



ΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

**Α.ΔΙ.Π.**

ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ  
ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ  
ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

**H.Q.A.**

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND  
ACCREDITATION AGENCY

## EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE  
ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **The External Evaluation Committee**

#### ***Introduction***

##### I. The External Evaluation Procedure

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

##### II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

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

#### ***A. Curriculum***

##### APPROACH

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

##### IMPLEMENTATION

- Rationality, functionality, effectiveness of the Curriculum.

##### RESULTS

- Maximizing success and dealing with potential inhibiting factors.

##### IMPROVEMENT

- Planned improvements.

#### ***B. Teaching***

##### APPROACH:

- Pedagogic policy and methodology, means and resources.

##### IMPLEMENTATION

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

##### RESULTS

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

##### IMPROVEMENT

- Proposed methods for improvement.

#### ***C. Research***

##### APPROACH

- Research policy and main objectives.

##### IMPLEMENTATION

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

##### RESULTS

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

##### IMPROVEMENT

- Proposed initiatives aiming at improvement.

**D. All Other Services**

## APPROACH

- Quality and effectiveness of services provided by the Department.

## IMPLEMENTATION

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

## RESULTS

- Adequateness and functionality of administrative and other services.

## IMPROVEMENTS

- Proposed initiatives aiming at improvement.

**Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations****E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors**

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

**F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:**

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

### **External Evaluation Committee**

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Italian Language and Literature of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki consisted of the following five (3) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Professor Moschos Morfakidis-Filactós (President)  
University of Granada
  
2. Professor Anna Zimbone  
University of Catania
  
3. Associate Professor Alicia Morales Ortíz  
University of Murcia

**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 Site Visit took place from the 4<sup>th</sup> February (17.30) to the 6<sup>th</sup> February (14:00) 2014.

On February 4<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon the Commission had a meeting with the Rector, the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and the Director of the Department of Italian Studies, with the assistance of all members of the Department’s OMEA.

On February 5<sup>th</sup> the Department’s members presented analytically and thoroughly to the Committee the various aspects related to the activity of the department : Department’s history and organization , quality assurance , undergraduate program, master's and doctoral program, mobility and international relations, research activities , research projects , publications , conferences and other academic and research activities , students support services , infrastructure (classrooms , libraries, new technologies, etc. . ) administrative services. The Commission had the opportunity to ask questions and receive clarification on all these aspects.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> in the morning the Commission interviewed the following groups:

- Undergraduate Students
- Post-graduate Students and Doctoral Candidates
- Teaching Staff in the field of Literature and culture
- Teaching Staff in the field of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics
- Teaching Staff in the field of Translation Studies
- Teaching Staff who teach the Italian language
- Teaching Staff in the field of Hispanic Philology
- Staff EEP, EDIP, ETEP
- Administrative Staff

During the Site Visit, the Committee visited the following facilities:

- The main building of the School of Philosophy
- The Department Secretary’s Office (in the main administrative building)
- Department’s Library (Spoudastirio)
- Teaching rooms

All meetings and interviews conducted during days 5 and 6 took place in the office of the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (Kosmitia).

For the preparation of this External Evaluation Report, the Commission has consulted the following documents:

- The Department's 2012-2013 *Internal Evaluation Report*
- The Study Guide (Odigos Spoudon)
- Department's Website
- The CVs of the Department Members and a list of publications
- Other documents (minutes of meetings of the Department, economic data, evaluation reports since 2008, notes (bathmologies), samples of written and oral tests, list of master and doctoral thesis, books, conference proceedings and journals published by the Department, regulations and legal documents etc..)

## II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The *Internal Evaluation Report* gives detailed information about the current state of the Department and its academic activities. The documentation was appropriate and complete and provided a good basis for the work of the External Evaluation Committee.

The Commission recalls that all department members attended meetings and were involved during the Site Visit (even attended a teacher who at that time was on maternity leave). At all times the various staff members - teachers, labor and administrative- had a very positive attitude towards the evaluation process and were willing to provide any additional information requested by the Commission.

## ***A1. Curriculum (undergraduate programme of studies)***

### **APPROACH**

The curriculum aims at training its graduates in Italian language, Italian literature and Italian culture. The fact that the areas of interpretation and translation on this particular subject are included in its objectives is especially important.

