a specific issue
3. Implementation of a module for frequently asked questions to eliminate the need of personal contact at the department
4. Implementation of electronic submission of requests for upcoming semester course enrollment



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

Evidence of such collaboration was presented to the EEC both on a department wide scale as well as by individual faculty members during the presentations of the activities of the various departmental research units.

The types of activities mentioned in the various collaboration areas included but were not limited to:

- Faculty involvement with Greek professional and industrial associations
- Faculty participation on advisory boards and other links with the industry
- Faculty and student involvement in civic activities
- Student Internships with industrial and business organizations with enhanced prospects of employment
- Faculty supervised undergraduate and graduate student research with high impact for industrial and business organizations as well as governmental agencies

In addition to the above, the Department has established a number of initiatives, conferences, activities with awards for the purpose of motivating the entrepreneurship and innovative spirit of the students or prospective area students.

Examples of such activities are:

1. The implementation of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Unit of the University of Patras (MOKE), the goal of which is to motivate and train both undergraduate and graduate students in the above two principles. Approach includes seminars, laboratory exercises, visits to industry in addition to a formal relevant course offering.
2. The Department has active participation in the program “Exercising for All-Scientific Support” which was implemented within the framework of a 2012-2013 ESPA funded program, “Development of Human Potential”. Under the direction of Professor Papadimitriou, the goal of developing a package of supporting material to be used for the training of the persons that would manage the program was developed and used by all Local Governmental Organizations (OTA) in the country.
3. In cooperation with the Regional Agency for primary and secondary education of Western Greece, the Department conducted and managed a competition for the authorship of an article in the field of Economics in which prestigious awards were given to the best articles presented by the students.
4. The Department assumes a leadership role in a number of programs co-funded by the Greek government and the EU that relate to projects of regional, local and national interest (via various Ministries) or may relate to some public organizations and institutions. Examples are projects such as the “Updating of the Strategic Business Plan” for the port of Patras or “Comparative Assessment of the Competitiveness of the Greek Economy in the Global Environment: Horizontal and Sectoral Approach”, funded by the General Confederation of Greek Labor Unions (ΓΣΕΕ).

The **quality** and **originality** of such collaborative activities and others is difficult for the EEC to assess since there was no measurable evidence or concrete feedback data presented. It can be easily concluded, however, that the collaborative activities apply to a wide span of benefactors from society, government and private sectors. The **significance** of such collaborative activities, however, is obvious since the Department is a part of the regional University of Patras perceived as an important source of knowledge and expertise in Western

Greece.

In conclusion, the Committee recognizes the outreach efforts from all the faculty members with the objective of strengthening the links between the University and external private and public sector organizations that in turn have positive returns for the students and create opportunities for them to secure internships, employment opportunities, networking with prominent business professionals as well as governmental agencies and research institutions.

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

### **\*\*\* DBusAdmin MISSION STATEMENT\*\*\***

**“The systematic Study, Organization, Administration and Operation of enterprises that operate in the Greek and European socioeconomic system by creating and offering goods, services and training high caliber, competent leaders capable for managing businesses and organizations in the public and private sectors on a local, national and multinational level.**

Based on this mission statement, the Department has established the following strategic goals to be achieved in the future:

#### Short-term:

- 1). The Department has decided to offer selected undergraduate and graduate courses in English in parallel with their Greek versions in order to attract international students.
- 2). Take advantage of modern technological tools and educational applications to strengthen the interactive mode of teaching.
- 3). Establish and organize an alumni association for graduate and doctoral students headed by a university based director to manage the communications, public relations and the gathering of statistical information on the careers of the graduates and analyze to enhance the placement opportunities of current graduates.
- 4). On-going relationship and communication with area middle schools to disseminate information about the Department's curriculum programs and research activity to later be able to attract bright students based on their high performance in the Panhellenic entrance examinations.
- 5). To take better advantage of the existing academic unit for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (MOKE, <http://www.innovation.upatras.gr/>) of the University as a permanent mechanism for new graduates to have access and establish connections with the job market and the business world.

#### Medium-Term:

- 1). Explore the possibility of smaller class sizes. The Department is considering the adoption of a post doctorate program that will also provide the capability of utilizing the post-doctoral research fellows for teaching duties.
- 2). Expand the existing networking with foreign Universities and domestic businesses and organizations
- 3). Continue efforts to adapt the curriculum to the needs of the society and the increasing or changing demands of the job market.
- 4). Continue efforts to seek funding through new and existing research programs.
- 5). Recruit and attract top middle school graduates to the student body of the Department.

#### Long-term:

- 1). Increase outreach efforts to enhance the image and the recognition of the Department in the domestic and international business community.
- 2). Strengthen and intensify the presence of the Department on a regional and national basis through faculty research contributions that address vital issues of the Greek economy

3). Increase and expand the Department's attractiveness to the potential benefactors of its services.

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

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

In spite of the restrictive governmental rules and regulations imposed on the Greek institutions of higher learning and the current dire economic conditions that prevail in Greece, the Department is striving to maintain academic recognition and make local impact via a culture of collaboration to live up to its most significant mission statement goal, that of achieving Excellence (ΑΡΙΣΤΕΙΑ).