The programme was designed with an ambitious plan, providing the graduates with qualifications for professional career in various fields :

#### a) Education

- As professors of Italian language and literature in secondary and higher education.
- As professors in private education (foreign languages teaching centres, technical and tourist schools)

#### b) Translation, interpretation and subtitling

- In the public sector and official services of the European Union.
- In the private sector: translation agencies, private companies, publications, editors and book presentations' managers, private tutors of small groups in special/general language.
- In the wider labour market (culture units : municipalities, museums, festivals, etc)

The programme was established by the teaching staff which, roughly, took into consideration the students' opinion. It does not appear to have been any collaboration with other social and professional groups that are directly or indirectly related to the subject of studies.

Overall, the undergraduate programme meets the needs that come up in the labour market, given that the material offered covers the fields of education (teaching of the Italian language, translation and interpretation and subtitling both in public and private fields).

The Department sensitizes on the curriculum's revision process. Its members have shown particular interest in the committee's indications. Between the two there was a very constructive dialogue on the perspectives of improvement and the trends in the international and especially the European arena. The members of the board made a good impression concerning their cooperation and willingness to constantly improve and adjust its curriculum to the new data featuring the constantly and rapidly changing world we live in today. Both older and newest ΔΕΠ (Greek for "Teaching and Research Staff") members seem excited, responsible and willing to collectively meet the new scientific and professional challenges.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The curriculum was recently modified (17-06-2013) but applied retrospectively since the academic year 2010-11 with 240 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) to graduation. This number of ECTS is divided into four (4) groups of courses :

a) Prerequisite (Italian language) to then select any other course of the group "Language" (12 ECTS).

b) Compulsory :

- 5 Italian language courses that are designed to develop level C2 language proficiency, according to the European Council scale (5X12=60 ECTS)

- 5 compulsory courses from other (5X6=30 ECTS).

c) Compulsory courses to choose from : 16X6=96 ECTS.

- 3 linguistics courses (science of language and linguistic communication): capacity to analyze, describe, comparatively study of Italian.

- 3 teaching of languages and pedagogical courses, 3 translation courses, 5 literature courses, 2 culture courses (teaching Italian as a foreign language, programming, use of digital technology, preparation of learning material, classroom management and performance evaluation).

d) Optional: Optional courses from all groups on the curriculum (42 ECTS, of which up to 20 ECTS can be courses of other departments).

The student is able to secure 12 out of 42 ECTS of optional courses through an internship, during the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> semester, given that they have successfully attended 50% of compulsory courses.

The schedule of semesters meets the required specifications, given that the semesters cover the necessary teaching hours. The duration of the three exam periods (June, September, January-February) is within the bounds of reason.

It is of great importance that the Department actively participates in European ERASMUS and TEMPUS programmes, in collaboration with corresponding Departments of European Universities (*Torino, Firenze, Roma 'La Sapienza', Bari, Siena, Groningen, Paris Descartes EMUNI and Universities of all over the World (Nebraska)*) that see to students and professor exchange. About 300 students have participated to the Erasmus programme in the last ten years, number that gives out the success of this effort. The participation process is considered satisfying.

The committee regards as important the fact that the material of Spanish language and literature, which is already taught for many years, is included in the curriculum. This is a decision that significantly broadens the scientific and professional horizons of its graduates. However, it notes that while, according to the update given by the President and members ΔΕΠ, the prospect was to expand the number of its courses, in order to become successively another offered literature and mutual to the Italian as it is known that the two languages are closely related both in linguistic and cultural level, the request to the Ministry of Education has not yet received the expected response. The department's intention is try until Spanish language and literature is secured as complementary to the material of Italian literature.

According to the above, we can draw the following conclusions :

a) In general, the curriculum is efficiently realized because the time offered is sufficient for the material, which is adequate for the wider field of Italian language.

b) The curriculum meets the internationally accepted standards of this field of studies because it is coherent and functional and its structure is rational and clearly outlined.

The Department employs appropriately competent and specialized staff to realize its curriculum, but it lacks in the resources required to employ teaching staff of Italian origin, which, in the form of language lecturers or visiting professors, could be of great help to linguistic training of students. Furthermore, the state should try on its behalf to cover the gap

in teaching spaces and the necessary material and technical facilities which will enable the smooth realization of the curriculum. The same applies to the library, which while being undoubtedly of great importance in Greece, it must constantly be enriched with new titles and scientific journals but also fully incorporated into international library systems concerning archive borrowing and exchange.

## **RESULTS**

The Department is known for its more than 50-year experience in teaching and research of the Italian language and literature. During this time there have been skilful tutors who had the chance to create all the necessary requirements to convert the Department into an important vehicle of teaching and research, both in a national and international level, provided that all the necessary material and technical infrastructure and several gaps in teaching staff are completed. Specifically, the committee the number of ΔΕΠ members to be relatively satisfactory for realizing both curriculums of the department, which equally and rationally cover almost all areas required for the proper training of the students of Italian language. The gap in Spanish literature mentioned before is only left to be completed. The committee does fully agree with the Department on these points.

## **IMPROVEMENT**

The committee reckons that the Department meets highly the requirements for the training of students in the academic field of Italian literature. The department expressed its determination to do everything possible to realize the recommendations for improvement which mainly focus on :

a) The use of auxiliary teaching staff of Italian origin (language assistants) for teaching Italian and Spanish. It is mentioned that the cost of this particular teaching staff is minimal compared to what it has to offer in learning the language. Besides, its presence in AUTH can be enabled by bilateral national or by interuniversity agreements within the frame of Italian and Spanish graduates practice of equivalent departments.

b) Promoting the material of Spanish language and literature according to the European curriculum model standards of double language specialization (Lingua major και Lingua minor). In this case is suggested that Spanish language becomes Lingua minor with 48 ECTS: 32 ECTS of linguistic courses (levels A1, A2, B1, B1+, B2, B2+) and 12 ECTS of literature courses. These courses could be easily incorporated in the list of compulsory optional courses, whereas 12 to 18 ECTS of translation could be incorporated to the optional courses.

c) The orientation of optional courses in specific subject areas which could be useful in laying the foundations a perfect philological training in the Italian, e.g. Latin and adaptation of theoretical courses in applied teaching in the field of Italian literature.

The members of the Department have shown that they are fully aware of the need to apply the points mentioned before and totally agree with the Committee's suggestions for improvements in the curriculum.

## ***A2. Curriculum (postgraduate programme of studies)***

### **APPROACH**

The Department makes a good impression in offering postgraduate studies which correspond to the undergraduate ones, focusing in training future scholars (researchers and professors) and translators.

The material offered remarkably covers a wide range of subject areas which enhance the students' knowledge and skills in the branches of: Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, Translation, Interpretation and Communication, Literature and Culture.

Moreover, the Department participates in the following two bilateral programmes on postgraduate studies in collaboration with other departments of literature ATh (English, French, German and Italian Language and Literature) :

- a) In the field of European Literature and Culture
- b) In the field of Interpretation and Translation

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The great demand for the programme by graduates from Italian literature and other branches of humanities is a proof of the success of this project.

The applicants' selection is made in a meritocratic way.

The teachers' training and teaching methods, according to the students' testimonies, are particularly good.

Student evaluation is also carried out correctly (paper, oral and written examination)

### **RESULTS**

The sufficiency of the curriculum is considered satisfactory because one can choose courses of methodology and new technologies in teaching, research and translation, linguistics which are associated with specific courses of Italian and Spanish language in the above fields.

Indicative is the fact that graduates of the postgraduate and bi-departmental programmes in which the Department participates, often move on to a doctorate in the same Department.

The elaborating process of the PhD thesis is in accordance with the provisions of Article 9 of Law 3685/2008.

## **B. Teaching**

### **APPROACH**

Teaching methods are varied and suited to the usual standards of Western universities: lectures, audiovisual laboratory classes, tutorials etc. In this regard, the Department has a small classroom recently arranged and equipped with computers for practical classes and work in laboratory. In addition, the University e-class and blackboard allow students to access material that teachers upload there to their disposal.

The Department participates in one interdepartmental master in which is implemented distance learning. The experience is highly valued by the participating teachers.

The interest of teachers by enabling students the best possible training is also evident in the recent introduction of a practicum (12 ECTS). This course has been chosen by 31 % of students, and probably this number will increase in the future. As negative aspects, note that all the management and administration of these internships are under teachers' supervision, which mean extra workload over their teaching hours.