The curricula at both undergraduate and graduate levels, are rich with an emphasis on quantitative analysis and approach to the business decision making. The teaching focuses on preparing students with knowledge and skills as needed by Greek employers and aims to equip the students with entrepreneurial competencies, thus, enhancing their employment opportunities. The quality of research activities of both faculty and students are evidenced by their published work in high quality journals similar to those published by researchers in other well-known institutions internationally. The Department's outreach efforts to the community are not intensive. However, EEC believes that the on-going dynamic changes to the undergraduate curriculum to better address the needs of the marketplace as well as the Department's involvement and collaboration with the local business community, will "spill-over" to local community organizations.

The EEC detected an atmosphere of high moral and culture of team collaboration across all levels of the student body, faculty and administrative staff, accompanied by intense work and quality results.

Following are some of the EEC's recommendations for further improvement.

### **CURRICULUM**

#### **Recommendation A1.**

The Department will need to strive to replace lost staff and retain existing staff, in spite of the current adverse legal and financial conditions in Greece.

#### **Recommendation A2.**

The department should devise a formal mechanism for identifying stakeholder needs so as to develop and update the curriculum accordingly in an effort to satisfy stakeholder expectations, for example, formation of staff/student subcommittees, Advisory Board of faculty members, Employers' representatives, Union representatives etc.)

#### **Recommendation A3.**

Develop an Alumni Association, with an aim to provide feedback to the Department in developing and adjusting the program based on the Alumni career path experiences and suggestions (It is within the plans of the department as communicated to the EEC).

### **TEACHING**

#### **Recommendation B1.**

The Department is encouraged to increase its international collaboration in joint degrees both at undergraduate and graduate levels.

#### **Recommendation B2.**

Create a 'Department Council', whose role would be to give feedback to the teaching staff members and collaborate with the Head of Department for corrective actions. Furthermore,

it is suggested that provisions be made to give feedback to the students on their evaluations and on the subsequent actions that are taken. Additionally, the 'Department Council' could establish a system of peer teaching evaluation, which could help teaching staff in sharing good teaching practices and could also serve as a mentoring system for those new to teaching. It is conceivable that MODIP could undertake this role.

**Recommendation B3.**

It is recommended that the Department institutes an internal process of discussing the examination questions and assignments between subsets of teaching staff who teach the same course.

**Recommendation B4.**

It is recommended that the Department follows up on expanding its ERASMUS co-operations and actively support student mobility and very importantly teacher staff mobility.

**Recommendation B5.**

The Department must find ways of keeping teaching and student service loads at levels comparable to research universities with which it rightly compares itself.

**Recommendation B6.**

Explore opportunities of international collaboration in the practice of visiting academic staff posts which may provide valuable links with constantly developing international academic quality standards and relief to the existing heavy teaching load of the Department faculty.

**Recommendation B7.**

The Department should set up a formal systematic process of internal vetting of exam questions and of assessed assignments to ensure they are fit the purpose. Further, the Department could set up a system of sample second marking to ensure the marks are appropriate for the standard of the work submitted by students.

**Recommendation B8.**

The Department should enforce strict guidelines on adherence by students to deadlines for handing in assignments but it should also set up formal procedures for appeals by students who fail to meet the deadline for good reasons. It is more practical to operate such a system through the administrative support staff rather than faculty.

**Recommendation B9.**

The Department should set up sessions to advise those new to teaching about effective teaching practices.

**Recommendation B10.**

The Department should set systematic procedures to ensure assessed assignments handed in by students do not plagiarize others but rather are the result of a student's work alone.

**Recommendation B11.**

As the governmental budget austerity measures continue and the trend for utilizing technology to facilitate instruction at universities worldwide continues, EEC recommends, provided that potential legal issues are resolved, that the department considers the delivery of some courses on an on-line mode which will save cost and time for both students and the Department.

**RESEARCH**

**Recommendation C1.**

The Department needs increased funding for research support and attendance of scientific conferences.

**Recommendation C2.**

The faculty members should be rewarded for high quality research and publications.

**Recommendation C3.**

A formal process should be created for the evaluation of research productivity. A list of journals might help in this process. This process should be done on a yearly basis and be used as a development tool, not as a punitive one.

**Recommendation C4.**

Faculty involved in research with human subjects should be educated and a formal permission process should be established.

**Recommendation C5.**

An outreach program with the local industry should be initiated resulting in research projects aimed to benefit such industry.

**ALL OTHER SERVICES**

**Recommendation D1.**

The Department is encouraged to aim for stronger networking with the local community. This collaborative effort could be improved upon through further initiatives taken by the Department in strengthening links with community involvement.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

**Recommendation E1.**

The EEC feels that the most important strategic consideration for the Department is to consider and vigorously pursue the adoption of reasonable tuition fees for graduate students. The department is one of the few exceptions in the country without such fees and the EEC understands that at the university level there is resistance for such a move. However, it is necessary to increase the Departmental cash inflows if the quality of the programs is to be maintained and the ability to retain quality faculty is preserved. The feedback that the EEC received from graduate students was positive toward that end as long as the fees were reasonable and the Department could adopt innovative ways of payment over time to ease the financial burden.

**Recommendation E2.**

The Committee recognizes the administrative overload that Departmental faculty has to undertake. Nevertheless, it would seem appropriate to institute a formal standing committee to formulate, propose, track and manage the progress of future plans and goals of the Department. Perhaps it could be a formally implied responsibility of the O.M.E.A as part of the ongoing self-evaluation process.