Currently there are 17 faculty members (15 *kathigités*, 2 *léktores*) and 1 foreign teacher (*allodapí daskala*), and a member of EEP and other EDIP working in the Department, to serve 809 undergraduate student , 48 post-graduate students and 65 doctoral candidates (September 2013) . At the time of the Site Visit, 3 teachers were enjoying a permit (two on leave without pay and one maternity leave). In recent years there has been an obvious decrease in the teaching staff (6 teacher positions have been lost, due to retirement or non-renewals of contracts). This has resulted in an increase in the workload of teachers. In interviews, professors commented on the excessive teaching load to be supported.

Students are very satisfied with the care they receive from teachers and the quality of their teaching, but consider that smaller groups for certain subjects would be desirable.

Students are very satisfied with their relationships with the teachers; more than 75% of the respondents valued positively teacher/student collaboration. The same follows from the interviews conducted during the Site Visit.

As for human resources, as noted above, in recent years there has been a noticeable decrease in staff due to several retirements. In addition it should be mentioned the lack of teachers who are on leave. The situation will be worse next course due to the retirement of a professor in the field of Spanish philology. Current lecturers must assume even greater teaching load, if the position is not covered by a new teacher.

As for the material resources, the most important problem mentioned by teachers is the lack of adequate classrooms for teaching, especially spaces equipped with multimedia resources.

The department has a *spoudastirio* / *bibliothiki* well equipped, with capacity for 16 seats. However, due to lack of staff, it is only open until 14.30 p.m. In the opinion of this Committee, it is clearly insufficient.

All members of the Department (students, faculty members and administrative staff) have e-mail account and access to digital platforms of the University (e-class and blackboard) and to the University library. In addition students have update on line information on their studies in the e-odigos *spoudon* and in the Department Website.

In teaching new technologies are commonly used (PowerPoint presentations, video, auditions, e-class, blackboard, internet etc. ).

In addition, the Department has created a very active *Club di Lingua e Cultura Italiana* where teachers and students work together. All the information on its activities can be found in the website and blog (<http://antonioventuris.wix.com/club-di-lingua#!blog/cr4f>)A

The examination system consists of written and oral exams, dissertations, portfolios. It adapts to usual procedures at universities.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

There is a close coherence between research and teaching. The subjects professors teach are closely related to their subject of knowledge and their research projects.

The department has Erasmus agreements with large number of universities, especially in Italy, and promotes very intensively the mobility of students and teachers. As students commented in interviews, the biggest obstacle to student mobility is the economic constraint.

In interviews, students of different levels (undergraduate, post-graduate and Doctoral Candidates) were very satisfied with the teaching they receive, although in some cases it is considered too theoretical and, in others, they express a desire of greater specialization in the curriculum.

In the process of evaluation carried out by the OMEA, students highly value the teaching and teaching materials.

Overall, the students interviewed have shown great appreciation for the work of the teaching staff, despite the sometimes scarce means available.

### **RESULTS**

The Commission notes that it was unable to observe the classroom teaching because the Committee's visit took place during the exams period and no classes were held.

Given this large number of students it is worth mentioning that the academic staff achieves more than one could expect.

According to data provided by the Internal Evaluation Report academic results are satisfactory, with 80 % of students who pass their final exams presented. The average mark in the degree is almost a 7/ 10.

In some subjects, especially in language teaching, the number of students per class (about 30 on average) seems excessive. This would be solved if the Department could have native assistants in classes. In this regard, the Department insists that in recent years the teaching staff has decrease from 6 native teachers to 1 currently.

A problem that teachers have to face is the disparity in the student's Italian knowledge in the early grades. In theory, B1 level is required, but it is not necessary to certify more than the national entrance examinations. Teachers recognize the lack of homogeneity in levels .

There is a repeated complaint about the excessive burden of teaching hours supporting the academic staff. This, as declared more than once, adversely affects the quality of teaching and research.

### **IMPROVEMENT**

Department members show a very positive attitude and the Internal Evaluation Report made several proposals for improvement.

Regarding teaching methods they propose initiatives to come closer to a less traditional teaching (eg, based on the chronological study of the history of literature) to implement innovative approaches. There are also proposals for the development of distance education in the future.

The Department believes that the lack of teacher has an adverse impact on the quality and effectiveness of teaching Italian and Spanish languages . There is a need to increase the number of native auxiliary personnel to assist in the teaching tasks. In the future this deficiency could be partially mitigated by foreign students under Erasmus placement or by doctoral candidates.

In general, as already stated, the Commission finds that teaching load is excessive and recommends increasing teaching staff.

The Commission recommends extending opening hours of the library, in order to facilitate students and researchers access to library resources. One option would be the creation of a central library of the Faculty.

This Commission would urge the competent authorities on the need to promote multilingualism in pre- university education levels and the inclusion of Italian and Spanish teaching in secondary education.

One of the weaknesses of the Greek educational system, particularly in the higher education, is the complete absence of the institution of *Excellence* when it comes to students' evaluation and grading. This deprives the students firstly, of one of the main motivations for healthy competition and secondly of future award, scholarship, etc committees, which is one of the most important tools for evaluation and selection of the best. After a fruitful dialogue, the Committee was able to distinguish ΔΕΠ's interest and sincere intention to adopt the internationally accepted institution of excellence rewarding. The Department committed to consider, as first step, the non-financial reward of distinguished for their academic performance students.

## **C. Research**

### **APPROACH**

The Department's policy and main objective in research have been articulated into four points: a) promotion of basic research applied to the different levels and aspects cultivated by the Department, b) connection between theory and practice, c) connection between research and teaching activities and needs of society, d) dissemination of the results that can be obtained and sharing them with the international scientific community. In particular, the Department will follow the training of young scientists and encourage interdisciplinary studies and collaboration between groups of local scholars and other universities, both Greek and foreign. From this point of view it is very satisfying the number of young undergraduates who have read papers in conferences.

The internal standards set by the Department to evaluate the research are congruent with the corresponding international research standards. The attainment of the objectives of the various investigations, in accordance with the scientific autonomy, is carried out through: a) research programs, b) scholarships, c) interdisciplinary collaborations in research and teaching d) partnerships with universities and scientific centers both national and foreign.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The great number of local, national, and international projects attests the Department's activities in promoting and supporting research. In addition to this, as part of the academic regulations, the Department grants permissions to attend congresses, both national and international, or leaves for periods of study, both in Greece and abroad (one semester every three years, one academic year every six years).

Unfortunately, over the past five years, due to the severe crisis that afflicts Greece, the Department cannot offer any financial support to scholars; the consequence is that they have to bear the travel expenses. This affects in particular younger scholars (post-graduate and post-doctoral), for whom the only scholarships available are the ones given by the central institution. It should be emphasized, however, that the Department encourages the "IKY" scholarships and is interested in finding support on the European grant for scientific research.

The quality and adequacy of infrastructure and support for research are certainly lacking: the buildings, especially the location of the library, still divided into many areas - 17 - are not satisfactory, but until today, unfortunately, an adequate space to create a centralized library (the costs of which should not be underestimated), is still to be found. It should be emphasized that the computer equipment needs continuous maintenance and periodic replacement and update. All this cannot be achieved without the help of national funds, at the moment non-existent.

The scientific publications of the Department in the past five years have been numerous and significant - 32 monographs, over 100 articles in scientific journals, 93 papers contained in conference proceedings, etc. - and cover a wide range of interests on a scientific level.

Over the past five years, the Department, in collaboration with various institutions and universities, has participated in several national and European projects showing a considerable activity. In particular, projects were implemented with the University of Rome

"La Sapienza", with the Italian Institute of Culture of Thessaloniki, with the Institute "Cervantes" of Athens, with the "Spanish University" of Valladolid, with the "Austrian Science Fund", with the "European Science Foundation", etc...

Research collaborations are strongly supported by the Department; they contribute to spread knowledge and keep society up-to-date in various areas. The Department carries out a traditional collaboration with the representative members of Society, Culture and Productive Sector, both as Department and individual members. Many of these representatives (over 57) belong to Ministry of Culture Associations (Σύλλογοι), Culture of Non-Governmental Organizations, Institutions of Public Utilities (Κωινοφελή), but also come from Professional Associations (Επαγγελματικοί Φορείς). Over the past five years we particularly highlight collaborations with important foreign institutions.

## **RESULTS**

The Department obtained positive results in achieving the objectives of the research as it can be seen from the data consulted. This is visible in the implementation of research both in collaboration between members of the Department and with scholars and groups of scholars from universities and national and international organizations. It can also be seen in the publications in foreign journals and participation in national and international scientific committees.

As was pointed out above, the academic body of the Department has a very solid scientific profile in terms of national and international publications (see above).

The projects and research programs, scientific collaborations with the social, cultural and productive representatives are in large number and reveal the disposition of the members of the Department to promote development at a local and national level. The relationship with these organizations had as a consequence the dissemination of research results being the Department developed in relation not only to education and instruction but also to representatives of society. Negative factor is, once again, the lack of subsidies. Another factor that slows down this relationship is the lack of a strategy of the Department in selecting collaborators (social, cultural, productive), and sometimes the resistance of the members of the Department to put into practice these collaborations in fear of taking time away from their duties of teaching.

The scientific quality of the Department is officially recognized both nationally and internationally as it appeared in the past five years from the large number of reviews, citations – in other publications – of works of the individual members, as well as the participation in committees of journals and conferences both in Greece and abroad (65). The implementation of the objectives of the research is also witnessed by numerous awards, honorary titles and prizes (23) obtained by members of the Department, at the level of the Department and University as well as nationally and internationally, in particular by EMUNI, Dante Alighieri Society, Cervantes Institute in Rabat, etc.

## **IMPROVEMENT**

The initiatives taken by the Department in order to improve the scientific activity of its members were aimed at the implementation of the research especially through collaboration with other members of the Department but also with scholars and groups of scholars of international universities, as well as through publications in scientific journals both Greek and foreign, conference papers, participation in scientific committees of congresses,

organization of panhellenic and international congresses, scientific responsibility and participation in the drafting of programs and texts. The research results find practical application in Translation, Neurolinguistics, Analysis of social and cultural phenomena etc., and they are part of teaching programs for students with the aim of making them as skilled as possible.

## **D. All Other Services**

### **APPROACH**

Many administrative procedures are processed electronically, and, in general, all members of the department are satisfied by this.

In general, the Department is satisfied with the services provided to the members of the academic community. The weak points identified are:

- Greater support from International Office to assist in the application and management of European funding
- Lack of classrooms and well equipped spaces for teaching
- Library / Spoudastirio schedule
- Increase of research funding, greater support for conference attendance, publications etc.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

After staff reductions due to financial difficulties, two people are currently working in the Secretariat (before there were four). The secretariat has a schedule to the public for one hour a day (from 12.00 to 13.00) according to the University's internal regulation, but in practice students are often served by e-mail outside these hours.

In the interview with the Committee the administrative staff expressed its dissatisfaction with the lack of specific training programs.

The Department has also an assistant (EDIP) who cooperates with educational tasks and provides computing support to other members of the Department, and another person belonging to the ETEP. Both of them work in the Library since they do not have their own working space. Due to staff reductions and heavy workload, in last times they have to perform administrative tasks and support that are not among their duties.

At this regard, this Committee would like to emphasize that has appreciated a great desire for collaboration among all members of the Department, to take forward the work, even if the task do not belong her/his professional responsibilities.

The Department Library / Spoudastirio contains about 12,000 volumes and is very well equipped. However, at present lacks qualified personnel, since the librarian is in a state of *diathesimotita* since October 2013. Lack of staff has forced to reduce opening hours between 8.30 and 14.30. Moreover, due to the absence of other suitable space, the Spoudastirio is used for Department meetings, so these times it is closed to the public.

Both teachers and students have free access to Internet. The Department has a micro classroom well arranged and equipped to be used for teaching with audiovisual resources and as a language laboratory (<http://www.itl.auth.gr/1/index.php/en/ypodomos/ergastirio-i-y>)

Teachers PCs are in need of modernization, so most teachers use at work own laptops brought from home.

Although there is not a prearranged system of student counseling, teachers are always ready to help their students beyond tutoring schedules. In this regard, the students interviewed

were very satisfied with the help and advice they receive from the academic staff.

The department is very involved in organizing cultural activities. In recent years has organized various seminars, conferences, exhibitions, book presentations, etc. (see <http://www.itl.auth.gr/1/index.php/en/ekdiloseis/loipes-politistik-es-ekdiloseis>).

The Department has also an active Club di Lingua e Cultura Italiana with a variety of cultural and academic activities (<http://antonioventuris.wix.com/club-di-lingua#!facilities/c66t>)

### **RESULTS**

In general, the Department believes that administrative services are adequate and effective. For details, see the comments above.

### **IMPROVEMENTS**

The department identified in the Internal Evaluation Report ways to improve the services provided. However, many of the possible solutions are beyond the control of the department, including, for example, improvements in classrooms and equipment, more IT support, lack of qualified personnel for the library, problems with heating, lack of cleaning staff, etc.

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

Both the short- and medium-term planning for the Department's development, as presented to the Committee, is on the right track. This fact shows promising prospective, provided the State and the University supply the necessary opportunities and appropriate support. Under these conditions, the Department may keep its leading role in the field of Italian literature studies both in Greece and internationally. To achieve these objectives, it employs skilled teaching and research staff capable to meet the modern requirements. It should be noted that the will of the staff and their suggestions, designed to make the Department competitive in the area of teaching and research, made a particularly good positive impression to the members of the Committee.

The deficiencies in the institutional framework of Greek universities as well as the function of the Faculty of Philosophy of Aristotle University, substantially prevents the smooth function of the Department, which makes a good impression reflecting the manager and teaching staff's intention as well as the students good mood.

The following actions on behalf of the State, the University and the Faculty are considered essential :

- a) Improvement of the teaching environment and technical equipment (phonetics laboratory) for the language courses and application of new technologies.
- b) Merger of secretariats and technical services of the faculty's departments. This will reduce its needs in staff and significantly improve the services offered. Indicatively, students must be serviced on all working days and throughout the opening hours of the now Central secretariat.
- c) The unification of departmental libraries of the faculty. This will solve the problem of space and qualified personnel in librarianship. It will also solve the major problem of integration in international library systems concerning borrowing and exchanging.
- d) Immediate solution to heating and cleaning problems.
- e) Financing of the aid of language teaching with Italian-speaking professors as assistants or visiting professors.
- f) Better conditions for research funding (research programmes)
- g) Better conditions for funding its teaching and scientific staff's participation at conferences and scientific meetings
- h) Upgrading of the Spanish language by the State with its recognition as Lingua Minor and its further strengthening by the Department in the field of translation.
- i) In terms of the University, the methods of internal assessment should be reviewed. They should be realized by external evaluators and not by officers of the university. In any case, should be imposed to the DEP members to participate in this process.

As medium and long-term goals would be :

- a) To strengthen the linguistic training of students by increasing the number of Italian language courses, mainly those of tutorial character.

b) The partial increase in courses of Italian literature and translation from Italian into Greek and the attachment of translation courses from Greek into Italian.

c) The development of the postgraduate curriculum by creating new branches in the fields of teaching/pedagogy and translation.

d) Enhancing the material language and literature through the orientation of theoretical courses of linguistics, text analysis and new technologies towards their application in the Italian language, literature and translation.

It is clear that the Department, being aware of the points to be improved, has worked on series of recommendations concerning :

a) The fulfilment of the previously mentioned improvements and goals in both under- and postgraduate studies.

b) The operation of programmes outside the standard under- and postgraduate curriculums, such as the operation of summer educational programmes open to the general public and the enhance of its participation in international networks.

Thanks to its long tradition and experience, and thanks to the quality of its teaching and research, the Department of Italian Language and Literature of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki is in a position to maintain its leading role in the field of Italian studies both in Greece and internationally.

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

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

The committee considers that this is a dynamic University Department which still has the ability and the qualifications to worthily carry on its remarkable journey in the field of Italian literature which counts more than half a century.

Despite the obstacles arising mainly from external factors, it employs teaching and scientific staff skilled to meet the requirements of the labour and research market, if the points the committee has already indicated, are improved.

The good cooperation among students is highlighted along with their infiltration into the society, one of the Department's main elements.

Its already obvious extroversion in the field of research in combination with the results guarantees its future competitiveness.

The deficiencies in material and technical infrastructure is a problem to be solved by the Greek state, while other operating problems at secretariat, library and the internal evaluation, are issues that can be solved relatively easily with a more rational policy by the University and the Faculty.

The Department indicated that it is able to exercise an effective policy on important issues such as: a) constant improvement and updating of under- and post-graduate curriculums b) cooperation with other scientific and educational institutions in Greece and abroad.

Its extroversion is being noticed by its continuous activation of training programmes for non-university public, as well as internship programmes that introduce students to working reality.

In conclusion, the Department meets the requirements expected of an academic institution in education and research.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Professor Moschos Morfakidis-Filactós
2. Professor Anna Zimbone
3. Associate Professor Alicia Morales Ortíz